Alexander Fedorov, Anastasia Levitskaya, Marina Tselykh, Andrei Novikov

Media Manupulations and Media literacy Education

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This monograph analyzes numerous types of media manipulations, the criteria and methods of evaluating the effectiveness of the activities developed by the authors that contribute to the development of students' media competence in the analysis of media manipulative influences; on the basis of synthesis and analysis the theoretical model of the development of media competence of students of universities and faculties of education in the analysis of media manipulative influences (including the definition of essential signs, qualities and properties, differentiation of media and manipulative influences) is presented.

The monograph is intended for teachers of higher education, students, graduate students, researchers, school teachers, journalists, as well as for the circle of readers who are interested in the problems of media education and media manipulative influences.

Reviewer: Professor V. Gura

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Introduction

The methodology of our research is based on the key concepts of connection, interdependence, and wholeness of the phenomena of reality (including organic connection of educational processes with the socio-cultural context), unity of the historical and social in the pedagogical knowledge, the theory of dialog of cultures by M.M. Bakhtin – V.S. Bibler, culturological and semiotic theoretical concepts by Y.M. Lotman, U. Eco, D. Buckingham, conception of critical and antimanipulative thinking development by S. Kara-Murza, L. Masterman, D. Halpern, etc. The project is based on a research content approach (revealing the content of the process under study, taking into account the totality of its elements, the interaction between them, their nature, appeal to facts, analysis and synthesis of theoretical conclusions, etc.).

We used the following methods:

a) empirical research methods: collection of information (information sources: books, articles, Internet files, etc.) related to the topic of the project.

b) theoretical research methods: classification, comparison, analogy, induction and deduction, abstraction and concretization, theoretical analysis and synthesis, generalization; theoretical analysis of scientific literature relevant to the project topic included a comparative analysis of types and mechanisms of media manipulative influences.

As a result, we obtained new scientific results: expansion of theoretical knowledge, new scientific data on the processes, phenomena existing in the studied field of media education in relation to media manipulations; clarification of the classification of media manipulations, theoretical justification of ways to improve antimanipulative media competence.

In particular, we:

- developed criteria and ways of assessing the effectiveness of activities that contribute to the development of students' media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;

- On the basis of the generalization and analysis we developed and graphically presented a theoretical model of the development of media competence of students of pedagogical universities and faculties in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences (including the definition of essential signs, qualities and properties, development of the structure, goals, tasks, content of this model, conditions of its implementation);

The results of the project may influence the development of scientific, technological areas in the field of media literacy education, the formation of topics for further research on this topic, the intensity of media literacy education and their effectiveness in terms of forming media competence and anti-manipulative analytical thinking of different segments of the population, the development of recommendations and proposals for the use of the results in innovative media education projects.

We would like to draw readers' attention to the fact that all material in this monograph was prepared before February 24, 2022, and, therefore, does not reflect political changes in the world after that date.

1. **Media manipulation in the modern world**

It can be agreed that over the course of many decades, two global, sometimes conflicting trends have been observed in the media: the audience as the object of manipulation and the audience as the collaborator and partner of the information process. Historically, the second one is most productive and promising. Timeliness of the theoretical awareness of this process is a compulsory condition for the civilized development of both traditional and new media (Bakulev, 2005: 196).

Meanwhile, the first trend, alas, continues to dominate and, as we believe, will only intensify in the foreseeable future: "the mainstream media's predilection for sensationalism, need for constant novelty, and emphasis on profits over civic responsibility made them vulnerable to strategic manipulation" (Marwick, Lewis, 2017: 47).

The reasons for media manipulations are quite diverse and are not susceptible to unambiguous interpretations; however, according to G.V. Gracheva and I.K. Melnik, they can be grouped into the following:

- the reasons due to the bias and subjectivity of people working in the field of mass media, caused by their individual psychological, personal characteristics, political preferences, sympathies, etc .;
- the reasons determined by the political, social, economic and organizational conditions of the media sphere (for example, economic and administrative dependence on specific social actors);
- the reasons depending on the very process of functioning of mass media: to attract attention and gain a mass audience, the media are guided by certain common technologies when creating and rotating certain messages (Grachev, Melnik, 1999).

Having conducted an extensive study of social networks in different countries of the world in 2017 and 2018, S. Bradshaw and P.N. Howard draws attention to new trends in organized media manipulation, as well as the growing opportunities, strategies and resources supporting this phenomenon:

- a significant growth of campaigns for manipulating social networks in 48 countries in 2018 compared with 28 countries in 2017, since each country has at least one political party or government agency that uses social networks to manipulate public opinion; whereas, much of this growth occurs where political parties spread misinformation during elections, or where government agencies feel threatened by unwanted news and foreign interference, and in response to this develop their own propaganda campaigns;
- in 20% of these 48 countries there was evidence of disinformation campaigns conducted through WhatsApp, Telegram and WeChat;
- manipulative propaganda uses the automation of accounts in social networks and online comments, but increasingly involves paid advertising and search engine optimization on an expanding array of Internet platforms;
- manipulation in social networks is a big business: since 2010, political parties and governments have spent more than half a billion dollars on research, development and implementation of psychological operations and manipulation of public opinion in social networks. In some countries, this includes efforts to combat extremism, but in most cases - to spread unwanted news and misinformation during elections, military crises and complex humanitarian disasters (Bradshaw, Howard, 2018: 3).

Of course, these trends do not contribute to strengthening public trust in various institutions, and the audience is increasingly facing uncertainty regarding the reliability of the available media information. For example, a survey shows that two-thirds of respondents regularly receive news via Facebook, and one-third of respondents encounter fake news, which they initially perceived to be true (Flintham et al., 2018).

Traditional media (print, press, television) from year to year lose their influence, and new media, on the contrary, win. For example, according to Mediascope, in 2019 the Internet in Russia for the first time surpassed television in daily coverage: about 75% of residents of large cities went online daily and 70.4% watched TV (Lebedeva, 2019).

Evidently, considering the statistics for the Russian Federation on the whole, and not just for the media consumption of big cities' residents, television does dominate. Television is still the main source of information for most Russians, although its audience is gradually declining. While ten years ago, 94% of Russians received information on TV, in 2019, only 72%. Younger people under 25 receive news on TV less often (the main source of information is social networks for them): 42% versus 93% of those 65 and older (Volkov, Goncharov, 2019).

Today, not only simple computers and smartphones, but also modern TVs connected to the Internet, give users (based on their personal preferences) the possibility of individual choice of media texts, and Internet sites and social networks engage the audience in a dialogue – both within social networks and with government agencies, business companies, professional journalists, etc.

It is worth emphasizing that media manipulators consciously use these interactive features. But while in the days of the "old media" these manipulations originated from state and business structures, today the previously manipulated audience has gradually transformed from readers / viewers / listeners into full-fledged creators and distributors of media texts, including manipulative ones. Back in the 1980s, newspapers (some with a staff of hundreds of employees) were proud of circulations of 2-3 million copies, but today the popular blogger's audience of ten million followers is no longer surprising.

The Internet users' reasons to become authors and distributors of media texts, in addition to financial ones, include shaping of the identity, self esteem, self-worth, sense of belonging, following fashion trends, desire to attract attention, desire to maintain communication with peers (Kunshchikov, Stroganov, 2018). A.E. Marwick believes that people "share fake news stories that support their pre-existing beliefs and signal their identity to likeminded others" (Marwick, 2018: 507).

As we know, social networks were not originally conceived as a political or manipulation tool: they were supposed to become a free and democratic space for communication between friends and relatives, with participants could share their impressions of books, films, music, travel, food recipes, post photos and videos etc. However, as soon as social networks (with their wide possibilities of users' segmentation by interests) gained a multimillion audience, they immediately entered the sphere of business and politics interests. Today, social networks are increasingly being used as a swift and relatively inexpensive way to promote information, including false one. As a result, social networks are becoming sources of various kinds of political and advertising fakes.

In recent years, media manipulation issues have been often linked to fake news. Of course, fakes per se (false information) are not new: fake news has been spread by traditional media before, too. The matter is that the Internet has made it possible to distribute fakes both by bots (robots), and by real individual users. Meanwhile putting the issue of fakes on the agenda became advantageous for 1) oppositionists protesting against the ruling authorities and mainstream media; 2) authorities, for which the term "fake news" often becomes an excuse to strengthen censorship and regulation of the Internet; 3) traditional media (major newspapers, television channels), which are painfully experiencing the loss of the audience (which, in particular, caused a decrease in advertising revenue) and try to blame the new media for violating the rules for presenting information, lack of professionalism and irresponsibility (Tambini, 2017: 9).

Evidently, most users of social networks do not create, but disseminate, repost other people's information, including fake information, and here "fake news gullibility intensifies with accelerating exposures and prolongs over time. If recurrence magnifies perceptions of truthfulness even for strikingly problematic and opinionated content" (Fielden et al., 2018: 55).

The situation with fake news is socially and politically problematic in three areas: 1) "its production of wrongly informed citizens, that 2) are likely to stay wrongly informed in echo chambers and 3) be emotionally antagonized or outraged given the affective and provocative nature of much fake news" (Bakir, McStay, 2018).

Another issue related to fake news is that they devalue the opinions of experts, academic researchers, professional journalists, undermine confidence in democratic institutions and can cause moral panic (Sadiku et al., 2018: 188).

Unfortunately, today's audience progressively more trusts information from social networks. For example, 23% of Americans use Facebook as the main one, and 27% as an additional source of

news, and approximately 75% of the adult population of the United States cannot recognize the degree of reliability of media texts (Silverman, Singer-Vine, 2016).

Many researchers argue that fake news, being exchanged on social networks, is transforming society significantly (Janze, Risius, 2017). However, according to Facebook management, this influence of social networks is greatly exaggerated, for instance, "that of all the "civic content" posted on the site in connection with the United States election, less than one-tenth of one percent resulted from "information operations" like the Russian campaign" (Shane, 2017).

The subject of media manipulation is rather popular in the academic and expert communities today, and researchers, in particular, pay much attention to the terminological field.

First of all, it is true about the differentiation of concepts such as "misinformation" and "false information" (fake).

H. Derakhshan and C. Wardle substantiate the following typology:

- "Dis-information. Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country;

- Mis-information. Information that is false, but not created with the intention of causing harm;

- Mal-information. Information that is based on reality, used to inflict harm on a person, organization, or country" (Derakhshan, Wardle, 2017: 9).

G.G. Pocheptsov essentially agrees with them, too, he believes that misinformation is a conscious deception, as contrasted to deception by chance, ignorance, underestimation, and exaggeration. The latter does not correspond to reality, but this happens without malicious intent. There is no malice in literature and art; they do not have to match the reality. On the other hand, disinformation is embedded into the information stream, on the basis of which some serious decisions may be made. And it is aimed to direct the decision maker to an intellectual or physical act beneficial to the communicator (Pocheptsov, 2018a). Disinformation misleads the audience by a direct lie, a juggling of facts and false, but supposedly documentary evidence, with the goal of whitewashing, or, conversely, compromising.

Thus, the term "misinformation" is understood as "the process of manipulating information: misleading someone by providing incomplete information or complete, but now reduntant information, distorting the context, distorting information partially. The manipulation ... refers to the type of psychological impact in which the skill of the manipulator is used to covertly introduce into the psyche of the addressee' goals, desires, intentions, relationships or attitudes that do not coincide with those that the addressee currently has; psychological impact aimed at changing the direction of activity of another person, performed so skillfully that it goes unnoticed by him; psychological impact aimed at implicitly inducing another to commit certain actions by the manipulator; the skillful inducement of another to achieve (pursue) the goal indirectly nested by the manipulator" (Mikheev, Nestik, 2018).

As for the audience's attitude to disinformation, cognitive, emotional-evaluative, value-semantic, and behavioral components can be distinguished.

Cognitive components of the audience's stance towards disinformation encompass the assessment of its frequency in media; ideas about its sources, goals, implementation methods, expected and actual consequences, links with other risks, and ways to protect against its impact.

Emotionally-evaluative components of the audience's attitude towards disinformation include: the significance of its threat in comparison with other types of threats; assessment of sources and use of false media information.

Value-semantic components of the audience's attitude towards disinformation cover the degree to which it can be used; opposing values and values that justify its use.

Behavioral components of the audience's attitude towards disinformation are: preferred methods and responsiveness to its appearance; actual willingness to support public and state initiatives aimed at combating disinformation, discuss related problems with other people.

Personality components of the audience's attitude toward disinformation are associated with psychological mechanisms, values, social trust, anxiety level, and social identity (Mikheev, Nestik, 2018).

G.G. Pocheptsov rightly asserts that any processes of disinformation, as soon as launched industrially, that is, massively and consciously, are dangerous and difficult to resist. The complexity of this struggle is determined by the following:

• a disinformation campaign is based on the concepts already existing in the mass consciousness, it only changes their priority, emphasizing those having a conflict potential;

• a disinformation campaign is the first to introduce information into the mass consciousness, which challenges efforts of later refutations, since a certain point of view has already been introduced into the mass consciousness;

• a disinformation campaign works with specific social groups, leading them to confront each other, the rest of the population witnesses this struggle, but these activated groups are very difficult to persuade;

• narratives introduced from the outside begin to contribute to the emergence of counter-narratives, thereby intensifying the confrontation, which passes from information to virtual space;

• from the information and virtual spaces, the conflicting ones are ready to go into the material world, which often happens, but the "street", in principle, cannot solve information and virtual problems (Pocheptsov, 2019: 28).

Thus, the model for designing a disinformation campaign involves determining the target audience, identifying destabilizing messages for this particular audience, determining the vulnerability of the audience and its resistance level, testing the content and language of the message in focus groups, and selecting media channels to deliver the message (Pocheptsov, 2019: 28).

Regrettably, the power of disinformation influences is enhanced by the audience's indifference to deactivate fakes, as any refutations are aimed at significant changes in beliefs formed under the influence of false information. In addition, the duration of the influence of disinformation on an individual can be quite noticeable, since the "forgotten" false information remains in memory, and when it pops up again, it is "perceived as reliable and is not in any doubt" (Mikheev, Nestik, 2018).

Network misinformation, using personalization and conspiracy techniques (often with the help of so-called trolls and bots), often becomes more convincing for users than even candid media texts coming from official media, especially if fake news is actively supported by users of any network groups by (political) interests, and the individual himself has no incentive to look into the problem using the method of checking facts by comparing several authoritative sources of information.

In this context, fake news is often seen as a form of deliberate misinformation (Sadiku et al., 2018: 187). However, in reality this is far from always the case, since fake information can be either completely false or partially true. This information may also be missing the context necessary for revealing its full content (and if it is disclosed accurately and completely, in all details, then the meaning of this kind of information can sometimes be reversed). The information may be true for some exceptional case, but, being generalized, also becomes fake. In addition, the ambivalence of media terminology is manifested in the fact that the very phrase "fake news" can be used in the political struggle with opponents, regardless of whether they are false or not. For example, in order to discredit their adversary, some politicians indiscriminately and cynically put labels on the true arguments of their opponents (Dentith, 2017: 66; Tambini, 2017: 1).

In addition, unlike professional misinformation, network news can be unintentionally misleading, since the world of fakes is a simplification of the complex world in which we live. Hence the craving not only for fakes, but also for conspiracy theory at one level, and magicians with fortune-tellers at another one (Pocheptsov, 2018b).

There is a viewpoint arguing "fake news to be fabricated information that mimics news media content ... Fake-news outlets, in turn, lack the news media's editorial norms and processes for ensuring the accuracy and credibility of information. Fake news overlaps with other information disorders, such as misinformation (false or misleading information) and disinformation (false information that is purposely spread to deceive people). Fake news has primarily drawn recent attention in a political context but it also has been documented in information promulgated about topics such as vaccination, nutrition, and stock values. It is particularly pernicious in that it is

parasitic on standard news outlets, simultaneously benefiting from and undermining their credibility" (Lazer et al., 2018: 1094).

Other scholars come to similar conclusions about the nature of fake news: "Fake news is the presentation of false claims that purport to be about the world in a format and with a content that resembles the format and content of legitimate media organizations" (Levy 2017: 20). "Fake news is the deliberate presentation of (typically) false or misleading claims as news, where the claims are misleading by design" (Gelfert, 2018: 108).

The European Association for Viewers Interests (EAVI) identifies ten types of fake news: propaganda, clickbait, sponsored content, satire and hoax, error, partisan content, conspiracy theory, pseudoscience, misinformation and bogus content and the different types of motivation: money, politics / power, humor / fun, passion and [the aim to] (mis) inform (EAVI, 2017; McGonagle, 2017: 204-205).

It can also be added that fakes often use inadequate generalizations, representing, for example, the opinion of one person (often marginalized) as the position of a party or country and despise the standards of traditional journalism and (like poisonous mushrooms trying to pass themselves off as edible) imitate the facade of "branded" news channels.

Clearly, false information may use the so-called simulacra (from Latin – simulacrum), that is, references with no referents or copies substituting originals and Internet memes – short media texts, usually bright (audio) visual images, often filed in an ironic or sarcastic (often political) context, spread by people or bots in social networks, are gaining immense popularity.

D. Rushkoff authors the development of the theory of media viruses, which can also be associated with the spread of fake news or misinformation. However, he believes that media viruses can be viewed in a positive context, as "a media virus can be developed with the goal of fighting against a political party, religion, social institution, economy, business, or even a worldview. In the same way that scientists use viruses to defeat a certain bodily disease or cause the destruction of dangerous cells with antibodies, media activists use viruses to fight those whom they consider enemies of our culture. Media viruses, whether they are engineered, introduced from outside or spontaneous, cause social mutations and are the key to a certain kind of evolution" (Rushkoff, 2003).

J. Farkas and J. Schou add more positive effects of fake news, considering fake news as a critique of digital capitalism, critique of right-wing politics and liberal and mainstream media (Farkas, Schou, 2018: 303-306).

K. Born identifies several factors that triggered the spread of fake media information:
- democratization of the creation and distribution of media texts, so that any person or group can influence a large number of people online;
- information socialization, leading to the information consumption from any sources, and not only from traditional media agencies that observe journalism standards;
- atomization as a departure of individual news from brand sources;
- anonymity of the creation and distribution of media texts: for a network user today, it is more important *who* (for example, his friend) shared a piece of information than its *source*;
- personalization of the information environment, which distinguishes it from the "old media", allowing to use the micro-target audience;
- sovereignty: unlike television, the press, and radio, social networks are self-regulating (Born, 2017).

Herewith, often the speed of distribution of fake news is several times higher than the speed of ingenuous messages. This is linked to the fact that fakes better correspond to the expectations of a person, his/her ideas about the real world, and not about its version, which is skillfully written about in newspapers. Indeed, quite often fakes emphasize the negative, while regular messages - the positive. And the negativity causes more interest. Fake comes to this world as a result of a sharp transformation of the model of the information flow's generation and broadcast. The first model can be described as "one speaks and listens, the other one listens and speaks," the second as "one speaks – many listen," and the current one as "many speak, many listen" (Pocheptsov, 2018b).

The concept of "manipulation" is closely related to the concepts of misinformation and false information. According to G.V. Grachev and I.K. Melnik, manipulation in political activity refers to

the following: fraud; a system of psychological impact, aimed at the introduction of illusory representations (Grachev, Melnik, 1999).

In social terms, manipulation is defined as illegal dominance, confirming social inequality. Manipulation as a control of human consciousness presumes interference in the processes of ideology, the formation of models of knowledge, understanding in the interests of certain states, organizations or groups (Van Dijk, 2006: 359).

However, in the media sphere, the term "manipulation" is considered more ambiguously. Of course, a biased media agency or a specific blogger may intentionally mislead the audience, but one may also inadvertently use false information for dissemination, erroneously considering it to be true. Moreover, the media agencies themselves can become the victims of manipulation by individuals and organizations: the generated media texts can become viral very quickly, and journalists, craving to get ahead of their rivals and neglecting the verification of the accuracy of the information received, immediately publish it on seemingly solid media platforms (Fitzpatrick, 2018: 45).

The problem of manipulation is also related to the fact that the network nature of the Internet and the ability to replicate and remix images, text and video often makes it impossible to determine where an idea, image or memory originates from, especially in case of ironic game of meanings. All this makes the process of exposing media manipulations very difficult (Marwick, 2018: 478).

Ideally, when presenting media news, it is necessary to strive for balanced information, however, today we often deal with the so-called false balance, since some of the media texts can be the products of a "polite society" or political correctness. As M. Dentith argues, "in a polite society there are certain things which are not talked about. Some truths which might be considered toxic should they be discussed openly are politely ignored or glossed over. For example, we might have all been aware that, in the 1970s, the police routinely planted evidence in order to secure convictions, but as those criminals were thought to be obviously guilty of something, we politely ignored the specific cases of evidence tampering. It would be impolite to talk about the matter, or think of raising it because the intentions of the police - keeping the streets safe – was a public good. Politeness is one reason why the claim "That's just your opinion!" Ends up having what appears to be apparent epistemic weight; we are often polite in the face of dissent, in order to not cause further dissent, or embarrassment" (Dentith, 2017: 76).

Hence, based on an analysis of various studies (Bakir, McStay, 2018; Born, 2017; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Dentith, 2017; Derakhshan, Wardle, 2017; Farkas, Schou, 2018; Fitzpatrick, 2018; Flintham et al., 2018 ; Gelfert, 2018; Grachev, Melnik, 1999; Janze, Risius, 2017; Kara-Murza, Smirnov, 2009; Lazer et al., 2018; Levy, 2017; Marwick, 2018; Nielsen, Graves, 2017; Pocheptsov, 2015; Pocheptsov, 2019; Rushkoff, 2003; Sadiku et al., 2018; Tambini, 2017; Tandoc Jr. et al., 2018; Van Dijk, 2006 and others), we can discern a number of basic manipulation techniques used by modern media:

- *appeal to authority, to opinion leaders, testimonial*: the use (including the help of the so-called "respected mediators") of real or fictitious statements of personalities with high authority, or vice versa, causing a negative reaction in people to whom the targeted manipulative effect is directed.

- *bandwagon*: selection of judgments, statements, phrases that require uniformity in behavior, creating the impression that everyone or "positive" nations, parties or groups do this. With the help of this "community", the audience is convinced that most people share the "correct" political, religious, etc. proposed by the media agency's point of view.

- *conceptual parasiticism*: parasitism on popular concepts, terms (using "patriotic", "folk", youth, slang words), (co) feelings, reflexes, (latent) desires, actions, etc .; in terms that hide / change the essence of the phenomenon;

- *disabling, blocking critical and rational perception*: appealing to the simplest emotions, subconsciousness in the atmosphere of a show, scandal, emphasizing shock, traumatic and paranormal phenomena; in particular, the manipulative effect can be enhanced by the introduction of political evaluations in entertainment shows;

- *exploitation of slogans, myths and stereotypes*;

- *false alternative*: an imaginary choice, while the audience is presented with several points of view on a given topic, but in a way that latently features an opinion that is beneficial to the communicator in the best light; the pseudo-alternative can also be manifested in the so-called non-alternative choice ("there is no other way");

- *misrepresentation*: distorting the opponents' opinions, attributing to them something they did not say and did not commit;

- *mockery, trollization, deepening the subject*: ironic, sarcastic, playful attitude to a particular phenomenon, theme, organization, country, nation, person, idea, symbol, etc .; used to defame something / someone, to show insignificant and frivolous, not worthy of attention;

- *multiplication, crushing, chaos*: redundancy, high pace of information flow which allows, on the one hand, even important (political) events to be integrated into the general "machine-gun" news mode, and on the other hand, it creates the need for interpretations, explanations, because a person does not want to live in a world that he cannot make sense. Mosaicism and randomness deprive the audience of a sense of orderliness and predictability of being;

- *name calling: labeling:* 1) negative labeling, demonization: "sticking negative labels", insulting epithets, metaphors, names related to a particular phenomenon, organization, country, nation, person, idea, etc. are used to defame something / someone. Negative concepts such as "authoritarianism", "aggression", "enemy", "imperialism", "militarism", "Nazism", "nationalism", "occupation", "racism", "totalitarianism", "junta" are exploited etc.; 2) glittering generality: "halo effect", "radiant generalizations": uplifting epithets, metaphors, names related to a particular phenomenon, organization, country, nation, person, idea, etc., are used to make something / put someone on a pedestal, advertise. It exploits such positive concepts as "brotherhood", "democracy", "friendship", "health", "quality", "love", "peace", "patriotism", "victory", "superiority", "prosperity" , "Equality", "freedom", "commonwealth", "happiness", "success", etc.

- *opponent isolation*: depriving the opponent of the opportunity to speak;

- *plain folks, maximum simplicity, rubbing into trust*: betting on trusting relationships with a wide audience, its support under the pretext that the ideas are maximally simplified, the communicator's proposals have a positive meaning, since they are supposedly close to ordinary people ("I'm the same as you are");

- *preemptive impact*: the fastest possible (significantly outperforming competitors) news message presented in the way necessary for the communicator; a message about possible negative or positive phenomena with their immediate refutation in favor of the communicator;

- *promotion and self-promotion*: advertising and self-promotion of an individual, group, party, organization, company, etc .;

- *reiteration*: constant, intrusive repetition (including the reception of the initial and secondary information waves) of certain statements, regardless of the truth;

- *rumour creation and exploitation*;

- *sacrificed cow*: exposure of a certain "lesser evil" as a "sacrifice" in order to conceal the "greater evil";

- *selection, card stacking, concept change*: substitution of concepts, biased selection of information, unbalanced emphasis only on positive or only negative facts and arguments while ignoring the opposite; using assumptions as arguments; replacing the positive (or negative) qualities of a phenomenon with other (sometimes opposite), necessary for the manipulator at the moment. Thus, the attractiveness is justified, or vice versa, the unacceptability of any point of view, program, idea, etc.

- *straightforward lie*: direct lie, falsification, forgery in media texts;

- *transfer, projection, associated chain*: transfer of meanings, positive (or negative) qualities associated with established positive or negative concepts in society to certain phenomena, organizations, countries that are necessary for the manipulator at the moment, nations, ideas, personalities, etc .; avoiding discussion of topics undesirable for the communicator;

- *Trojan horse*: fragmentation and gradual integration of the disinformation between neutral / unbiased information;

Thus, the discussion around the problem of media manipulation in recent years has dramatically intensified, especially in connection with the spread of fake news on the Internet. For example, as studies prove (Nielsen and Graves, 2017: 6-7), most people, unfortunately, do not

distinguish between fake news and other types of news. However, the problem of fake news is not only related to fabricated media texts, but also reflects the audience's discontent with traditional mass sources of information, specific influential politicians, parties and organizations. From the audience's point of view, the problem of fake news is not limited to false news - it also applies to poor-quality journalism, political propaganda, and misleading forms of advertising; distrust in public institutions and media agencies.

In addition, in the modern media world, unambiguously true and explicitly false information is becoming increasingly rare. In fact, rather sophisticated manipulation techniques that mix reliable and fake information are being used, so there can be no simple judgements regarding the development of mechanisms to ban or remove false media information. One of the promising ways of counteracting fakes is to develop methods for identifying communities on the Internet which are most likely to spread false and misleading information (Mikheev, Nestik, 2018).

Resistance to disinformation can be based on both machine (computer) algorithms (Janze, Risius, 2017) and qualitative analytics (Van Dijk, 2006). We also believe that mass media education of the audience can effectively contribute to the development of analytical thinking and media competence of the individual (inter alia, the given typology of mass-media manipulation techniques that have been synthesized based on analysis of scientific research).

Case Studies 1: Pseudo-Chomsky, or Media Manipulation in Science

The traditional model of media exposure assumes that the audience shares fake messages, not only for profit or personal gain, but also because they are misled by manipulators. The worldview of the audience is formed by its social, cultural, and political perspectives and beliefs, which are often very different or even conflicting. However, today manipulative media texts are part of the media environment, therefore, it is necessary to explore which algorithms and marketing techniques promote or stimulate manipulative content. In order to unravel the problem of false media information used for manipulative purposes, effective models and technologies are needed. False information is not just a problem of the polarized audiences, they have existed before, too. It is caused not only by the erosion of traditional journalism's credibility, but also by the transition to receiving the bulk of information via the Internet (in particular through social networks). Looking into these complex processes can mitigate the effects of media manipulation processes (Marwick, 2018: 509-510).

Today, in the scientific world, great importance is attached to research aimed at developing technologies for detecting media manipulations and false media texts (Bakir, McStay, 2018; Born, 2017; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Dentith, 2017; Derakhshan, Wardle, 2017; Farkas, Schou, 2018; Fitzpatrick, 2018; Flintham et al., 2018; Gelfert, 2018; Grachev, Melnik, 1999; Janze, Risius, 2017; Kara-Murza, Smirnov, 2009; Lazer et al., 2018; Levy, 2017; Marwick, 2018; Nielsen, Graves, 2017; Pocheptsov, 2015; Pocheptsov, 2019; Rushkoff, 2003; Sadiku et al., 2018; Tambini, 2017; Tandoc Jr. et al., 2018; Van Dijk, 2006 and others).

We believe that The Open University, which in 2014 developed the PROMPT anti-manipulation critical assessment technology for media information (the name is an acronym for: Presentation, Relevance, Objectivity, Method, Provenance, and Timeliness), has made significant progress in this direction (The Open University, 2014).

M. Kunovskaya applied this anti-manipulation technology to the text with the carrying great weight title "Noam Chomsky – "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010-2020).

Presentation (Is the information presented and communicated clearly? Consider the language, layout and structure) (The Open University, 2014).

Here M. Kunovskaya comes to the conclusion that as far as the English grammar is concerned, the text looks correct, but there are some problems with the clarification of the viewpoint, since a clear message should answer the question: who does what, but the analyzed text gives a vague answer to this (Kunovskaya, 2017).

Relevance ("Is the article relevant to the topic you are researching? Look at the introduction or overview to find out what it is mainly about") (The Open University, 2014).

M. Kunovskaya suggests that most readers who have reposted a link to the pseudo Chomsky's article may not have specifically been seeking information on how to direct the mass opinion, but were attracted by a headline that responded to some hidden aspirations. The points of view coincided, and further the author could argue whatever (Kunovskaya, 2017). Moreover, the pseudo-Chomsky's article contains neither specific references to any scientific works, nor a review of them.

Objectivity ("Is the article biased, or motivated by a particular agenda? Is the language emotive? Are there hidden, vested interests?") (The Open University, 2014).

M. Kunovskaya argues that a text, written by an author who is trying to be objective is usually written in an impassive, rational manner. In the subjective, on the contrary, there is expressive vocabulary, metaphors, exaggeration and understatement (Kunovskaya, 2017). In the text of pseudo-Chomsky this affecting style is present. For example, there is the following emotional phrase: "Go to the public as a little child. Most of the advertising to the general public uses speech, argument, people and particularly children's intonation, often close to the weakness, as if the viewer were a little child or a mentally deficient "(Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010-2020).

Method ("Is it clear how the data was collected? Were the methods appropriate and can you trust it?") (The Open University, 2014).

In the pseudo-Chomsky article (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010-2020) there are no references to any scientific methods, data collection procedures or authoritative sources.

Provenance ("Is it clear where the information has come from? Can you identify the author (s) / organization (s), and are they trustworthy? Are there references / citations that lead to further reading, and are they trustworthy sources?") (The Open University, 2014).

None of these logical questions are answered in the article, and the text itself can be read (in all major European languages) on hundreds of non-academic or infotainment sites (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010-2020). Moreover, this text is published there without a date and without reference to an initial source. None of these Internet sources can be called reliable.

However there is a genuine interview of N. Chomsky with the journalist M. Nevradakis (Nevradakis, 2012).

In this interview, M. Nevradakis asks the famous scientist a question regarding this particular text, "Noam Chomsky – "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010).

In response, N. Chomsky states the following:

"I should add a cautionary note here. You may be referring to something that circulates on the internet called, I think, "10 strategies of manipulation by the media", which is attributed to me, but I didn't write it. There have been many efforts to correct it, to get it off, but once something's on the internet, it's hopeless. So if that's what you mean, it's not mine" (Chomsky, 2012).

Thus, in this case, we have a direct statement by N. Chomsky that a popular text entitled "Noam Chomsky – "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" is a fake that has nothing to do with his scientific works.

Timeliness ("How up-to-date is the material? Is it clear when it was written? Does the date of writing meet your requirements, or would it be obsolete?") (The Open University, 2014).

The pseudo-Chomsky's article (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010-2020) features no concrete and accurate examples of how manipulation strategies are applied. It is also completely incomprehensible from this text exactly when it was written.

Thus, M. Kunovskaya, based on the application of PROMT technology, draws a reasonable conclusion that the text "Noam Chomsky – "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010-2020) is not trustworthy (Kunovskaya, 2017).

To try and detect the source of fake information, we decided to use the Google search engine and first find out how many links to the text "Noam Chomsky – "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" are on the Internet.

In response to this phrase, the Google search engine produces 14.500 pages in all major languages of the world. It turns out that before 2002 there were no links to it at all, but we managed to find a French text, posted on one of the popular sites about medicine, "Stratégies de manipulation" (Timsit, 2002), which completely coincides with the English-language article of the pseudo-Chomsky (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010).

Meanwhile, the francophone author S. Timsit, in his article, posted on the popular science site Syti.net, never mentions or refers to N. Chomsky, his article's title does not contain number 10, although it does list ten manipulation strategies.

Our further search for the text "Noam Chomsky – "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" showed that from 2002 to the first half of 2010 there was no text titled like that on the Internet. However, in September-October 2010, various Internet sites posted the text "Stratégies de manipulation" (both in French and English) under the name "Noam Chomsky – "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010), and in subsequent years it began to multiply in different languages on hundreds of sites.

The emergence of unverified information on the Internet, unfortunately, is far too common today. However, the case with the text fraudulently attributed to N. Chomsky turned out to be much more complicated: it started to be actively quoted – as a genuine academic source – in scientific articles, monographs, research reports and dissertations.

For example, a reference to this fake is contained in the report on the scientific project "Noam Chomsky – Theorist", carried out by three American scientists (Aguilar et al, 2012: 3) in Texas University in 2012. Another reference to the pseudo-Chomsky was made by French scientists who published their article in the academic journal *Les Cahiers Internationaux de Psychologie Sociale* (De Visscher, Latinis, 2015: 101).

References to the text of pseudo-Chomsky penetrated the monograph of Dr. E.E. Rumyantseva "The Truth Against Deceiving the Population, Distorting Reality and Replacing Concepts: expert commentary on media news in 1997-2017" (Rumyantseva, 2017: 6), the book of F.O. Bogachev on a positive way of thinking (Bogachev, 2011: 179-182), in dozens of articles (Farafontova, 2012: 54-55; Fedotova, 2015: 417, 419; Gogol, Protopopova, 2014: 231; Kanataev, 2014: 11; Kipyatkova, Torgovanova, 2016: 76-78; Larionova, 2015: 1083; Orekhov, 2019: 142, etc.).

Moreover, Ph.D. dissertations were defended, the authors of which (together with their supervisors) (Shikhalieva, 2014: 105-106; Trokhinova, 2019: 236, 335) seriously consider the text "Noam Chomsky – "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" (Pseudo-Chomsky, 2010) as a real scientific source.

These facts indicate that a fake launched into mass Internet rotation and scientific circulation using the classical manipulative technique of "appeal to an authority" can be uncritically accepted as genuine not only by the mass audience, but also by scientists who have not questioned the source and correctness of this information. Paradoxically, in this case, quite a few authors of research papers on media manipulations themselves became victims of media manipulation using a false article on this topic.

It is good that Professor N. Chomsky directly asserted that he has never written the text "10 strategies of manipulation by the media" (Chomsky, 2012). But if an Internet troll tries to launch a false text attributing it to a famous scientist who passed away, it will be much more difficult to expose such a fake.

We have applied the PROMPT anti-manipulation technology (The Open University, 2014) to an academic article on media education "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" published in the scientific journal "Proceedings of the Belarusian State Technological University" (Bogdanova, Petrova, 2017: 71-78).

The analysis of this article shows the following:

Presentation

The article "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" is quite logical, information on the state of affairs with media education of Belarus schoolchildren and students is given in a scientific style.

Relevance

This article is fully consistent with media education topics, it has a review of the scientific literature on this topic.

Objectivity

This article does not seem biased, it is written in a standard scientific language, devoid of a bright emotional coloring. Gain interests are not visible.

Method

Seemingly, the data was collected and analyzed in the traditional way for a scientific article (collection and comparative analysis of scientific literature on the topic), but the question of the methods' validity will be disclosed below.

Provenance

Using the Internet search engine and the anti-plagiarism software program, we discovered that the following scientific monographs and articles became real sources:

- "Media Education of Young Audiences" (Zhilavskaya, 2009);
- "Research and practical implementation of media educational projects in modern Belarus" (Chelysheva, 2012: 42-52);
- "The discourse of media education research as an articulation of the challenge of the cultural situation" (Sharko, 2012).

Meanwhile, the above sources are neither correctly cited in the article "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" (Bogdanova, Petrova, 2017: 71-78), nor present in the *References* section after the article.

The plagiarism control check of the text of the article "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" (Bogdanova, Petrova, 2017: 71-78) shows that it contains almost 90% plagiarism and is a compilation of large paragraphs from the above scientific works (Chelysheva, 2012 : 42-52; Sharko, 2012; Zhilavskaya, 2009).

The text "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" (Bogdanova, Petrova, 2017: 71-78), excluding the list of references, consists of 31.045 characters (including spaces). Of this volume, the text, fully "borrowed" from the monograph "Media Education of Young Audiences" (Zhilavskaya, 2009), makes up 3.782 characters (12.2 %). The main body of the article "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" (Bogdanova, Petrova, 2017: 71-78) almost entirely consists of a text "borrowed" from the article by I.V. Chelysheva (16.893 characters, i.e. 54.4 % of the total text that A. A. Bogdanov and L.I. Petrova ascribed to themselves), and the conclusion is taken from the article by O.I. Sharko (6.859 characters, i.e. 22.1 %).

In total, a borrowed text without attribution and without quotation marks constitutes 27.534 characters in the article "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" (Bogdanova, Petrova, 2017: 71-78), i.e. 88.7 %.

Thus, not only the (stolen) information's origin is revealed, but it is also proved that the "authors" of this article are not trustworthy, and the existing links / quotes available in "their" text are not reliable, since they do not refer to the three real sources which A.A. Bogdanova and L.I. Petrova unethically took advantage of.

Returning to the *Objectivity* criterion, it can be argued that behind the plagiarism in the article "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" (Bogdanova, Petrova, 2017: 71-78), there are apparently some vested interests: an imitation of scientific work, an attempt to manipulate academic audience by passing off texts from other people's works as their own.

Timeliness

The article "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" (Bogdanova, Petrova, 2017: 71-78) was published in 2017, however, the list of references includes academic sources dating from 1989 to 2011. The absence of more recent sources from 2012-2017 is explained by the fact that the list was also not compiled by A.A. Bogdanova and L.I. Petrova, but it was directly taken from the scientific works mentioned above (Chelysheva, 2012 : 42-52; Sharko, 2012; Zhilavskaya, 2009), which, logically for *their* publication time, could not contain references to books or articles later than 2012.

Thus, the issue of the timeliness of the article "The system of youth media education in the Republic of Belarus" is not applicable because of the plagiarism case.

In conclusion, manipulations in the academic environment can, among other, take one of the following forms:

- substitution of the authorship, that is, replacement of the surname of a little-known author with the surname of a scientific celebrity ("appeal to an authority" technique) subsequently distributing the now false scientific text on the Internet. This manipulative technique, in the absence of an authenticity check obligatory in such cases, causes a whole loop of citations and references in scientific journals of different countries, since scholars who cite the fraud are mistakenly convinced that they are dealing with a genuine article from a respected author; the

purpose of this manipulation is not to derive direct benefits for the manipulator, but a kind of scientific trolling: to prove to the academic audience that by falsely attributing the name of an author authoritative in the scientific world to someone else's mediocre text, it is possible to make other scientists take this fake for genuine scientific work;

- the use of scientific works written in a foreign language (without correct references and citations) in their publications (direct plagiarism) for gain purpose of appropriating someone's work and intellectual property, passing it off as their own.

The present study has revealed an urgent need both for researchers and for academic journals' editors - to carefully verify quoted sources that may be false. Representatives of the scientific world, traditionally considered to be the most informed community, must not become victims of manipulative influences.

Case Studies 2: Coronavirus and Media Misinformation

In recent years, an increasing number of scholars around the world have been exploring media competence/literacy training methods to address media manipulation related to fake news in particular (Bulger, Davison, 2018; Courtney, 2018; De Abreu, 2019; Dell, 2019; Hobbs, McGee, 2014; McDougall et al, 2018; McDougall, 2019; Shen et al., 2019; Wilson, 2019, etc.).

Misinformation, fakes have become familiar terms (e.g., in talk shows). New media technologies, huge information opportunities of the Internet (including popular social networks) provide audiences, including schoolchildren, with significantly greater access to a variety of information, incomparable to what it was even 20-30 years ago...

Accordingly, new opportunities for media manipulation have arisen.

Of course, even in the 20th century false information was often spread through the media (press, radio, television), but behind this were either state structures or private agencies. Ordinary people unconnected to state sources of mass communication and the private media business could spread false information mainly through rumors (which of course did not exclude state secret services and private agencies from being involved in their dissemination).

With the mass arrival of the Internet, false rumors began to be transmitted not by word of mouth, but through social networks and "yellow" sites. Often false information spreads faster on the Internet than reliable information. And given that today's young people have minimal contact with the "old" media, preferring the Internet, it is clear that fake information reaches them in the first place.

The impact of fake media texts on audiences is largely due to the fact that fakes rely on arousing emotions: for example, content that arouses anxiety or anger spreads much more widely than dispassionate content (McDougall et al, 2018: 41).

And given that "old media" also often use ideological propaganda and deception in their information field (which causes rejection and distrust of the audience), fake Internet news is sometimes perceived in the general context of the media stream.

The term "fake news" itself is very controversial. On the one hand, it is used by journalists and academics to refer to truly false, misleading information, and on the other hand, it is often used by politicians, who use the term as an accusatory label that they "label" unwanted or unpleasant facts and phenomena (for political, ideological, corruption and other reasons).

The total spread of the coronavirus in 2020-2022 was the source of a whole series of media manipulations.

Unfortunately, practice shows that not only anonymous (or, on the contrary, famous) bloggers, but also people holding responsible government positions can become the source of this kind of disinformation.

For example, the President of the Republic of Belarus A. Lukashenko in his video appeals advised the population as protection against coronavirus: to go to bathhouses and saunas, because COVID-19 supposedly dies at the temperature of +50c - +60c (Lukashenko, 2020a) and play hockey (Lukashenko, 2020).

However, experts believe (and this is confirmed by practice) that if a person is sick with coronavirus, no bath, alas, will help, and in many cases can worsen the course of the disease (Does it help..., 2020). As for hockey, this advice of A. Lukashenko cannot be called other than a joke. In

addition, the video quoted above shows an ice arena full of spectators who do not keep even a minimum distance of 1.5 meters from each other.

Another popular misinformation recently has been the report that copper products (particularly copper mesh masks) can destroy coronavirus. Here is a typical example of this kind of fiction: "Copper products kill viruses in a matter of minutes. ... This property of copper has the ability to kill coronavirus" (Kairatuly, 2020). This fake is refuted by a study conducted by the Virology Department, it showed that no copper destroys COVID-19 (Tileuhan, 2020).

Sometimes unverified information comes into the media sphere from popular TV anchors as well. For example, the famous Russian TV host   E. Malysheva said in one of her TV programs that it is a good idea to wash your nose with a salt solution during the spread of the coronavirus (Malysheva, 2020). Unfortunately, the examination proves that this method of controlling the infection is useless (Malikov, 2020).

In April 2020, a short video with the provocative title "Rostov on Don woke up!" appeared on YouTube (Rostov..., 2020), in which someone filmed from a car a street filled with protesters shouting "Freedom! Freedom!" while a police ring was tightening around them. This video was passed off by disinformers as protests against the self-isolation regime during the coronavirus epidemic. However, a close look at this video proves that it was not filmed in Rostov-on-Don, but in Moscow. By comparing this video with news video archives, the creators of the Factcheck website convincingly proved that this video was filmed during a rally in Moscow on Tverskaya Street on July 27, 2019, and, of course, has nothing to do with protests against quarantine measures (Rostov-on-Don..., 2020).

Unfortunately, people often seek not objective information from the media, but information that corresponds to their established beliefs and attitudes. Thus, if people have convinced themselves that spontaneous mass protests against quarantine measures are erupting all over the world, they will persistently seek confirmation of their preconceived beliefs on the Internet, and a fake video entitled "Rostov on Don is awake!" will be a tidbit for them, both for individual consumption and for distribution on social networks.

In addition, bias in (false) beliefs helps a person ignore or reject official information if it does not coincide with that bias. In this case, the (falsely) convinced audience arrogantly believes, for example, that all state mass media and media owned by large private corporations are biased, always lying, hiding true information from the people, etc.

One can also observe an effect when, when confronted with evidence which is ideologically, politically, aesthetically, ethically in conflict with the person's original worldview, his/her belief in false information even increases, causing defensive emotions, sometimes quite aggressive ones. A confirmation of this can be found, for example, in Internet comments on current political situations in the world or painful periods in the history of this or that country.

The fight against media misinformation is also often hampered by a false consensus effect, whereby the audience (e.g. of a particular group on social networks) believes that many others share their (erroneous) beliefs. Young people are often inclined to reject messages received from "engaged" adults and, conversely, to unconditionally trust their "independent and honest" peers spreading fakes. Thus, there is a confidence in a kind of "correct" group unity of opinion, which sometimes gives even greater confidence in bias (McDougall et al, 2018: 43).

Can media education help audiences critically evaluate false media information?

Of course, media education is not a panacea; however, leading researchers and media educators believe that fake information can and should be addressed in the educational field (Bulger, Davison, 2018; Courtney, 2018; De Abreu, 2019; Dell, 2019; Hobbs, McGee, 2014; McDougall et al, 2018; McDougall, 2019; Shen et al, 2019; Wilson, 2019; et al).

First, audiences need to understand that any controversial event (much less the current coronavirus epidemic) instantly generates false or conspiracy rumors, accusations, speculation, and fake news.

Second, in combating the tendency of audiences to confirm their biases, we need to help them understand exactly how a person's prior engagement affects what and how they seek, accept, and disseminate in the media sphere (and in their personal circle of communication).

Third: to teach the audience not only to obtain media information from a variety of sources, but also to compare different perspectives on an issue, rather than to make an instantaneous judgment (often false) about information they have just received from an unverified source.

Fourth, to help the audience gain experience in skillfully analyzing media information from a variety of sources reflecting different points of view.

At the same time, work with identifying media manipulation in the audience should not be rude and uncompromisingly humiliate supporters of fake news, because this unethical approach can provoke in students a sharp defensive reaction and a total rejection of everything that the (media) educator says. Here, we believe, a tactful approach to the opinions and beliefs of the audience is necessary. In addition, the educator needs to provide students with substantiated explanations of why and for what, in whose interests this particular fake began to spread at a certain period of time.

Thus, when answering the question of whether media education can be a successful tool for increasing the level of media competence of the audience (including in relation to media manipulation), we generally give a positive answer.

However, the following problematic issues of the media-education process must be taken into account:

Can media education really counteract the minute-by-minute superactive media "yellowing" of (incompetent) audiences?

Which populations should media education primarily target?

Which of the existing media education technologies should be chosen?

Which media education programs are best to rely on?

What criteria should be used to assess the audience's media competence?

What are the two main types of audience attitudes toward media education (a belief that people do not need media education because they have already spontaneously acquired sufficient media competence; an overestimation of the possible positive effects of media education)? (Bulger, Davison, 2018: 21).

How can we avoid the negative effects of media education when disruptive media educators use media education technologies to foment interreligious, interethnic, and interstate enmity?

Can media educators count on government support for the media education movement?

Case Studies 3: Manipulation in the Modern German Press

The problem of media manipulations, in particular, in the press, is far from new, but in recent decades it has become significantly relevant due to the fact that the press of the 21st century is not only paper media, familiar in previous century, but also news Internet sites easily accessible to millions of readers. Thus, with the help of the Internet, the texts of modern newspapers attract the attention of readers who are not in the habit of buying press, subscribing to it and going to the reading rooms of libraries. And, consequently, the manipulative influence of the press reaches a new, previously inaccessible audience. This means that the analysis of media manipulations in the press remains essential, especially for the youth audience.

As maintained by numerous researchers (Albright, 2017; Aldwairi, Alwahedi, 2018; Baake et al., 1999; Berghel, 2017; Bertin et al., 2018; Bharali, Goswami, 2018; Blumeke, 2000; Bowker, 1991; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Buckingham, 2003; 2015; Conroy et al., 2015; De Abreu, 2019; Dentith, 2017; Fletcher, 2018; Flintham et al., 2018; Gahirwal et al., 2018; Goering, Thomas, 2018; Hobbs, 2010; 2017; Jolls, Wilson, 2014; Kara-Murza, 2002; Martens et al., 2018; Marwick, 2018; Marwick, Lewis, 2017; McDougall et al, 2018; Nielsen, Graves, 2017; Pérez Tornero et al., 2018; Potter, 2019; Potter, McDougall, 2017; Ruchansky et al., 2017; Rushkoff, 1994; Sadiku et al., 2018; Salma, 2019; Silverblatt, 2001; Tambini, 2017; Usov, 1989; Vargo, 2018; Waldrop, 2017; Wilson, 2019; Wilson, 2019; Worsnop, 2004; Zhou et al., 2019), the view that "we need to forever banish the association of the word "truth" with "politics"— these two terms just don't play well with each other" (Berghel, 2017: 80) can be supported.

Yet, it should not be forgotten that "fact-checking is predicated on the assumption that people will change their mind when confronted with correct information, which implies a very passive model of the audience: If an audience member reads a fake news story, she believes it; if

she is presented with contradictory facts, she will change her mind. Her own agency and predispositions are entirely absent. ... [but] this ignores a wide variety of social and cultural factors, and is not supported by empirical evidence. In fact, fact-checking may have the opposite effect of making stories "more sticky." ... the more people see fake news headlines, the more likely they are to think they are accurate. This is true even if the story is repeated in order to debunk it" (Marwick, 2018: 508).

In 2018, a team of British scientists conducted an experiment in which the audience was asked to read an article containing fake information. The findings revealed that "of those who did read the article either in full or in part, only 55% believed that the headline accurately matched the content. ... 37 % of respondents had *come across a news story, believed it to be true, then later realized that it was either exaggerated, inaccurate or blatantly false*. Common examples were celebrity news, American news, and again issues related to Brexit and Donald Trump. Here respondents stated that they identified the piece of news in question as fake predominantly by fact-checking against other sources, or using their own reasoning that something either could not be true or seemed implausible. Conversely, 46 % had *come across a news item they immediately identified as fake*, principally based on knowledge of the source..., or being known to exaggerate – 'because it was the *Daily Mail'*, or again through their own reasoning and judgements of plausibility. Our survey results suggest that social media users are not only incidentally consuming news via sites such as *Facebook*, but they are aware of – and encountering – fake news, some of which is taken at face value. Respondents appear to draw on a number of different strategies in reasoning about the validity of news, including prior assumptions about source reputation, determinations of plausibility, headlines and sometimes the full text" (Flintham et al., 2018).

Russian scientists came to similar conclusions: "it has been experimentally proven that a large percentage of people who read news, read only headlines and thus judge the current picture of the world by the totality of information conveyed by headlines" (Pogorelova, 2018).

Unfortunately, we have to admit: "a significant, and not the worst one, part of our society, under the influence of mass culture and the flow of low-standard, and, often, extremely harmful to the human mind, information pouring on it from the pages of newspapers, from TV screens and from the radio, in a progressive mode loses the ability to complex logical thinking and critical, or "perspective", analysis of information. And this is also one of the manifestations of the manipulation of consciousness" (Kara-Murza, Smirnov, 2009).

As it has been proposed by Kara-Murza, "manipulators are trying to turn us into *consumers of ideas*, into an attentive ear and an iris dilated. ... a manipulator, interrupting the dialogue, presents a solution that is beneficial to him as having no alternative — otherwise, thoughts and reasoning begin. ... Such a condition must be dismissed at once. ... One has only to allow oneself to think of different solutions in mind, and the whole structure of manipulation collapses - and selfish intentions immediately become visible" (Kara-Murza, 2002).

Further, based on the structural model developed by us of media educational activity, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing the reliability of media and key questions (What is the source of information? Can you verify the source? What is the main message? What facts are presented to support the main idea? Is there any information missing? What is the purpose of transmitting this message? Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose? From whose point of view is the message presented? Does the message refer to logic or emotion? What effect? What values and priorities are reinforced as a result? (Wilson, 2019), we have analyzed 337 articles in German newspapers over the period 2020-2021. Meanwhile, it was observed that 98.2 % of the texts (331 out of 337 articles) expressed negative opinions about Russia, about its politics and economy. Positive opinions of German journalists were expressed only if the article was devoted to the activities of the Russian opposition.

For example, in December 2020, the *Frankfurter Rundschau* newspaper published an article entitled (German) "Russland: Wie viel Autorität genießt Wladimir Putin noch?" /(Eng.) "Russia: how much authority does Vladimir Putin still enjoy?" (Scholl, 2020), dedicated to the state of health of Russian President V. Putin.

Media text genre: article on current events in the world, news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible receivers of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The source of information in this article is rumors about V. Putin's poor health, received by a German journalist from several unverified sources: "This year, sports fan Vladimir Putin has never taken part in a hockey match. This has fueled rumors that have been circulating in Moscow for several weeks: the 68-year-old president is allegedly seriously ill, so he will announce his resignation in January. ... The liberal television channel Dozhd drew attention to a coughing fit when Putin cleared his throat several times during one of the videoconferences. And one Moscow masseuse, who regularly kneads the parliamentarians, tells her clients that the State Duma is expecting "huge changes". The main source of the rumor is historian Valery Solovey, who boasts of his close ties to the Kremlin. In May, he announced that Putin would have to resign because he was allegedly taking medication with severe side effects" (Scholl, 2020),

Can you verify the source?

Throughout 2020 V. Putin was actively engaged in his professional activities and did not miss any scheduled meetings or events. None of the rumors cited by Scholl have been confirmed.

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

This article primarily addresses human emotions, simple emotional reactions in response to a "sensational" message invented by unverified sources.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main goal of the publication (Scholl, 2020) is to convince German-speaking readers that the Russian president is seriously ill and is about to step down.

Is there any information missing?

The article does not provide any alternative information to the false rumors.

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article is presented from the point of view of V. Putin's opponents.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If the information presented in the article is accepted as true, the political opponents of V. Putin, of whom there are many in modern Germany, will win, and the mass audience incapable of critical analysis of the media text will lose.

Assessment of the level of truthfulness of the media text: the estimated level of truthfulness of the media text is close to zero.

Conclusion: the media text most likely contains utterly false information.

In February 2021, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* newspaper published an article entitled (German) "Neun Worte über Nord Stream 2"/ (Eng.) "Nine words about North Stream 2" (Schuller, 2021), related to the political situation around the 95 % completed gas pipeline running along the bottom of the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany.

Media text genre: an article about current events in the world.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible receivers of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it? Can you verify the source?

The article is centered around the personal opinions and recommendations of journalist K. Schuller (Schuller, 2021), not supported by links to any authoritative sources.

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

This article addresses human emotions and follows the logic of a harsh anti-Russian policy: "The goal of Putin's gas pipeline is to bypass Ukraine as a transit country for gas. When the pipeline is ready, the president will be able to reignite the frozen war against that country without fear of hindering exports to the West. For the eastern NATO countries, the Russian threat would take on a new dimension. ... Germany, being the EU's gravity center, threatens to lose its binding power" (Schuller, 2021).

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main objective of the article "Nine words about North Stream 2" (Schuller, 2021) is to convince German-speaking readers that the construction of the pipeline should be urgently stopped in order to thereby put pressure on Russia and support the Russian opposition: "After the verdict handed down to Navalny in Russia, the chancellor needs to say only one single proposal. So she could set boundaries for Putin, win Biden to herself and unite Europe. … These words could sound like this: "I cannot support the Nord Stream gas pipeline-2". … Thus, having said such a proposal, Merkel would not have had to admit a mistake. Nevertheless, its effect would be enormous. … At the same time, it would be possible to talk with Putin in plain text. If his Baltic project were threatened, even the Russian president could understand that he cannot show aggression against Ukraine for free, carry out a covert military intervention in Libya, and now persecute Navalny, violating international law. Then Putin would have a reason to seek a compromise. For example, he might wonder if the time has come to actually withdraw his irregulars from eastern Ukraine" (Schuller, 2021).

Is there any information missing? The article does not explicitly refer to alternative points of view, although it does mention that German Chancellor A. Merkel considers the Nord Stream 2 project to be purely economic (Schuller, 2021).

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article presents the point of view of opponents of Russian politics.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If the proposals presented in the article are accepted, Russia's political opponents will win, and a mass audience incapable of critical analysis of the media text and comparison of different points of view will lose.

Assessment of the level of truthfulness of the media text: the estimated level of truthfulness of the media text is less than 30% (truthful information here includes the fact that Nord Stream 2 is really being built, that political disputes around it do not subside; the rest of the information is presented by the journalist in an extremely biased manner, usually without any or alternative points of view).

Conclusion: the media text most likely contains the highly ideologized point of view and recommendations of journalist K. Schuller, reflecting the views of Russia's political opponents.

In June 2021, *Die Welt* published an article entitled (German) "Ökonom sieht Russland hinter Amerikas historischem Steuer-Leak"/ (Eng.) "The Economist Sees Russia Behind America's Historical Tax Leak" (Beutelsbacher, 2021), dedicated to the tax scandal of American billionaires.

Media text genre: an article about current events in the world.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible receivers of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The main source of this article is ProPublica, a nonprofit organization based in New York, whose purpose is investigative journalism. S. Beutelsbacher writes: "There was a sensation in the USA. The published figures — if true — are discouraging: Between 2014 and 2018, the richest 25 Americans paid only 3.4 % federal tax, far below the taxes that ordinary workers in the US have to pay to the government" (Beutelsbacher, 2021).

Can you verify the source?

Without access to the tax base and investigation materials, it is not possible to check this information for compliance with reality.

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

This article primarily addresses human emotions of outrage, simple emotional reactions in response to a sensational message.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main objective of this article (Beutelsbacher, 2021) is to convince German-speaking readers that American billionaires are evading taxes, and "in March 2020, attackers — possibly with the support of the Russian government — also gained access to IRS data. Then the investigators said that there were no signs that confidential data had been stolen. Now, following the ProPublica revelations, the US Treasury wants to launch a new investigation" (Beutelsbacher, 2021).

Is there any information missing? The article does not provide any alternative information regarding the above assumptions.

From whose point of view is the message presented?

This article is partially presented from the point of view of opponents of Russian politics.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If the information presented in this article (Beutelsbacher, 2021) is accepted as true, the political opponents of Russia will win, and the mass audience incapable of critical analysis of the media text will lose.

Assessment of the level of truthfulness of the media text: the estimated level of truthfulness of the media text is less than 50 % (the author is verbally making some reservations: "if they (figures) are true", "perhaps".

Conclusion: the media text most likely contains largely false information.

In June 2021, the Frankfurter Allgemeine newspaper published an article entitled (German) "Wir werden mit dieser EM wahrscheinlich völlig ersticken"/ (Eng.) "We will probably completely suffocate with this EM" (Schmidt, 2021), dedicated to the European Football Championship, several games being held in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Media text genre: an article about current international events.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible receivers of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented to support it?

The main source of this article is the published statistical data on the spread of coronavirus in Russia, the opinions of the German journalist F. Schmidt and an anonymous nurse from St. Petersburg (Schmidt, 2021).

Can you verify the source?

Statistics on the spread of coronavirus in Russia are available, they are updated daily on the official Russian portals.

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

This article primarily addresses human emotions regarding fear of the Covid-19 pandemic, simple emotional reactions.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main objective of this article is to convince German-speaking readers that "a year after the end of the strict restrictions, anti-coronavirus measures are being tightened again in Moscow. The number of new infections is on the rise, the lack of confidence in vaccinations is high, and the European Championship could further exacerbate the situation" (Schmidt, 2021).

Is there any information missing?

The article does not provide any alternative information regarding the above assumption that the holding of the European Football Championship will dramatically worsen the epidemiological situation in St. Petersburg and in Russia.

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article is presented partially from the point of view of critics of Russian policy in the field of combating Covid-19.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If the information presented in this article (Schmidt, 2021) is accepted as true, the critics of Russian policy in the fight against Covid-19 will win, and the mass audience incapable of critical analysis of the media text will be affected, though not taking into account the fact that the European Championship was carried out in different countries of the continent, and, of course, there was also a danger of the virus spread.

Assessment of the level of truthfulness of the media text: the estimated level of truthfulness of the media text is not more than 50% (the straight part of the information is that in the summer of 2021, the epidemiological situation in Russia in fact worsened, and in June 2021 in St. Petersburg some championship matches were held during European Football Championship).

Conclusion: the media text most likely contains partially false information (regarding the fact that the holding of the European Football Championship in St. Petersburg will dramatically increase the rate of Covid-19, which, in fact, did not happen).

In June 2021, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* published an article titled (German) "Joe Bidens heilige Verpflichtung"/ (Eng.) "Joe Biden's Sacred Duty" (Gutschker, 2021) on American policy towards Russia.

Media text genre: an article about current international events.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible receivers of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

Statements by US President J. Biden and the NATO leadership.

Can you verify the source?

The statements mentioned above were widely broadcast by various media, it is not difficult to get acquainted with them (in the press, on Internet platforms).

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

This article primarily addresses human emotions, simple emotional reactions. The main message of the article - the military "threat to Euro-Atlantic security" from Russia and Russia's refusal to engage in dialogue with NATO - is presented absolutely unsubstantiated.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main purpose of this article is to convince German-speaking readers that "three years after Donald Trump's outburst of rage, his successor dispelled all doubts in Brussels: America is supporting its NATO partners. They are closing ranks - against Russia, but also in the face of China. … In recent years, this process has only accelerated, as Moscow rejected proposals from the West - including proposals from the alliance - for dialogue and instead intensified its confrontation. This brought the allies together" (Gutschker, 2021).

Is there any information missing? The article does not provide any alternative point of view regarding the political positions of J. Biden and NATO.

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article presents the viewpoint of critics of Russian politics: Russia's "aggressive actions" are classified as a "threat to Euro-Atlantic security". Thus, "Russia poses the greatest threat to the alliance, along with terrorism in all its forms". Why this is so is outlined in more detailed paragraphs than three years ago, covering everything NATO is concerned about — from disinformation campaigns to new short- and medium-range missiles and recent troop deployments near Ukraine's borders. While the proposal for a dialogue with Moscow remains in effect, the communique unequivocally states: "Until Russia demonstrates compliance with international law and its international obligations and responsibilities, there can be no return to business as usual" (Gutschker, 2021).

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If the information presented in this article (Gutschker, 2021) is accepted as true, opponents of Russian politics will win, and a mass audience incapable of critical analysis of the media text will lose, which does not take into account alternative points of view.

Assessment of the level of truthfulness of the media text: the estimated level of truthfulness of the media text is less than 50% (the information correctly reflects the political views of President J. Biden and NATO, but completely unsubstantiated draws a conclusion about Russia threating Euro-Atlantic security.

Conclusion: the media text most likely contains partially false information.

In June 2021, the *Bild* newspaper published an article entitled (German) "Corona macht Putin noch gefährlicher" / (Eng.) "The Coronavirus Makes Putin Even More Dangerous" (Harbusch et al., 2021) on the policy of Russian-German relations.

Media text genre: an article about current events in the world.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible receivers of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

Report of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, report of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution of the German Internal Intelligence Service and the point of view of three German journalists.

Can you verify the source?

Ordinary German-speaking readers are unlikely to have access to the full text of this report, much less to the mechanisms for checking the information presented in the report.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

This article, primarily appeals to human emotions: "Putin's special services and propaganda media are keeping Germany at gunpoint. In an annual report from the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Germany's internal intelligence service warns that the Putin regime is using the coronavirus crisis to spread misinformation and undermine the credibility of the German government "(Harbusch et al., 2021).

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main message of the article is to convince the audience that "in addition to espionage activities, Russia continues to seek to channel political and public opinion in Germany in its favor through the dissemination of propaganda, disinformation, and other attempts to influence" (Harbusch et al., 2021).

Is there any information missing? The article does not provide any alternative point of view.

From whose point of view is the message presented?

This article is presented from the point of view of critics of Russian politics: "In recent weeks, there has been an increase in attacks from a Russian cyber entity on political bodies in Germany. The attacks are aimed, in particular, at the e-mail boxes of political parties and political foundations and are aimed at obtaining data to authorize users and thus gain access to confidential information. ... The goals of all Russian efforts are to discredit the German government, polarize political discourse and undermine trust in government agencies. ... In 2021, Germany is likely to become the center of Russian espionage and influence with the Bundestag elections scheduled for September 26, 2021, elections to the Landtag and city parliaments in six federal lands and municipal elections. ... At the same time, the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic may further persuade the Kremlin to engage in dangerous attacks. The significant political and economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic for Russia itself could further intensify Russian espionage activities, especially with the aim of diverting attention from its own problems in the economy and science" (Harbusch et al., 2021).

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If the information presented in this article (Harbusch et al., 2021) is accepted as accurate, opponents of Russian politics will win, and a mass audience incapable of critical analysis of the media text, which does not take into account alternative points of view, will lose.

Assessment of the level of truthfulness of the media text: the estimated level of truthfulness of the media text is very low, since it does not contain any evidence of Russia's interference in the political life of Germany (through cyber attacks, etc.).

Conclusion: the media text most likely contains largely false information.

In June 2021, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper published an article entitled (German) "Putins Rendezvous mit dem Lieblingsfeind" / (Eng.) "Putin's rendezvous with the favourite enemy" (Bigalke, 2021), dedicated to the talks between US President J. Biden and Russian President V. Putin in Geneva.

Media text genre: an article about current events in the world.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible receivers of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The real fact presented in this article is the meeting and negotiations between US President J. Biden and Russian President V. Putin in Geneva, the rest is the personal opinion of the journalist.

Can you verify the source?

The very fact of the meeting and negotiations between US President J. Biden and Russian President V. Putin in Geneva (summer 2021) is easily verified, the rest of the information presented in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* article is the subjective opinion of the journalist.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

This article, first of all, refers to human emotions, simple emotional reactions: "The world, as the Kremlin presents it to the Russians, is as bipolar as Putin wants it to be. There is Russia and the United States, and all the rest revolve around these poles" (Bigalke, 2021).

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main message of the article is to convince the audience that "the Kremlin is inciting hostility towards the United States - and is using it to fight critics in its own country" (Bigalke, 2021).

Is there any information missing?

The article does not provide any alternative point of view.

From whose point of view is the message presented?

This article is presented from the point of view of opponents of Russian politics: "The United States has long been Russia's favorite enemy, relations with Washington are the pivot around which Putin's foreign policy revolves - and, more and more often, his domestic policy as well. After all, the image of the enemy that the Kremlin cultivates not only motivates a sufficient number of Russians to rally behind their president. It also serves an explanation for all kinds of complaints in the country. Critics and Russian opposition are controlled by foreign forces, i.e. the United States - that is the message of its propaganda" (Bigalke, 2021).

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If the information presented in this article (Bigalke, 2021) is accepted, opponents of Russian politics will win, and a mass audience incapable of critical analysis of the media text will lose, which does not take into account alternative points of view.

Assessment of the level of truthfulness of the media text: the estimated level of truthfulness of the media text is less than 50%.

Conclusion: the media text most likely contains partially false information.

Thus, relying on the developed media educational activity that contributes to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing the reliability of media texts and a series of analytical questions encouraging the identification of media manipulations, we have analyzed a number of articles in the German press devoted to Russian foreign and domestic policy. In total, we analyzed 337 articles in German newspapers for the period 2020-2021. Herewith, it was found that 98.2 % of the texts (331 out of 337 articles) expressed negative opinions about Russia, about its politics and economy, which, certainly, does not contribute to the development of mutual understanding and dialogue between Germany and Russia.

Meanwhile, in many cases, the German press uses the following typical manipulative persuasive techniques: selection — selection of certain tendencies (in this case, only negative ones); distortion of these tendencies; labeling (accusatory, offensive, etc.); appeal to authority — a reference (often incorrect) to authorities in order to justify a particular statement; false accusations; framing; loaded language; name-calling, etc.

Case Studies 4: Media Manipulation in Modern American and British Press

The problems of propaganda, misinformation, media manipulations and fake news have been extensively analyzed in scientific research (Albright, 2017; Aldwairi, Alwahedi, 2018; Azzimonti, Fernandes, 2018; Bakir, McStay, 2018; Balmas, 2012; Bean, 2017; Berghel, 2017; Bertin et al, 2018; Bharali, Goswami, 2018; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Conroy et al., 2015; Dentith, 2017; Derakhshan Wardle, 2017; Farkas, Schou, 2018; Figueira, Oliveira, 2017; Fletcher et al., 2018; Fletcher,Nielsen, 2017; Gahirwal et al., 2018; Goering, Thomas, 2018; Janze, Risius, 2017; Marwick, 2018; Mihailidis, Viotty, 2017; Quandt et al, 2019; Ruchansky et al., 2017; Vargo et al., 2018; Waldrop, 2017 and others).

We agree that "the most important circumstance and characteristic of manipulative information is that by inviting listeners or readers to make their own judgment, the media create only the illusion of independence, objectivity, the possibility of choosing from different points of view and relying on the opinion of the audience. The opinion of the audience, which has a negative response to certain information, does not apply to the entire targeted audience. The mass audience is territorially fragmented and people, consuming information, are, if not alone, then at least in

small groups and have the opportunity to argue only in front of each other. Public expression of your protest against current information is impossible, but it is precisely this information that becomes a permanent instrument of manipulative influence on people who, under the modern information system, are doomed to passivity and existence only as an object of influence" (Grachev, Melnik, 1999).

Moreover, one has to consider that "now, if we take the allegation of something being fake news, or fake media seriously, then – if we assume one side of the debate is correct – then someone is misleading the public. So, is the allegation of "That's just fake news!" just the exposure of a lie? Not quite; the allegation something is fake news is a *rhetorical device*, one designed to cast doubt on what would otherwise be some received story. That is, currently allegations of fake news, or fake media, focus on challenging mainstream media discourses" (Dentith, 2017: 67).

The article in *The New York Times,* under the eloquent heading "Apathy and wariness of Kremlin leave Russians unvaccinated" – is one of the vivid examples of media manipulation.

The following manipulative techniques are used:

"Weak inference", integrating the over simplification of the information. The article's author tries to draw wide political conclusions (see the headline) based on the statement of only one person – "a person of the people" (who might be a fictional character as well): "After Sofia Kravetskaya got vaccinated with Russia's *Sputnik V* vaccine last December, she became a pariah on the Moscow playground where she takes her young daughter. "When I mentioned I volunteered in the trials and I got my first shot, people started running away from me," she said. "They believed that if you were vaccinated, the virus is inside you and you're contagious." For Ms. Kravetskaya, 36, the reaction reflected the prevalent mistrust in the Russian authorities that has metastasized since the pandemic began last year. That skepticism, pollsters and sociologists say, is the main reason only one third of the country's population is fully vaccinated, despite the availability of free inoculations. But even with a record-breaking death toll, the government has imposed few restrictions, and its vaccination campaign has floundered, sociologists say, because of a combination of apathy and mistrust" (Hopkins, 2021).

Thus, some gullible readers of *The New York Times* may get the opinion that in Russia vaccinated people really become outcasts, and the "wrong" political system is to blame for the relatively low percentage of vaccinated population. As if in "democratically correct" countries like the USA or the UK, there are neither adversaries of vaccination, nor a large number of Covid-diagnosed people.

"Labeling" and "appeal to authorities": further in the article it is made clear that the Russian government is hesitant to vigorously fight coronavirus precisely for political reasons: "The government is reluctant to impose restrictions because they do not want to "mess with this majority of people," who oppose them, said Aleksandra Arkhipova, a social anthropologist who researches Covid-related misinformation... She said her research showed that many Russians believed that political, rather than epidemiological, concerns drove policy" (Hopkins, 2021). The author of the article however does not link the scope of the infected population to the political issues in any other countries, the USA or the UK, for example.

The topic of pandemic in the Russian context is touched upon in the article in *The Gardian* newspaper. It emphasizes that in Russia "cafes and restaurants look likely to take a hit from the city's long-delayed response to the coronavirus epidemic. After the government's lacklustre campaign to get Russians to get jabs of *Sputnik* and other domestically produced vaccines, cafe owners have said they feel like they're being "sacrificed" as the government scrambles to contain an "explosion" in new cases" (Roth, 2021).

At a time when restrictions on working hours of cafes and restaurants were imposed in dozens of European countries, the author of an article in *The Gardian*, using manipulative techniques of "selection" and "labeling", is trying to convince the readers that "anti-restaurant measures" are being taken in Russia for political reasons at the same time making an assumption that in the Western countries similar actions of the authorities, apparently, were exclusively democratic.

An article in *The Washington Post*, also devoted to the Covid situation in Russia, is constructed in a similar manipulative vein. Here again, the actual facts are presented first: "it took just a few hours for fraudsters to act after Moscow's mayor announced this month that coronavirus

vaccinations were compulsory for most of the city's service sector employees. Accounts advertising the availability of fake coronavirus vaccination certificates suddenly appeared as social media followers of Russians who identified as working in restaurants or bars" (Khurshudyan, 2021).

Further on, however, the manipulative techniques "card stacking"/"cherry picking" are used when concluding that in Russia "people say they are more fearful of being vaccinated than they are of contracting the coronavirus. That makes buying a fake vaccination certificate an attractive option to try to beat the system" (Khurshudyan, 2021). Thus, the readers of *The Washington Post*, are being made to believe that the Russians are so afraid of being vaccinated with the "wrong" Sputnik V that they are ready to risk to commit a fraud, to deceive the "wrong" government.

Another hot topic is the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. An article in *The Time*s titled "Nord Stream 2: Vladimir Putin accused of 'choking' gas supply to push up price" (Swinford, 2021) is one of the typical examples of media manipulation over the gas theme.

The Times journalist, without reference to actual facts, states that *"*Britain has accused President Putin of "choking off" the supply of gas to Europe to increase energy prices and win approval for a new gas pipeline. Ministers believe that Russia is deliberately restricting gas exports as part of a strategy to force European Union nations into approving Nord Stream 2, a pipeline under the Baltic Sea" (Swinford, 2021). The article contains the following techniques of the readers' manipulation: a *scapegoat:* a technique which is aimed to transfer blame to one person or group of people without investigating the genesis and/or complexity of the issue ("Britain has accused *President Putin...*"), *cherry picking:* the technique is meant to convince the audience by using selected information and not presenting the complete story , *labeling* ("Russia is *deliberately...*"), *appeal to authorities* ("*Ministers* believe that...").

The short but, in our opinion, rather tabloid article "Putin brought 'attractive' translator to distract Trump during G20 meeting" in *Daily Mail* was written by 4 (!?) authors*.* It argues that "Russian President Vladimir Putin brought an 'attractive' translator with him to distract former President Donald Trump at their 2019 meeting – and Trump told Putin he would act tough in front of the cameras and then play nice privately, former White House official Stephanie Grisham reveals in her forthcoming tell-all. 'OK, I'm going to act a little tougher with you for a few minutes. But it's for the cameras, and after they leave, we'll talk. You understand,' Trump had told Putin when they met in June 2019 in Japan at the G20, Grisham recounted" (Schwab et al., 2021).

This article was published during the presidency of J. Biden – at the end of September 2021, when the anti-Tramp theme seems to be no longer relevant. But, as we can see, with the help of manipulative techniques of *selection, labeling, testimonial*, the journalists from the *Daily Mail* tried to convince their readers that the Russian president had tremendous influence on his American counterpart, and Trump did not have the strength to resist either Putin or his charming interpreter.

The article in *The Washington Post* under the headline "Putin's Russia isn't a model for anyone" demonstrates the open support of Russian lawful government's opponents: "Russians in huge numbers took to the streets again on Wednesday to protest their government's treatment of Alexei Navalny, a man they fear may soon die because he dared to criticize President Vladimir Putin. While the mass demonstrations across Russia's 11 time zones inspire respect, the country itself, under its entrenched regime, has achieved precisely the opposite. Putin has made no secret of his goal of restoring Russia's former glory. Instead, he's turning it into a global pariah. ... Today, Putin's Russia stands for rampant corruption, stark income inequality, aggression toward its neighbors and state-sponsored assassinations of those who dare to criticize the system. Its economy is weak, its infrastructure atrophied. (One-fifth of Russians still don't have indoor plumbing). Xi Jinping's China is also a harsh autocracy, but it has visibly boosted the wealth of most of its citizens and dazzled onlookers with its rapid development. By contrast, Russia makes headlines for its kleptocracy, repression and mafia-style tactics. ... But most people certainly don't see his regime as an example of what they want for their own countries or themselves. Modern-day Russia may still inspire fear, but it generates very little in the way of respect" (Ghitis, 2021).

As we can see from this extract, real facts (corruption, a significant lag of the Russian economy from the economies of some Western European countries) are intertwined in the text in order to exaggerate demonstrations of Navalny's relatively few supporters in Russia and to contrast "undemocratic" capitalist Russia for a number of reasons (in the first place - an economic nature)

to a more acceptable to the West, communist China. Thus, the article exhibits the following basic techniques of manipulative media influence: *selection, labeling, plain folks.*

Paradoxically, the Western ideologists, that had actively fought against communism and communist ideology in the past, are now seriously concerned about the fate of the Russian communists. A striking example is the article in *The Christian Science Monitor,* which sounds quite sympathetically towards the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF): "while some rank-and-file members want them to push harder if they ever want to make political headway, their nascent protesting has resulted in a decisive wave of official repression. The backlash is unprecedented in post-Soviet experience and threatens to upend two decades of Putin-era political stability. ... The KPRF, with 150,000 members including 40,000 youths, is Russia's second-largest party and the only major one with independent historical roots in Russia, while most others have been artificially created by the Kremlin. The KPRF won 19 % of the votes in the September election, up about 5 % from its previous tally in 2016. By contrast UR, which had been running at around 30 % in national preelection polling, won around 49 %, about 5 % below its previous total" (Weir, 2021).

Thus, by using the propaganda technique *"least of evils"*, the readers of *The Christian Science Monitor* are being indoctrinated that it would be better for the Communists to win the elections again than the party United Russia, which "democratic West" is intolerant to.

The article in *Foreign Policy* under the heading "Scientists Want Out of Russia" starts by the statement about corruption in Russia: "Many projects conducted seemingly for the good of the people in Russia are giant corruption schemes. ... Corruption in public services in Russia takes many forms, but what all experts can agree on is that it's extremely high" (Antonova, 2021). However, further in the article, using the manipulative technique of *selection,* stereotyping/labeling ("draconian legislation"), weak inference ("...anyone...is in real danger..."), it is concluded that the main reason for the emigration of Russian scientists to the West is not that they want to earn more, but due to the fear of reprisals: "The pervasive paranoia of the Russian state means that anyone in sensitive sectors is in real danger of being accused of espionage – even if it's just by an ambitious underling who wants their job. ... Repressions, previously more random, have taken on distinct and troubling patterns – including the adoption of more and more draconian legislation" (Antonova, 2021).

To conclude, in the analysis of the latest articles in the American and British press, the filtering of the text was used (reasoned selection of facts versus opinions in media texts, clearing information from "glittering" and "labeling" by comparing with actual facts, etc.; clearing out the halo of "typical", "common people", "authority", a critical analysis of the goals, interests of the media agency, that is, the source of information.

In particular, abundant use of the following basic techniques of manipulative influence of media on the audience was detected: stereotyping, labeling, plain folks, least of evils, scapegoat, distortion of data, framing, selection, weak inference, etc.

Although much has been written about the harmful effects of media manipulation, sadly, there are still a lot of media consumers who are not fully aware of its deceptive and unfair means or techniques. As a journalist, author, and fake news expert Craig Silverman reminds us, "If you trust that every news article in your news feed represent an unbiased collection of what you most need to see, you will end up misinformed. This reality is important for every person to recognize, but it's essential for journalists. We are being targeted by coordinated and well-funded campaigns to capture our attention, trick us into amplifying messages, and bend us to the will of states and other powerful forces" (Silverman, 2020).

Case Studies 5: Media Manipulation in the Modern French and Swiss Press

One should agree that "around the world, disinformation is spreading and becoming a more complex phenomenon based on emerging techniques of deception. Disinformation undermines human rights and many elements of good quality democracy; but counter-disinformation measures can also have a prejudicial impact on human rights and democracy. COVID-19 compounds both these dynamics and has unleashed more intense waves of disinformation, allied to human rights and democracy setbacks. Effective responses to disinformation are needed at multiple levels,

including formal laws and regulations, corporate measures and civil society action" (Colomina et al., 2021).

In the study encompassing the year 2020, S. Bradshaw, H. Bailey and P.N. Howard identify three key trends of disinformation activity:

"1. Cyber troop activity continues to increase around the world. This year, we found evidence of 81 countries using social media to spread computational propaganda and disinformation about politics. This has increased from last years' report, in which we identified 70 countries with cyber troop activity.

2. Over the last year, social media firms have taken important steps to combat the misuse of their platforms by cyber troops. Public announcements by Facebook and Twitter between January 2019 and November 2020 reveal that more than 317,000 accounts and pages have been removed by the platforms. Nonetheless, almost US $10 million has still been spent on political advertisements by cyber troops operating around the world.

3. Private firms increasingly provide manipulation campaigns. In our 2020 report, we found firms operating in forty-eight countries, deploying computational propaganda on behalf of a political actor. Since 2018 there have been more than 65 firms offering computational propaganda as a service. In total, we have found almost US $60 million was spent on hiring these firms since 2009" (Bradshow et al., 2021).

These disturbing trends emphasize the relevance of teaching and learning how to identify, counter media misinformation, and develop effective technologies for their analysis, especially for educational institutions.

Having applied the model of anti-manipulation media educational activity developed by us (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 323-332), we rely on the following challenging questions: What is the source of information? Can you verify the source? What is the main message? What facts are presented to support the main idea? Is there any information missing? What is the purpose of this media text? Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose? Whose point of view does the media text present? Does it appeal to logic or emotion? With what effect? Which values and priorities are conveyed as a result? (Wilson, 2019).

Based on this model and problematic issues, we analyzed 70 articles on "Russian topic" in French-speaking French and Swiss newspapers for the period 2018-2021. The analysis shows that only few (5) of them contained objective information, not accompanied by manipulative techniques. Thus, most of the articles in the Francophone press contained, to one degree or another, bias and propaganda clichés. It is only in the case of the coverage of the Russian political opposition's activities that the article has a positive key.

For example, consider an article titled "Russia: *Sputnik V*, Launched Like a Rocket Vaccine, Causes Distrust", published in the newspaper *Libération* (Jacques, 2021).

Media text genre: article on current events (in Russia), news text.

Analysis of the media text for credibility (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible mastermind of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

As sources of information, the article uses the opinions of an anonymous Russian nurse, a doctor and a representative of the Alliance of Doctors trade union close to the Russian opposition: "in fact, the Sputnik V vaccine, intended for certain age groups and the most vulnerable professions, is actually available for everyone. It comes in five-dose vials", – explains a nurse at a Moscow clinic, "and as soon as the bottle is opened, it should be used as soon as possible or thrown away". The young nurse went so far as to suggest that I, a non-priority foreigner, be vaccinated to prevent the loss of already opened doses, which indicates that those who wish are not fighting for places. ... The doses are not enough in relation to the population of the country, and too many in relation to the number of applicants, – said a representative of the Alliance of Doctors trade union close to the Russian opposition. – There are very few people who want to be vaccinated. Sometimes you open a dose of vaccine, but only one or two people come in and the rest of the solution is thrown away unused. ... "Last week", says Nikolai, a doctor from a provincial town, "they came to us and asked who wants to be vaccinated. Naturally, there were not many people willing, only two or three people. I don't want that myself" (Jacques, 2021).

Can you verify the source?

It is impossible to verify the sources of information indicated in the *Libération* article, as they are presented in the text anonymously.

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

This article is primarily addressed to the emotional sphere of readers, arguing that in addition to this vaccine, Russian society in general is very apprehensive about its national medication, and especially of the pharmaceutical industry. When there is a choice between imported pills, and their Russian counterparts, the population prefers foreign ones. This is even being used as a marketing argument by many private medical offices: the same will undoubtedly be the case when Western vaccines currently unavailable, will become extremely expensive in private clinics when allowed (Jacques, 2021).

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main objective of the article is to discredit Russian medicine in general and the *Sputnik V* vaccine, in particular, since, according to the French journalist, even among Russian doctors who are most susceptible to coronavirus infection and have priority for obtaining a vaccine, there is widespread mistrust. It makes the reader suspect that there is a reason behind the unwillingness to get vaccinated of people living in the country that is proud of the fact that it was the first one in the world to certify its national vaccine.

This was facilitated by the lack of quarantine and strict sanitary measures, as well as the underestimated mortality statistics until recently, which do not create a sense of emergency among the population. But, above all, despite all the triumph that accompanied the announcement of *Sputnik V*, there is great mistrust of this vaccine. ... The original sin of the *Sputnik V* vaccine continues to haunt it: after the euphoria of its official recognition this summer, it quickly became clear that it was made prematurely, and the third phase of clinical trials has not even begun (Jacques, 2021).

Is there any information missing?

The article only marginally mentions that Sputnik V turned out to be quite effective for vaccinated Russians. And there is no information at all about the opponents of vaccination in France and other Western European countries, although in fact, there are quite a few of them (see, for example, a publication on this topic by the France-Presse news agency (France-Presse, 2021).

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article clearly represents the opinion of the opponents of the Russian vaccine and lobbies the interests of manufacturers of Western antiviral vaccines.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If readers take the stand of the article's author, the manufacturers of Western antiviral vaccines will benefit, as indirectly the article supports the political decision not to certify the Russian vaccine in Europe.

Assessment of the media text's credibility: the facts are carefully mixed with biased selection, relying on the "authority" of anonymous experts and "plain folks" technique.

Conclusion: the media text contains a mixture of factual information and manipulation techniques.

Similar manipulative techniques can be found in the article "Covid-19: the controversial fate of the Russian *Sputnik V* vaccine" published in the newspaper *Le Monde* (Mandraud, Ayache, 2021).

Media text genre: article on current events (in Russia), news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible masterminds of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented to support it?

The main source of information is the opinion of two journalists of the newspaper *Le Monde*, who claim that the Russian vaccine against SARS-CoV-2, which was touted by the head of the Kremlin as the best in the world, has to fight for recognition. The Sputnik V vaccine - a name that refers to the first Soviet satellite launched into space and the letter V for a symbol of victory - has so far been adopted by only a handful of developing countries attracted by its cost - less than $ 10 (about euro 8.30) per dose; defending requires two doses, as is the case with its Western competitors, while maintaining close ties with the Kremlin. ... The *Sputnik V* vaccine, developed by

the National Research Center for Epidemiology and Microbiology ... under real conditions suffers from the speed of its development. Its approval by the Russian authorities even before the scientific data was published and after limited testing undermined its credibility. Everything had to be done quickly, since Vladimir Putin first of all saw in this a powerful geopolitical tool for competing with the West. As a result, the spread of the Sputnik V vaccine primarily follows the influence curve of the Kremlin networks (Mandraud, Ayache, 2021).

Can you verify the source?

The article provides a number of real facts that are easy to verify (V. Putin's support for the Russian vaccine, its cost, the lack of recognition of *Sputnik V* by the leading Western countries).

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

The article mostly refers to the emotions of the audience, although it contains a number of well-known facts.

What is the message of a media text?

The political, ideological standpoint of the authors of the article is to discredit the actions of the Russian authorities (accusations of haste in the development of a vaccine, in the use of the vaccine as a geopolitical instrument of influence on the "third world countries", etc.). This stance undoubtedly meets the political and economic interests of the governments of leading Western countries, the interests of Western manufacturers of antiviral vaccines.

Is there any information missing?

The article does not say anything about the shortcomings of Western vaccines, nor about their testing period, as well as about the certain groups of people protests (including France) against vaccination, although there are many of them (Euronews, 2021; France-Presse, 2021; VOA news, 2021 and many other authoritative media sources).

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article clearly represents the opinion of opponents of the Russian anti-virus vaccine and lobbies the interests of manufacturers of Western antiviral vaccines.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

Obviously, if readers support the position of the authors of the article, the manufacturers of Western antiviral vaccines will benefit. In addition, the article will add to the flow of excuses not to certify the Russian vaccine in the West.

Assessment of the level of reliability of the media text: the facts are intertwined with biased ones, framing, plain folks and scapegoat techniques are used.

Conclusion: media text contains a mixture of factual information and manipulation techniques.

An article in *Libération* with the eloquent title "Russia: the authorities are to blame for the Covid outbreak" (Markovic, 2021) is also devoted to the topic of a pandemic and vaccination.

Media text genre: article on current events (in Russia), news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible masterminds of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The main source of information is the biased opinion of a journalist from the *Libération* newspaper, who persuades the readers that facing the rapidly growing numbers of infection and deaths from Covid-19, the Russian authorities have announced a number of measures. But this is too little and too late for a country with a very low level of vaccination ... "Measures announced in a dispersed manner over several days generally produce the effect of half measures ... This method is symptomatic of the manner in which the Russian government manages a pandemic: minimal and without a coherent strategy... A strategy like this could make sense if it were accompanied by mass vaccinations, but the people in the homeland of Sputnik V, proud to be the first in the world to officially register a vaccine against coronavirus, continue to avoid vaccinations. Only 35% of the population received at least one dose of vaccine ... The responsibility is on the Russian propagandists. For 20 years they have been spreading conspiracy messages, discrediting any form of public involvement in political life, thereby creating conditions for the current vaccination fiasco. Discrediting Western vaccines was only reflected on the image of Russian vaccines. Explaining the failures of *Sputnik V*, which has not yet been approved by WHO or the European Union, by a

conspiracy of pharmaceutical companies, certainly Western and therefore Russophobic, could only reinforce the idea that vaccines are not so much a tool for saving lives as a geopolitical tool against which better to stay aloof. With enthusiasm broadcasting conspiracy theories about the coronavirus created by the American armed forces, one can only open the door for strengthening conspiracy theory to such an extent that a quarter of Russians today believe that the statistics of deaths from Covid are untrue, while they are not underestimated, but overestimated"(Markovic, 2021)

Can you verify the source?

A number of facts presented in the article are true (the relatively low degree of vaccination of the Russian population at the time of publication of the article in the second half of October 2021; non-recognition of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine by the WHO or the European Union; inconsistency of some measures) and are easily verified by official data. However, these real facts are manipulatively mixed in the article with political attacks against the course of the Russian government, while completely ignoring Western sources claiming the artificial origin of Covid-19, created with American money in a biological laboratory in Wuhan (see: Kessler, 2021; Lerner, Hvistendahl, 2021 and many others), etc.

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

The article is primarily addressed to the emotional sphere of the audience, with the expectation that it lacks critical thinking and the skills of comparative analysis of facts and trends.

What is the media text aimed at?

The political, ideological pose of the author of the article is to discredit the actions of the Russian authorities (standard accusations of haste in the development of a vaccine, in the use of a vaccine as a geopolitical instrument of influence, in the absence of an effective plan for antiviral actions). This position undoubtedly meets the political and economic interests of the governments of leading Western countries, the interests of Western manufacturers of antiviral vaccines.

Is there any information missing?

This article does not say a word about the similar difficulties that the leading Western countries have experienced and are still facing when implementing anti-Covid measures, and there is no information about the statistics of Covid in the USA, Great Britain, France and Germany and other countries.

Nevertheless, according to BBC data as of the end of October 2021 (BBC News, 2021):

- in the United States, the total number of infected with Covid-19 reached 45.7 million, of which 0.7 million died, that is, the mortality rate was 226.1 per 100 thousand inhabitants;

- in the UK, the total number of infected with Covid-19 reached 9.1 million, of which 0.14 million died, that is, the death rate was 210.4 per 100 thousand inhabitants;

- in Russia, the total number of infected with Covid-19 reached 8.4 million, of which 0.2 million died, that is, the mortality rate was 162.2 per 100 thousand inhabitants;

- in France, the total number of infected Covid-19 reached 7.2 million, of which 0.12 million died, that is, the death rate was 175.4 per 100 thousand inhabitants;

- in Italy, the total number of infected Covid-19 reached 4.8 million, of which 0.13 million died, that is, the death rate was 219.1 per 100 thousand inhabitants;

- in Germany, the total number of infected with Covid-19 reached 4.6 million, of which 0.09 million died, that is, the death rate was 115.2 per 100 thousand inhabitants.

Thus, despite the high incidence of Covid-19 in Russia, in terms of mortality per 100 thousand inhabitants, as of the end of October 2021 the United States and Great Britain, France and Italy were ahead of Russia.

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article clearly represents the views of opponents of Russian politics and the Russian antioxidant vaccine and lobbies for the interests of Western anti-Russian politicians.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

Obviously, if readers support the position of the authors of the article, then anti-Russian Western politicians and manufacturers of Western antiviral vaccines will benefit.

Assessment of the level of frankness of the media text: biased selection, and anti-Russian propaganda are part of the submerged message of the media text.

Conclusion: the media text contains a mixture of real information and manipulation techniques.

An article in the French newspaper *Le Figaro* titled "Moscow will never concede Crimea but fears sanctions" (Barluet, 2021) is devoted to an acute political problem, due to which, since 2014, Western countries have imposed a number of sanctions on Russia.

Media text genre: article on current events in the world and in Russia, news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible commissioner of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The journalist of the *Le Figaro* newspaper mentions a number of experts who express different points of view on the legal status of Crimea. For example, "the most serious consequence of the Crimean Platform will be putting the Crimean issue back on to the international agenda, says political analyst Alexander Bedritsky. Although this topic is not very relevant, its resumption in the news could have the effect of consolidating and extending the sanctions policy, which was decided after the events of 2014. "From the point of view of the stated goals of the platform, such as the de-occupation of Crimea, this event is absolutely fruitless," another expert confirms, associate professor of the Department of Religious Studies of the Taurida Academy of the Crimean Federal University, political scientist Nikolai Kuzmin. "But various countries can use the "Crimean Platform" and participate in it as a subject of political bargaining with Russia", the expert adds (Barluet, 2021).

Can you verify the source?

Due to the fact that the article mentions the specific names of the experts (and their positions, places of work), it is possible to contact them in case one would want to, so that they could confirm the correctness of the citation of their opinions in *Le Figaro*. The author of the article draws the conclusion that although "Russia will never cede Crimea and will hold on to this position like cement for the foundation. It even serves as the basis for consensus in society" (Barluet, 2021), Russian still fears new Western sanctions. The article does not provide any real arguments in favor of such concerns.

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

The article appeals to logic rather than emotion.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main objective of the article is to convince the audience that "international mobilization around Crimea worries Moscow, since this topic is at the heart of the national narrative promoted by Vladimir Putin. A narrative praising a great country that has raised its head and maintains its international status despite the hardships embodied in the image of the West" (Barluet, 2021), and Russia ultimately fears Western sanctions.

Is there any information missing?

This article in *Le Figaro* is a vivid example of maintaining the facade of balanced information, when the views of Russian officials, pro-Russian experts, and not just the opposition are brought to the readers of the newspaper. However, the article is missing the key information provided already in its title - any factual evidence of the Russian government fearing new Western sanctions related to Crimea.

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article was written not from the point of view of anti-Russian "political hawks", but rather reflects the point of view of more moderate Western politicians who do not sympathize with Russia, but also do not reject the possibility of having a dialogue with it.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

It can be assumed that as a result of the article's impact, political and social actors that neither have sympathy for Russia, nor belong to its aggressive opponents, will benefit.

Assessment of the level of frankness of the media text: the estimated level of reliability of the media text is quite high, but still it contains some manipulative methods of selection and unsubstantiated conclusions.

Conclusion: the media text contains a significant part of reliable information and well-grounded expert opinions, but at the same time contains elements of media manipulation.

The Crimean topic is also touched upon in the article "From Crimea with Love: A Trip to Vladimir Putin's Landmark Land", published in the newspaper *Le Monde* (Vitkine, 2021).

Media text genre: article on current events (in Russia), news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible commissioners of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The French journalist in his article cites the conflicting opinions of several people, including those who support the reunification of Crimea with Russia: "Having driven over the bridge, we find ourselves in Kerch. From the point of view of Ukraine and international law, we have just illegally entered the territory of Ukraine. But, according to the director of city museums, Lyudmila Umrikhina, we are entering "the oldest city in Russia". ... Lyudmila Umrikhina reminds us with ardor and repeats, like a mantra, that "Crimea has always been Russian". As if in support of her words, on the outskirts of the city, there is a military base in plain sight, and air defense systems ... Before our departure, Anna Kolin Lebedeva, a French expert on the post-Soviet space, warned us: "Crimea became Russian primarily due to its principles of operation, its inclusion in political schemes and distribution channels of money. As in other regions, the people in charge are given complete freedom of action to enrich themselves, and in return they guarantee control over the region". ... In the opinion of 49-year-old Alexander Gorny, "a dream" is the confidence to participate in a fabulous collective adventure. On the day Crimeans voted to reunite with Russia in a hasty referendum in March 2014 following armed intervention, the Moscow businessman drank two bottles of cognac. To celebrate the "rectification of historical injustice" that arose from the transfer of Crimea to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1954" (Vitkine, 2021).

Are the journalist's sources reliable?

If the interlocutor of the journalist has indicated not only the surname, but also his/her position, verification of the source's opinions is possible.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

Quotes of the interviewed people are emotionally colored, overall, the article in the newspaper *Le Monde* has a dominant emotional connotation.

What is the media text aimed at?

The main objective of the article is to convince the audience that although "it has been seven years since the fate of Crimea turned the other way, which led to a shift in relations between Moscow and the West. "Annexed" for some, "reunited" with the motherland for others, the peninsula that belonged to Ukraine joined Russia in March 2014. The positions remained motionless, but the reality of this territory with grandiose landscapes is inexorably changing, and so does the life of Crimeans" (Vitkine, 2021), but changes are moving towards supporting the Russian population and infringing on the rights of the Crimean Tatar minority (Vitkine, 2021),

Is there any information missing?

The article lacks any facts of infringement of the rights of the Crimean Tatars.

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article reflects the point of view of Western politicians who do not sympathize with Russia, but do not resort to outright confrontation.

Who will benefit if readers accept this message? Who will lose?

It can be assumed that as a result of the article's impact, political and social actors that neither have sympathy for Russia, nor belong to its aggressive opponents, will benefit.

Assessment of the level of trustworthiness of the media text: the article gives readers an opinion that Crimea remains a controversial issue, the author cites viewpoints of several parties.

Conclusion: the media text contains a number of real facts, interspersed with unsupported allegation that the rights of the Tatar population are being infringed on in Crimea.

An article published in *Le Temps* newspaper titled "American-style murder in a Russian school" is dedicated to the tragic fact of a mass shooting committed by an 18-year-old student at the Polytechnic College in Kerch (Grynszpan, 2018).

Media text genre: article on current events in the world (in Russia), news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible commissioners of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The source of information for the journalist from *Le Temps* was the real facts, widely covered by the Russian media.

Can you verify the source?

The facts can be verified through numerous television reports and other media reports from major news agencies.

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

The article is largely addressed to the emotions of the reader.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main task of the text is: 1) to convince readers that Russia is "adopting" the worst American experience, where for many decades the so-called "school shooters" have killed dozens of innocent people; 2) remind once again that "the Crimean peninsula was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014" (Grynszpan, 2018). Noteworthy, in the title of the article, the author uses the adjective "Russian".

Is there any information missing?

The article does not provide any grounding for the allegation of the "annexation" of Crimea by Russia.

Whose point of view does the article give?

This article reflects the point of view of Western politicians opposed to Russia.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

It can be assumed that as a result of the impact on the audience of this article, forces that are far from sympathy for Russia will benefit.

Assessment of the level of trustworthiness of the media text: the article is trustworthy as far as the tragic event coverage, however there is bias by word choice and omission of facts in the reference to the 2014 Crimea history.

Conclusion: the article contains a description of the real fact that happened in Kerch, but the reference to this specific location (Crimea) is then used by the journalist for political purposes of anti-Russian propaganda.

An article published in *Le Temps* entitled "Vladimir Putin's Red Line"(Grynszpan, 2021) is a commentary on the speech of the President of Russia, which he delivered in April 2021.

Media text genre: article on current events in the world (in Russia), news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible masterminds of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The source of information is V. Putin's speech: "The President's Message to the Federal Assembly" on April 21, 2021 (Putin, 2021), the text of which was published in the Russian press.

Can you verify the source?

The source of information can be checked on the official website kremlin.ru (Putin, 2021).

Does the message refer to logic or emotion?

Le Temps's comments on the President's speech are largely emotional.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

One of the objectives of the *Le Temps* article is to minimize the significance of the Russian President's speech: "During his annual address to the Russian political elite, Vladimir Putin took a revengeful pose. However, in the context of tighter than ever relations with Ukraine and the West, he did not announce any innovative foreign policy decisions" (Grynszpan, 2021). But the main objective of the article is to emphasize the aggressiveness of Russian political intentions with a quote, using the following phrases of V. Putin: "But I hope that no one will think about crossing the "red line" with regard to Russia. We ourselves will determine in each specific case where it will be drawn... Russia's response will be asymmetrical, swift and tough" (Putin, 2021). Grynszpan comments that "here the head of state recalled his methods. Asymmetry implies unpredictability; speed is contrasted with the slowness of democracies where decisions are negotiable; finally, rigidity is the characteristic with which he intends to act. Although he did not specify where the red line is, the most obvious and relevant of them is certainly the hypothetical accession of Ukraine to NATO" (Grynszpan, 2021). Remarkably, the article's author omits the following phrase in Russian President's speech (which should be right there where ellipsis is, before the words "Russia's

response..."): "We really want to maintain good relations with all those engaged in international communication, including, by the way, those with whom we have not been getting along lately, to put it mildly. We really do not want to burn bridges" (Putin, 2021).

The other points of V. Putin's speech in an article published in *Le Temps* are merely mentioned, and are coloured with irony: "Nine-tenths of the president's speech were devoted to domestic issues ... Vladimir Putin described a perfectly governed country where the state will pay a one-time additional allowance to large or single-parent families" (Grynszpan, 2021).

Is there any information missing?

The article contains no information about NATO's actual actions against Russia and about many other political aspects related to the topic of NATO, Ukraine and Russia.

Whose point of view does the message present?

This article clearly reflects the point of view of Western politicians negatively biased against Russia.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

It can be assumed that this article might reinforce anti-Russian political moods.

Assessment of the level of trustworthiness of the media text: the article does not strive to be objective, often the phrases of actual text of the Russian President's speech are used out of context.

Conclusion: the article contains biased and manipulative comments on the President's Address to the Federal Assembly.

The article "Russia: Can the Regime Survive Without Putin?", published in the newspaper *Le Figaro*, is an interview of political expert Hadrien Desuin with a journalist Victor Rouart.

Media text genre: interview about the political situation in Russia.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible masterminds of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? Are there any supporting evidence?

The only source of information in the article is the political expert Hadrien Desuin, his opinions are left by the journalist practically without comment.

Can you verify the source?

There is probably an opportunity to address Hadrien Desuin himself to confirm his opinion given in this interview.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

To a large extent, the text in *Le Figaro* is directed to the emotions of the audience.

What is the purpose of a media text?

The main objective of the article is to convince readers of *Le Figaro* that "the Russian people do support their president's policy, but less and less" (Desuin, 2021).

Is there any information missing?

Through stern selection, this interview mainly selected information negatively biased against Russian politics: "Since European countries have more or less aligned their position with that of the United States, the latter will have to follow Joe Biden in his crusade for the democratization of Russia. ... The United States are urging Ukraine to resume the reconquest of Donbass and, to a certain extent, to raise the issue of Crimea again. The US military will not engage in intense frontline conflict against the Russian military. Given Russia's nuclear deterrent forces, the consequences would be too risky. Thus, the Ukrainian game of the U.S. is an indirect strategy that involves logistical and financial support" (Desuin, 2021).

Whose point of view does the message feature?

This interview reflects the point of view of anti-Russian political forces, which, however, admit that in Russia "a palace coup remains unlikely, and the return of Navalny and his videos ... was nothing more than a storm in a teacup" (Desuin, 2021).

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

It can be assumed that as a result of the impact on the audience of this article, anti-Russian political circles will benefit.

Assessment of the level of trustworthiness of the media text: the article contains an opinion of a political commentator, so it is by definition cannot be fully objective.

Conclusion: the media text contains clearly visible manipulative features: selection, ellipsis, "plain folks".

Based on the theoretical model of the anti-manipulation media literacy activities that we have developed (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 323-332), we have analyzed 70 articles on Russian topics in French and Swiss newspapers over the period 2018-2021 with the help of guiding questions. The findings show that only few of them contain objective information, not accompanied by manipulative techniques. Thus, most of articles in the French-language press contain to various degree signs of manipulation and propaganda clichés. It is only in the case of the coverage of the Russian political opposition's activities that the article has a positive key. In particular, the most common manipulative techniques used by French-speaking journalists in their articles on the Russian topic are: half-truth/leaving out some information, plain folks, appeal to authority, selection/framing, bias by word choice, loaded language aimed at emotional impact rather than relying on the facts' logic, bias through selection and omission. In general, the articles under study are aimed to support a particular perspective on Russia and its policy, and to reinforce the EU political actors' attitude towards the Russian Federation in masses. The survey carried out by Ifop (French social polls institute) in December 2018 provides the following information: "An overwhelming majority of French people (81 %) consider the situation of public freedoms in Russia unsatisfactory" (Dabi, Dubrulle, 2018), an opinion, which the vast majority of the French people could only gain through media coverage.

Case Studies 6: Russian Topic on *Euronews* and Media Manipulations

Positioning itself as an independent and objective media agency, *Euronews* defines its main objectives as follows: "We believe All Views matter": "At *Euronews*, our mission is to provide unfiltered, unbiased, fact-based journalism that empowers rather than unsettles. Unapologetically impartial, we believe all views matter, and we actively resist the temptation to bait clicks or views through bias, outrage, or sensationalism. By staying true to facts but giving voice to many opinions, we provide our audiences with the resources they need to make up their own mind — or perhaps even change it. By focusing on facts, ideas, and solutions, our journalists cultivate clarity, empathy, and integrity" (Euronews, n.d.). Is this so in fact? In the present article, we attempt to analyze *Euronews* media texts linked to Russia in order to understand how the declared *Euronews* mission is supported by facts.

The problems of propaganda, misinformation, media manipulations and fake news have been extensively analyzed in scientific research (Azzimonti, Fernandes, 2021; Balmas, 2012; Bean, 2017; Berghel, 2017; Bertin et al, 2018; Bharali, Goswami, 2018; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Bradshow et al., 2021; Colomina et al., 2021; Conroy et al., 2015; Dentith, 2017; Derakhshan Wardle, 2017; Farkas, Schou, 2018; Figueira, Oliveira, 2017; Goering, Thomas, 2018; Howard et al., 2021; Janze, Risius, 2017; Marwick, 2018; Mihailidis, Viotty, 2017; Quandt et al, 2019; Ruchansky et al., 2017; Vargo et al., 2018 and others).

For example, P.N. Howard, L.-M. Neudert and N. Prakash point out that "the rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation (mis/disinformation) online has emerged as a pressing public issue of the 21st century that affects all those accessing online networks, as well as those offline. ... Digital mis/disinformation can proliferate through people, bots and troll factories – organized groups that wage coordinated mis/disinformation campaigns – for a range of reasons: to intentionally deceive and harm, to gain political influence, for financial gain, or unwittingly to share information or garner approval and popularity. Algorithms drive personalized news feeds and curate search results, content and recommendations based on individual profiles that have been created by tracking user behaviour. By sometimes promoting misleading, sensationalist and conspiratorial content over factual information, algorithms are a key part of the mis/disinformation flow" (Howard et al., 2021: 4).

We agree that "the news stories distributed are designed to inuence or manipulate users' opinions on a certain topic towards certain objectives. While the concept of propaganda is not new, social media has made the spreading of ideas faster and more scalable, making it potentially easier for propaganda material to reach a wider set of people. Relative to more traditional ways of spreading propaganda, fake news are extremely difficult to detect posing a challenge for social

media users, moderators, and governmental agencies trying control their dissemination" (Azzimonti, Fernandes, 2021).

The teaching manual published by the team of researchers in 2021 justly emphasizes that "to be an independent and informed thinker in the digital world of the 21st century is a real challenge and, in reality, few people are prepared effectively to navigate the online environment. This deficit in Digital Media Literacy across the world has been identified as a critical factor explaining widespread belief in online false information, be it misinformation or disinformation, which has led to changes in education policy across Europe and the world, changes in the governance of personal data and the rethinking of the design of technology platforms. This widespread belief in false information circulating online is a critical challenge for today's societies. Indeed, this has become even more apparent in the last year during the pandemic. "The time is now," tweeted the European Commission: "There has never been a more urgent need for an Internet free of false or misleading information than during the coronavirus pandemic." Media Literacy is crucial to being safe, positive and respectful online" (Teaching..., 2021: 8).

In this regard, we believe it is important to apply the critical analysis to the media texts of major information agencies, such as, for example, *Euronews.*

In practical application of the model of anti-manipulation media education that we had developed (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 323-332), key challenging questions were used to uncover the goals and techniques of the authors of media texts (Wilson, 2019). Based on this model and the questions, we analyzed 752 materials related to Russia on the *Euronews* website published in the Russian language.

Unlike many Western newspapers, where many materials on the Russian topic contain signs of media manipulation, *Euronews* is significantly more balanced: about a third of the materials of this agency analyzed, to some extent related to Russia, have positive connotation, another third is predominantly neutral, but about one third exhibits negative connotation with the use of manipulation techniques.

For example, such materials of *Euronews* entitled "Recognition of the Russian *Sputnik V* vaccine: the result is obvious" (Dovil, 2021), "The success of Sputnik V in San Marino" (Sheludkova, 2021), "Yuri Gagarin - forever the first one" (Alexandrova, 2021), "The ISS film crew returned to Earth" (Pozdnyakov, 2021), "Sakhalin turns into a green island" (Alexandrova, 2021), "Ekaterina Alekhina: a female path to Michelin stars" (Kepinski, 2021) contribute to a rather positive image of Russia:

Media text genre: material on current events (in Russia), news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible agency of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

In the story "Recognition of the Russian *Sputnik V* vaccine: the result is obvious" (Dovil, 2021), one of the most authoritative medical journals in the world, *The Lancet*, is presented as the main source of information, which published the results of the third phase of clinical trials of the Russian vaccine *Sputnik V*, confirming its safety and high efficiency against coronavirus. It amounted to 91.6 % (Dovil, 2021).

The report "Success of Sputnik V in San Marino" reports (with reference to the head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund K. Dmitriev) that the use of the Russian *Sputnik V* vaccine allowed San Marino to become the first country in Europe to defeat the coronavirus and reduced the infection rate and mortality to zero (Sheludkova, 2021).

The text "Yuri Gagarin – forever the first one" reminds the audience of *Euronews* that the first human to be in space, sixty years after the historic flight that opened the vast space of the Universe to mankind, Yuri Gagarin still evokes admiration and pride (Alexandrova, 2021), and the house of the Gagarins in Klushino, in the Smolensk region, was reconstructed and turned into a museum (Alexandrova, 2021). The quotes of the adviser to the director of the Gagarin Museum T. Filatova, the writer and journalist A. Pervushin, and others are provided.

The text "The ISS film crew returned to Earth" (Pozdnyakov, 2021) tells about the successful completion of the space flight of cosmonaut O. Novitsky, actress Y. Peresild and a film director

K. Shipenko, who for twelve days filmed episodes for the film *Challenge*. As *Euronews* points out, this is the first professional feature film shooting in orbit (Pozdnyakov, 2021).

The media text "Sakhalin turns into a green island" is dedicated to a reportage from the Sakhalin Region, which is expected to become the greenest region in Russia in the near future. They intend to achieve a carbon neutral balance by 2025. Laminaria can help to implement the plan (Alexandrova, 2021).

The story "Yekaterina Alyokhina: a female path to Michelin stars" (Kepinski, 2021) gives a positive image of a restaurant in the suburbs of Moscow with the concept of "zero waste", which was opened about a year ago by a business lady, who became the first woman chef in Russia to get a Michelin star. The restaurant has received a star as a very good restaurant in its category and a green star as well, which is given to those that are seasonally aware, reduce food waste and use innovations caring about the future (Kepinski, 2021).

However, a fly in the ointment in this material is the opinion of a restaurant critic who was dissatisfied with the quality of food in the restaurant and whose confidence in the Michelin rating had been undermined. The critic claimed that one reason for giving the star was "politically correct ethics, since the chef of the restaurant is a woman" (Kepinski, 2021).

Can you verify the source?

The source of the text "Recognition of the Russian Sputnik V" vaccine: the result is obvious can be easily verified, because the article in *The Lancet* (Logunov et al., 2021) is freely accessible on the Internet, and it does make favorable conclusions about the Sputnik-V vaccine.

The source of the story "Success of *Sputnik V* in San Marino" was the head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund and real facts about the total vaccination of San Marino residents with the Russian vaccine, this can be verified by numerous similar reports in Western and Russian media.

The reliability of the information in the text "Yuri Gagarin – forever the first one" is out of the question, this fact is enshrined in history.

Adequacy of the sources of materials "The ISS film crew returned to Earth", "Sakhalin turns into a green island" and "Ekaterina Alekhina: a female path to Michelin stars" can also be verified by the news stories by other news agencies around the world.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

These messages are more focused on logic and facts, although, of course, affect the emotional sphere.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main objective of these messages is to provide objective, fact-based information related to "Russian" topic.

Is there any information missing?

The article "Recognition of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine: the result is obvious" does not contain the opinions of the opponents of the Russian vaccine, and the article "The ISS film crew returned to Earth" does not reflect the views of opponents of filmmakers' flight into space.

Whose point of view does the message present?

These messages successfully represent the core concept of *Euronews* as an agency that provides objective and unbiased information to a mass audience.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

As a result, supporters of objective and non-politicized information will benefit.

Assessment of the level of reliability of the media text: these media texts contain true and verified information.

Below are some examples of *Euronews* media texts related to Russia in a neutral key: "Moldova and Russia have agreed on gas supplies" (Pozdnyakov, 2021), "COVID-19 in Russia: a new highest record of deaths" (Alexandrova, 2021), "Scammers offering fake vaccination certificates have become more active in Russia" (Alexandrova, 2021), "Mockery on the verge of sadism: the Russian Foreign Ministry criticized the United States for issuing visas to Russians in Warsaw" (Pozdnyakov, 2021), "Vladimir Putin is a true friend of Israel" (Barsukov, 2021), "Nord Stream 2 is ready to launch" (Barsukov, 2021), "Latvia stops broadcasting Russian TV channels" (Kepinski, 2021).

Genre of media texts: materials about current events (in Russia), news texts.

Analysis of media texts for reliability (identification of the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identification of possible agencies of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

The material "Moldova and Russia have agreed on gas supplies" (Pozdnyakov, 2021) provides real facts reflected in dozens of reports from news agencies around the world with links to Gazprom and the Moldovan government. The *Euronews* article also presents the opinion of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs J. Borrell, who "accused the Russian side of using the gas price dispute for political pressure on Moldova" (Pozdnyakov, 2021).

The text "COVID-19 in Russia: a new highest record of deaths" sets out the real facts that in October 2021 in Russia, against the background of an outbreak of coronavirus infection, the daily number of deaths from COVID-19 reached another maximum (Alexandrova, 2021). One of the sources of information for this media text is the opinion of the head of the temporary infectious diseases hospital R. Dmitrishin. *Euronews* notes that, "trying to stop the spread of the coronavirus, the Russian authorities declared eleven days non-working - from October 30 to November 7, and allowed the regions to vary these periods depending on the epidemic situation" (Alexandrova, 2021).

Just as neutrally *Euronews* presents the text "Scammers offering fake vaccination certificates have become more active in Russia" (Alexandrova, 2021). This media text accurately notes that the Russian authorities "urge Russians to get vaccinated, since this is the only way to defeat the virus," but "the campaign to immunize the population is complicated not only by the reluctance of many to refuse vaccination, or to postpone it. Scammers have intensified their activities by posting advertisements of fake vaccination certificates and promising to enter the data into the State Services database for a fee. There is also medical personnel among violators of the law"(Alexandrova, 2021). The statement is sustained by opinion of the director of the National Research Center for Epidemiology and Microbiology of the N.F. Gamalei.

Quite objectively, *Euronews* covers the US-Russian visa conflict in an article entitled "Mockery on the verge of sadism": Russian Foreign Ministry criticized the U.S. for issuing visas to Russians in Warsaw " (Pozdnyakov, 2021). It is objectively noted here that "Moscow is outraged by the refusal to issue American visas in Russia after the demand of the Russian government to reduce the US diplomatic mission. Moscow criticized Washington for issuing US visas to Russians outside Russia. To draw up documents for entering the United States, Russian citizens need to contact the American Embassy in Warsaw, - says the new edition of the State Department's instructions on the work of diplomatic missions. ... The Russian Foreign Ministry called it "mockery on the verge of sadism". Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova accused American diplomats of prolonged and consistent destruction of the system of rendering consular services in Russia created before them (Pozdnyakov, 2021). The media text cites the opinion of M. Zakharova that "the decision of the State Department no longer affects only tourism or cultural exchanges, but also families and relatives" (Pozdnyakov, 2021), as well as a brief history of the mutual confrontation between the United States and Russia from 2014 to our days.

The article "Vladimir Putin is a true friend of Israel" (Barsukov, 2021) provides a neutral overview of the brief visit to Russia by Israeli Prime Minister N. Bennett. Avoiding any evaluative comments, the *Euronews* channel quotes the key statements of V. Putin and N. Bennett, which they made at this meeting in Sochi.

The media text "Nord Stream 2 is ready to launch" (Barsukov, 2021) gives account of the facts that technical gas was pumped into the first string of the pipeline, which runs along the bottom of the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany. *Euronews* reports that "the Russian side is only waiting for permission from the German regulatory authorities ... Moscow calls on Berlin to respond as soon as possible, given the very small volumes of European reserves on the eve of winter. Several countries have already had to raise tariffs for heating and electricity. At the same time, the price of gas in Europe on Monday again exceeded $ 1,100 per thousand cubic meters" (Barsukov, 2021). Objectively, *Euronews* informs the audience that, at the same time, there are some opponents of this project (for example, Naftogaz of Ukraine) (Barsukov, 2021).

In the *Euronews* text "Latvia stops broadcasting Russian TV channels" (Kepinski, 2021), it is reported that "the largest telecommunications company in Latvia, Tet, from February 1, 2021, will

stop relaying five Russian TV channels on the territory of the republic ... within ten days it plans to make a decision to restrict the retransmission of the Russia-RTR TV channel on the territory of the republic. ... The Russian Foreign Ministry called the actions of the Latvian authorities against Russian-speaking journalists a punitive action and a blatant example of violating the foundations of a democratic society – freedom of the media and expression. The Russian Embassy in Latvia emphasized that the searches and criminal prosecution of the company's management "testify to only one thing - the desire of the local elite to restrict residents' access to alternative sources of information" (Kepinski, 2021).

Can you verify the source?

All sources of the above media texts are available for verification, the information presented is objective and based on real facts.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

These messages primarily refer to audience's logical thinking.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main task of these media texts is to provide the *Euronews* audience with objective information related to international (related to Russia) political, business, and healthcare news.

Is there any information missing?

In media texts, in many cases, the points of view of different parties are presented, which creates the effect of a balanced presentation of materials.

Whose point of view does the message present?

These messages successfully stand for the core concept of *Euronews* as an agency that provides objective and unbiased information to a mass audience.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

As a result, supporters of objective information will benefit, without the biased politicization of situations and conflicts.

Assessment of the level of reliability of the media text: the media texts contain objective and balanced information.

The third group of the analyzed *Euronews* media texts includes materials where manipulation techniques can be found. Unlike many Western media sources, *Euronews*, generally, does not slip into Russophobic propaganda and apparent distortion of facts. Media manipulations are used more subtly – in the form of deliberated omissions and selection. Examples can be found in: "NATO has decided how to restrain Russia" (Alexandrova, 2021), "The head of the Pentagon in Romania accused Russia" (Khachatryan, 2021), "Navalny is accused of extremism. He faces up to 10 years in prison"(Pozdnyakov, 2021), "Award to the Kremlin's opponent" (Sheludkova, 2021).

Media text genre: material on current events (in Russia), news text.

Analysis of the media text for reliability (identifying the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identifying possible agency of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text):

What is the source of the information? What facts are presented in support of it?

In the article "NATO decided how to restrain Russia" it is reported that "NATO defense ministers assessed the threats from Russia's missile potential, decided to strengthen their air force and air defense, and agreed on a general defense plan" (Alexandrova, 2021)

The media text "The head of the Pentagon in Romania accused Russia" states that "the United States will continue to help strengthen the navies of Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Georgia to support their efforts to contain and defend against hostile Russian actions in the Black Sea region" (Khachatryan, 2021).

The sources of this material about NATO and the Pentagon are NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Pentagon Chief Lloyd Austin.

The news story "Navalny is accused of extremism. He faces up to 10 years in prison" repeats popular in European and American media propaganda clichés at the level of uncorroborated allegations (Novichok poison, etc.) and mixes them with actual points of fact (Navalny's charges of the criminal case Yves Rocher, street demonstrations in support for Navalny, etc.).

The media text "Prize to the Kremlin's Opponent" first states that "Alexei Navalny has become a laureate of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. In Russia, an oppositionist is serving a sentence in a colony on a fraud case, and the Anti-Corruption Foundation, which he

heads, has been recognized as an extremist and a foreign agent organization" (Sheludkova, 2021). And then the Muscovites' quotes selected by the *Euronews* correspondent follow: 1) "I believe that Alexei Navalny was absolutely justified in receiving this award, because he really did a lot to ensure that civil liberties took place"; 2) "I believe that he deserves this award, because he has been fighting for our rights, for the rights of people in general, for a very long time, and sits (is in prison) for the fact that many people are silent and cannot express their opinion on politics"; 3) "Even if you don't sympathize with him as a person, there is still some respect for what he has experienced, some sympathy from people, this is also important"; 4) "Of course he hasn't deserved the award. Why was it given to him? I don't see any of his feats, except for scandals" (Quoted in: Sheludkova, 2021).

Thus, the main sources of *Euronews* materials about A. Navalny are the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, statements by A. Navalny himself and some anonymous residents of Moscow.

Can you verify the source?

The statements of officials contained in the above materials can be easily verified, since they were widely replicated by the media of different countries, including video versions. The statements of anonymous sources are of course much more difficult to verify, most likely it is impossible.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotion?

To a greater extent, these materials are addressed to the audience's emotions.

What is the main purpose of a media text?

The main aim of these media texts is to shape the image of Russia as a state with non-legal practices that might become a military threat to the West.

Is there any information missing?

The media texts presenting the anti-Russian views of the NATO and Pentagon leaders lack any alternative information. Not only are the views of the Russian leadership on the topic of military confrontation not presented, but also any information about the number of US and NATO bases placed in the states directly bordering on Russia.

In the story about A. Navalny (Sheludkova, 2021), three positive opinions of Moscow residents about his activities and significance were intentionally selected, and only one negative one, so the *Euronews* audience may get the impression that the overwhelming number of Russians (75 % against 25 %) sympathize with opposition leader A. Navalny and his supporters.

Meanwhile, the reality of A. Navalny's reputation in Russia is utterly different. According to the results of the elections to the State Duma, the United Russia party received 49.82 % of the vote, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation - 18.93%, the Liberal Democratic Party - 7.55 %, A Just Russia – Patriots – For the Truth – 7.46%, New People – 5.32%, Party of Pensioners – 2.45%, Yabloko – 1.34% (RBC, 2021). It is clear that the voters of United Russia, KPRF, LDPR, and Fair Russia have never been and never will be A. Navalny's electorate. And if Navalny's opposition party had run in the 2021 elections, it could have probably only counted on a small fraction of the popular vote that eventually went to the New People and Yabloko parties. But taking into account that these parties also have an electorate determined to vote specifically for these, and not for other oppositionists, the logic leads to the fact that Navalny's supporters on an all-Russian scale cannot collect more than 5 % of the vote. However *Euronews* in its text, through omission of data and selection of opinions to quote, strives to create the illusion of Navalny's recognition and support by a significant part of the population in Russia.

Whose point of view does the message present?

These media texts represent the point of view of opponents of Russian foreign and domestic policy.

Who will benefit if people accept this message? Who will lose?

If the audience accepts the political position of these media texts uncritically, anti-Russian-minded political forces will win, and supporters of dialogue between Russia and the West will lose.

Assessment of the level of straightforwardness of the media text: the analyzed media texts contain a mixture of factual accounts and biased manipulative messages.

While the role of media in shaping public opinion and the value of critical perception of information is by now common knowledge, media agencies and educational institutions

continually fail to confront this issue with the urgency it deserves. By examining 752 *Euronews* materials, related to Russia and published on the website in the Russian language in 2021, this study established that two-thirds of them contained objective information, not accompanied by manipulative techniques. Still about a third of *Euronews* materials contained some signs of manipulation and propaganda clichés. We need to consider the implications of such manipulations. These manipulations might contribute to social, international misunderstanding, making the gap between cultures and nations wider and sharper. Media literacy education, among other things, is designed to evaluate ourselves and our communities, to activate critical thinking, intelligence, and cross-cultural awareness in the spirit of mutual respect and looking for common values and attitudes to unite people.

Case Studies 7: Russian Topic on *Radio France Internationale* and Media Manipulations

Media manipulation in recent years has increasingly become the subject of scientific research around the world. This is primarily due to the fact that today the media spectrum has expanded dramatically compared to the situation of the 20th century, when only paper, radio and television media, where professionals worked, could have a mass audience. Today, many online bloggers have millions of readers, outnumbering most traditional newspapers in terms of circulation. This forces professional TV/radio channels and newspapers to actively develop their Internet counterparts. Among them is *Radio France Internationale*, founded in 1975, but with its origins dating back to 1931. When it comes to coverage of Russian news in foreign media and vice-versa, the role of media manipulation is very important.

The problems of propaganda, misinformation, media manipulations and fake news are widely analyzed in scientific research (Aguaded, Romero-Rodriguez, 2015; Azzimonti, Fernandes, 2021; Balmas, 2012; Bean, 2017; Berghel, 2017; Bertin et al, 2018; Bharali, Goswami, 2018; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Bradshow et al., 2021; Carson, 2021; Colomina et al., 2021; Conroy et al., 2015; Dentith, 2017; Derakhshan Wardle, 2017; Farkas, Schou, 2018; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2020; Figueira, Oliveira, 2017; Goering, Thomas, 2018; Hofstein Grady et al., 2021; Howard et al., 2021; Janze, Risius, 2017; Kim, de Zúñiga, 2020; Marwick, 2018; Mihailidis, Viotty, 2017; Quandt et al, 2019; Ruchansky et al., 2017; van der Linden et al., 2021; Vamany, 2019; Vargo et al., 2018 and others).

We can agree that "the current communicational and digital ecosystem is endogenous and systemically misinformative, as it has gradually become an information overload and infoxicative scenario, traversed by a dynamic of mediamorphosis, in which traditional media are looking to compete for the preference of the audience facing the multiplicity of digital platforms in the way of their economic subsistence, usually spreading pseudo-contents with limbic great value, but lacking useful in the process of decision making" (Aguaded, Romero-Rodriguez, 2015).

Prior research suggests that "fake news has been discussed as a disturbing factor... As such, it has recently become a major object of inquiry for scholars and practitioners in various fields of study and practice" (Vamanu, 2019: 207).

Many modern scholars hold the view that "the explosive usage in recent years of the terms "fake news" and "posttruth" reflects worldwide frustration and concern about rampant social problems created by pseudo-information. Our digital networked society and newly emerging media platforms foster public misunderstanding of social affairs, which affects almost all aspects of individual life. The cost of lay citizens' misunderstandings or crippled lay informatics can be high. Pseudo-information is responsible for deficient social systems and institutional malfunction" (Kim, de Zúñiga, 2020).

In this light, we believe that the analysis of media texts of major information agencies, such as, for example, *Radio France Internationale*, is indispensable to investigate the problem. One of the aims of the study is to provide politicians, experts, institutions, teachers, and other actors with an enhanced basis for discussing and acting in relation to the media coverage of Russia by foreign media and foreign countries by Russian media.

Implementing our model of media education activities aimed at identifying and critically evaluating manipulative techniques of media (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 323-332) we have used

the set of key questions that aid to understand the aims and techniques of the media texts' agencies and/or authors (Wilson, 2019). Using this framework we have analyzed 180 media texts of 2021 from the Russian-language version of *Radio France Internationale*, related to Russia.

In particular, the following sample of texts were examined: *Radio France Internationale:* "Coronaskeptics or "Coronanegativists"? How Russia views the COVID-19 epidemic" (Makarova, 2021); "Russia broke a new anti-record of deaths from the coronavirus. Putin announced the weekend" (RFI, 2021); "It "does not contradict the Constitution": Russia advocated compulsory vaccination" (RFI, 2021); "In Russia, additional restrictions were introduced for the lockdown period" (RFI, 2021); "United Russia" wins, the CPRF has a record: the first results of the State Duma elections" (RFI, 2021); "Lukashenko and Putin signed an integration decree" (RFI, 2021); "Russia announced the suspension of its mission to NATO" (RFI, 2021); "Go to Warsaw for a visa: the American State Department has added Russians to the list of "homeless nationalities" (RFI, 2021); "Russia became the absolute leader in the number of government demands to *Google* to remove content" (RFI, 2021); "Russia launched the first movie crew to the ISS to shoot a movie" (RFI, 2021); "Konstantin Khabensky appointed head of Chekhov Moscow Art Theater" (RFI, 2021).

Let's start with *Radio France Internationale* media texts on science and culture.

The genre of the media text: news coverage.

Analysis of the media text for accuracy (identification of the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identification of its possible commissioners, political and other groups, who are served by or benefit from the message):

What is the source of information? What facts are presented to support it?

A group of materials with a positive image of Russia is the smallest. One of these kinds of examples is the report "Russia Launched the first movie crew to the ISS to shoot a movie" where it says that the Soyuz Spaceship with the actress Yulia Peresild and the director Klim Shipenko started on October 5 to the international space station. Within 12 days on the ISS, (where the French astronaut Thomas Pesquet was also at the time), they will make the first feature film in the history of cinema in a near-earth orbit (RFI, 2021). However, the mood of the message is not universally positive about Russia, as further it says (with reference to the France-Presse agency) that using this flight as PR, Roscosmos is trying to restore the reputation of the space industry of the Russian Federation, stained with corruption scandals, recurring accidents and loss of the profitable monopoly on flights to the ISS (RFI, 2021). The opinion of the political scientist K. Kalachev is given, that the "Russian Space Agency hopes to win NASA and SPACE X" and "distract attention from their problems" (quoted in RFI, 2021).

In this regard, the material by *Radio France Internationale* on theatre life sounds more neutral: "Konstantin Khabenskiy appointed head of Chekhov Moscow Art Theater". Without embedded political agenda, it says (with reference to RIA news, Interfax, and Ministry of Culture of Russia) that "the actor Konstantin Khabenskiy is appointed the new art director of Moscow Art Theatre named after A. Chekhov… Khabenskiy will replace the 64-year-old Sergey Zhenovach" (RFI, 2021).

Can the source be verified?

The cited sources of the above texts are accessible, the information can be checked, the message is rather objective and based on true facts.

Does the message appeal to emotions or logic?

In the first place, the messages appeal to logic.

What is the main objective of the text?

The message is being sent to inform the audience of *Radio France Internationale.*

Is there any information (ideas, alternative perspectives) left out?

In the media text on shooting a film in space the perspective of the film crew and Roscosmos representatives are missing, which prevents it from being totally objective.

Whose point of view does the text reflect?

The texts present the point of view of *Radio France Internationale,* as an agency, positioning itself as an objective source of information for the mass audience.

Who will profit if the text's message is accepted? Who won't?

Those who are looking for factual information will benefit.

The evaluation of the text's credibility: the media texts contain mostly objective information.

The Covid-19 topic is one of the most popular in international media. *Radio France Internationale* pays a lot of attention to it, too, every time mentioning that in Russia the infection is boosting and the share of the vaccinated population still leaves much to be desired.

The genre of the media text: news coverage.

Analysis of the media text for accuracy (identification of the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identification of its possible commissioners, political and other groups, who are served by or benefit from the message):

What is the source of information? What facts are presented to support it?

The media texts "Coronasceptics or Coronanegativists"?, "How Russia views the COVID-19 epidemic" (Makarova, 2021) state that there is a very large proportion of "coronasceptics" in Russia – those who doubt the seriousness of this disease or the need for government measures to combat it. During the first wave of the pandemic, the proportion of such people in Russia was 38 % – this exceeds the indicators of large European and Asian countries by two or more times.

The source of such conclusions is the opinion of the head of the Laboratory of Comparative Social Research (Higher School of Economics) B. Sokolov, based on research conducted in 2021. This expert believes that a typical Russian coronasceptic is "a person who is primarily characterized by increased distrust of the existing socio-political order: the government, epidemiological policy, to a lesser extent, other people. ... Coronasceptics trust social networks much more than some traditional media, like newspapers or TV. In terms of socio-demographic characteristics, there were more men, more people of working age, more people with a low level of education, but this is quite predictable. ... those who are not ready to get vaccinated – this indicator remains more or less stable, just above 50 %" (quoted in Makarova, 2021).

The text "Russia broke a new anti-record of deaths from the corona virus. Putin announced the weekend" claims that ""in Russia, 1028 people have officially been declared dead from the effects of coronavirus over the past 24 hours. This is the worst indicator for the entire time of the pandemic. ... Later it became known that the president declared "non-working days" in the country from October 30 to November 7, 2021. ... shopping malls, cafes, and restaurants will be closed, as well as mass events will be banned. ... The restrictions will not affect pharmacies, grocery stores, online trading and delivery, catering establishments will be able to work takeaway" (RFI, 2021).

Sources: decisions of the Russian authorities, taken in the fight against the pandemic in the fall of 2021, reports by TASS, RIA-Novosti and Forbs.

The article "It does not contradict the Constitution: Russia advocated compulsory vaccination" says that "Alexander Ginzburg, director of the Gamalei Center, which developed the Sputnik V vaccine, advocated mandatory vaccination of Russians against Covid-19. Almost simultaneously, the chairman of the Federation Council Committee on Constitutional Legislation, Andrei Klishas, adds that the introduction of such a measure "does not contradict" the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Later that day, Deputy Prime Minister Tatyana Golikova says at a meeting with Putin: "all Russians who do not have medical contraindications should be vaccinated against COVID-19" (RFI, 2021). This text also contains another quote from the statement of Deputy Prime Minister T. Golikova: "In order for us to reach the level I mentioned – 80 %, for this all citizens of the Russian Federation who currently do not have a medical withdrawal from vaccination should simply be vaccinated" (quoted in RFI, 2021).

Further, *Radio France Internationale*, using links to news agencies, provides comparative data on the number of vaccinated in Russia and France and on the daily mortality: "in Russia, according to official data, 49.8 million people or slightly more than 34 % of the population have been vaccinated... For comparison, 50.3 million people have been fully vaccinated in France. At the same time, the population of France is 67 million, the population of Russia is 146 million. According to the latest data (as of November 9), 49 people died from coronavirus in France during the day. In Russia – 1211 people (November 10 - 1239) (RFI, 2021).

In the article "In Russia, additional restrictions were introduced for the lockdown period" (RFI, 2021), it is reported that at the end of October 2021, "Russian President Vladimir Putin instructed the regional authorities to ban the operation of catering and entertainment establishments in the evening and at night, and also announced quarantine for non-vaccinated Russians over 60 years old. ... At the same time, the peak of the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in Russia has not yet been reached" (RFI, 2021). This material of *Radio France*

Internationale contains references to official Russian information sources, the Interfax agency and the infectious diseases specialist V. Chulanov.

Can the source be verified?

The cited sources of the above texts are accessible, the information can be checked, the message is rather objective and based on true facts.

Does the message appeal to emotions or logic?

In the first place, the messages appeal to logic.

What is the main objective of the text?

The message is aimed to inform the audience of *Radio France Internationale* on the situation with the pandemic in Russia. However some texts have the embedded message that the situation in Russia is worse than in France and other European countries.

Is there any information (ideas, alternative perspectives) left out?

In media texts, in many cases, the points of view of different parties are presented, which creates the effect of a balanced presentation of materials. There are also references to similar phenomena in France itself.

Whose point of view does the text reflect?

The messages succeed in presenting *Radio France Internationale* as a news agency providing objective information for masses.

Who will profit if the text's message is accepted? Who won't?

Advocates of objective, unbiased information will benefit.

The evaluation of the text's credibility: the media texts contain mostly objective information.

The next group of *Radio France Internationale* media texts concerns international policy topics. The examples are "Lukashenko and Putin signed an integration decree" (RFI, 2021); "Russia announced the suspension of its mission to NATO" (RFI, 2021); "Go to Warsaw for a visa: the American State Department has added Russians to the list of "homeless nationalities" (RFI, 2021); "Russia became the absolute leader in the number of government demands to *Google* to remove content" (RFI, 2021).

The genre of the media text: news coverage.

Analysis of the media text for accuracy (identification of the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identification of its possible commissioners, political and other groups, who are served by or benefit from the message):

What is the source of information? What facts are presented to support it?

The media text "Lukashenko and Putin signed an integration decree" reports that during the (video)meeting of the Presidents of Russia and Belarus 28 union programs were approved... The programs declare the integration of currency systems, the principles of collecting indirect taxes, the formation of monetary policy, the common payment space, the fight against terrorism" (RFI, 2021) with references to the statements of the President of Belarus A. Lukashenko, the BelTA news Agency, the Secretary of State of the Union State D. Mezentsev.

In "Russia announced the suspension of its mission to NATO", *Radio France Internationale* informs the audience that Russia is suspending the work of its permanent mission to NATO and the activities of the NATO military liaison mission in Moscow, as well as the NATO information office in Moscow at the Embassy of Belgium: "This was announced in Moscow after NATO's decision to halve the size of the Russian mission to the alliance" (RFI, 2021). Sources of this information: Russian Foreign Minister S. Lavrov, NATO Secretary General J. Stoltenberg, Kommersant newspaper

The report "Go to Warsaw for a visa: the American State Department has added Russians to the list of "Homeless Nationalities" conveys that in the fall of 2021, the United States Department of State classified Russian citizens wishing to obtain an American immigration visa to the category of "Homeless Nationalities". ... Russians are invited to obtain visas in Warsaw (RFI, 2021). References to the US State Department and Kommersant newspaper are provided.

"Russia became the absolute leader in the number of government demands to Google to remove content" reports that "for 10 years, Russia has asked Google to block content more often than all other countries combined" (RFI, 2021). The sources of this information are the BBC, BBC IT expert G. Bakunov, and Google Transparency Report.

Can the source be verified?

The cited sources of the above texts are accessible, the information can be checked, the message is rather objective and based on true facts. Nevertheless some texts contain negative connotation related to Russia.

Does the message appeal to emotions or logic?

In the first place, the messages appeal to logic.

What is the main objective of the text?

The texts are aimed at providing information linked to the Russia's international policy to *RFI* audience.

Is there any information (ideas, alternative perspectives) left out?

The examined media texts sometimes miss the alternative points of view, which hinders the creation of the balanced message.

Whose point of view does the text reflect?

The reports reflect the viewpoint of *Radio France Internationale* as a news agency, some of them contain linguistic persuasive devices and manipulative techniques such as *labeling* and *omission.*

Who will profit if the text's message is accepted? Who won't?

Those actors who are aimed at undermining healthy, non discriminatory working relations between Russia and European countries, will benefit.

The evaluation of the text's credibility: the texts contain real-life facts intermingled with anti-Russian clichés and bias.

The next group of media texts by *Radio France Internationale* are the reports connected to the internal political life in Russia. In it, the manipulative techniques have been detected. One of the vivid examples is "United Russia" wins, the CPRF has a record: the first results of the State Duma elections" (RFI, 2021).

The genre of the media text: news coverage.

Analysis of the media text for accuracy (identification of the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identification of its possible commissioners, political and other groups, who are served by or benefit from the message):

What is the source of information? What facts are presented to support it?

In the report "United Russia" wins, the CPRF has a record: the first results of the State Duma elections" *Radio France Internationale* informs the audience that the Russian Central Election Commission has published the first results of the elections to the State Duma: United Russia wins, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the Liberal Democratic Party, Fair Russia - For Truth and the New People Party (RFI, 2021) are also going to the Duma. It is further emphasized that "the elections to the State Duma were held against the background of numerous violations reported by the *Golos* movement. Earlier, the Russian authorities recognized it as a foreign agent. *The Map of Violations* project has recorded more than 4,500 possible violations. According to representatives of the opposition and human rights activists, the elections to the State Duma cannot be called competitive. Supporters of Alexei Navalny, who is imprisoned, were not allowed to nominate their candidacies. This was due to the adoption of a law prohibiting the election of persons "involved in the activities of extremist organizations". This status was given to the Anti-Corruption Fund (FBK). The authorities also actively interfered with the work of the "smart voting" system, which offered to support opposition candidates in single-mandate districts with the greatest chances of winning" (RFI, 2021).

Whose point of view does the text reflect?

The media texts from this group generally represent the point of view of the opponents of Russian foreign and domestic policy. The authors of the messages, using the techniques of "selection" (not presenting contesting arguments or alternative data), "victimization" (A.Navalny is labeled as a victim without providing the context), "labeling" (using specific linguistic means to create the needed context (e.g. labeling some vague/anonymous candidates as having "the greatest chances to win"), etc., tried to convince readers that, on the one hand, numerous violations in the State Duma elections contributed to the victory of *United Russia* party, and, on the other hand, the suspension of A. Navalny's party from participating in the elections deprived the ruling party of real competition with the influential opposition. Meanwhile, the final voting figures in the elections in Russia over the past twenty years indicate that the potential votes of supporters of A. Navalny's

party, with the most successful combination of circumstances, are in the niche of 3 % to 7 % of the total number of voters, and, therefore, could not and cannot influence the final victory of *United Russia*. As for the sources of information, here, using manipulative techniques of "references to authorities" and "selection", *Radio France Internationale* only cites the opinion of the opposition organization *Golos*, leaving out the wide range of different experts' opinions.

Who will profit if the text's message is accepted? Who won't?

If the audience accepts the point of view of such messages, anti-Russian political forces will win, and supporters of the dialogue and understanding between Russia and the West will lose.

The evaluation of the text's credibility: numerous cases of manipulative techniques are identified in this group of messages which seed doubts about its credibility. The messages are not neutral, they are judgmental, only one perspective is given, and the other parties' opinions are missing.

Based on the theoretical model of anti-manipulation media educational activity developed earlier (Fedorov, 2015; 2019; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; 2016; 2020; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 323-332), we have analyzed 180 materials on the *Radio France Internationale* website related to Russia for the period 2021 using a set of key questions. It was found out that two-thirds of media texts contained objective information, not accompanied by manipulative techniques. Nevertheless, in about a third of *Radio France Internationale*'s materials signs of manipulation and propaganda clichés were detected to one degree or another. In particular, the most common manipulative techniques used by *Radio France Internationale* authors reporting on Russia were "silence", "selection", "labeling", "framing" facts and "references to authorities". Clearly, a greater variety of sources and voices of experts is missing.

The news coverage of Russia and the Russian society presented by the foreign media (in our case, the French news agency) crucially determine the Europeans' perception of Russia: relatively few people from the European countries have personal relations with Russians or spend holidays in Russia, still fewer learn the Russian language, know its history and culture. Thus, the perception of Russia and the Russians is shaped primarily by the ongoing media (Kabel et al., 2019:7).

Isolated events that are covered by media agencies create the combined effect and contribute to shaping the general image of Russia for the international community. Unfortunately, it is a negative image – the image of the country whose not only *foreign policy* on the international arena is criticized, but also *domestic affairs* are questioned and judged.

Our findings are consistent with the results of the recent research published by the Danish School of Media and Journalism: "Reporting on political, economic and cultural issues in Russia journalists quite often choose to stress features that seem alien and different…Such reporting only strengthens the stereotypical image of a dangerous, unpredictable, and incomprehensible neighbouring country. In general, the Finnish Russia reporting could use more vivid curiosity and less one-track thinking… The general coverage of Russia is focusing on hostile and negative aspects of Russian policies and the media portrayal of Russia sometimes gives the impression of a caricature" (Kabel, 2019: 69-81).

The consequence of this is a danger of "rejection of Russia as an integral part of the "civilized world", as a state which is ready to share "universal values" *as they are seen by the Western society*" (Repina et.al, 2018). The question is, who takes advantage of intensifying this confrontation.

Case Studies 8: Russian Topic on BBC and Media Manipulations

BBC declares its mission as "to act in the public interest, serving all audiences through the provision of impartial, high-quality and distinctive output and services which inform, educate and entertain". The Royal Charter which is the constitutional basis for the BBC sets out five public purposes of the media agency: "1. To provide impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them. 2. To support learning for people of all ages. 3. To show the most creative, highest quality and distinctive output and services. 4. To reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all of the United Kingdom's nations and regions and, in doing so, support the creative economy across the United Kingdom. 5. To reflect the United Kingdom, its culture and values to the world". The first purpose is also emphasized in company's

values: "Trust is the foundation of the BBC. We're independent, impartial and honest" (BBC, n.d.).
Do these principles apply to coverage of topics related to Russia? To try and answer this question
we have analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively several hundred media texts on the BBC Russian
Service website.

In the last few years more attention has been given to the problems of propaganda,
misinformation, media manipulations and fake news in scientific research (Azzimonti, Fernandes,
2021; Balmas, 2012; Bean, 2017; Berghel, 2017; Bertin et al, 2018; Bharali, Goswami, 2018;
Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Bradshow et al., 2021; Carson, 2021; Colomina et al., 2021; Conroy et
al., 2015; Dentith, 2017; Derakhshan Wardle, 2017; Farkas, Schou, 2018; Figueira, Oliveira, 2017;
Goering, Thomas, 2018; Hofstein Grady et al., 2021; Howard et al., 2021; Janze, Risius, 2017;
Marwick, 2018; Mihailidis, Viotty, 2017; Quandt et al, 2019; Ruchansky et al., 2017; van der Linden
et al., 2021; Vargo et al., 2018 and others).

As pointed out by Carson, "a lack of consensus among policymakers, media practitioners and
academics on working definitions of fake news, misinformation and disinformation contribute to
the difficulties in developing clear policies and measures to tackle this global problem" (Carson,
2021).

The implications of the fake news and manipulations of media extend to all spheres of life
and are quite disturbing, "fake news can have serious societal consequences for science, society,
and the democratic process. For example, belief in fake news has been linked to violent intentions,
lower willingness to get vaccinated against the coronavirus disease…, and decreased adherence to
public health guidelines" (van der Linden, Roozenbeek et al., 2020).

"Success" of manipulation efforts on the audience depends on the latter's ability of critical
thinking and evaluation of media messages, meanwhile, "research on the continued effects of
misinformation on memory have pointed out that the reason corrections are often ineffective is
that the original information has already been accepted as legitimate and true, and corrections are
least effective when the information its strongly with a person's worldview. As negative effect
toward opposing political parties increases, negative information about opposing candidates and
their immoral behavior is likely to be accepted readily by partisans, even when in a skeptical
mindset. In a practical sense, this shows how difficult it is to encourage rejection of politically
congenial fake news; the news that people want to believe is likely to be accepted over time, and the
rest rejected, leading to a self-fulflling cycle of partisan expectations" (Hofstein Grady et al., 2021).

The belief that media's manipulation of people's worldview is something that only "non
democratic" governments do or only "foreign countries do" is an illusion. "The impact since the
mid-nineteenth century of the communications revolution, combined with developments in the
size, significance, and role of public opinion, meant that governments of all kinds have increasingly
had to devote themselves to the struggle for hearts and minds in an age of the politicized masses, in
peace and in war…the "munitions of the mind" have become no less significant to the survival of
the state - or, alternatively, to its destruction - than more conventional weapons" (Taylor, 1986).

Therefore we believe that contributing to the research of credibility of mass media (on the
example of the BBC Russian Service's coverage of Russia) is a valuable contribution to promoting
media literacy in any civil society, both Russian and Western.

Implementing our model of media education activities aimed at identifying and critically
evaluating manipulative techniques of media (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 323-332) we have used
the set of key questions that aid to understand the aims and techniques of the media texts' agencies
and/or authors (Wilson, 2019). Using this framework we have analyzed 689 materials of the *BBC
Russian Service* related to Russian topics.

Unlike many Western news media, where the vast majority of the materials on the Russian
topic contain signs of media manipulation, the BBC Russian Service is significantly more balanced:
about two-thirds of the materials analyzed by us from this agency, to one degree or another related
to Russia, gave a neutral or balanced an assessment of the events in 2020-2021.

However, unlike, for example, *Euronews*, there were virtually no positive messages in the
materials of the *BBC Russian Service* concerning Russia or Russians.

Following are the examples of media texts' headlines of the *BBC Russian Service* related to
Russian topic: "Russia suspends the work of its mission to NATO" (Aksenov, 2021), "Russia called
the United States an "unfriendly country." The American embassy will not be able to hire Russians"

(BBC, 2021), "Moldova and Gazprom agree on gas supplies for five years" (BBC, 2021), "Putin and Lukashenko have agreed on the integration of Russia and Belarus. About what exactly?" (BBC, 2021), "Saving a Neighbor. How much does Russia lose by supporting Belarus" (Churmanova, 2021), "Russia updates the maximum number of deaths with Covid-19 for the second day in a row" (BBC, 2021), "Non-working days instead of holidays: what is the danger of the "fourth wave" of coronavirus in Russia" (Ilyin et al., 2021), "The Russian research vessel *Akademik Ioffe* was detained in Denmark " (BBC, 2021), "Shooting at Perm University: six people dead" (BBC, 2021), "Chukotka" of ducks and massacre of hares: high-profile scandals with Russian officials on the hunt" (BBC, 2021), "Case of thong photo in front of St. Isaac's Cathedral: court rejected the investigation" (BBC, 2021).

The genre of the media text: news coverage.

Analysis of the media text for accuracy (identification of the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identification of its possible commissioners, political and other groups, who are served by or benefit from the message):

What is the source of information? What facts are presented to support it?

The *BBC Russian Service* article "Russia suspends its mission to NATO" (Aksenov, 2021) objectively states that "a strong deterioration in NATO–Russia relations occurred after 2014 - then Brussels completely froze military cooperation, leaving only a diplomatic channel. They improved slightly in 2016, when the practice of holding council meetings at the level of permanent representatives was resumed – it was necessary to solve the current problems of the situation in Afghanistan and Ukraine. However, both ways reciprocal claims have not only not gone away, they have only aggravated. ... Russia's attitude towards the Alliance is no better. The parties conduct exercises where they practice military operations against each other, military aircraft constantly fly near the borders. In the end, this confrontation led to the suspension of diplomatic relations" (Aksenov, 2021).

The article "Russia called the United States an "unfriendly country." The American Embassy will not be able to hire Russians" (BBC, 2021) states the fact that the President of the Russian Federation "signed a decree according to which states "committing unfriendly actions" against Russia will be limited in the right to hire Russian citizens: their number will be determined by a quota. The President also provided for the possibility of a complete ban on the employment of Russians in the embassies of such states: if it is introduced, they will be able to provide their work only at the expense of their own citizens" (BBC, 2021). The article quotes the speech of the Director of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, M. Zakharova, and her comments on the presidential decree.

The article "Moldova and Gazprom have agreed on gas supplies for five years" (BBC, 2021) contains trustworthy and widely information replicated by various media that the Government of Moldova and the Russian company Gazprom have signed a contract on gas supplies for five years from November 1, 2021 (with reference to the following sources: the Government of Moldova, Gazprom PJSC, Moldovagaz JSC and Intefax).

The materials "Putin and Lukashenko agreed on the integration of Russia and Belarus. About what exactly?" (BBC, 2021) and "Saving a Neighbor. How much Russia loses on the support of Belarus" (Churmanova, 2021) quite objectively speak about the modern political and economic relations between Russia and Belarus.

In particular, it is reported about the visits of the President of Belarus A. Lukashenko to Russia for talks with the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin to coordinate joint programs in the economic and military spheres. The *BBC Russian Service* objectively states that "while European countries, the United States and Canada impose restrictions on the Belarusian president, his entourage and various sectors of the economy, Vladimir Putin promises Lukashenko multilateral assistance, including financial one. In exchange, Putin can count on political and military support. Russia is not only the main trading partner of Belarus, but also the main creditor. ... In addition to interstate loans, Russia helps Belarus in other ways: she gives her discounts on gas, and also supplies oil and petroleum products duty-free" (Churmanova, 2021). The sources of this information are the words of V. Putin and A. Lukashenko, spoken by them at a press

conference, statements by the press secretary of the Russian President Dmitry Peskov, data from the Reuters agency.

Materials related to the coronavirus pandemic are based on facts: "Russia updates the maximum number of deaths with Covid-19 for the second day in a row" (BBC, 2021), "Non-working days instead of holidays: what is the danger of the "fourth wave" of coronavirus in Russia" (Ilyin et al., 2021). They report that at the end of October 2021, "on the eve of non-working days announced in Russia by presidential decree, the authorities record the maximum daily mortality from coronavirus for the entire time of the pandemic," and significant restrictions are introduced in the Russian Federation related to visits to cafes, restaurants, shopping centers and other crowded places (BBC, 2021; Ilyin et al., 2021).

These materials contain references to statements by Prime Minister of the Russian Federation M. Mishustin and Deputy Prime Minister T. Golikova, Mayor of Moscow S. Sobyanin, President of the Federation of Restaurateurs and Hoteliers of Russia I. Bukharov, head of the Association of Cinema Owners O. Berezin, head of the Association of Operators of the Fitness Industry of Russia O. Kiseleva, Ombudsman for the Protection of Small and Medium-sized Businesses A. Tatulova, the newspaper *Kommersant*, the chief physician of the hospital in Kommunarka D. Protsenko and doctors who preferred to remain anonymous.

In the article " The Russian research vessel *Akademik Ioffe* was detained in Denmark" (BBC, 2021), it is impartially reported that "the Danish authorities detained the Russian scientific research vessel Akademik Ioffe." ... A lawsuit against the Russian vessel ... was filed by the Canadian company One Ocean Expeditions Ltd, which organizes small private expeditions and sea cruises to the Arctic, Antarctica, Svalbard, Greenland and other remote regions of the world" (BBC, 2021). *BBC Russian Service* relies on the following sources: the website of the Center for Marine Expeditionary Research of the P.P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology, the opinions of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Copenhagen and the message of the Interfax agency.

The article "Shooting at Perm University: six people dead" (BBC, 2021) highlights the tragic situation that occurred at Perm University when a student opened fire on people (the news report contains reference to: the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, the press service of the Ministry of Health of Russia, the statements of State Duma Deputy A. Khinstein).

In the article ""Chukotka" of ducks and the massacre of hares: high-profile scandals with Russian officials on the hunt" it is stated that in October 2021, "Valery Rashkin, a State Duma deputy from the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, was caught in the Saratov region with the carcass of a dead elk in a car. A criminal inquiry into illegal hunting was launched" (BBC, 2021). Further, the BBC material cites other real life cases related to illegal hunting, which involved high-ranking officials which had taken place in Russia (sources: United Russia website, Novaya Gazeta, Komsomolskaya Pravda, KP-Ryazan, Rise, statements by N. Nikolaev, the head of the State Duma Committee on Natural Resources).

In the article "Case of a thong photo in front of St. Isaac's Cathedral: the court rejected the investigation" it is reported that "The Oktyabrsky District Court of St. Petersburg refused a measure of restraint to Irina Volkova, accused of insulting the feelings of believers. Volkova was detained after social media users drew attention to a photo of a woman in a thong posing at St. Isaac's Cathedral, she was charged with a crime under Part 1 of Article 148 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (public actions expressing obvious disrespect for society and committed in order to offend the religious feelings of believers)" (BBC, 2021). This material contains links to the statement of the Department of the Investigative Committee for St. Petersburg).

Can the source be verified?

All sources of the media texts mentioned above are available for verification, the information presented is quite objective and based on real facts.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotions?

In the first place, the messages appeal to logic.

What is the main objective of the text?

The media texts are aimed at providing the audience of the *BBC Russian Service* with objective information related to the Russian topic.

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Is there any information (ideas, alternative perspectives) left out?

In media texts, in many cases, the points of view of different parties are presented, which creates the effect of a balanced presentation of materials. However, in some cases (for example, in materials related to the pandemic in Russia) there are no references or comparative analysis to similar phenomena in the UK itself and other countries.

Whose point of view does the text reflect?

These messages reflect the perspective of the media agency *BBC Russian Service.*

Who will profit if the text's message is accepted? Who won't?

As a result, supporters of objective information, without biased politicization of situations and conflicts, benefit.

The evaluation of the text's credibility: the media texts contain mostly objective information.

The second sample of media texts of the *BBC Russian Service* comprises materials where manipulative techniques are detected. Unlike some other Western media agencies, the *BBC Russian Service* prior to 2022 generally, did not stoop to open Russophobic propaganda and obvious distortion of facts. Media manipulations are used more subtly – in the form of silencing "uneasy" facts and selection. Examples of this kind: "Russia is in decline, but still dangerous" – NATO's strategy report for the decade" (Vendik, 2020), "Russia intends to "de facto integrate" Donbass, says EU" (BBC, 2021), "Sputnik didn't make it. Contracts to supply Russian vaccines are being frustrated around the world" (BBC, 2021), "The State Redeemer" and His "Innocent State": Did Russia Have a Chance for Democracy?" (Golubeva, 2021), "Soviet or Russian? How the symbols of the USSR became part of modern Russia" (Kornienko, 2021), "My Russia sits in prison". Street protests of Navalny's supporters took place in the regions " (Pushkarskaya et al., 2021), "Deputies of European Parliament about Russia: enough illusions, we need tough sanctions" (Vendik, 2020).

The genre of the media text: news coverage.

Analysis of the media text for accuracy (identification of the political, ideological position of the authors of the media text, identification of its possible commissioners, political and other groups, who are served by or benefit from the message):

What is the source of information? What facts are presented to support it?

The article "Russia is in decline, but still dangerous" – NATO Strategy Report for the Decade" (Vendik, 2020) comments on the NATO document which emphasizes that although "While Russia is by economic and social measures a declining power" (NATO, 2020: 16), it is still dangerous, and the NATO bloc must confront it in cohesion and without attempts to cooperate with Moscow, ignoring the problems...The report's authors suggest strengthening NATO's capabilities to counter threats from Russia, expand cooperation with Ukraine and Georgia wishing to join NATO, and also be ready for tougher sanctions against Moscow" (Vendik, 2020). The sources of information used are: the report of NATO experts (NATO, 2020), statements by NATO Secretary General J. Stoltenberg, reports of the Reuters news agency.

In the article "Russia intends to "de facto integrate" Donbass, says EU" (BBC, 2021), it is reported that while "the EU believes that Russia is trying to take in the unrecognized "People's Republics" in eastern Ukraine, "The Kremlin, rejecting these suspicions, said that Russia has never done any acquisitions". The references include the Bloomberg Agency, the EU Memo, the Interfax Agency, anonymous experts, statements by the Press Secretary of the President of the Russian Federation D. Peskov, Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of Russia D. Kozak, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine D. Kuleba, Commissioner of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for Human Rights L. Denisova (BBC, 2021).

The text with the eloquent headline "Sputnik didn't make it. Contracts to supply Russian vaccines are being frustrated around the world," reports that the Russian authorities have achieved registration of the Sputnik V drug in almost 70 states and have concluded dozens of supply agreements around the world. A year after the vaccine was triumphantly presented by President Vladimir Putin, it becomes obvious that it is difficult to fulfill Russia's supply agreements" (BBC, 2021). The sources are: Minister of Health of Bolivia A. Flores, President of Guatemala A. Giammattei, Russian Ambassador to Guatemala, Russian Direct Investment Fund (BBC, 2021).

The article "The State Redeemer" and His "Innocent State": Did Russia Have a Chance for Democracy?" presents opinions on the political situation in Russia in the XXI century and states

that although Russian officials still call the country a successful and free democracy, however, it is obvious that it is not such (Golubeva, 2021). To support this opinion, the BBC correspondent retells expert opinions: a researcher of Russian politics, professor of Berkeley University M.S. Fish, Professor of Yale University T. Snyder, the economist E. Yasin and political scientist V. Gelman.

In particular, M.S. Fish holds the opinion that by the end of the Yeltsin era, democracy in Russia had turned into an oligarchy. ... the economy's dependence on oil and gas may contribute to the failure of democratization plans. ... resource wealth creates a large-scale network of corruption in any country where there are no well-established and well-established laws. ... Therefore, the conclusions about the possibility of building democracy are disappointing - significant changes are needed in the system of elections and laws and the restriction of presidential power, which clearly will not happen under Putin" (Cit. by: Golubeva, 2021).

T. Snyder states that Russia had no chance for democracy after the USSR, but argues this not due to the lack of strong democratic institutions like elections and laws, but due to the philosophy that underlies the political thinking of Russian leaders. Thus, Snyder sees in the way politics was formed in Russia, a literal reflection of the philosophy of the Russian thinker of the early XX century, Ivan Ilyin. ... The thing is that Ilyin considered Russia an "innocent" state that has faced threats and seizures throughout its history. ... That is why, according to Ilyin, in the Russian state the role of the "sovereign redeemer", who will assume the leading role in this timeless self-defense is very important (Cit. by Golubeva, 2021).

According to the BBC correspondent, E. Yasin is trying to find a "democratic tradition" in Russian history as to show that the Russian state is not alien to an open and competitive policy. However, he characterizes this "democratic tradition" not as involving all segments of the population in politics, but as historical periods during which it was possible for various political forces to struggle for the ability to make state decisions. ... "Yeltsin made a strategic choice: he sacrificed the norms of democracy to reforms. It's pointless to deny it. Even if by necessity, for the sake of lofty goals, but already in the new democratic Russia, a precedent was created for the violation of the basic law by the executive power to the detriment of the legislative power." ... Managed democracy already at the beginning of the 2000s was on the verge of becoming an authoritarian regime. In conclusion, Yasin tries to explain the non-viability of democracy in Russia by the "national character", which is both accustomed to submission and distrust of the state. According to Yasin, it is possible to eliminate these character traits only by changing the state institutions (Cit.by Golubeva, 2021).

According to V. Gelman, "Yeltsin and his team effectively eliminated their competitors who lacked public support; the very idea of accountability of the executive branch to the legislature was buried, as was the idea of checks and balances." ... Nevertheless, Gelman finds that it was still difficult for Yeltsin to establish "any kind of order": a weak economy, the weakening influence of the "center" on ethnic republics, the decline in the work of law enforcement agencies and the flourishing of criminal groups. ... Gelman sees how all these negative results of Yeltsin's rule have become lessons for the new president Putin. ... "The loyalty of various layers of the Russian elite to the regime and personally to Putin has given them access to huge opportunities to receive benefits in exchange for their support of the political status quo. This mechanism, based on general corruption, enriched those who were part of this imposed consensus, but it also allowed the Russian rulers to dismiss disloyal subordinate subjects at any time, accusing them of abuse or negligence." ... If Yeltsin's personalist rule was based on the principle of "divide and conquer", which he practiced in relation to various regional and oligarchic groups, then Putin and his entourage "sought to create long-term foundations for the stability and continuity of their regime" (Cit. by Golubeva, 2021).

The article "Soviet or Russian? How the symbols of the USSR became part of modern Russia," it is emphasized that many of the former Soviet republics have adopted laws on de-Sovietization, prohibit the symbols of the USSR and demolish monuments to leaders," and "in Russia, Soviet symbols are still found everywhere - from state symbols and monuments, ending with clothes and souvenirs for tourists. ... and the authorities often use nostalgia for the Union as a way to strengthen their own popularity (Kornienko, 2021). However, the single opinion of a sociologist L. Gudkov, is given as reference.

In the article "My Russia is in prison." Street protest of Navalny's supporters took place in the regions" it is reported that "in dozens of Russian cities on January 23 (2021), people took to the streets in support of opposition leader Alexei Navalny. The most crowded one was held in Moscow, but large-scale protests also took place in the regions. For the first time in one day, people rallied in a hundred cities" (Pushkarskaya et al., 2021).

It is claimed that in St. Petersburg there were 5-10 thousand protesters out in the streets, in Yekaterinburg – three thousand people, in Irkutsk "several thousand people", in Vladivostok, Krasnoyarsk and Rostov–on-Don – a thousand people each, in Chita – 300 people (Pushkarskaya et al., 2021). This article refers to the following sources: OVD-Info, the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, the Baza telegram channel, the Stolitsa Yuzhny telegram channel, the Fontanka newspaper, Znak, statements by anonymous protesters and reports by BBC correspondents.

The article "Deputies of European Parliament about Russia: enough illusions, we need tough sanctions" (Vendik, 2020) reports that Josep Borrell was badly reprimanded for his visit to Moscow: in the eyes of many MEPs, he became the embodiment of the conformist policy of old Europe towards Moscow; the behavior of the Russian authorities during the visit of EU representative Josep Borrell should teach a lesson for those who had so far advocated cooperation with Moscow, and the EU should impose sanctions against Putin and his entourage - this was said by almost all speakers in Tuesday's debate in the European Parliament. ... However, Borrell himself stated that "even before the visit he had no illusions about Moscow's course, and the results of the trip allowed him to fully convince himself that official Russia does not want cooperation with Europe and does not want to be a democratic state governed by the rule of law" (Vendik, 2020). It is further added that "of the 46 MEPs who participated in the debates on Russia and Borrell's visit on Tuesday, only four spoke in defense of Moscow, and even those did not justify what was happening in Russia, but talked about imaginary or real harassment of the opposition in the EU countries and that the EU, respectively, has no moral right to preach other nations" (Vendik, 2020). The references include opinions of deputies of the European Parliament and the head of the EU Foreign Policy Department J. Borrell.

Can the source be verified?

The statements of officials contained in the above-mentioned materials can be verified, since they have been widely replicated by the media of different countries, including video segments. The statements of anonymous sources, of course, are much more difficult to verify, and sometimes impossible.

Does the message appeal to logic or emotions?

To a greater extent, these materials are addressed to the emotional perception.

What is the main objective of the text?

The aim of these media texts is to form the image of Russia as a non–legal state that poses a military threat to the West.

Is there any information (ideas, alternative perspectives) left out?

As a vivid example, in the text "Russia is in decline, but still dangerous" – the NATO Strategy Report for the Decade" (Vendik, 2020), only anti-Russian opinions of the NATO leadership and its experts are given, but the factual information about NATO military bases moving closer and closer to the borders of the Russian Federation is left out or "silenced". Neither opinions of Russian military experts nor non-members of NATO alliance on the issue are provided for readers.

In the article "Russia intends to "de facto integrate" Donbass, says EU" (BBC, 2021), the political position of the EU clearly dominates.

The text "Sputnik didn't make it. Contracts to supply Russian vaccines are being frustrated around the world " (BBC, 2021) carefully selected negative facts and opinions about the supplies of Russian vaccines abroad are given and positive facts of the Sputnik vaccine's effectiveness are omitted.

The article "The Sovereign Redeemer" and his "Innocent state": did Russia have a chance for democracy?" (Golubeva, 2021) provides expert opinions, generally united by a negative assessment of the modern Russian state structure. The opinions of neutral analytics or supporters of the Russian President's course are not presented.

The text "Soviet or Russian? How the symbols of the USSR became part of modern Russia" (Kornienko, 2021) is only based on the opinion of the journalist and a sociologist L. Gudkov. There are no references to a wider research on the issue (by cultural studies experts, for example).

In the article "My Russia is in prison. Street protest of Navalny's supporters took place in the regions" (Pushkarskaya et al., 2021) it is claimed that the opposition protests at the end of January 2021 were massive, although this is refuted even by the figures given in the same text, as the sum total of protesters did not exceed 20 thousand people, that is, about one hundredth of a percent of the 145 million population of the Russian Federation. Moreover, opinion polls show that the number of the protests' critics was by far greater, yet, the opinions of opponents of these rallies are not represented in the text.

In the article "Deputies of European Parliament about Russia: enough illusions, we need tough sanctions " (Vendik, 2020) negative anti-Russian opinions of EU Parliament deputies dominate.

Whose point of view does the text reflect?

These media texts represent the point of view of the opponents of Russian foreign and domestic policy.

Who will profit if the text's message is accepted? Who won't?

If the audience uncritically accepts the viewpoint of these media texts, anti-Russian political forces will win, and supporters of the constructive dialogue between Russia and the West will lose.

The evaluation of the text's credibility: media texts contain manipulative techniques intervened with facts.

Based on the theoretical model of anti-manipulation media educational activity developed earlier (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 323-332), we have analyzed 689 materials on the *BBC Russian Service* website related to Russia for the period 2020-2021 using a set of key questions. It was found out that two-thirds of media texts from the examined sample contained mostly objective information, not accompanied by manipulative techniques. Nevertheless, in about a third of *BBC Russian Service* materials signs of manipulation and propaganda clichés were detected to one degree or another. In particular, the most common manipulative techniques used by *BBC Russian Service* authors reporting on Russia were "silence", "selection", "labeling", "framing" facts and "references to authorities". Clearly, a greater variety of sources and voices of experts was missing.

Case Studies 9: Media Manipulation and Its Reflection in Movies

The media are prone to reflection, showing the ways mass media function, how they influence the audience, and, in so doing, what methods and techniques are used. Therefore, for almost a hundred years, cinema has repeatedly addressed the storylines related to the work of the press, television, radio, film studios (and now also Internet agencies), to the stories of journalist investigations, election campaigns, etc. Meanwhile, the work of the employees of media agencies is often portrayed in a rather negative light, revealing many ulcers associated with media manipulations, information wars, direct forgery, etc.

In recent decades, numerous studies have been published on the film's portrayal of the work of media staff, mainly journalists (Ehrlich, 1997; 2004; 2005; 2006; Good, 1989; 2008; Khalilov, 2007; Lonsdale, 2016; Manvell , 1978; McNair, 2010; 2011; 2014; Milan, 2010; Saltzman, 2002; Shaffer, 2009; Zynda, 1979).

Partially, these were the studies of the heroic film images of journalists as fighters against Evil. Nevertheless, there were researches of the ways films represent media agencies and specific journalists as providers of deliberately false sensational information, with their main task being to manipulate public opinion in favor of the "powerful" (Good, 1989; Ehrlich, 2006; Milan, 2010; Rowe, 1992; Saltzman, 2002).

For example, it has been noted that "Hollywood has given us reporters corrupted by cynicism, ambitions, and drink, careless of others' lives and reputations, and ever reluctant to let the truth stand in the way of a good story" (Good, 1989: 9), and journalists in the movie "are hard-drinking, foul-mouthed, dim-witted social misfits concerned only with twisting the truth into scandal and otherwise devoid of conscience" (Rowe, 1992: 27), "'bad journalist' characters actually have helped shore up the press's preferred self-image, either by seeing through lies and pretense to

the truth or by paying the price for not telling the truth, "(Ehrlich, 2006: 502), journalists" can lie, cheat, distort, bribe, betray, or violate any ethical code as long as the journalist exposes corruption, solves a murder, catches a thief, or saves an innocent "(Saltzman, 2002: 146).

Thus, "most ethical situations presented in journalism films often focused on negative characteristics, actions or decisions of the journalists. The majority of the journalists depicted are corrupt or unethical in some way, while the protagonist is usually either the only ethical reporter in a sea of unethical ones, or an unethical reporter who rises about the rest to become a heroic and honest journalist. ... Three types of ethical situations were most often presented in the films - deception or unethical reporting practices, most often involving relationships with sources, and questionable choices in personal relationships and home life "(Milan, 2010: 53).

In one of the previous articles (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020), we, based on the analysis of a variety of studies (Bakir, McStay, 2018; Born, 2017; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Dentith, 2017; Derakhshan, Wardle, 2017; Farkas, Schou, 2018; Fitzpatrick, 2018; Flintham et al., 2018; Gelfert, 2018; Janze, Risius, 2017; Lazer et al., 2018; Levy, 2017; Marwick, 2018; Nielsen, Graves, 2017; Rushkoff, 2003; Sadiku et al., 2018; Tambini, 2017; Tandoc Jr. et al., 2018; Van Dijk, 2006 and others) distinguished a number of the main manipulative techniques used by modern media.

It should be noted that the mechanisms of such manipulative media techniques have been frequently demonstrated in feature films (*15 Minutes.* USA-Germany, 2001; *1984.* UK, 1984; *State of Play.* USA, 2009; *All the King's Men.* USA-Germany, 2006; *House of Cards.* USA, 2013-2019; *Il Mostro.* Italy, 1977; *The Newsroom.* USA, 2012-2014; *The Front Page.* USA, 1974; *The Last Debate.* USA, 2000; *Natural Born Killers.* USA, 1994; *Network.* USA, 1976; *The Morning Show.* USA, 2019-2020; *Wag the Dog.* USA, 1997; *The Truman Show.* USA, 1998, etc.).

For example, the content analysis has shown that in Luigi Zampa's 1977 film *Il Mostro*, about the work of a daily newspaper and a journalist trying to make a career out of sensational stories about a killer maniac, one can find almost the entire set of our generalized classifier of media manipulation techniques.

Thus, the main character (with the support of the newspaper's management) effectively uses the following media manipulation techniques:

- *preemptive impact*: that is, the fastest (significantly ahead of competitors) news message (in this case, this is another murder committed by a maniac) in the (sensational) manner necessary for the communicator; prompt message about the possible negative consequences of this or that phenomenon (in the film it is the newspaper's forecast of further murders);

- *plain folks, maximum simplicity, rubbing into trust*: deliberately simplifying ideas and working to maintain trusting relationships with a mass audience, its support under the pretext that the most simplified ideas, the communicator's suggestions have a positive meaning, since they are supposedly close to the common people. In *Il Monstro* this is manifested, first of all, in the fact that the newspaper publishes on the front page a "sincere" and "confidential" letter from a journalist to a murderer, allegedly aimed at making him surrender to the hands of justice;

- *multiplication, crushing, chaos*: mosaicism, chaotization, flowing information at high speed, its redundancy, high tempo, which allows, on the one hand, even important (political) events to be embedded in the general machine-gun-speed news presentation, and on the other hand, creates the need for interpretations, explanations, since people need to make sense of the world they live in. Mosaic and chaotic nature of the presentation deprive the audience of a sense of orderliness and predictability of life. In Luigi Zampa's film, the newspaper editorial staff creates a whole series of "machine-gun" news series, daily stirring up the interest of the mass audience in the murders and the alleged plans of the maniac.

- *disabling, blocking critical and rational perception*: disabling, blocking critical and rational perception of the message by appealing to the elementary emotions, to the subconscious in the atmosphere of a show, scandal, accentuation of shocking, traumatic and paranormal phenomena. In *Il Monstro,* the main character, together with the newspaper editorial staff, relying on the natural human instinct of fear, fear of death, does everything so that the audience does not reflect and analyze, but only trusts the editorial policy of interpreting "hot facts" and conjectures.

- *reiteration*: constant, obsessive repetition (including the reception of the initial and secondary information waves) of certain statements, regardless of the truth. This technique is also actively used in the film by the main character in relation to the income-generating "hot topics".

- *exploitation of slogans, myths and stereotypes*: In L. Dzampa's film, it is made clear that journalism is capable not only of exploiting myths and stereotypes, but also of deliberately constructing them.

- *rumor creation and exploitation*: Throughout the story, the authors of *Il Monstro* show in detail how the newspaper purposefully creates, spreads and exploits rumors.

- *Trojan horse*: fragmentation and gradual introduction of necessary information between neutral and/or true information. This manipulative technique is also used by the main characters of the film in newspaper publications about a maniac killer.

- *selection, card stacking, concept change*: selection, cheating, substitution of concepts, biased selection of information, selection and unbalanced emphasis on only positive or only negative facts and arguments, while marginalizing or suppressing the opposite; using assumptions as reasoning; replacing the positive (or negative) qualities of some phenomenon with others (sometimes opposite), which are necessary for the manipulator at the moment. In *Il Monstro* it is clearly shown how newspapers from the whole variety of daily information flow do select the information about murders for the front page.

- *transfer, projection, associated chain*: the transfer of positive (or negative) qualities associated with established positive or negative concepts in society to certain phenomena, organizations, countries necessary for the manipulator at the moment, nations, ideas, personalities, etc. In case of L. Dzampa's film, it is the transfer of the popularity of the journalist and his coverage of murders, to the extended business sectors: the publication of detective books, merchandising including perfumery, toy production, popular songs, TV shows, etc.

- *appeal to authority, to opinion leaders, testimonial*: real and fictitious statements of famous (or notorious) people. In *Il Monstro* this role of a "mediator", "authority", an"expert" is promptly played by the main character - the journalist, since it is to him that the maniac sends letters announcing the next murder prepared by him.

- *name calling, labeling*: negative labeling, demonization. In the film, the maniac is deliberately demonized by the journalists, he is given the features of "Invincible Evil", capable of keeping a big city at bay.

- *promotion and self-promotion*: advertising and self-promotion of an individual, group, party, organization, company, etc. In the film's case it is both self-promotion of a newspaper and the journalist reporting on a series of murders.

- *straightforward lie*: falsification, forgery, fake in media texts. At the end of the film, it turns out that the entire media story of the maniac (although all the murders were really committed) was initially based on forgery and falsification.

To conclude, although "every year brings yet more journalists to the screen, sometimes to play the hero, sometimes the villain, and sometimes something of both" (Good, 2008: 5), cinema is largely portraying the media (press, television, Internet) as an agent of manipulation and fraud, and the work of journalists is often shown as a technology of deceiving and managing the mood of the mass audience for the benefit of the certain powerful groups.

2.Foreign and Russian experience of media literacy education related to the analysis of media texts of manipulative influence

As early as in the second half of the 20th century, media education began to focus on needs of an audience living in an ambiguous media environment. However back then it was still not so multimedia and interactive and dealt with autonomous media. Media messages were then created mainly by professional media agencies, which facilitated perception and ideological, ethical and artistic evaluation of media texts. However, the 21st century witnesses media explosion: every day more and more people of different ages are getting involved in interactive multimedia processes (having been drastically influenced by the development of satellite television, the Internet, mobile and smart gadgets), access to information has become almost unlimited and in many more formats. As never before, the audience began to spend a significant amount of time on access to new multimedia opportunities, on the creation, use and distribution of media texts of various types and genres, on interaction in a variety of media environments.

The limited number of media channels in the 20th century undoubtedly narrowed the scope of contact and perception of media texts by the audience. Modern social networks have dramatically changed the situation: going online, a person can now filter out things he/she doesn't like and create a comfortable virtual environment, matching one's attitudes (this is where he/she may become a victim of media manipulators, who investigate personal features of an individual and/or organization).

Against this background, more people and organizations are becoming increasingly aware that media illiteracy can lead to substantial negative political and social consequences.

Of course, false news and other misinformation has been accompanying society for centuries, but it is today that media manipulations have acquired a truly global scale. Moreover, false messages can be created not only for the purpose of (political) misinformation, but just for fun for some social groups, from an ironic, satirical or parody perspective.

However, it can be agreed that "in the age of fake news and alternative facts, the risks and dangers associated with illintentioned individuals or groups easily routing forged … information through computer and social networks to deceive, cause emotional distress, or to purposefully influence opinions , attitudes, and actions have never been more severe"(Shen et al., 2019: 460).

That's why audiences of any age need media competence. Numerous studies (Bulger, Davison, 2018; De Abreu, 2019; Dell, 2019: 619-620; Gallagher, Magid, 2017: 1; Hartai, 2014; Hobbs, 2010; 2011; Jolls, Wilson, 2014; Mason et al. , 2018: 1; McDougall et al, 2018; Mihailidis, 2018; Müller, Denner, 2019: 5; Potter, 2012; Potter, McDougall, 2017; Shen et al., 2019; Wilson, 2019) prove that media education does enhance knowledge, skills and attitudes in terms of analysis and critical reflection of media and misinformation. At the same time, one should not forget that the creators of misinformation, groups conducting political campaigns using data from social networks, extremists and agents of the "troll factories" have a high level of media competence. Therefore, educating media literate citizens is not enough: in order to counter media manipulations at a democratic level, it is necessary to integrate media literacy education into the activities of media agencies and government structures (McDougall et al, 2018: 6; Mihailidis, 2018; Müller, Denner, 2019: 5; Wilson, 2019).

One way or another, but it is precisely the problem of media manipulation that has become acute in recent years that has again drawn attention to media education. Media literacy has increasingly become associated with the fight against fake news, and various stakeholders - from educators to lawmakers and media agencies - have contributed to the creation of new resources and media education programs (Bulger, Davison, 2018: 5; Fake news …, 2018; European Commission, 2018a; 2018b; Friesem, 2019; Gallagher, Magid, 2017; Give …, 2019; Mason et al., 2018: 1; Müller, Denner, 2019: 5; Haigth et al., 2019; Hobbs, McGee, 2014; Horbatuck , Sears, 2018; Ireton, Posetti, 2019; McDougall, 2019; Murrok et al., 2018; Pradekso et al., 2018; Salma, 2019; Silverman, 2015).

J. Suiter (Suiter, 2016) associates these new trends with the following reasons:

- the synthesis of such often diverse and contradictory phenomena as globalization, the economic crisis, local armed conflicts, the fight against terrorism;

- the emergence of a new media system, dominated by entertainment shows, social interactive networks and information filters.

The merger of these factors strengthens the emotional component of the media, while seriously weakening the credibility of the audience, cast doubt on many state institutions and political values, and created increased skepticism about media and journalism. As a result, the legitimacy of liberal values loses its significance, but doors open for anti-liberal forces, whose populist and nationalist appeals are gaining strength (Suiter, 2016: 25; Pérez Tornero et al., 2018: 230-232).

A number of researchers (Bulger, Davison, 2018; McDougall et al, 2018; Wilson, 2019) believe that media literacy / media competence involves the following components:

- *access and dissemination*: the ability to skillfully find and use media information, as well as share valuable and practical media texts (including filtering and managing media content);

- *analysis and evaluation*: the ability to analyze and evaluate media texts based on critical thinking and understanding of their quality, truthfulness, reliability and other components, including from the point of view of potential consequences of impact on the audience;

- *creation*: the ability to create media texts being aware of their aims, target audience and composition;

- *social responsibility and ethics*: the ability to apply the principles of social responsibility, democratic citizenship and ethics to one's own identity, communication, behavior and media activities (McDougall et al, 2018: 7).

Certainly, these components of media competence should be considered in a comprehensive manner, including the framework of topics related to manipulative influences, which significantly complicated the work of modern teachers seeking to convey to their students the value of true facts, especially in those subject areas that have long been used as a propaganda tool (social science, history, literature, etc.).

In the case of addressing such a narrow field of media education as the development of critical thinking regarding media manipulations, it is reasonable to rely on five guiding principles for teaching "How to Know What to Believe": misinformation is pollution; all information is not designed to manipulate; people tend to see what they want in "the media"; news is distinct from most other forms of information; digital forensics skills are obligatory (Adams, 2018: 232-234).

However, we fully agree with D. Buckingham: "Yet there is a broader problem here. Media literacy is often invoked in a spirit of 'solutionism'. When media regulation seems impossible, media literacy is often seen as the acceptable answer - and indeed a magical panacea - for all media-related social and psychological ills. Are you worried about violence, sexualisation, obesity, drugs, consumerism? Media literacy is the answer! Let the teachers deal with it! This argument clearly frames media literacy as a protectionist enterprise, a kind of prophylactic. It oversimplifies the problems it purports to address, overstates the influence of media on young people, and underestimates the complexity of media education. Thus, violence in society is not simply caused by media violence, and it will not be reduced by simply telling kids that movies are teaching them the wrong lessons – or indeed by stopping them watching TV, as some propose. Similar arguments apply to fake news. Fake news is a symptom of much broader tendencies in the worlds of politics and media. People (and not just children) may be inclined to believe it for quite complex reasons. And we can't stop them believing it just by encouraging them to check the facts, or think rationally about the issues"(Buckingham, 2017).

In fact, a tendency to reduce *media literacy* to *protection from media* is becoming increasingly accepted: "Media Literacy — the ability of audiences to think critically and analyze the manipulative propaganda around them — as a key way to withstand information war, lies, and hate speech" (Copeland, 2016: 2).

In this context, the appearance on the field of media education of new, previously unthinkable actors, such as, for example, NATO, is remarkable.

At the first glance, the media education tasks that NATO aims at, seem quite logical:

- "Enhance general media literacy. The mass media and opinion leaders can play important roles in educating the public about the misinformation activities in online media – by providing

analysis of trolling tactics and manipulation techniques, as well as suggesting criteria for identifying organised trolling. Putting trolling in the headlines and encouraging people to share their experiences of being attacked/harassed by trolls would facilitate discussion on how to identify the malicious use of social media and seeking ways to counter it;

- Enhance the public's critical thinking and media literacy. Long-term efforts are required to enhance the public's critical thinking and education on the weaponisation of the media, particularly online media. Perhaps providing simple user guides for the general public (for example, when opening comment sections) on how to identify trolls would be the first and simplest step towards raising society's awareness of the manipulation techniques utilised in the internet. One solution might be introducing media knowledge and source appraisal in social media to school curricula" (NATO, 2016: 82-83).

However, if one reads the chapters' headings ("Trolling and Russian military strategy", "Russian military strategy and hybrid trolls", "Incidences of pro-Russian trolling", "The possible influence of the content generated by pro − Russian trolls?", Trolling impact assessment in the perception of Russian-speaking society") of this book, it becomes obvious that all of the media education anti-manipulation activities proposed by NATO have a virtually unambiguous anti-Russian orientation. It is not without reason that on the 106 pages of this book the word Russia (usually in a negative context) is mentioned 585 times (NATO, 2016).

Another problem, in our opinion, is related to the fact that a refutation directed against media manipulative exposure introduces negative information even to that part of the audience that previously did not know about it. As a result, a situation may arise when one part of the audience will believe in a manipulative lie, and the other will receive its refutation, thereby refuting the fakes only widens the audience. "Oddly enough, the fight against fakes is complicated by the fact that people who read and share fakes do not read the online sources where fakes are checked, where an intense struggle is being waged against them. Such sites are read only by professionals. They can be journalists or, again, anti-fake experts who create their own websites. The refutation is focused on the initial appearance of the accusation, that is, it is journalism that appears post-factum, it is utterly tied to the information actions of the opposite side" (Pocheptsov, 2019).

It must be admitted that there are significant pedagogical problems associated with how to design media education classes on the basis of media manipulations and fake news. David Buckingham (Buckingham, 2017), in our opinion, rightly believes that to assess the reliability of sources on the Internet is probably much more difficult to do than traditional press and television, although experienced media educators are likely to cope with this task. However, in this case, the assessment of truth and lies will depend on knowledge of the context and content, as well as on the form of presentation of the material. This is especially difficult in conditions where the majority of the audience (both youth and adult) is unlikely to be interested in exposing false political or social information (especially if they did not know about it before).

R. Hobbs (Hobbs, 2017) provides an example of a successful practice of one of the American schools where an English teacher uses the Internet resource *Mind Over Media*, developed by the University of Rhode Island's media education laboratory. This resource includes more than a thousand examples of modern media propaganda on topics related to national and international politics, emigration, crime, justice, media, nutrition, health, environment, and wildlife. This site also offers free lesson plans for studying media manipulation. In this way, secondary school students first encounter the concept "propaganda" and discover its techniques (for example, triggering strong emotions, simplifying information and ideas, addressing specific needs of the audience, attacking opponents), perform creative assignments, learn to recognize manipulation and propaganda, filter out quality information and become more media-competent (Hobbs, 2017).

So, if these useful anti-manipulation skills are taught at school, then the question arises: will such skills be used outside of school?

One of the most eminent modern researchers in media culture and education, Professor D. Buckingham argues that: "How many people are willing to routinely evaluate the reliability of online sources, or to cross-check information - especially in an age when we have become used to instant access to information? Personally, I am sorry to say that I rarely do this, and I doubt that I could persuade an average sixteen-year-old student to do so either. Beyond this, there is the problem of epistemology. You don't have to be a complete relativist to acknowledge that a given

'fact' can be interpreted in many different ways by different people in different contexts. There are some absolute truths and some absolute falsehoods, but between them lies a very large gray area" (Buckingham, 2017).

In addition to this, it is extremely important to identify why people can easily believe seemingly "fake" news, it should be recognized that, perceiving and evaluating any media text, the audience relies not only on rational thinking, but on intuition, emotions, (latent) desires, prejudices and fantasies, on the whole intricate and ambiguous ensemble of one's life and media experience. But this experience can be (especially in an adult audience) developed contrary to democratic ideals and views. Most likely, it will be impossible to convince a racist to abandon his views with the help of rational arguments and analysis of anti-racist media texts. Among other things, the cultivation of a critical view of social processes and media culture can develop into total cynicism (supported by conspiracy theory) – a complete distrust of everything and everyone, and especially the media (Buckingham, 2017).

The latter tendency is asserted, for example, by the Knight Foundation study – the number of Americans who trust the media has declined dramatically:

- about 66 % say that most news media don't do a good job of separating fact from opinion;

- more people have a negative (43 %) than a positive (33 %) view of the news media, while 23 % are neutral;

- on a multiple-item media trust scale with scores ranging from a low of zero to a high of 100, the average American scores a 37 (Knight Foundation, 2018).

The Commission on Fake News and Critical Literacy in Schools found that "only 2 % of children and young people in the UK have the critical literacy skills they need to tell whether a news story is real or fake. Fake news is driving a culture of fear and uncertainty among young people. Half of children (49.9 %) are worried about not being able to spot fake news and almost two-thirds of teachers (60.9 %) believe fake news is having a harmful effect on children's well-being by increasing levels of anxiety, damaging self-esteem and skewing their world view. ... the online proliferation of fake news is making children trust the news less (60.6 %). While almost half of older children get their news from websites (43.8 %) and social media (49.5 %), only a quarter of children actually trust online news sources (26.2 % trust websites). Regulated sources of news, such as TV and radio, remain the most used and the most trusted by children and young people. Children are most likely to talk to their family (29.9 %) and friends (23.4 %) about fake news and least likely to speak to their teachers (6.4 %); yet 98.8 % of teachers believe they have the greatest responsibility for helping children develop the literacy skills they need to identify fake news. Children with the poorest literacy skills, such as boys and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, were also found to be the least likely to be able to spot fake news. Indeed, half of teachers (53.5 %) believe that the national curriculum does not equip children with the literacy skills they need to identify fake news, and a third (35.2 %)" (Fake news..., 2018: 4).

According to the results of a qualitative sociological study conducted by D.B. Pisarevskaya in February 2015 with people whose socio-political preferences had been known in advance (25 expert interviews with residents of Russia from 20 to 35 years old), four strategies of behavior in perceiving the news were noted:

- to perceive and integrate into one's world outlook only those facts from the news that correspond to the socio-political preferences of the person and therefore are considered reliable (exact correlation);

- not to trust the news in the media fundamentally: "There is no such a thing as objective news";

- to study news from various sources (including foreign-language ones) in order to get a "slice" of various news and points of view, and then form their own perspective on their basis;

- to try and separate news facts from opinions and trust only facts, but in the absence of a clear separation between journalism of opinions and journalism of facts, this is difficult to do. Also, the very ambiguity of the concept of "a fact" prevents it: with modern technical means available on the Internet you can easily find evidence of eyewitnesses to events, but they may not have the fullness of the picture, and their photo and video materials can be easily edited, remounted or even faked. Journalists and bloggers in reporting texts can distort facts or keep silent about any details" (Pisarevskaya, 2018: 152).

To date, media educators (Bulger, Davison, 2018; Hobbs, 2017; McDougall et al, 2018; News ..., 2019: 35; Wilson, 2019 and others) offer the following practical areas of educational work with news media information:

- establish clear principles for building a media education program;
- create a modular curriculum that has a potential to grab the audience's attention, choose remarkable materials of news and information (including manipulative examples too);
- develop a series of assessment questions and interactive tasks regarding the topics of each lesson;
- create quantitative and qualitative tools for assessing the media competence of the audience;
- treat students not only as consumers, but also as creators of media texts;
- involve news agencies as educational partners;
- cooperate with journalists; engage them in media education courses, both as instructors, and assessors;
- teach the audience to appreciate the quality standards of journalism;

D. Pisarevskaya offers the following recommendations for determining the reliability of news in the press and on the Internet:

- to check the primary source given in the article: is the news still present on the website or has it already been removed, since it contained inaccurate information; whether the news was on fact-checking sites in other languages;
- to check if the piece of news is on other news sites (if it is not there, this does not necessarily mean that it is a fake; perhaps other resources simply have not published it yet. However, you should study the news more carefully and also check whether the news is present on implausible sites);
- to question the reputation of the publication and the author's reputation (whether they published fakes before);
- to check geographical location of the message's author (how far is he from the place of events);
- to check publication address: url, name, location (fake news sites sometimes "disguise" as urls of popular news sites, but a slight difference in url is also possible); general information about the publication (who supports the work of this publication, site; is it neutral or promotes a particular perspective);
- to verify photos and videos (if they are presented as exclusive shots from the scene, it should be clarified whether they have appeared on the Internet before, whether they were processed in Photoshop or similar software. There are various online services that allow you to do this (e.g. TinEye.com).
- to check the correspondence of the headline to the content of the news;
- to identify action verbs and personal pronouns in the headings: is there a call for some action (for example: "Urgently read this news") or personal pronouns (for example: "She decided to share her story);
- to analyze if there are any references to "anonymous authority", which are used for greater credibility: e.g. "Based on many years of research, scientists have established ... ", "Most doctors recommend ... ", "A source from the closest presidential quarter who wished to remain anonymous, reports ... ";
- to see if there are manipulations and pressure on emotions: is the author striving to furnish opinions and emotions as facts and create a certain emotional impression on the audience;
- to examine the quotes and indirect speech: are the citations distorted by being placed in a different context or are somebody's words incorrectly cited;
- to check whether the quantitative data referred to in the article comply with the rules for statistical reporting of information;
- to examine eyewitness accounts on social networks: what eyewitnesses write about the event (Pisarevskaya, 2018: 162-164).

We have adapted and summarized a set of media education assignments aimed at the factual analysis of media texts (among other things, from the perspective of their manipulative influences)

developed by E. Murrock, J. Amulya, M. Druckman and T. Liubyva (Murrok et al., 2018: 37-40) to show the possibilities of their practical application.

Based on the aforementioned, we can agree that the structure and conceptual features of fact checking in media literacy education should be aimed at: avoiding subjective interpretation of information; prevention of manipulating the evidence; elimination of bias when drawing conclusions; preventing allegation of bias (Gorokhovsky, 2017: 25).

However, in practice this can often be violated by the media educators themselves.

For example, the authors of the textbook for teachers "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking in Social Science Lessons: a Teacher's Guide" at the beginning reasonably state: "In order to form an objective opinion, it is worth analyzing historical facts and collect as much proven and verified information as possible. The source of historical facts is, first of all, historical documents ... (Primary sources are original sources that do not interpret information. These are research reports, photographs, diaries, letters ... When using primary sources, adjustments should be made for the subjective factor. Secondary sources are provided by intermediaries when information has already been interpreted, analyzed and summarized. These are scientific articles, books, critical analysis, etc. Tertiary sources are compilations, indexes, and other organized sources: abstracts, tables, encyclopedias" (Bakka et al., 2016: 13-14).

However, when later in their textbook its authors (Bakka et al., 2016: 13-14) move on to a specific example of the information analysis, they seem to forget about the basic principles of checking and interpreting facts in a media text.

Thus, in the textbook "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking in Social Science Lessons: a Teacher's Guide" (Media literacy and critical thinking in the lessons of social studies: a companion for the teacher), students are asked to investigate how justified in relation to the leader of the Ukrainian nationalist movement Stepan Bandera (1909-1959) the following characteristics: "terrorist", "collaborator", "authoritarian leader", "schismatic" and "only symbol". And here, instead of comparing different sources and points of view, the opinions of authoritative historians and archivists, to study the works of S. Bandera himself, the authors of the textbook offer students only one option: to read the article of the ex-director of the State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine V. Vyatrovich "Bandera: old and new myths" (Vyatrovich, 2009), on the basis of which the students should answer such questions: 1) How and why was the myth created? 2) Who benefited from it? 3) What methods did the author use to debunk the myth? 4) What other methods can be used? (Bakka et al., 2016: 13).

Based on the adapted set of media education tasks developed by E. Murrock, J. Amulya, M.Druckman and T. Liubyva (Murrok et al., 2018: 37-40), we will check in what ways the article of V.Vyatrovich (Vyatrovich, 2009) meets the criteria for a balanced verification of facts:

1. Who is the target audience of this media text?

V. Vyatrovich (Vyatrovich, 2009) published in the Ukrainian language, it is clear that it is primarily intended for the audience of residents of Ukraine (although there are also translations of this article into Russian on the Internet).

2. Does this media text allow to draw certain conclusions?

Yes, it does, and the authors of the textbook do this, claiming (in full accordance with V. Vyatrovich's views) that "they have seen in practice the way a negative image of one of the symbols of the Ukrainian liberation struggle is formed and corresponding myths arise" (Bakka et al., 2016: 13).

3. How does this media text make one feel?

The text of V. Vyatrovich is undoubtedly aimed at evoking positive emotions in the audience towards S. Bandera: "It would seem that everything is already clear, and there is not a single nation who would reject such a hero. However, still often Ukrainian authors regarding Bandera lack the courage to draw a conclusion from these facts. But I am convinced that the moment will come when the authors, readers and all other Ukrainians will find enough strength to call a hero a hero. And Bandera will again become a symbol, a symbol of the fact that Ukrainians no longer need to look back at someone, formulating their views on the past or vision of the future" (Vyatrovich, 2009).

6. Did this media text exclude any point of view?

In his article, V. Vyatrovich cites opinions (though without any specific references to any authoritative sources) that are ideologically sharply at odds with his views, however, using the manipulation methods of "juggling cards", he exaggerates and dramatically simplifies the theses of his anonymous opponents, adjusting them to his pre-prepared politically biased answers.

7. What points of view are missing from this media text?

Due to the anonymity of the opinions of opponents, the article by V. Vyatrovich lacks the points of view of authoritative historians and archivists.

8. Do all official names, data, and quotes / opinions in this media text have clear references?

The article by V. Vyatrovich (Vyatrovich, 2009) does not contain a single quote, and the data are not backed up by any links to archival documents and authoritative historical research.

9. Are the images, statistics, and symbols consistent with the contents of the media text?

There are no images and statistics in the article of V. Vyatrovich, although there are verbal symbols that correlate with the content.

10. The name of this media text is... (neutral, causes an emotional reaction, difficult to answer).

The title of V. Vyatrovich's article ("Bandera: Old and New Myths") may seem neutral at first glance, however, from the very beginning, the author's explicit calculation for the audience's emotional reaction is revealed.

11. The name of this media text ... (corresponds to its content; does not correspond to its content; difficult to answer).

The title of the article as a whole corresponds to the content, based on the author's task to refute the myths created by the anonymous opponents of V. Vyatrovich.

12. The author of the media text ... (has a biased position; the position is neutral; difficult to answer).

The text of the article clearly shows that its author has a biased pro-Bandera ideological position.

13. Are the facts in this media text separate from opinions?

The facts in the article by V. Vyatrovich are not separated from his opinion and are presented in a distinctly manipulative manner.

14. Is this media text balanced in terms of opinions, links, and sources?

The article by V. Vyatrovich is far from balanced: the author gives only points of view that are convenient for his criticism, while they are anonymous and are submitted without any reference to any historical sources.

15. How reliable are the statements made by the experts cited in this media text? (a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means "not trustworthy at all", and 10 — "fully trustworthy").

The article by V. Vyatrovich does not provide a single alternative opinion of an authoritative expert. As for the opinion of the author himself, in view of his obvious bias and manipulativeness, in our opinion, it may not be considered fully credible.

16. Does this media text have a clear "hook" for the audience?

Yes, the hook is clearly visible in the text of the article to attract the attention of the audience; it was stated by the author in the introduction: "Anniversary dates bring back old Soviet clichés (terrorist, traitor, collaborator) to life. In the case of Bandera, new stereotypes are added to these stamps — a destructive politician, a schismatic, an authoritarian leader" (Vyatrovich, 2009).

17. Are numerous political figures mentioned in this media text?

There is no numerous mention of politicians in this article.

18. Is this media text focused on the achievements / activities of one person?

Yes, this article is about one person.

19. Is the author's point of view supported by facts?

The facts in the article by V. Vyatrovich are presented only through the prism of his opinion, without reference to authoritative sources and archival materials.

20. Express your attitude to the following phrase: "This is an objective, balanced media text" (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, difficult to answer).

Of course, the biased and subjective text of V. Vyatrovich, for the reasons described above, cannot be considered balanced.

21. Given your answers above, how would you rate this media text? (1 — completely implausible, 10 — completely implausible)

An article by V. Vyatrovich may look plausible only for an audience that is not capable of critically evaluating the manipulation techniques used by the author and a priori having pro-Bandera views.

And although the authors of the textbook quite prudently write that "when we talk about an outstanding historical figure that is important for a certain people, nation, country, then you should not recklessly trust the media, both from countries seeking to level out the significance of this figure, and those that they only call for worship" (Bakka et al., 2016: 13), in practice they themselves act contrary to their own advice and, as we have proven above, actually force students to accept a single, biased viewpoint.

Thus, we have identified another problem of media education related to the disclosure of false information: the political bias of some media educators themselves, who in fact do not resist fake media messages, but also contribute to their propaganda among the mass audience.

It has been proven by numerous studies (Bulger, Davison, 2018: 5; Fake news ..., 2018; Friesem, 2019; Gallagher, Magid, 2017; Mason et al., 2018: 1; Müller, Denner, 2019: 5; Give ..., 2019; Haigth et al., 2019; Horbatuck, Sears, 2018; Ireton, Posetti, 2019; McDougall, 2019; Murrok et al., 2018; Pradekso et al., 2018; Salma, 2019; Silverman, 2015) that initiatives to increase media literacy, including educational programs involving journalists, reduce the vulnerability of the audience to media manipulation and misinformation. The development of critical thinking and analytical skills is a key component of successful educational activities. A media competent audience is more likely to reveal misinformation, which gives hope for the effectiveness of media education programs (McDougall et al, 2018: 7).

It is remarkable that some researchers (Copeland, 2016: 2) even propose to popularize media education by introducing its elements into television talk shows and entertainment programs, for example, when hosts discuss relevant news issues with celebrity guests.

However, for all that, media literacy "cannot be treated as a panacea. Media literacy is just one frame in a complex media and information environment. At issue is not simply an individual's responsibility for vetting information but how state-sponsored disinformation efforts and our everyday technologies influence the information we see and how we interact with it. The extent to which media literacy can combat the problematic news environment is an open question. Is denying the existence of climate change a media literacy problem? ... Can media literacy combat the intentionally opaque systems of serving news on social media platforms? Or intentional campaigns of disinformation? It is crucial to examine the promises and limits of media literacy before embracing it as a counter to disinformation and media manipulation" (Bulger, Davison, 2018: 6).

This is why the following questions are so important:

- Can media education be successful in preparing the audience for contacts with fake media texts?

- What social strata groups do media educators need to focus on? What new media education initiatives need to be developed?

- How can media education media literacy programs help people understand that they often overestimate their ability to evaluate false media texts?

- Can a fact check in (news) media texts be appropriate in a person's daily contacts with the media?

- How can an audience committed to misinformation and propaganda can sow distrust of the media and create hostile media texts?

- How can politically engaged media educators promote fake, ideologically biased media texts among a mass audience?

That is why only if every person (with the help of a media teacher or on their own) will study the key concepts of media education (i.e. representation, audience, ideology, etc.) and develop a balanced and unbiased analytical thinking in relation to modern media texts (including news), it will be possible to avoid both the false binary "real vs. fake" and the dangers of hypercynical distrust of all media (McDougall, 2019: 42).

Moreover, we concur with Buckingham (Buckingham, 2017) that, so far, the development of human media competence, unfortunately, has not been supported by the media agencies, which are often far from willing to truly inform citizens and promote democracy. Declaring that in a free economic market media regulation is impossible (and false information - among other things — often brings financial profit), media agencies hold the individual consumer responsible for contacts with media texts. Such an approach can serve as the basis for state regulation of media and government statements about its support for media education (which often remain declaration only). In any case, pedagogical approaches (of media education) are not enough, we need a conscious strategy for reforming the media sphere. In addition, one must also take into account the multidirectional activity of Internet users who are not members of any traditional media corporations (Buckingham, 2017).

In this context, we agree with J. McDougall (McDougall, 2019: 42-43): instead of developing media competency rating scales, media education should teach the audience to apply in practice the media researchers' and media educators' tools; media education should be based on dynamic interactive approaches and cooperation of education and media culture actors; the traditional media educational topics should be complemented by practical exercises of the analysis of social networks and Internet information, in particular, regarding commercial and political exploitation and manipulative influences.

3. Theoretical model for the development of media competence of pedagogical universities and faculties' students in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences and its implementation in the educational process

Criteria and ways of assessing the effectiveness of activities that promote the development of media competence of students in the analysis of media manipulative influences

The modern media sphere is characterized by the spread of misinformation, which has a negative impact on students (both cognitively and emotionally), on the learning process in schools and universities. The consequences of disinformation campaigns can be profound, especially at the school level. They have undoubtedly complicated teachers' job, especially, in such subject areas where propaganda and manipulation is more frequently attempted (history, social studies, etc.). Many scholars hold the view that "media literacy initiatives have been shown to lessen the vulnerability of children to disinformation. The development of critical thinking and analytical competences are key components of a successful educational intervention. There is an ongoing debate on the best strategy to address students' susceptibility to disinformation, revolving around the extent to which interventions should target a person's core belief system and worldview. Media literacy campaigns against propaganda and disinformation have historical precedents that can inform present efforts to combat vulnerability to disinformation. There are many current educational initiatives that improve students' capacity to detect disinformation and protect themselves against its influence. Evidence shows that students who reported high levels of media literacy learning opportunities were more likely to identify misinformation, which lends credence to the impact of media literacy programmes. Such initiatives should be more widely researched and implemented" (McDougall et al, 2018: 50). Therefore it is particularly important to develop the criteria and assessment means for the efficiency of activities, aimed at media competence's development of students in the process of media manipulative influences' analysis.

We agree that the political and media environment of the 21st century motivates educators and researchers to create effective tools to increase the media competence of people, including preparing citizens to counter disinformation in any form and manifestation. In order to do that, in particular, one needs to: a) "develop a coherent understanding of the media environment, b) improve cross-disciplinary collaboration, c) leverage the current media crisis to consolidate stakeholders, d) prioritize the creation of a national media literacy evidence base, e) develop curricula for addressing action in addition to interpretation" (Bulger, Davison, 2018: 18).

Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that, etymologically, the word "propaganda" does not bear negative connotation. It is derived from Latin "propagare" – set forward, extend, spread, increase, which can be illustrated by "healthy lifestyle propaganda" or "anti-smoking propaganda". Thus, the word, which was not originally pejorative, in modern political sense, becomes such, and implies bias or deliberate misleading. This phenomenon has also been noticed by Renee Hobbs: "Propaganda, which is generally defined as strategic communication designed to activate strong emotions, bypass critical thinking, and shape attitudes and behaviors, has long been an important form of social power. But for too many American students, the term is only associated with historical examples from the middle of the 20th century. As a result of biases and omissions in classroom instruction, some high school and college students wrongly think propaganda only happened in Nazi Germany! Today, propaganda is everywhere, and it takes new digital forms that blur the lines between entertainment, information, and persuasion. Propaganda can be found on YouTube videos, websites, and TV news, and in movies, music, and video games. And it doesn't have to be solely negative; some forms of propaganda are actually beneficial. Think of the public service messages that remind you not to text and drive, for example. Well-designed propaganda activates strong feelings that motivate people to take action" (Hobbs, 2017).

However, the numerous prior researches have shown that it is the adolescent audience that is the most vulnerable and susceptible to manipulative media influences, it "has the highest tendency to read and to spread hoax or fake news. This is also tied to the fact that millennial spend more time on the Internet, and therefore have higher exposure to many various types information, including fake news" (Pradekso et al., 2018).

Yet, in spite of all the efforts of media educators around the globe, attempted throughout recent decades (Blumeke, 2000; Bowker, 1991; Buckingham, 2000; 2003; 2015; 2017; Buckingham, Sefton-Green, 1997: 285; Bulger, Davison, 2018; Courtney, 2018; De Abreu, 2019; Dell, 2019; European Commission, 2018; Friesem, 2019; Gallagher, Magid, 2017; Hartai, 2014; Hobbs, 2010; 2011; 2017; Hobbs, McGee, 2014; Ireton, Posetti, 2019; Jeangène Vilmer et al., 2018; Jolls, Wilson, 2014; Kubey, 1997; Mason et al., 2018; McDougall et al, 2018; Müller, Denner, 2019; Pérez Tornero et al., 2018; Potter, 2001: 28, 53; 2012; 2019; Potter, McDougall, 2017; Semali, 2000: 55; Silverblatt, 2001: 2-3; Silverblatt, Enright Eliceiri, 1997: 40; Wilson, 2019; Worsnop, 2004, etc.) the research results "indicate that nearly 6 in 10 (57.0 %) primary school teachers and half of secondary school teachers (52.9 % in KS3 and 50.7 % in KS4) believe that currently, the curriculum does not equip pupils with the skills they need to be able to identify fake news. Nearly two-thirds of teachers (64.8 %) feel that the critical literacy skills taught in school are relevant to the real world, yet over a quarter (26.4 %) are not convinced this is the case" (Fake news..., 2018: 21).

For that reason, we suppose that it is the development of the efficient ways of mediacompetence's development, especially of students and teachers, that is the key to improving the situation, including in terms of resisting media manipulations.

By the *media competence* of an individual, we mean the sum of their motives, knowledge, skills, abilities (criteria: motivational, contact, informational, perceptual, interpretive / evaluative, practical-operational, creative), contributing to the choice, use, critical analysis, evaluation, creation and communication of media texts in various forms, forms and genres, analysis of complex processes of media functioning in society.

At the same time, we believe that a media competent person has: the ability to select and use what the media can offer; knowledge of economic, social, technical, political conditions that are associated with the production and distribution of media products; knowledge of the conventions of the types and genres of media texts, the ability and willingness to make an effort to adequately perceive and understand the content of the media text and filter out "noise"; understanding the power of influence of media texts; the ability to distinguish between emotional and reasoned reactions in the perception and analysis of certain phenomena in the field of media culture, media texts of different types and genres; the ability to competently judge the content of the media text; to critical reflections on media texts, no matter how influential their sources are; knowledge of the specifics of the language of various media and the ability to understand their impact, regardless of the complexity of media texts; skills to create their own media products (Fedorov, 2007; Weber, 2002).

The Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary defines the term "criterion" (from the Greek *kriterion* — means for judgment) as "a feature on the basis of which an assessment is made, a means of verification — a measure of assessment" (PED, 2010).

Based on the above, in 2007 we developed a number of such criteria / features, on the basis of which we further assessed the levels of media competence of the audience (Fedorov, 2007: 31-56) (Table 1).

Table 1. Criteria (indicators) of audience's media competence

Criterion	Criterion's Description	Levels of the particular criterion development*
Motivational	motives of contact with media and media texts: genre, thematic, emotional, epistemological, hedonistic,	High. Average. Low

	psychological, moral, intellectual, aesthetic, therapeutic, etc.	
Contact	frequency of communication / contact with media and media texts	High. Average. Low
Informational	knowledge of terminology, theory and the history of media culture, the process of mass communication	High. Average. Low
Perceptive	ability to perceive media texts	High. Average. Low
Interpretational/ evaluative	ability to analyze the process of media functioning in society and media texts of different types and genres	High. Average. Low
Practical/operational	the ability to choose one or another media and media texts, create / distribute your own media texts, self-education skills in the media	High. Average. Low
Creative	evidence of creativity in various aspects of activities (perceptual, game, artistic, research, etc.) related to media	High. Average. Low

* The levels are described further in Table 2.

The decoding of the levels of criteria for a person's media competence was compiled by us (Table 2) based on six basic areas of knowledge and understanding for media education ("media agencies": studying the work, functions and goals of the creators of media texts; "media categories": studying the typology — types and genres of media / media texts; "media technologies": the study of methods / technologies for creating media texts; "media languages"": the study of media languages, that is, verbal, audiovisual, montage of media texts, codes and conventions; "media representation" : the study of ways of presenting, rethinking reality in media texts and its consequences, author's concepts, etc.; "media audience": studying the typology of the audience, the typology of media perception), identified by leading British media educators (C.Bazelgette, 1989; Bowker, 1991; Hart, 1997, etc.) and taking into consideration the prior findings of leading world experts in the field (Adams, 2018; Baake et al., 1999; Blumeke, 2000; Buckingham, 2000; 2003; 2015; 2017; Buckingham, Sefton-Green, 1997: 285; Bulger, Davison, 2018; Courtney, 2018; De Abreu, 2019; Dell, 2019; Friesem, 2019; Gallagher, Magid, 2017; Hobbs, 2010; 2011; 2017; Ireton, Posetti, 2019; Jeangène Vilmer et al., 2018; Kubey, 1997; Mason et al., 2018; McDougall et al, 2018; Müller, Denner, 2019; Pérez Tornero et al., 2018; Potter, 2001: 28, 53; 2019; Pradekso et al., 2018; Salma, 2019; Semali, 2000: 55; Shen et al., 2019; Silverblatt, 2001: 2-3; Silverblatt, Enright Eliceiri, 1997: 40; Wilson, 2019; Worsnop, 2004, etc.) and Russian (Bondarenko, 1997: 22-23; Cherkasova, 2019; Dakhin, 2004; Gura, 2005; Khilko, 2001; Khutorskoy, 2002; Pisarevskaya, 2018; Polichko, 1987: 7-8; Usov, 1989, etc.) media practitioners and theorists.

Undeniably, this kind of typology is conditional, but it gives an idea of a differentiated approach to the development of media competence, when, for example, in the presence of high levels of contact or creative criteria, an average or even low level of information and evaluative features is possible. The rest of the indicators appear in an undeveloped, "shrunken" condition. But it seems as an axiom that without the developed media perception and the ability to analyze and evaluate the media text, media competence cannot be considered as high leveled. Neither knowledge of the facts of the history of media culture, nor the frequency of communication with the media, nor the practical ability to create media texts can by themselves make a person media literate.

Many researchers have examined a wide and varied range of motives of the audience's contacts with media and media texts (in particular, cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and ethical, etc.) (De Abreu, 2019; Kubey, 1997; Potter, 2001: 8; 2019; Semali, 2000: 55; Silverblatt, 2001: 2-3; Silverblatt, Enright Eliceiri, 1997: 40; Worsnop, 2004). Of course, these motives largely depend on

factors such as the environment (micro and macro) of territory / communication, heredity / genetic code, education / upbringing, age, gender, etc.

Table 2. Description of the levels of criteria/indicators of media competence

Criteria's levels	Description of the levels of criteria/indicators of media competence
	Levels of the motivational criterion
High	A wide range of genre, thematic, emotional, epistemological, hedonistic, intellectual, psychological, creative, ethical, aesthetic motives for contacts with media and media texts, including: - the desire to obtain new information; - the desire to search for materials for educational, scientific, research goals; - selection of a varied genre and thematic spectrum of media texts for mandatory inclusion of non-entertainment genres; - the desire for recreation, compensation for entertainment (in moderate doses); - striving for identification, empathy; - striving to confirm their own competence in various spheres of life and media culture; - striving for artistic impressions; - striving for philosophical / intellectual, ethical, aesthetic dispute / dialogue with the creators of the media text, constructive criticism of their positions; - the desire to learn how to create media texts yourself, studying specific examples of professionals' work.
Average	A range of genre, thematic, emotional, epistemological, hedonistic, psychological, ethical, aesthetic motives for contacts with media and media texts, including: - the desire to obtain new information; - the desire to search for materials for educational, scientific, research goals; - selection of a diverse genre and thematic spectrum of media texts with a dominant focus on entertainment genres; - the pursuit of thrills; - striving for recreation, entertainment; - striving for identification, empathy; - striving to extract moral lessons from the media text; - the desire for compensation; - striving for psychological "treatment"; - striving for artistic impressions; - weak expression or lack of intellectual, creative motives of contacts with media texts.
Low	A narrow range of genre, thematic, emotional, hedonistic, ethical, psychological motives for contacts with media and media texts, including: - the desire to obtain new information; - selection of only entertaining genre and thematic spectrum of media texts; - the pursuit of thrills; - striving for recreation, entertainment; - the desire for compensation; - striving for psychological "treatment"; - lack of aesthetic, intellectual, creative motives for contacts with media texts.
	Levels of contact criterion
High	Daily contact with media and media texts
Average	Weekly contact with media and media texts

Low	Contact with media and media text is less than several times a month
	Levels of informational criterion
High	Knowledge of most types and genres, media languages, basic terms, theories, basic facts of the history of the development of media culture, creativity of media culture figures, the typology of the media audience, a clear understanding of the process of mass communication and media influences;
Average	satisfactory knowledge of types and genres, media languages, individual basic terms, theories, some facts of the history of development of media culture, work of individual personalities in media culture, typology of media audience, processes of mass communication, media influences;
Low	lack of knowledge (or poor, minimal knowledge in this area) of types and genres, media languages, basic terms, theories, facts of the history of the development of media culture, creativity of media culture figures, typology of the media audience, processes of mass communication, media impacts
	Levels of perception criterion
High	Identification with the author of the media text while maintaining the main components "Primary" and "secondary" identification (except for the naive identification of reality with the content of the media text): that is, the ability to relate with the author's position, which allows you to envisage the plot's development "on the basis of the emotional and semantic correlation of the plot elements, the perception of the author's thought in the dynamics of the sound-visual image, the synthesis of the viewer's thoughts and feelings in figurative generalizations" (Usov, 1989: 314)
Average	identification with the character of the media text: that is, the ability to empathize, put oneself in the place of the character / presenter, understand their psychology, motives of actions, perception of individual components of the media image (detail, etc.);
Low	emotional, psychological connection with the environment, the plot (chain of events) of the media text: that is, the ability to perceive the chain of events in the media text (for example, individual episodes and scenes of the plot), naive identification of reality with the content of the media text, assimilation of the environment (emotional perception and relation to the reality presented in the media text, etc.)
	Levels of interpretational/evaluation criterion
High	Ability to analyze the process of media functioning in society, taking into account a variety of factors based on highly developed thinking. Analysis of media texts based on the ability for media perception, close to "complex identification", the ability to analyze and synthesize the space-time form of a media text, understanding, interpretation, implying comparison, abstraction, induction, deduction, synthesis, assessment of the author's concept in the context of the structure works, historical and cultural contexts (expressed by reasoned agreement or disagreement with the author's position, assessment of the moral, emotional, aesthetic, social significance of the media text; the ability to correlate emotional perception with conceptual judgment, transfer this judgment to other genres / types of media culture, link media text with your experience and the experience of other people, etc.). In general, this kind of level of interpretation, assessment of the media text is based on high levels of informational, motivational and perception criteria of media competence;
Average	ability to analyze the process of media functioning in society taking into account selected, most noticeable factors based on the average development of thinking. Ability to characterize actions and psychological states of characters in a media text based on fragmentary knowledge, the ability to explain the logic of the sequence of events in the plot of the media text, the ability to tell about the individual components of the media image; lack of interpretation of the author's position (or its primitive interpretation). In general, this level of analysis of

	interpretation, media text in this case is based on the average levels of information, motivational and perception criteria of media competence;
Low	lack of skills to adequately analyze the process of media's functioning in society, lack of critical thinking skills. "Illiteracy", i.e., ignorance of the language of the media, poor ability to retell the plot of the media text; instability, confusion of judgments, uncertainty, predisposition to external influences, lack of (or extreme crudeness) of the interpretation of the position of the heroes and authors of the media text; a low level of tolerance for ambiguous, complex media texts. In general, this level of interpretation, analysis of the media text, is based on low levels of informational, motivational and perception criteria of media competence.
Levels of practical/operational criterion	
High	Skills to independently practically use various types media; the ability to select, create / distribute media texts (including individual and/or group media projects), the ability of active self-education in the practical sphere of media;
Average	skills in the practical use of various types of media; skills to select, create / distribute media texts (including individual and/or group media projects), of various types and genres with some form of assistance (by teachers, specialists, etc.);
Low	lack (or extremely weak expression) of practical skills in choosing, using, creating / distributing media texts, educating oneself in the practical sphere and / or unwillingness to do it.
Level of creative criterion	
High	A prominent level of creativity in various forms activities (perceptual, game, artistic, research etc.) related to media;
Average	creative abilities are manifested in certain types of activities related to the media, yet they are not obvious;
Low	creativity is not demonstrated, there is no evidence for creativity.

One should emphasize the ambivalence of the contact criterion of media competence. On the one hand, a high level of frequency of audience's contacts with media and media texts by no means mean a high level of media competence of an individual as a whole (one can watch TV, videos and surf Internet sites for hours every day, yet, is not able to analyze media texts). On the other hand, a low level of contact with various media can mean the tendency to avoid media messages that are difficult, to narrow contacts with media texts to a minimum, in order to always remain in information field which is familiar and protect yourself from the need to spend additional intellectual efforts (Potter, 2001: 28), but also an increased selectivity of an individual who does not want to consume low-quality (in their opinion) media production.

When analyzing the levels of the perception criterion of a person's media competence, in fact, it should be remembered that most people remember only 40% of what they see and 10% of what they hear (Potter, 2001: 24), and that media perception is both an active and social process (Buckingham, 1991: 22).

When discussing the levels of media perception, in our opinion, one should also take into account the so-called "folklore" type of perception. For, as accurately noted by N.M. Zorkaya:

- there is an absolutely real (and by no means mythical) vast majority of viewers with the same aesthetic needs, preferences and taste;

- the common taste is based on the constants of folk taste and archetypes of folklore perception (listening to fairy tales, watching fair/market plays, etc.);

- general public favours... in one or another modification, traditional folklore plots which are reproduced, and divided into episodes. This kind of repertoire is mass, serial production that plays the role of a kind of "soil", compressed "cultural layer" of old traditional images, plots, "tropes" of folklore genres, some of which are of ancient origin (Zorkaya, 1981: 136-137).

The therapeutic effect and the phenomenon of compensation are also important for the mass success of the media text. Of course, it is absolutely natural for a person to make up for the feelings and experiences they lacks in real life. S. Freud affirmed that culture must mobilize all its forces in order to put an end to the aggressive primary urges of a person and slow down their manifestations by creating the necessary psychological reactions (Freud, 1990: 29).

Thus, based on the above, it can be concluded that media texts (including those with manipulative agenda) owe their popularity to many factors. These include: reliance on folklore and mythological sources, constancy of metaphors, reference to the consistent embodiment of the most persistent plot schemes, synthesis of the natural and the supernatural, appeal not to the rational, but to the emotional through identification (imaginary getting into the character's skin, merging with the atmosphere, the aura of the media text), the "magic power" of heroes, standardization (replication, unification, adaptation) of ideas, situations, characters, etc., mosaic, multi-series stories, compensation (the illusion of fulfilling cherished, but not fulfilled desires), happy ending, intuitive guessing of subconscious interests audience, etc.

In recent decades, media texts (including manipulative ones) have also acquired the interactivity of the virtual world, in which the following main features can be distinguished (Kostina, 2006: 236-237):

- the relevance of existence, i.e. existence without past and future, elimination of the opposition between life and death, real and imaginary;

- immersion in events, when a person acts directly or is in the illusion of acting;

- centralization of the cultural perspective, focusing in the human space, where the whole world is perceived to be oriented towards him;

- the similarity of the interactive media text with the state of sleep, the possibility of its comprehension through the metaphor of a dream;

- the production of virtual objects of human-computer interaction or (inter) human activity.

Video / computer games built on these principles have incorporated the entire folklore and mythological set of archetypes and are popular with the mass audience largely due to the same factors as traditional media texts. However, their influence is enhanced by the interactive participation of a person in the development of the plot of a computer media text.

When deciphering the content of the levels of criteria / indicators of the audience's media competence, we take into account the characteristics of the levels of the interpretation / evaluation criterion of media competence, developed by J. Potter (Potter, 2001: 28, 53):

- high level (highlighting the main meaning of the media text; analysis: identifying the main elements of the media text; comparison: identifying similar and unique fragments of the media text; assessing the value of the media text or its fragment; judgment based on comparison according to a certain criterion; abstracting: the ability to create a short, clear and accurate description of a media text; generalization; deduction: using general principles to explain individual information; induction: deriving general principles from the observation of individual information; synthesis: the ability to reassemble elements into a new structure (Potter, 2001: 53);

- low level (weak intelligence (in relation to problem solving and creativity); weak memory, which can sometimes remember only few important things; thematic dependence, lack of insight, that is, lack of understanding of what is important in messages; need for an advisor, assistant, reference book, study guide; low tolerance for the ambiguity of media texts, uncertainty; weak conceptual differentiation in the presence of few categories for messages; negative attitude towards new messages that do not correspond to the usual categories, or simplification of this media text – deliberately classifying it into the easiest category; high impulsivity - quick decision making with the sacrifice of precision (Potter, 2001: 28).

When substantiating the classification of the levels of an interpretive / evaluation criterion of a person's media competence, we relied on the characteristics of the following audience's abilities to perceive media texts as proposed by Y.N. Usov: 1) multifaceted comprehension of the figurative recreation of the fact in the plastic composition of individual sequences, their linkage in the artistic structure; 2) identification of the logic of the development of the author's thought in space-time dimensions; 3) reading implied imagery, perception of an artistic choices, multi-layered internal content; 4) the perception of the development of artistic thought in the complex unity of the sound-plastic organization of space: graphic, tonal organization, tempo-rhythmic organization of the work due to the repetition of visual images, plans, their temporal activity, emotional and semantic correlation of individual fragments, visual themes (Usov, 1989: 17-18). Clearly, the case described by Y.N. Usov is the manifestation of the highest interpretive level of the personality's media competence. J. Potter calls such skills extended (Potter, 2001: 52).

According to J. Potter (Potter, 2001: 129), within each of the levels of the interpretive / evaluative criterion of a person's media competence, one can also distinguish:

1) cognitive (*knowledge*: structural, narrative, etc. features of the genre formula; *skills*: the ability to analyze the content of a media text, recognize its genre formula, identify / compare key scenes of the plot, types of characters and themes);

2) emotional (*knowledge* based on the memory of personal experience, as it would feel in a specific situation of the plot of the media text; *skills*: the ability to analyze the feelings of the characters, identify oneself with the position of various characters, the ability to control their emotions caused by the plot and theme of the media text);

3) aesthetic (*knowledge*: o screenwriting, directing, editing, etc.; *skills*: to analyze the professionalism and artistic level of the media text; to compare the skill shown in the interpretation of a given plot with familiar counterparts);

4) moral (*knowledge*: various moral principles, values and decisions — including in the media system — their significance; knowledge of stories similar to those told in a specific media text - from the point of view of "good" and "bad" morality; *skills*: to analyze the moral components of a media text proved by the decisions of the characters, the significance of these decisions for the plot and the main theme of the media text; compare the ethical decisions presented in the media text with the decisions in other works; evaluate the ethical responsibility of media producers and compilers of the repertoire) aspects.

When analyzing the problem of interpreting media texts, in our opinion, it is legitimate to take into account that a person interprets the content of media messages of any type, proceeding from one's:

- background (what does the audience already know about the topic?);
- the level of interest / attention (how much is the audience interested in the topic?);
- predispositions (what is the attitude of the audience to the topic — positive or negative — at the beginning);
- priorities (could the issues be of particular importance to the audience? Why?);
- demographic profile (national / gender / racial / ethnic origin; age; education; financial security);
- psychological profile (self-identification concept; emotionality; life experience; attitude towards others; personal aspirations);
- communication environment (what is the size of the audience? What does it do when it receives information?);
- particular stage of a person's development (Silverblatt, 2001: 40-41).

In unison, during contacts with the media, an audience with a low "threshold of tolerance" to the content and form of media texts perceives / analyzes them differently than an audience with a high level of media competence. If the media message corresponds to the preliminary opinion (attitude towards media perception) of people with a low "threshold of tolerance", then this media text reinforces their opinions. If the surface layer of the media text does not correspond to the person's preconceived opinion, the message is ignored. In short, there is no analysis. People with a high tolerance for ambiguity do not have an analytical barrier (Potter, 2001: 26).

It is known that knowledge of the historical and cultural context is extremely important for the interpretation / analysis of any media message.

As A. Silverblatt points out, a media text can provide for an understanding of the period of its creation; in countries with limited civil liberties, media authors are often forced to comment on political and cultural issues in an indirect way; understanding of media texts can be provided by understanding of historical events / references; media texts sometimes contain social criticism that predicts historical events; media texts can provide for the reaction of the audience to ongoing events; media texts can play an active role in shaping historical events (Silverblatt, 2001: 46-47).

It has been reported that in many cases manipulative media texts can distort the audience's understanding of historical facts, cause inadequate audience reactions and unreasonable social criticism, and initiate real events necessary for the manipulator.

We find confirmation of the last thesis in the works of a media theorist D. Rushkoff, who, among examples of active media influence on historical events, singles out the technique of marginalization: in order to ensure public support for illogical policies, leaders need to name the

enemy and demonize him, and then send the rage of society on him. Anyone who continues to oppose the proposed policy should be belittled, sidelined, or marginalized (Rushkoff, 1994).

The anti-manipulative media competence of an individual undoubtedly enhances independent judgments and competent decisions of people in response to information transmitted through media channels. The ability of a person to think dialogically is extremely important, that is, to be able to understand opposing points of view or references, which implies: 1) distinguishing between facts that can be verified and value statements; 2) determining the reliability of the statement or source; 3) determining the accuracy of the statement; 4) the distinction between guaranteed and non-guaranteed statements; 5) identifying bias; 6) identification of explicit and implicit assumptions; 7) recognition of logical inconsistencies; and 8) determining the strength of the argument (Silverblatt and Enright Eliceiri, 1997: 40).

Meanwhile, the analysis of the media text is regarded as a process of dialogue (Buckingham, 2003: 14), and not the achievement of a previously agreed or predetermined position, since there can be no unambiguous, once and for all "right" interpretations of media texts. In addition, media texts often do not have the meanings that people who analyze them give them, so often all interpretations of media texts (especially complex ones) may be "false" (Buckingham, 2000: 216). So we once again come to an understanding of the relevance of the very concept of "dialogue of cultures" by Mikhail Bakhtin — V.S. Bibler (Bibler, 1991) and its practical application in the process of media education.

So, we come to the conclusion that the media competence of a person is a combination of one's motives, knowledge, skills, abilities (criteria: motivational, contact, informational, perceptual, interpretive / evaluation, practical-operational, creative), contributing to the choice, use, comprehensive analysis, assessment, creation and transmission of media texts in various forms, forms and genres, analysis of complex processes of media functioning in society.

It is worth noting that there exists a body of literature highlighting the supremacy of the "activity" criterion of media competence (for example, the theory of media activity and the "journalistic model" of media education: Dzialoshinsky, 2009; Zhilavskaya, 2008), aimed at the practice of creating media texts. However, as we have already noted, the emphasis only on the user's and practical skills of the audience in creating and distributing media texts (to the detriment of the analytical process), in our opinion, sharply narrows the spectrum of a person's media competence. In addition, the activity itself, which develops media competence, is by no means confined to the practice of creating and distributing media texts, but first of all it is an analytical activity, without which a person (even who has mastered the practical aspect of the matter) becomes an easy target for media manipulations.

Further on, we are going consider the criteria (features) of the effectiveness of media educational activities that contribute to the development of students' media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences (Table 3).

Tab. 3. Criteria (indicators) of the effectiveness of media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences

Criterion	Criterion's description	Criterion's levels *
Motivational	Motives of the media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of the media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences: emotional, epistemological, moral, legal, etc.; striving to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of media and media education and resist media manipulative influences.	High Average Low
Contact	The frequency of contacts of (future) teachers with audiences in the process of media educational activities that	High Average

	contribute to the development of media competence audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences.	Low
Informational	Awareness, theoretical and pedagogical knowledge of (future) teachers in the field of media, media education, typology and essence of media manipulations.	High Average Low
Technological	Technological skills of (future) teachers in the field of media educational activities, contributing to the development of audience's media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences	High Average Low
Evaluation	(Future) teachers' awareness and skills of assessment/evaluation of audience's media literacy	High Average Low
Practical	Quality of practical media education activities of (future) educators, promoting development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences	High Average Low
Creative	Creativity of (future) teachers in media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences	High Average Low

* The levels are described in Table 4.

Tab. 4. Defining the levels of criteria / indicators of the effectiveness of media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences

Criterion's level	Description of the level
Levels of the motivational criterion of the (future) teacher's activity	
High	Versatile motives of media educational activity: emotional, epistemological, hedonistic, moral, aesthetic, etc.; striving to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of media and media education;
Average	the predominance of certain motives of media educational activity aimed to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of media and media education;
Low	weak motivation for media educational activities, lack of motivation to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of media and media education.
Levels of the contact criterion of the (future) teacher's activity	
High	Weekly classes integrating media education activities contributing to the development of media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
Average	monthly classes integrating media education activities contributing to the development of media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
Low	occasional classes integrating media education activities contributing to the development of media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences.
Levels of the informational criterion of the (future) teacher's activity	
High	Systematic knowledge, extensive theoretical and pedagogical knowledge in the field of media and media education, typology and essence of media manipulations;

Average	partial awareness, satisfactory theoretical and pedagogical knowledge in the field of media and media education, typology and essence of media manipulations;
Low	poor awareness, weak theoretical and pedagogical knowledge in the field of media and media education, typology and essence of media manipulations
*Levels of the technological criterion of the (future) teacher's activity*
High	Developed technological skills in the field of media education activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
Average	adequate technological skills in the field of media education activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
Low	fragmentary technological skills in the field of media education activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences.
*Levels of the evaluation criterion of the (future) teacher's activity*
High	Comprehensive knowledge of the methods of assessing the knowledge and skills of the audience in the field of media education and analysis of media manipulative influences;
Average	satisfactory knowledge of the methods of assessing the knowledge and skills of the audience in the field of media education and analysis of media manipulative influences;
Low	poor knowledge of the methods of assessing the knowledge and skills of the audience in the field of media education and analysis of media manipulative influences.
*Levels of the practical criterion of the (future) teacher's activity*
High	High quality of practical media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
Average	suitable practical media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
Low	poor practical media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences.
*Levels of the creativity criterion of the (future) teacher's activity*
High	Pronounced level of creativity in media education activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
Average	Creativity is only demonstrated in certain types of media educational activities;
Low	creativity in media education activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences is not demonstrated or very seldom expressed.

Proceeding from existing teacher evaluation approaches, we recognize the following combination of tools to assess the effectiveness of media educational activity: observation of teacher's work during the lesson; interviews, surveys, teachers' reflection; creative works (e.g., written work, essays exposing media manipulation); project activities (various kinds of media projects carried out individually or as part of a group); research activity on media material (including research on media manipulation); testing. When evaluating this kind of work, the following should be taken into consideration: the degree of argumentation, validity, independence when performing various kinds of educational tasks; mastery of media material; readiness to learn new information; to cooperate and communicate; self-reflection, etc.

Applying this set of measures for assessing the effectiveness of media educational activities, we use the developed criteria (as described in Tables 1-4), taking into account the fact that these criteria can be used both for the audience as a whole (Tables 1-2) and for the audience of future and working teachers (Tables 3-4).

Thus, for a person with a high level of media competence (note that some scientists use the terms "media culture level", "media literacy" or "media education" interchangeably, which, in our opinion, once again testifies to the terminological pluralism inherent in media education process), the following characteristics are intrinsic:

- the motivational criterion of media competence: aspiration to search for materials for educational, scientific, research purposes; desire to obtain new information; a wide range of genre, thematic, emotional, epistemological, hedonistic, intellectual, psychological, creative, ethical, aesthetic motives for contacts with media and media texts, including: a choice of a diverse genre and thematic spectrum of media texts with the obligatory inclusion of non-entertainment genres; wish for recreation, compensation for entertainment (in reasonable portions); striving for identification, empathy; striving to confirm their own competence in various spheres of life and media culture; the pursuit of artistic experiences; striving for a philosophical / intellectual, ethical, aesthetic dispute / dialogue with the creators of the media text, for constructive criticism of their position; the desire to learn how to create media texts yourself, studying specific examples of the professionals' creative work;

- contact criterion of media competence: daily contacts with various types of media and media texts;

- information criterion of media competence: knowledge of most types and genres, media languages, basic terms, theories, basic facts of the history of the development of media culture, prominent samples of media texts, the typology of the media audience, a clear understanding of the process of mass communication and media influences;

- the perception criterion of media competence: identification with the author of the media text while maintaining the main components of "primary" and "secondary" identification (except for the naive identification of reality with the content of the media text): that is, the ability to correlate with the author's position, which makes it possible to predict the course of events in the media text "on the basis of emotional the semantic correlation of the elements of the plot, the perception of the author's thought in the dynamics of the sound-visual image, the synthesis of the viewer's thoughts and feelings in figurative generalizations" (Usov, 1989: 314);

- interpretive / evaluative criterion of media competence: the ability to analyze the process of media functioning in society, taking into account various factors on the basis of highly developed critical thinking. Analysis of media texts based on the ability for media perception, close to "complex identification", the ability to analyze and synthesize the space-time form of a media text, understanding, interpretation, implying comparison, abstraction, induction, deduction, synthesis, assessment of the author's concept in the context of the structure works, historical and cultural contexts (this expresses a reasoned agreement or disagreement with the author's position of the creators of the media text, assessment of the moral, emotional, aesthetic, social significance of the media text; the ability to correlate emotional perception with conceptual judgment, transfer this judgment to other genres / types of media culture, link media text with their own experience and the experience of other people, etc.). In general, this kind of level of interpretation, assessment of media text is based on high levels of informational, motivational and perceptual criteria of media competence.

- practical and operational criterion of media competence: the ability to independently use various types of media in practice; the ability to select, create and communicate media texts (including those created individually or as group projects) of various types and genres, the ability to actively self-educate in the practical sphere of media;

- creative criterion of media competence: a pronounced level of creativity in various types of activity (perceptual, game, artistic, research, etc.) related to media.

As for the teacher, the characteristics of the criteria for his/her high level of activity efficiency, contributing to the development of students' media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences, are as follows:

- motivational criterion for the teacher's activity: versatile motives of media educational activity: emotional, epistemological, hedonistic, moral, aesthetic, etc .; striving to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of media education;
- contact criterion of the teacher's activity: weekly classes integrating media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
- information criterion of the teacher's activity: systematic awareness, extensive theoretical and pedagogical knowledge in the field of media and media education, typology and essence of media manipulations;
- the technological criterion of the teacher's activity: developed technological skills in the field of media and media educational activities, contributing to the development of the audience's media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
- evaluative criterion of the teacher's activity: comprehensive knowledge of the methods of assessing the knowledge and skills of the audience in the field of media education and analysis of media manipulative influences;
- practical and operational criterion of the teacher's activity: high quality of practical media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences;
- a creative criterion for a teacher's activity: a pronounced level of creativity in media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences.

Theoretical model of media competence's development of teachers-to-be in the process of the analysis of manipulative media influences

Media manipulations are multiplied not only by the manipulators per se, those who initiate and create (with specific objectives) some (partially) false media texts, but also by ordinary audiences, who uncritically perceive these media messages as true. This is a natural consequence of the existing capabilities of the mass media ("yellow press", "yellow" TV programs, Internet sites), when once created false information is replicated without any critical comments and analysis. It has been noted before that the spread of false media information resembles a viral epidemic, when in many cases filters and information verification practices have disappeared (Pérez Tornero et al., 2018: 222; Martens et al., 2018).

We agree that "living in what Marshall McLuhan coined the global village, it is not enough to merely understand media, students need to be empowered to critically negotiate meanings, engage with the problems of misrepresentations and underrepresentations, and produce their own alternative media. Addressing issues of inequality and injustice in media representations can be a powerful starting place for problem-posing transformative education. Critical media literacy offers the tools and framework to help students become subjects in the process of deconstructing injustices, expressing their own voices, and struggling to create a better society" (Kellner, Share, 2005: 382).

Therefore it is necessary today to develop a theoretical model of the audience's media competence development focused on the analysis of manipulative media's influences.

On the one hand, the current actualization of the phenomenon of media manipulation and fake news is rooted in a synthesized crisis: globalization of journalism, the deterioration of the public sphere and the pandemic. On the other hand, "we have seen how reducing the matter of fake news to a simple contrast between truth and falsehoods-fact checking-is very limited. It does not consider the discursive hybridization, which is characteristic of the present, nor the complexity of discourses in the context in which news and other journalistic discourse are developed. Only a global vision of the phenomenon will allow us to have a comprehensive understanding. ... What seems to mark the near future in the field of fake news will be a group exercise by political media and educational institutions to develop what we have called news literacy. We are thus facing a new period in the study of the media and the politics of mediatization. If the emphasis had been previously put on information rights and expression, media literacy has begun to be heard as a new civil right. On the other hand, beyond understanding journalism as an institutionalized practice,

which only corresponds to journalists, in light of the fake news phenomenon only a strong alliance between citizens and journalists can lay the foundations for an authentic renewal of journalism" (Pérez Tornero et al., 2018: 230-232).

In 2017 R.K. Nielsen and L. Graves analyzed data from eight focus groups and interviewed online news users from the United States, Great Britain, Spain and Finland in order to find out the opinions of the audience about media manipulations and fake information. Their findings reveal that the audience does not always see the difference between fake and objective news, although it does often blame bad journalism, deceitful politicians, propaganda, as well as some types of advertising. Fake news is perceived by this audience as a mix of media and politics. However, "findings suggest that, from an audience perspective, fake news is only in part about fabricated news reports narrowly defined, and much more about a wider discontent with the information landscape — including news media and politicians as well as platform companies. Tackling false news narrowly speaking is important, but it will not address the broader issue that people feel much of the information they come across, especially online, consists of poor journalism, political propaganda, and misleading forms of advertising and sponsored content" (Nielsen, Graves, 2017: 1).

Media literacy education is able to facilitate the fight against media manipulations whilst developing media competence and information literacy of the audience. Certainly, a modern citizen "demands additional skills, political knowledge and actions. In other words, today's society should have a deep understanding on how politics work, such as hate spin politics. Thus, we will not easily to be manipulated by political actors and we can be wiser in responding to these phenomenon" (Salma, 2019: 334).

We believe that media education can be integrated in almost all academic subjects (native language, literature, social studies, history, geography, etc.). While in many countries around the world it has already been integrated into basic school subjects, in some countries there is also partnerships between media educators and the media industry, literacy organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders at the level of resource production and specific events (McDougall et al, 2018: 8).

Media education has been proven to reduce children's vulnerability to misinformation. At the same time, the development of analytical competencies is a key component of a successful educational process, "there are many current educational initiatives that improve students' capacity to detect disinformation and protect themselves against its influence. Evidence shows that students who reported high levels of media literacy learning opportunities were more likely to identify misinformation, which lends credence to the impact of media literacy programmes. Educational programmes across Europe's schools to combat conspiratorial thinking are beginning to involve professional journalists. Journalists can help teach students how to check the authenticity of information and to understand how advertisers and others use the students' personal information to influence them" (McDougall et al, 2018: 72).

Thus, based on the analysis of a number of scientific concepts (Albright, 2017; Aldwairi, Alwahedi, 2018; Baake et al., 1999; Bertin et al., 2018; Bharali, Goswami, 2018; Blumeke, 2000; Bowker, 1991; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Buckingham, 2003; 2015; Conroy et al., 2015; De Abreu, 2019; Dentith, 2017; Fletcher, 2018; Gahirwal et al., 2018; Goering, Thomas, 2018; Hobbs, 2010; 2017; Jolls, Wilson, 2014; Martens et al., 2018; Marwick, 2018; Marwick, Lewis, 2017; McDougall et al, 2018; Nielsen, Graves, 2017; Pérez Tornero et al., 2018; Potter, 2019; Potter, McDougall, 2017; Ruchansky et al., 2017; Rushkoff, 1994; Sadiku et al., 2018; Salma, 2019; Silverblatt, 2001; Tambini, 2017; Usov, 1989; Vargo, 2018; Waldrop, 2017; Wilson, 2019; Wilson, 2019; Worsnop, 2004; Zhou et al., 2019) we can express the theoretical model of the media competence's development for students of education colleges and departments as follows:

Definitions of basic concepts and essential features

The media competence of a person is a set of criteria / features (motivational, contact, informational, perceptual, evaluative, practical and operational, creative) to choose, use, analyze, evaluate, transmit and create media texts, analyze complex processes of media functioning in society.

Professional media competence of a teacher is a set of skills (motivational, informational, technological, practical and operational, creative) to carry out media educational activities in classes with students of different ages.

Conceptual framework: the synthesis of cultural, sociocultural and practical theories of media education.

Aim: development of media competence of students of education colleges and departments in the process of analyzing media manipulation effects.

Objectives: development of the following skills of the audience: historical and theoretical; perceptual and creative; practical and creative; analytical.

Organizational forms: the development of future school teachers' media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulation effects in the framework of a media education course.

Methods: according to the sources of acquired knowledge — verbal, visual, practical; by the level of cognitive activity: explanatory and illustrative; problematic, research.

The main sections of the content of the media education program: 1) the place and role of media and media education in the modern world, types and genres, language of media; 2) basic terms, theories, key concepts, directions, models of media education; 3) media competence — as a result of media education; 4) analysis of the functioning of media in society and media texts of different types and genres (content analysis, structural analysis, plot / narrative analysis, analysis of stereotypes, analysis of cultural mythology, character analysis, iconographic analysis, semiotic analysis, ideological and philosophical analysis, ethical analysis, aesthetic analysis, hermeneutic analysis of the cultural context, etc.); 5) typology of media's manipulation effects; 6) the main directions of the analysis of media manipulation effects.

Fields of application: teacher training universities, colleges, departments; professional growth training courses for teachers.

The theoretical model of the media competence's development of student teachers in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences as follows (Fig. 1):

1) *diagnostic (ascertaining) component*: definition of the levels of development of the audience's media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations; questioning, testing, analysis of the audience's creative work, observation;

2) *content-target component:* theoretical component (a unit for history and theory of media culture, for the development of media educational motivation) and practical component (units of creative and analytical activities based on media material);

3) *efficiency component* (a unit of final questionnaires, testing and creative works of the audience and a unit of the final identification of the levels of development of the audience's media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations).

The need for diagnostic and efficiency's components of the model is justified by the fact that, both at the beginning and at the end of the implementation of the main structural units, it is important for the teacher to be aware of the levels of development of the media competence of a given audience with an emphasis on the analysis of media manipulative influences.

For the full-fledged practical implementation of this model, the following criteria (features) of the media competence of the audience are particularly necessary:

- *motivational* (motives of contact with media and media texts: genre, thematic, emotional, epistemological, hedonistic, psychological, moral, intellectual, aesthetic, therapeutic, etc.);

- *contact* (frequency of communication / contact with media and media texts);

- i*nformational* (knowledge of terminology, theory and history of media culture, the process of mass communication);

- *perceptual* (ability to perceive media texts);

- *interpretive* / evaluative (the ability to analyze the process of media functioning in society and media texts of different types and genres);

- *practical/operational* (the ability to choose certain media and media texts, create / distribute your own media texts, skills of self-education in the media sphere);

- *creative* (the presence of creativity in various aspects of activities (perceptual, play, artistic, research, etc.) related to media).

We believe that this model corresponds to those developed by Yu.N. Usov indicators of optimality (the development of systematic knowledge about media culture, the ability to analyze media texts; taking into account the dialectical unity of education, development, upbringing; the possibility of expanding the communication of the audience; orientation towards personal development) (Usov, 1989: 32).

Fig.1. The model of the media competencies' development of teacher training colleges' students in terms of the manipulative media influences' analysis

Aim: the development of future teachers' media competence in terms of their ability to analyze the media's manipulative techniques

Questioning, testing, analysis of the audience's creative work, observation

DIAGNOSTIC COMPONENT

Establishment of the levels of development of the audience's media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations

THEORETICAL COMPONENT

PRACTICAL COMPONENT

CONTENT-TARGET COMPONENT

A unit for history and theory of media culture

A unit for the development of media education motivation

A unit of creative activity

A unit of analytical activity

Analysis of final questionnaires, testing and creative works of the audience

EFFICIENCY COMPONENT

Analysis of the final identification of the levels of development of the audience's media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations
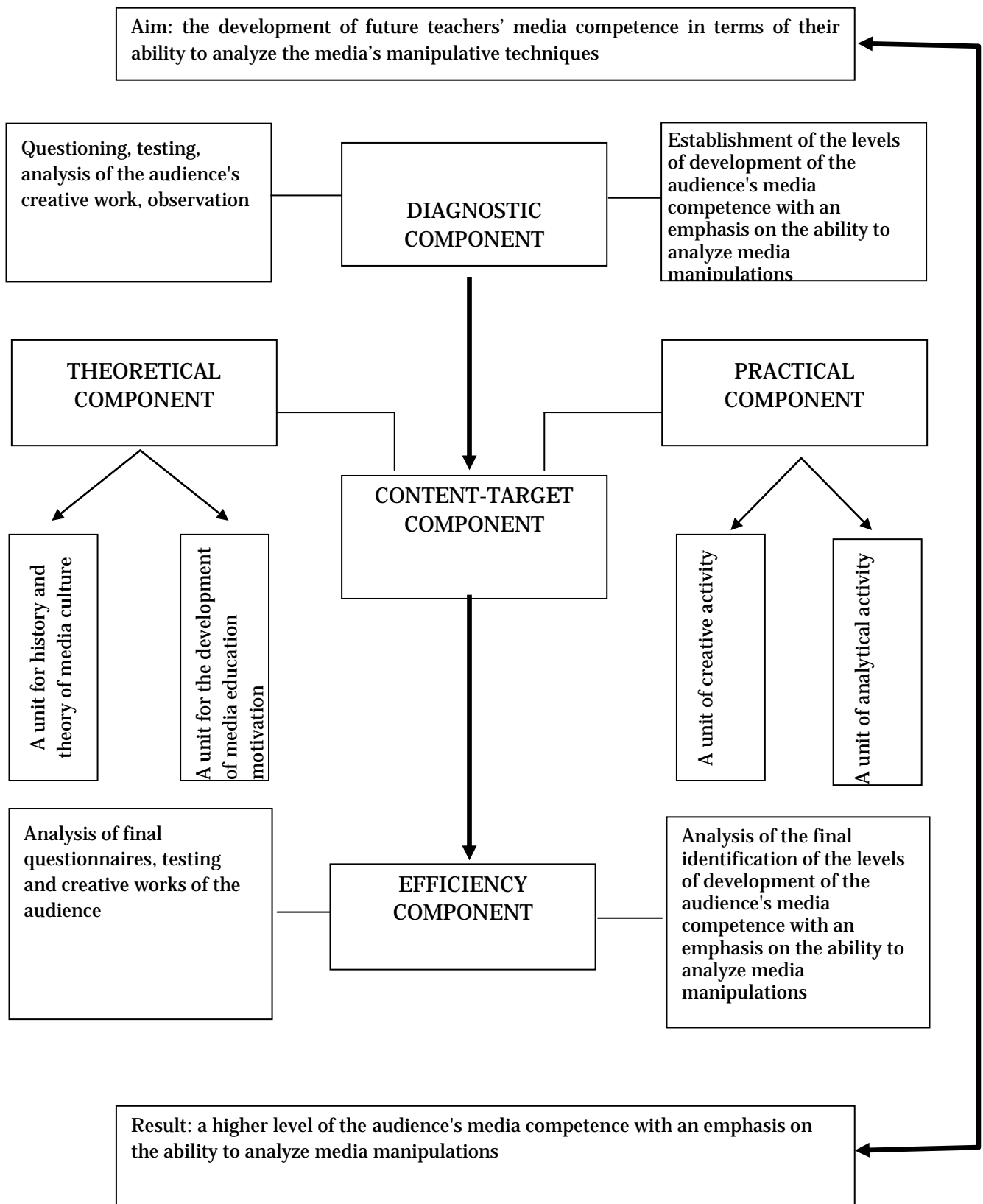
Result: a higher level of the audience's media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations

As for the theoretical model of the efficient media education activity of (future) teachers, focused on the media competence's development in the process of manipulative techniques' analysis, it is presented as follows (Fig. 2):

Fig.2. The model of the efficient media education activity of (future) teachers, focused on the media competence's development in the process of media's manipulative techniques' analysis

Aim: to raise the efficiency of media education activity of (future) teachers, advancing the development of the audience's media literacy in terms of analyzing media manipulative influences

Questioning, testing, analysis of the creative work of teachers-to-be, observation

Establishment of the levels of development of the future teachers' media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations

DIAGNOSTIC COMPONENT

THEORETICAL COMPONENT

PRACTICAL COMPONENT

CONTENT-TARGET COMPONENT

A unit for history and theory of media culture

A unit for the development of media education motivation

A unit of creative activity

A unit of analytical activity

Analysis of final questionnaires, testing and creative works of the (future) teachers focused on their mastering of media education technologies counter fighting media manipulations

EFFICIENCY COMPONENT

Analysis of the final identification of the levels of development of the (future) teachers' media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations

Result: raising the efficiency of media education activity of (future) teachers, aimed at the audience's media literacy development with emphasis on media manipulative influences' analysis, up to the high attributes (levels)

1) *diagnostic (ascertaining) component*: ascertaining the levels of effectiveness of media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulations; questioning, testing, analysis of creative works of (future) teachers, observation;

2) *content-targeted component*: theoretical component (the unit for studying the history and theory of media culture, for developing media educational motivation and technology for conducting classes from classrooms) and practical component (units of creative and analytical activities based on media material, with an emphasis on the analysis of media manipulative influences);

3) *an efficiency component* (a unit of final control testing of (future) teachers, analysis of the results of their performance of creative tasks on media material, with an emphasis on mastery of media educational antimapulation technologies; a unit of final statement of the effectiveness levels of media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in analysis of media manipulations.

For a full-fledged practical implementation of this model (Fig. 2), the following criteria (markers) of the effectiveness of media educational activities of (future) teachers are necessary, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences:

- motivational (motives of the media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences: emotional, epistemological, moral, legal, etc.); striving to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of media and media education and resisting media manipulative influences);

- contact (the frequency of contacts of (future) teachers with audiences in the process of media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences);

- informational (awareness, theoretical and pedagogical knowledge of (future) teachers in the field of media, media education, typology and essence of media manipulations);

- technological (technological skills of (future) teachers in the field of media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences);

- evaluative (proficiency of (future) teachers in the methods of assessing the knowledge and skills of the audience in the field of media education and analysis of media manipulative influences);

- practical and operational (the quality of practical media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences);

- creative (the level of creativity of (future) teachers in media educational activities, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences).
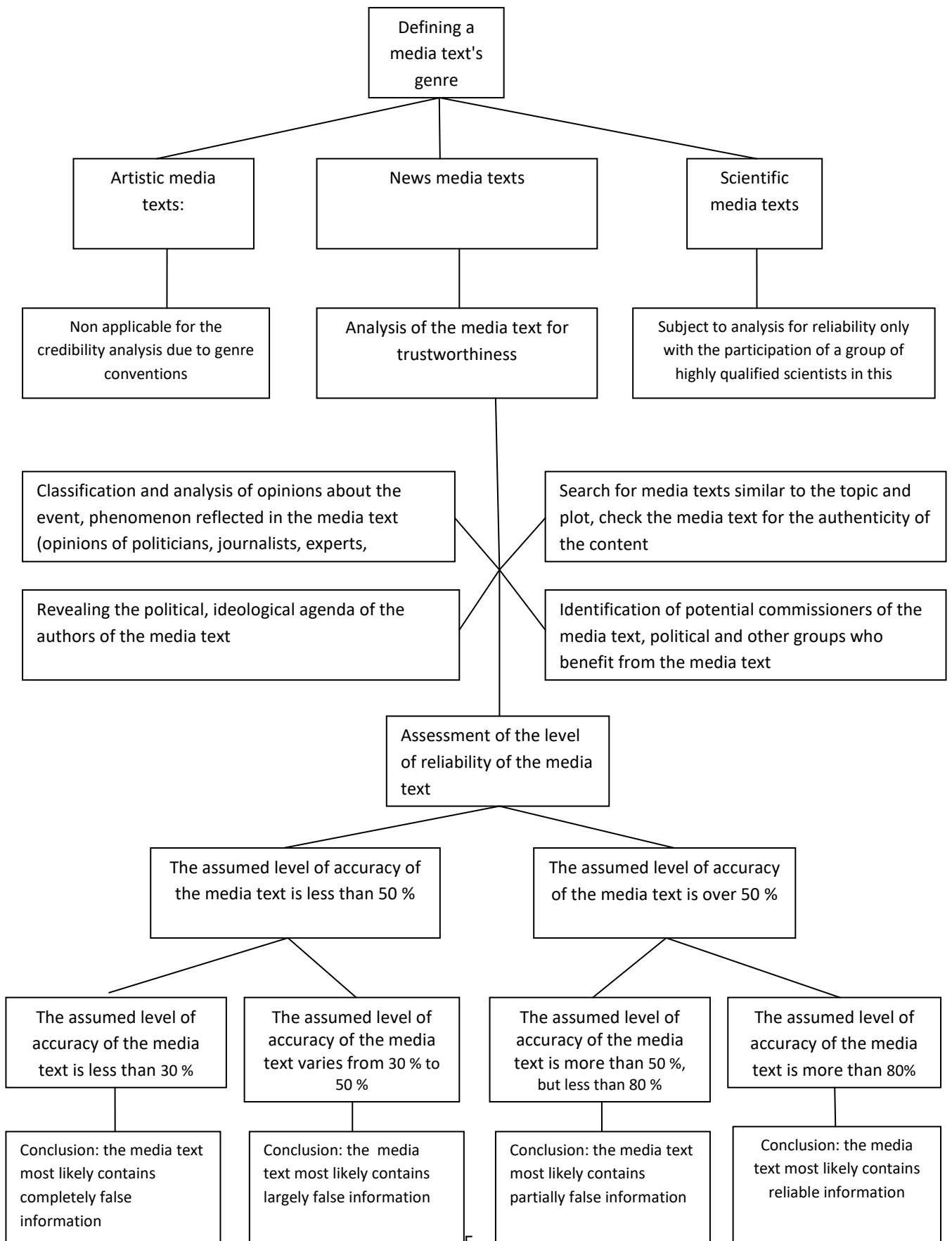
Further on, drawing on a number of scientific studies (Albright, 2017; Aldwairi, Alwahedi, 2018; Bertin et al., 2018; Bharali, Goswami, 2018; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Conroy et al., 2015; Dentith, 2017; Fletcher et al., 2018; Gahirwal et al., 2018; Goering, Thomas, 2018; Martens et al., 2018; McDougall et al, 2018; Marwick, 2018; Marwick, Lewis, 2017; Nielsen, Graves, 2017; Pérez Tornero et al., 2018; Ruchansky et al., 2017; Sadiku et al., 2018; Salma, 2019; Tambini, 2017; Vargo, 2018; Waldrop, 2017; Wilson, 2019; Zhou et al., 2019), we have elaborated the theoretical model of media education activity, facilitating the development of the audience's media literacy in the process of the analysis of media texts' credibility (Fig. 3).

While implementing the above model it is useful to rely on the technology of resisting media manipulations and fakes, based on asking and seeking answers to such challenging questions as:

"What is the source of the information? Can the source be verified? Is it reliable? Who owns the media platform or information source?

What is the main message? What facts are presented to support the main message? Is any information missing? What is the purpose of conveying this message? Who will gain if people accept the message? Who will lose?

Fig.3. Model of media education activity, facilitating the development of the audience's media literacy in the process of the analysis of media texts' credibility

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                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │   Defining a    │
                        │  media text's   │
                        │     genre       │
                        └─────────────────┘
          ┌───────────────────┼───────────────────┐
┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐
│  Artistic media  │ │ News media texts │ │    Scientific    │
│      texts:      │ │                  │ │   media texts    │
└──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘
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| Non applicable for the credibility analysis due to genre conventions | Analysis of the media text for trustworthiness | Subject to analysis for reliability only with the participation of a group of highly qualified scientists in this |

| Classification and analysis of opinions about the event, phenomenon reflected in the media text (opinions of politicians, journalists, experts, | Search for media texts similar to the topic and plot, check the media text for the authenticity of the content |

| Revealing the political, ideological agenda of the authors of the media text | Identification of potential commissioners of the media text, political and other groups who benefit from the media text |

Assessment of the level of reliability of the media text

| The assumed level of accuracy of the media text is less than 50 % | The assumed level of accuracy of the media text is over 50 % |

| The assumed level of accuracy of the media text is less than 30 % | The assumed level of accuracy of the media text varies from 30 % to 50 % | The assumed level of accuracy of the media text is more than 50 %, but less than 80 % | The assumed level of accuracy of the media text is more than 80% |

| Conclusion: the media text most likely contains completely false information | Conclusion: the media text most likely contains largely false information | Conclusion: the media text most likely contains partially false information | Conclusion: the media text most likely contains reliable information |

From whose perspective is the message presented? Does the message appeal to logic or emotion? To what effect?

Who is quoted or given air time? How often? What names and titles are used and to whom do they apply? Can you verify these? Are there any incomplete quotations or comments taken out of context? Are all claims or conclusions supported by the facts presented?

What words or images are used to describe or illustrate both sides of an issue? Look for the use of emotionally laden or vague terminology. What effect could emotional elements have on the message of the story and on audiences?

Where is the information or story presented? How has it been distributed or shared? If it is a news report, where is the report located in relation to the rest of the news presented? How much time or space has the story been given?

What is the context for the story? Is information about the context shared? What is the impact of the presence or absence of any context for the story?

Does the platform or website allow for sharing different points of view? How do you know? What values and priorities for the site are conveyed as a result?

Could you base an important decision on the information you have received? Explain why or why not with specific reasons to support your opinion.

How do you determine whether or not to share or block information you receive? What are the factors you or others might consider?

What is the difference between sharing information as an act of "transmission" by making a conscious decision to pass on information, and sharing information as an act of "ritual" by sharing regularly as a habit? What are the possible effects of each kind of sharing?

Does the platform you are using provide any "incentives" for passing on information? How do you know this? What is the purpose of incentives? How might you decide to respond and why?

How can you exercise your individual and collective influence to challenge examples of fake news?" (Wilson, 2019: 12).

Thus, the article presents not only the theoretical model of the development of media competence of students of pedagogical universities in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences, but also theoretical models of efficient media educational activity of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences; and also media educational activities, facilitating the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing the media texts' trustworthiness.

4. Analysis of media manipulation influences as a way to develop media competence of future teachers (on Covid-19 media texts)

Human beings tend to be afraid of something vague, unknown, new, unexplored or understudied. Covid-19 is one of those new phenomena. This disease is called a SARS-CoV-2 novel coronavirus infection (COVID-19), the effect of which is still poorly understood. In a short period of time this new virus caused a pandemic, affecting millions of people in various countries around the world. It challenges not only medics, scientists, politics, economists but also a wide range of common public, who doesn't have enough knowledge to judge upon the topic, but still produce a lot of comments especially in digital press. Sometimes these are just erroneous assertions, and sometimes they are malicious falsifications, especially dangerous for people's health in a pandemic.

To combat various kinds of fakes and disinformation, in many countries special departments and Internet sites are being created in order to verify facts, investigate the sources of rumors, false opinions and establish the truth. However, the results of the work of such structures cannot always be thoughtlessly trusted. Under the pretext of telling the truth, some of them propagate their own ideas about what freedom of the media is and their own point of view, that is biased and far from impartial. To navigate in the flow of modern complex information, a certain level of media competence is required.

The problem is that, in general, the modern Russian audience does not have a high or even enough level of media competence to be able to recognize fakes about the coronavirus infection and draw reasonable, not harmful to health conclusions.

We are particularly concerned about the lack of critical, thoughtful thinking among school and university graduates and, in particular, future teachers. After all, modern teachers are required not only to understand and correctly interpret media texts, but also to carry out media education of schoolchildren in the context of the development of the information society.

The relevance of this problem is proved by UNESCO documents. In the UNESCO booklet devoted to the World Freedom Day 2008 we may read: "News consumers need the necessary skills to produce and circulate information and engage with the media, and also to critically analyze and synthesize the information they receive. These elements, along with media professionals adhering to the highest ethical and professional standards designed by practitioners, serve as the fundamental infrastructure on which empowerment can prevail ... In all facets of community life, the media play a central role as the conduit for information and potentially as a catalyst for activism and change" (UNESCO..., 2008: 7-9).

A lot of authors refer to the *World Health Organization (WHO)* which has emphasized the equal importance of confining the circulation of misinformation in order to prevent serious socio-economic consequences during the Covid-19 pandemic (Das, Ahmed, 2021; Tangcharoensathien et al., 2020; Vraga et al. 2020). *WHO* called misinformation shared on social media about Covid-19 an "infodemic", which requires paying special attention to the development of audience's media competencies.

Obviously, media education enables people to exercise their right to freedom of speech and information. In this sense, media education not only promotes personal development, but also increases social participation, prepares for democratic citizenship and political understanding. That's why it is necessary to develop media education as a part of the concept of lifelong learning.

Today, the dependence of the audience on the infosphere has increased dramatically. Thus, we need to understand the challenges of the infodemic context in which we exist if we want to address the negative impact of misinformation and fakes in a reliable and effective way. Having in mind all these we pay special attention in our research to the analysis of media manipulation influences as a way to develop media competence of future teachers. The problematic question of this article is as follows: How the analysis of media texts about COVID-19 helps to solve the current problems of media education of future teachers. We believe that the results of our study will help to theoretically substantiate ways to improve the anti-manipulative media competence of students of the pedagogical profile.

Recently, during the COVID-19 health crisis, the flow of disinformation and fake news sharing dramatically increased. In this connection there have been appeared a large number of publications related to the problem of media manipulation (Arin et al., 2021; Barreto et al., 2021; Benoit, Montesi, 2021; Mauldin, 2021;Theocharis et al., 2021) and finding ways to improve the anti-manipulative media competence of the audience (Abdel-Raheem, Alkhammash, 2021; Billig, 2021; Brennen et al., 2021; Janssen et al., 2021; Linden et al., 2020; Moorhouse, Kohnke, 2021; Rodrigues, Xu, 2020; Shulman et al., 2021).

At the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020 the team of scientists from the Reuters Institute published the results of their research about the main types, sources, and claims of COVID-19 misinformation. They stressed that "misinformation about the pandemic presents a serious risk to public health and public action" (Brennen et al., 2020). They analyzed the 225 pieces of misinformation, rated false or misleading by independent professional fact-checkers and coded it for the type of misinformation, the source for it, the specific claims it contained, and what seemed to be the motivation behind it. According to Professor Nielsen "addressing the spread of misinformation about COVID-19 will take a sustained and coordinated effort by independent fact-checkers, independent news media, platform companies, and public authorities to help the public understand and navigate the pandemic" (Brennen et al., 2020). Agreeing with these statement in general, we can add that it is necessary to accentuatethe significance of media education which may help to address the spread of misinformation about COVID-19 and support audience to analyze, deconstruct and understand it from critical position.

Some authors connect the issue of media manipulation influences upon consumers with political ideology and with media coverage of the threat of COVID-19. For example, such US researchers as D.P. Calvillo, B.J. Ross, R.J.B. Garcia, T.J. Smelter, and A.M. Rutchick suggest that the relationship between political ideology and threat perceptions may depend on issue framing by political leadership and media. The authors claim that once a threat of COVID-19 "becomes politicized, the polarization induced by the current political environment may shape the way it is perceived. In the case of COVID-19, conservatives with higher levels of presidential approval were less knowledgeable about the virus, less accurate in discerning real from fake news, and in turn saw it as less of a threat. These polarized perceptions may well inhibit collective action and threat responses that require significant levels of community-level coordination" (Calvillo et al., 2020: 1125).

It is also important to note that Reuters Institute study also shows distrust of news and information about COVID-19 from political sources by people in eight countries (Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Spain, the UK, and the US). This research displays that "the handling (and coverage) of the crisis has become more explicitly political, but trust in news has declined less than trust in governments" (Nielsen et al., 2021). The research findings also prove that those who follow the news are also less likely to believe in vaccine misinformation.

By exploring the ideological constructs of citizens towards acceptance or rejection of disinformation during the heightened time of a COVID-19 global health crisis R. Das and W. Ahmed argue that government, public, private and social media agencies have received the biggest wakeup call for the necessity to take tighter actions in the wake of COID-19 infodemic (Das, Ahmed, 2021). They suggest to develop and apply sophisticated identification and analytical tools based on advanced NLP-based machine learning techniques, that is, reinforcement learning (RL). In addition to machine and deep learning algorithms, the authors offer to use trained human interventions in understanding the narratives and trajectory of misinformation in developing preventative measures and policies (Das, Ahmed, 2021). Thus, it turns out that media education becomes one of the leading sources for overcoming the negative impact of COVID-19 misinformation on information recipients.

The issues of cause and origin of the fake news on COVID-19 and vaccines that were circulating on catholic networks are in the center of the research interest done by A. Sarukhan (Scientific writer/senior Communications Officer at Barcelona Institute for Global Health). At the end of the project research she came to the conclusion that some fake news originate from the misinterpretation of scientific results, some – from a lack of scientific literacy among society, and others – from doubts – often valid – regarding the safety, efficacy or impact of vaccines that caused mistrust due to the unprecedented speed at which they were developed. Her research findings are

as follows – misleading information is a universal problem that needs to be tackled with good communication and a better education (Sarukhan, 2021).

The need to increase public health presence on social media and the urgent need to remain diligent in educating community members about COVID-19 myths – is the call of scientists from the United States who assessed COVID-19 knowledge among university students. The authors declare that their "findings support communities need continued education and reinforcement of COVID-19 known facts to address the abundance of misinformation available online and on social media sites" (Chesser et al., 2020: 543).

According to Vraga and her co-authors scientific literacy helps people distinguish between good and bad information on Covid-19 and could reduce the amount of misinformation shared (Vraga et al., 2020: 476-477). The authors emphasize that the actual situation is an ideal time to encourage and facilitate information users to participate in more active curation of social media feeds correction. They recommend encouraging users to correct Covid-19 misinformation they see on social media as an extension of their news literacy knowledge and skills in order to protect themselves and others from misinformation.

Intervention strategies which nudge people to be skeptical of the information they come across on social media are suggested by researchers O.D. Apuke and B. Omar. In order to help policy makers in curbing the spread of fake news they proposed a conceptual framework combining two theories; affordance theory and the cognitive loadtheory to test how information sharing, status seeking, self-expression, online information trust, informationoverload and news-find-me perception predict fake news sharing on COVID-19 (Apuke, Omar, 2021).

Several studies to date have viewed COVID-19 misinformation through a visual lens. In the works of J.S. Brennen, F. Simon, R.K. Nielsen special accent is made on the diverse roles of visuals employed in the service of COVID-19 misinformation. The authors argue that visuals not only serve to illustrate and help frame misleading understandings about the virus, but also work to establish the authority and facticity for false claims. Focusing explicitly on the visual content in coronavirus misinformation, its function, and its characteristics they provide the analyses of manipulative techniques with the help of which manipulative visuals are produced (Brennen et al., 2020).

We cannot but agree with the authors who state that "the scale of the crisis and the abundance of misleading information demand that scientists, health information professionals and journalists take serious steps to help the general public to identify and recognise fake news stories. There is a need to train people, especially the young, about the nature of social media and how to use it effectively and safely if we are to win the war against fake news" (Naeem et al, 2020).

In connection with the issue of our research the up-to-date information under analysis is of great interest, because it helps to uncover the tools of manipulations about coronavirus pandemic, and the ways to respond to it in the process of future teacher's education. So we think that our focus on mediaeducation may help shape students' media literacy and develop their ability to distinguish potentially dangerous and misleading information or narratives which is spreading with great speed and in large numbers especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We build our practice research on the basis of theoretical model of media competencies' development of future teachers in the process of analyzing media manipulation effects worked out by A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya. This model includes several components:

1) diagnostic (ascertaining) component: definition of the levels of development of the audience's media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations; questioning, testing, analysis of the audience's creative work, observation;

2) content-target component: theoretical component (a unit for history and theory of media culture, for the development of media educational motivation) and practical component (units of creative and analytical activities based on media material);

3) efficiency component (a unit of final questionnaires, testing and creative works of the audience and a unit of the final identification of the levels of development of the audience's media competence with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulations) (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 325).

We implement the model in order to help students to identify misinformation, to get ready to fight against fake news dissemination, as well as to expand scientific dissemination of information on topics involving the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implementation of this model deals with setting up and working out several tasks, designed to form and develop following markers of the effectiveness of media educational activities: motivational, contact, informational, technological, evaluative, creative, practical and operational (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021: 328). To form these markers we developed and conducted a series of practical seminars. Our practice study took place between September 2021 and February 2022 with the second year students of Rostov State University of Economics, Russian Federation. Working with university students has given us the opportunity to put into practice several methods of media education to help combat fake news as it grows.

In order to develop students' abilities to analyze media manipulations we used different methods and techniques. In class students discussed different examples of Covid-19 misinformation, myths or fake news and vaccines disinformation. In the form of a dialogue they commented on information they came across, classified news media information, tried to identify common types of misinformation relating to COVID-19, examined and characterized the potential harm it can cause.

The analysis of publications about vaccive hesitancy, pro − or anti-vaccination messages against the COVID-19 makes also possible to develop such students' media competence features as perceptual, evaluative, creative, practical and operational ones. Studying the above mentioned news stories students usually pay attention to the negative character of the discourse on the issue of vaccination. They note that very often the reasoning of vaccine opponents is rude, deleterious; their comments are ignorant and offensive. The students pay attention to the fact that sometimes it is very difficult even for scientists to argue and dismantle Covid-19 myths and vaccines disinformation.

Many examples used by students illustrate such situations. And one of them is the Gordon's Doc-tock show. In several broadcasts a number of invited experts have failed to argue with one vaccine denier. An example is from the release of the program dated December 16, 2021. During the show, the guest anti-vaxer was removed from the studio because of extreme aggressiveness and unfriendliness. The show host (A. Gordon) regretted his decision to invite "anti-vaxer" for a discussion, since people of such kind consider themselves crusaders on a holy mission against conspiracy involving the government, big pharma and the mainstream media. As a rule, students agree that it is unacceptable to invite such participants and give them the opportunity to promote through the broadcast their malicious and anti-scientific points of view, which may put public health at risk.

In the process of analyzing media manipulative influences it is also possible to discuss the work results of special departments and Internet sites created in order to verify facts, investigate the sources of rumors, false opinions and establish the truth.

Here is only one example of the class discussion about one of the largest internet news portal named DELFI – "Lie Detector". This portal was created in Lithuania, as they say, an independent and open fact-checking department. Journalists from different fields of activity claim that they united in order to find out the real facts. They declare that they seek to carefully analyze the public statements of politicians and experts to make sure that they are consistent with the facts.

There are many interesting publications about "anti-vaxers", conspiracists, QAnons and COVID-19 fakes. At the same time, the authors and employees of this department have a clearly biased attitude towards Russia and its media. Lithuania's journalists uncompromisingly argue that just Russia is the main source of false and unverified information about Covid-19. At this site we may read the following version about negative impact of Russia on the spread of Covid-19 disinformation: "Pro-Kremlin media have been spreading conspiracy theories about the coronavirus since the beginning of the outbreak: in the first case, a comment on the topic, which we registered on January 22, claims that the coronavirus was "most likely developed in NATO biological laboratories". In doing so, they claim that "DELFI's Lie Detector" met the organization's extremely high standards by pledging to continue the tradition of honest and quality journalism" (https://www.delfi.lt/ru/detektor-lzhi/?page).

This is an example of a clear manipulative media influence on the audience, for the understanding of which a sufficient level of media competence must be formed among the students, which presupposes the development of analytical thinking, creative, practical, operational and other markers of media literacy.

Thus, we believe that such kinds of university class discussions, debates and interchange of views on latest news media texts, digital press, TV programs, Internet sites regarding Covid-19 are concrete steps to form students' media literacy, their abilities to see the pandemic crisis in a broad framework, and thus to diminish the spread of misinformation on Covid-19.

In conclusion, it is necessary to summarize several important points. Our content analysis of the latest publications has shown that the consumption of publications related to the coronavirus has dramatically increased both in social media outlets and in traditional media. The COVID-19 with renewed vigor has launched/aggravated the processes of disinformation in the media space. In this regard, it is necessary to strength en the work on media education of population in general and the formation of media literacy of future teachers in particular.

We are convinced that engaging students in the analysis of media manipulative influences related to COVID-19 problems is one of the means to develop their media competence and therefore is a way to help people navigate the pandemic.

5. Theoretical model and technology of anti-Russian propaganda in internet communications of modern Ukraine within the framework of various student groups' media literacy education

In our study, we proceed from a problematic situation, indicating contradictions and conflicts of interest arising within the framework of the thematic field of analysis and synthesis of the theoretical model and technology of anti-Russian propaganda in the Internet communications of modern Ukraine in the framework of media education of various groups. It was necessary to answer a challenging question: why and how has media education in modern Ukraine in many ways become an instrument of anti-Russian propaganda?

As a basic hypothesis that needs to be tested in the course of the study, we assume that anti-Russian propaganda in the Internet communications of modern Ukraine incorporated in media education is the reaction of the Ukrainian leadership in the field of education, culture, mass communications to the main political and ideological vectors of the Ukrainian state policy that have been shaped since 2014, and the conflict between Ukraine and Russia. Internet communications were chosen as the field of the anti-Russian media war as obviously the most popular and sought-after sources of information. To test this hypothesis, we have studied and analyzed several hundreds of Ukrainian media texts relating to media education field, posted on various media platforms.

We carried out: 1) collection of information about the state variables of the research object in a range of sources in order to identify and update the main features of the studied object, reflecting its essence and the most characteristic forms of its connections with the environment; 2) purposefully organized recording of the features of the research object (the process of anti-Russian propaganda in the Internet communications of modern Ukraine in the framework of media education of various groups of the population), the derivation of such features by means of analyzing the model of the studied object and situations where such features are manifested. In accordance with this, we used the following methods: generalization and classification, verification of the hypothesis, comparison (establishing the similarities and differences of certain phenomena in the Internet communications of modern Ukraine, related to the research topic; as a result of this kind of comparison, both special and common in these phenomena); measurements (in particular, the results of measuring the frequency of repetition of certain concepts, statements, fakes, etc. anti-Russian orientation, obtained in the course of content analysis of media texts posted on Ukrainian Internet portals and media education sites); typological method of analysis, taking into account specific types of media agencies, genres of media texts; a method of content analysis of various content-thematic aspects of anti-Russian propaganda media products, contributing to the shaping of certain opinions of the mass audience in its communication with Ukrainian media educational portals and sites, etc.

In the course of the research, we studied the content of the main Ukrainian Internet portals related to the topic of media education and media literacy:

Академія Української Преси (Academy of Ukrainian Press) http://www.aup.com.ua/

Медіаосвіта та медіаграмотність (Media awareness and media literacy) https://medialiteracy.org.ua/

Медіапсихологія та медіаосвіта (Media psychology and media awareness) http://mediaosvita.org.ua/pro-nas/

Media Sapiens https://ms.detector.media/

Vox Ukraine https://voxukraine.org/

Stop Fake https://www.stopfake.org

Content analysis of all these portals shows that they all contain anti-Russian materials. Meanwhile, the typology of data of Ukrainian media and media education agencies is dominated by public organizations, often supported by Western state and public organizations and / or foundations: United States of America Embassy, USAID (USA), IREX (USA), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (Germany), Deutsche Welle Akademie (Germany), Friedrich Naumann Stiftung für die Freiheit (Germany), Vidrodzhennya (J. Soros Foundation in Ukraine), etc.

The main genres used by Ukrainian Internet portals related to the topic of media education and media literacy are as follows: news; reports on current events (seminars, conferences related to media and / or media literacy education); review articles; analytical articles; the results of sociological surveys of various groups of the population; the results of checking media information (fact-checking); guidelines; teaching aids; collections of articles; monographs.

The anti-Russian thrust is, to varying degrees, inherent in the materials of all these genres, however, the media educational orientation is more emphasized, of course, in teaching manuals and textbooks.

For instance, the textbook for teachers "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking in Social Science Lessons" (Bakka et al., 2016: 129) uses a photograph of German officers posted in the LiveJournal by an anonymous person as an example of "fact-checking" and exposing "Russian propaganda" (https://ic.pics.livejournal.com/extra_web/28023659/8080/8080_original.jpg).

Indeed, this anonymous person (by the way, he is really not necessarily from Russia) in his blog in LiveJournal erroneously claims that the Ukrainian Nazi Stepan Bandera (1909-1959) is sitting among the Wehrmacht officers in the photo, and this causes indignation of the authors of the textbook "Media literacy and critical thinking in social studies lessons" (Bakka et al., 2016: 129). However, in fact, the authors of the manual use a simple manipulative technique: a post made by an individual blogger, his/her personal opinion is attributed to the official opinion of Russian media agencies, and thus, the authors of the textbook in this case pass off a marginal post of an anonymous blogger for Russian propaganda. Why are they doing this? The text of the textbook itself (Bakka et al., 2016: 87) gives an unequivocal answer to this question: to create a positive image of Nazi S. Bandera as a fighter against the Bolsheviks for an independent Ukraine.

By the way, the trend of whitewashing Ukrainian Nazis is far from new for the media education movement in Ukraine. Back in 2010, Kiev published the curriculum "Media culture and media education of secondary school students: visual media culture" recommended by the Academic Council of the Institute of Social and Political Psychology of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine (protocol No. 10/10 of 4.11.2010) (Cherepovska, 2010), where it is suggested to instill in students patriotism and love for the homeland using the example of the Nazi Roman Shukhevych's life (1907-1950) (Cherepovska, 2010: 109). At a time when even nationalistic groups of Ukrainian researchers do not deny that R.Shukhevych served in the armed units of Nazi Germany until the beginning of 1943 (Lysenko, 2008).

It must be acknowledged that the propaganda of a positive image of the Nazis and, in particular, R. Shukhevych, continues by the Institute of Social and Political Psychology of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine today, too. For example, the employee of this organization N. Cherepovska in her textbook "Media educational resources for the development of patriotism and critical thinking", published in 2017, continues to promote the Nazis R. Shukhekvich, S. Bandera and their accomplices as national heroes of Ukraine for the patriotic education and media education of students and youth (Cherepovska, 2017: 117; 135-137).

N. Cherepovska argues that "a talented commander, a well-known cornet general, a true patriot of Ukraine, unconquered Roman Shukhevych, whose personal life was completely dedicated to serving Ukraine" is an appropriate role model of patriotism (Cherepovska, 2017: 135). S. Bandera's legacy is given a similar evaluation in the textbook "Media educational resources for the development of patriotism and critical thinking" (Cherepovska, 2017: 137).

It is worth mentioning that the most radical-minded activists of Ukrainian media education accuse even the President of Ukraine V. Zelensky of pro-Russian propaganda. Thus, O. Kharitonyuk argues that "everything that is happening now in Ukrainian politics and in Ukrainian society as a whole is the result of a planned, wicked and cold-blooded information war on the part of the Russian Federation. Through television programs and series that promote indifference to moral values, Russia, with the help of its agents of influence, is trying to create a different reality for Ukraine. ... One of such TV series is ... a political satire television series filmed in Ukraine ... about the election of a history teacher as the President of Ukraine. The main role of the history teacher in the series is played by Vladimir Zelensky. ... After analyzing all the seasons of the series, we can draw several conclusions: the series is Ukrainophobic, all characters- corrupt officials and politicians almost always end their speech with the words "Glory to Ukraine! " ...; it contains hints that the reforms that have been introduced in Ukraine are ineffective; ... the role of

citizens' trust in the institution of parliamentarism, the role of decommunization is being devalued; the role of the European Union and financial assistance to Ukraine is diminished" (Kharitonyuk, 2020: 491-492).

Based on this kind of analysis of the film series *Servant of the People* comedy series, O. Kharitonyuk draws far-reaching conclusions that "we live in a time when information kills us. It is killing our identity, culture, history and national memory. Putin will not stop in the process of destroying the Ukrainian nation until the nation stops this process itself. To maintain critical thinking at all times of toxic content" one requires media literacy and fact-checking (Kharitonyuk, 2020: 491-492).

The article by O. Kharitonyuk is one of many where the main reason for the development of the media education movement in Ukraine is called "Russian aggression" (see, for example: Dorosh, 2014; Koropatnyk, 2017; 2020; Zental, 2020). Although the factor of "aggression" and "occupation" is presented on Ukrainian Internet portals in other contexts as well (Filonenko, 2020; Lazorenko, 2020; Yuksel, 2020, etc.).

For example, M. Dorosh gives a positive answer to her own question: "Is war the finest hour for media education?" alleging that media literacy is necessary precisely in the context of an information war with Russia (Dorosh, 2014). Of course, the article by M. Dorosh and many other Ukrainian authors "for objectivity reasons" contains references to the European experience of media education, to certain documents of the European Union or UNESCO, but all this is a kind of "smokescreen" in order to redirect readers to the slogan in the title of the article.

Similar messages are contained in the textbook "Media Literacy for Librarians" (Zorya et al., 2021: 27) and in other online publications (Collection ..., 2015; 2017; 2020; Emets-Dobronosova, 2014; Naidenova, Dyatel, 2020 and etc.).

One of the most prominent supporters of the transformation of media education in Ukraine into the process of anti-Russian propaganda is M. Koropatnyk, who claims that the "hybrid war" unleashed by Russia against Ukraine, its informational, propagandistic and psychological components, require significant adjustments to the forms and content of media education, especially from the point of view of the critical thinking development, the ability to adequately assess various types of information. ... there are objective reasons for including media education in educational institutions' programs – from preschool to higher and postgraduate education ... with the obligatory consideration of the "hybrid war" factor. They are the basis for defining one of the competencies of the new Ukrainian school, as information-digital, which provides for the development of media and information literacy, and, consequently, qualitatively new, modern approaches in the professional training of educators and researchers" (Koropatnyk, 2020 : 23-24).

M. Koropatnyk believes that it is necessary "to clearly identify the vulnerabilities of Russian propagandists so as to include them in programs with media and information literacy in order to properly inform the population, including about events in critical regions of Ukraine" (Koropatnyk, 2017: 370).

In so doing, the Ukrainian media educator accuses the Ukrainian authorities of the fact that their reaction "to Russian propaganda was not very successful, since it was based on a policy of prohibitions and gave additional trump cards in the hands of Russian propagandists in the West, as well as in working with the population of the occupied territories" (Koropatnyk, 2017: 357), while the "aggressor country" supplied media "fakes and hate speech directed against Ukraine and everything Ukrainian (in particular, such vocabulary as "punishers", "junta", "fascists" , "Ukrops", etc.), manipulative interpretation of political processes in Ukraine, coverage of events from only one side, references to anonymous or unverified sources" (Koropatnyk, 2017: 359).

Further on M. Koropatnyk expresses regret that, "considering the problems of correlation of media educational approaches in the coverage of events in Donbass, it is worth paying attention to a number of features of the region, they do not contribute to the state process and lead to negative consequences. First, Eastern Ukraine and Donbass, as its main part, is poorly integrated into all-Ukrainian processes, the population speaks mainly Russian, listens and watches mainly Russian and local channels, reads Russian and local newspapers, has its own local leaders, recognizes Russian and Soviet heroes" (Koropatnyk, 2017: 367).

Ukrainian authorities turned off the broadcast of the main Russian TV channels on their territory, and on March 13, 2020, V. Zelensky signed the law "On complete general secondary

education", which since September of the same year has liquidated Russian-language schools in Ukraine and abolished programs training in the Russian language (Law ..., 2020), thereby depriving millions of citizens of this country to study in their native language.

In addition, in the collection of articles "Cyber socialization" published by the Institute of Social and Political Psychology of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, the expansion of anti-Russian media activities at the state and public levels is noted with appreciation: "On December 2, 2014, the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine was created - the central executive body that ensures the formation and implements state policy in the areas of information sovereignty of Ukraine, state foreign broadcasting and information security. With the support of this Ministry, in February 2015, the Information Forces of Ukraine project was created to recruit and mobilize volunteers to actively participate in the confrontation with the anti-Ukrainian side in the hybrid war. The project was joined by Internet users, including bloggers, journalists and volunteers, whose purpose was to track information provocations against Ukraine, the lies of the propaganda in Russian media and the spread of counter-propaganda. Thus, the importance of ensuring information security in Ukraine during a hybrid war was realized at the national political level using certain institutional innovations. ... On February 28, 2017, the Doctrine of Information Security of Ukraine entered into force, the purpose of which is to clarify the foundations for the formation and implementation of state information policy, primarily to counter the destructive information influence of the Russian Federation in the context of the hybrid war unleashed by it. It is important to note that among the priorities of state policy defined in the Doctrine, the prerequisites for the adoption on May 15, 2017 by Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 133/2017 were identified, which led to the blocking of access to a number of Russian Internet resources in Ukraine, including popular social networks and postal services" (Zental, 2020: 50 -51).

Certainly, a higher level academic/research materials (although often also anti-Russian) are also published in Ukraine, with media analytics built not on straightforward propaganda and counter-propaganda, but on the generalized laws of information wars (see, for example: Pocheptsov, 2015; 2016; 2017, etc.).

Whilst, continually accusing Russia of aggression and war, there have not been attempts on the part of Ukrainian media culture activists and media educators to ask some questions, very important for understanding the policy of the modern Ukrainian leadership: "Why has Ukraine since the overthrow of the President Yanukovych (2014) not severed diplomatic relations with the "aggressor country"?, "Why is Ukraine continuing to transit gas through a pipe coming from Russia from 2014 to the present?", "Why has Ukraine, in spite of repeatedly declaring "European democratic values", since autumn 2020 deprived millions of its Russian-speaking citizens of the right to study in their mother tongue?"

It should be emphasized that these questions are not being raised by media educators from Europe and the United States too (Culver, Grizzle, 2017; European Commission, 2018; Fake news ..., 2018; Giles, 2016; Murrok et al., 2018; NATO, 2016; Silverman, 2015; Singh et al., 2016; Sturhetski, 2018; UNESCO, 2021; Wilson, 2019). By helping Ukraine to develop democracy and media literacy, Western media educators and researchers of media culture are not bothered by the fact that in Ukraine the Nazis (R. Shukhevych and others) have been turned into national heroes and dozens of monuments in their honour were erected all over the country.

The analysis of anti-Russian propaganda technologies in Internet communications in modern Ukraine within the framework of media education for various groups (2014-2021) shows that its basic theoretical model includes the following units:

- a unit of introduction to the problem, including clichéd propaganda phrases about Russian aggression and propaganda, and the need to emphasize the counter-propaganda function of media education;

- a unit of "appeal to authority" (a brief review of literature on media education, media manipulation, information wars with an emphasis on the political positions of the European Union, the United States, the concepts of Western scientists in the field of media culture, media education and political science, UNESCO documents, etc.). Meanwhile, anti-Russian phrases are carefully chosen from a wide range of scientific literature;

- a unit of examples of Russian media propaganda (often from marginal sources and with selective manipulation and emotional interpretation);

- a unit containing the main methods of analyzing Russian media sources (often selectively manipulative);

- a unit of conclusions of an anti-Russian orientation, often in no way arising from the previously cited media examples.

As a result of the analysis of several hundreds sources related to anti-Russian propaganda technologies in Internet communications of modern Ukraine in the framework of media education of various population groups (2014-2021), we have synthesized the following graphically presented theoretical model (Fig. 4).
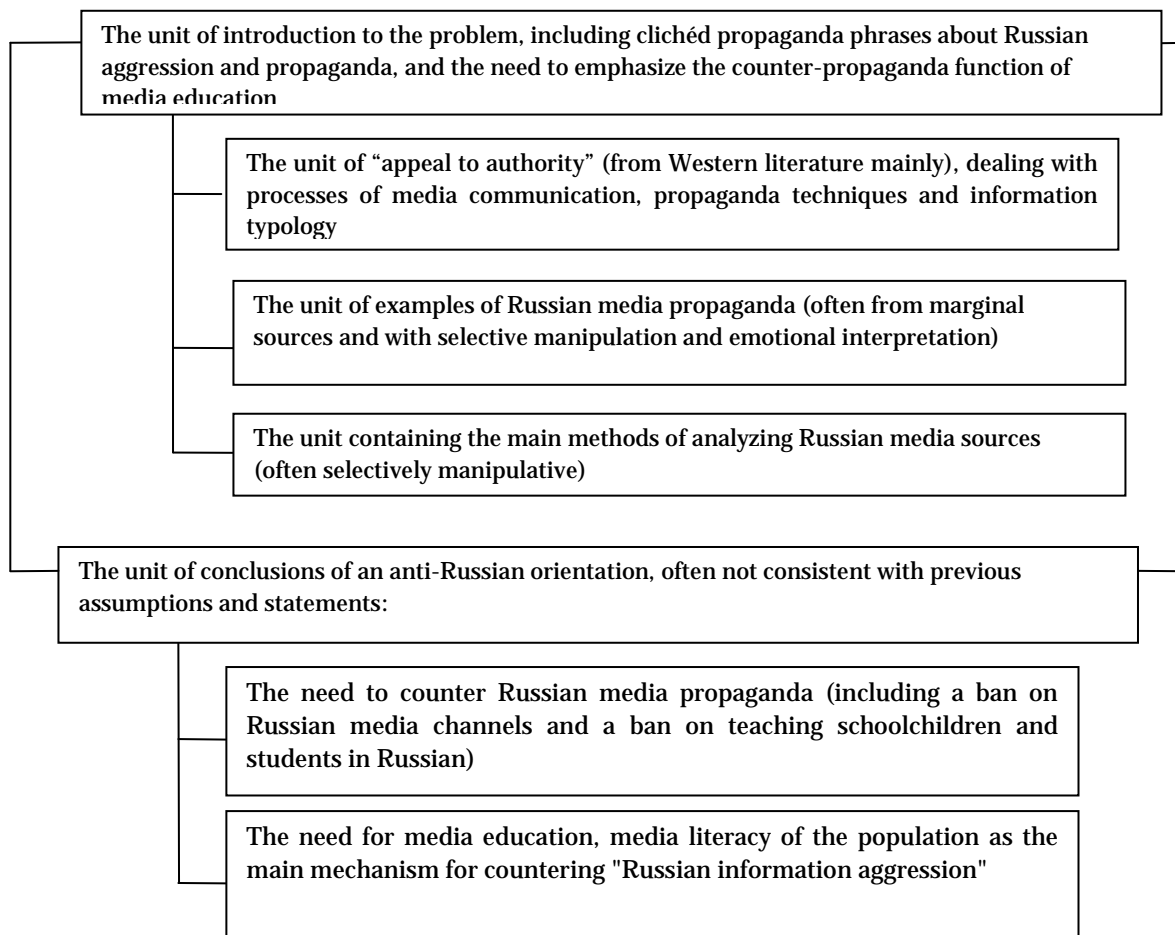

Fig. 4. The basic model of anti-Russian propaganda in the Internet communications of modern Ukraine in the framework of media education for various groups of the population (2014-2021)

The findings of our research have confirmed the hypothesis: 1) on the one hand, anti-Russian propaganda in the Internet communications of modern Ukraine in the framework of Ukrainian citizens' media education has become the reaction of the Ukrainian leadership in the field of education, culture, mass communications to the main political, ideological vectors of the Ukrainian state policy that has developed since 2014 due to the political tension between Ukraine and Russia. Internet communications were chosen as the field of the anti-Russian media war as the most popular and accessible source of information; 2) on the other hand, it should be admitted that the very essence of media education, recognized as means of creatively and wisely engaging with media to promote *equality, intercultural dialogue, peace,* freedom of expression and access to information (https://en.unesco.org/themes/media-and-information-literacy), has become in Ukraine a kind of a convenient "civilized" cover for one-sided, anti-Russian biased media campaign aimed primarily at such target audience groups as schoolchildren, students, young adults, and school teachers.

6. Media education model aimed at efficient development of audience's skills to reasonably confront the false (or partially false) information, contained in anti-Russian Ukrainian internet communication resources

In our article "Theoretical model and technology of anti-Russian propaganda in Internet communications of modern Ukraine within the framework of various student groups' media education" (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021) we have specified and analyzed contemporary Ukrainian media sources of media education (Bakka et al., 2016; Cherepovska, 2010; 2017; Collection…, 2015; 2017; 2020; Filonenko, 2020; Ivanov et al, 2016; Kharitonyuk, 2020; Koropatnyk, 2015; 2017; 2020; Lazorenko, 2020; Media…, 2021; Naidenova et al., 2018; Naidenova and Dyatel, 2020; Pocheptsov, 2015; 2016; 2017; Vlasyuk et al., 2019; Yuksel, 2020; Zental, 2020; Zorya et al, 2021, etc.) and have synthesized a theoretical model in this direction (in some or other variations used by Ukrainian media educators and media culture figures), which consists of the following units:

- a unit of introduction to the problem, including clichéd propaganda phrases about Russian aggression and propaganda, and the need to emphasize the counter-propaganda function of media education;

- a unit of "appeal to authority" (a brief review of literature on media education, media manipulation, information wars with an emphasis on the political positions of the European Union, the United States, the concepts of Western scientists in the field of media culture, media education and political science, UNESCO documents, etc.). Meanwhile, anti-Russian phrases are carefully chosen from a wide range of scientific literature;

- a unit of examples of Russian media propaganda (often from marginal sources and with selective manipulation and emotional interpretation);

- a unit containing the main methods of analyzing Russian media sources (often selectively manipulative);

- a unit of conclusions of an anti-Russian orientation, often in no way arising from the previously cited media examples (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021).

In this article, based on generalization, classification, and theoretical modeling, we present the media education model aimed at the effective development of audience's skills to reasonably counteract false (or partially false) information contained in anti-Russian Ukrainian Internet communication sources related to media literacy, media pedagogy, media competence, information propaganda, and counterpropaganda.

For this study, we 1) collected data on the parameters of the state of the research's subject in various sources in order to identify and actualize its main features, reflecting its essence and the most characteristic forms of its relations with the environment; 2) recorded the subject's features, having derived its indicators by analyzing the model of the subject under study and situations where such indicators are manifested. Therefore the following methods were used: data collection, generalization and classification, theoretical modeling.

The problems of propaganda and misinformation that must be confronted have been addressed in recent years in a considerable body of literature from around the world (Albright, 2017; Aldwairi, Alwahedi, 2018; Azzimonti, Fernandes, 2018; Bakir, McStay, 2018; Balmas, 2012; Bean, 2017; Berghel, 2017; Bertin et al, 2018; Bharali, Goswami, 2018; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Marwick, 2018; Mihailidis,Viotty, 2017; Waldrop, 2017). In particular, fake news on political topics has been studied repeatedly (Balmas, 2012; Dentith, 2017; Farkas,Schou, 2018; Figueira,Oliveira, 2017; Fletcher et al., 2018; Fletcher,Nielsen, 2017; Quandt et al, 2019; Vargo et al., 2018, etc.) and patterns for detecting fake media information (Conroy et al., 2015; Derakhshan Wardle, 2017; Gahirwal et al., 2018; Goering, Thomas, 2018; Janze, Risius, 2017; Ruchansky et al., 2017).

Many scholars hold the view that "fact-checking sites and media literacy campaigns presume that people will not share news if they know it is inaccurate, painting users as cultural dupes at the mercy of media elites. But this is simply a newer form of the "magic bullet" media effects model popular in the first half of the 20th century. This theory conceptualized media "messages as magic bullets capable of mesmerizing listeners who passively received and responded to communicative stimuli in an essentially uniform manner." In contrast, active audience approaches require

understanding how and why people make meaning from media, viewing media use within a particular sociocultural context" (Marwick, 2018: 477).

As some researchers maintain, "media literacy is the only way to detect fake news and fake photographs" and disinformation (Bharali, Goswami, 2018: 128; Mihailidis, Viotty, 2017).

However "no one imagines that media literacy will be easy to foster, however. It's one thing to learn how the media works and how to watch out for all the standard misinformation tricks... But it's quite another to master ... emotional skepticism, which urges users to slow down and check things before sharing them" (Waldrop, 2017: 12634).

Within the framework of the chosen theme, it is worth noting that more than often, the articles by Western media scholars focused on the problem of propaganda and fake media information, highlight Russian media influence (Lipman, 2009) and accuse leading Russian media channels (including Russian drama/comedy TV series) of media manipulation and one-sided interpretation of information (Giles, 2016; Khaldarova, Pantti, 2016; Murrok et al, 2018; NATO, 2016; Saran, 2016), while being supportive of the actions of Ukrainian propagandists, on the pretext that they are at the forefront of the fight against disinformation and propaganda coming from the Kremlin (Fitzpatrick, 2018: 45).

Meanwhile, Ukrainian media propagandists, in general, are far from providing objective information.

Let us examine a typical example of anti-Russian propaganda. In this case, it is an article by the Doctor of Sciences (in Philology), Professor V.V. Lizanchuk (in the Soviet era, a member of the Communist Party) – "Anti-Ukrainian information aggression in the television and radio space of Russia and Ukraine". In our opinion, it is rather typical for the Ukrainian anti-Russian propagandists and contains practically all the standard building blocks/units of such media texts:

1) a unit of introduction to the problem, including clichéd propaganda phrases about Russian aggression and propaganda (including media sphere), about the need to emphasize the counterpropaganda function of the media (Lizanchuk, 2014: 13-16).

Below are just a few examples of V.V. Lizanchuk's anti-Russian (absolutely unsubstantiated) invectives: "Moscow's zoological hatred of everything Ukrainian, human, moral and spiritual has opened up to the world in a new way" (Lizanchuk, 2014: 15), "Putin's Russian leadership and the media, loyal to him, leave no chance for an average Russian to be a mentally healthy person, blocking all alternative sources of information" (Lizanchuk, 2014: 16).

The last phrase of V.V. Lizanchuk seems simply unprofessional for a Ph.D., Professor and Head of the department of broadcasting and television at university, because in the age of the Internet with its millions of open sources of information (in all world languages), it is ridiculous to argue that "alternative sources of information" are being cut off in Russia. Moreover, in fact, some Ukrainian journalists and political analysts appear live on leading Russian TV channels, and openly express their anti-Russian positions in discussions with their Russian counterparts.

Further on, V.V. Lizanchuk points out that "the Russian media totally deceive the citizens of their country, as well as shoots lies through the information space of Ukraine, poisoning the consciousness of Ukrainians, primarily the population of the eastern and southern regions. The trump card of Moscow's propaganda is Nazism, so-called Ukrainian fascism, "rabid bourgeois nationalism", and Bandera-ism" (Lizanchuk, 2014: 16). Notably, it is the above citation that demonstrates several of the common propaganda techniques: "demonizing the enemy", "dysphemism", and "false accusations". These techniques are highlighted by the careful choice of lexical means by the author: instead of neutral verbs, he deliberately uses the ones with negative connotation, those which cause fear, uncertainty, and anger: Russian media "deceive", "shoot lies", "poison".

True, the Russian media have always condemned and denounced Nazis' and Bandera's actions as crimes against humanity, as genocide. It is therefore surprising that V.V. Lizanchuk blames them for that.

Further on, V.V. Lizanchuk argues that the most striking aspect of Moscow's propaganda was and still is inspired by the events of Euromaidan in Kiev and "stories about fascists who, as they say, have taken over Kiev and want to ban everything Russian" (Lizanchuk, 2014: 16). Thus, V.V. Lizanchuk emphasized that such fears are groundless and false and are a product of Russian propaganda.

The real life history utterly refuted Lizanchuk's thesis: "democratic" Ukrainian authorities first cut off broadcasting of the leading Russian TV channels on Ukraine's territory and on 13.03.2020 President V. Zelensky signed the law "About complete general secondary education" which liquidated Russian-language schools in Ukraine and abolished programs of education in Russian (Law..., 2020), thereby depriving millions of citizens of this country to study in their native language since September 2020.

2) A unit of "appeal to authority" (a brief review of the literature on media, media manipulation, information wars, with an emphasis on the political stance of the European Union, the United States, etc.). Meanwhile, specifically phrases accusing or discrediting Russia are often selected from a wide range of academic literature (Lizanchuk, 2014: 17-19).

3) A unit of examples of Russian media propaganda (often from marginal sources and with selective-manipulative and emotional interpretation) (Lizanchuk, 2014: 18-19).

4) A unit of anti-Russian conclusions (Lizanchuk, 2014: 20-21).

In V.V. Lizanchuk's article, these conclusions are made with the framing technique of propaganda through language means. He also uses the propaganda technique called "transfer" or "association" (i.e. projecting negative qualities of a person, entity, object, or value onto another to discredit it), comparing Russian media to Goebbels' propaganda. V.V. Lyzanchuk argues, in particular, that "Ukraine is facing the most powerful Russian propaganda machine in the world, which also inherited all the infrastructure, technology, and know-how from the time of the Cold War between the USSR and the West. Open sources tell us that ten powerful media groups of the Russian Federation are working against Ukraine ... They have adopted the methods of Goebbels' propaganda. ... Goebbels once said that with media in his hands he can easily turn any nation into a herd of pigs. It seems that his recipes worked well, otherwise, how to explain such a high level of zombification of the majority of the population of Russia and some Ukrainian citizens in the Crimea, East and South of the country. Besides, Russia is used to living a lie" (Lizanchuk, 2014: 20).

The finale of V.V. Lizanchuk's article sounds especially aggressive and propagandistic, as it points out that "the most important task of Ukrainians now is to deprive themselves and future generations of many illusions of imaginary brotherhood, unity and friendship with the Russians, which is only possible on the basis of equality, mutual respect and freedom. Society should clean up our information space from Russian psychological interference and fake terror as persistently and purposefully as Ukrainian fighters clean up Putin's invaders and homegrown separatist terrorists in eastern Ukraine" (Lizanchuk, 2014: 20).

Another typical example of anti-Russian propaganda combined with media educational objectives is a textbook for Ukrainian teachers with the ambiguous title "NATO is a force that protects civilians" (Bakka et al., 2019). A big group of Ukrainian media educators participated in the creation of this manual.

An analysis of this textbook shows that, on the one hand, it is a kind of hymn praising the "most peace-loving" military alliance in the world (Bakka et al., 2019: 5-144), whose expansion to the east allegedly does not threaten Russia at all, while, on the other hand, it is a set of clichéd political accusations directed against Russia (Bakka et al., 2019: 145-158).

A vivid example of false information contained inside the educational material is the publication "First Lesson for Students in Grades 9-11. Ukraine starts with you" (Mitsay, Plyaka, 2019). The authors begin their recommendations for this patriotic lesson with the following key objectives:

- "assertion of national-patriotic self-awareness;
- deepening knowledge of the problem of patriotism as a social and personal value;
- definition of the qualities of a patriotic citizen;
- deepening of students' knowledge about the key events of the Ukrainian state in the twentieth century;
- acquaintance of students with the outstanding figures of social and political, military, cultural and artistic who made a significant contribution to the development of the Ukrainian state and the popularization of the national idea;
-promotion of understanding the common Ukrainian nation: state sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and democratic principles of the state system;

- activation of students' cognitive interest in the historical and cultural heritage of the country and the state events of the history of Ukraine in the twentieth century;

- fostering respect for State symbols, and a respectful attitude to the traditions of Ukrainian and other ethnic groups living in the country;

- formation of an active life position of schoolchildren, their civic self-determination, social activity and desire for self-realization in Ukraine;

- formation and development of motivation aimed at preparing to defend their homeland and serve in the Armed Forces of Ukraine" (Mitsay, Plyaka, 2019).

Yet, further in the text it is explained that Ukrainian "history and greatness have been created over the centuries by people whose names are carved in the heart of every Ukrainian", and there are the names of S. Bandera, A. Melnyk and R. Shukhevych (Mitsay, Plyaka, 2019), and among Ukraine's major historical dates is "the proclamation of the restoration of the Ukrainian State on June 30, 1941 in Lviv, occupied by German troops" (Mitsay, Plyaka, 2019).

Meanwhile, if one carefully reads the original text of the "Act of Proclamation of the Ukrainian State" (1941), one finds that in reality it in no way implied true Ukrainian independence, but rather stated that "the renewed Ukrainian State will cooperate closely with National Socialist Great Germany, which under Adolf Hitler creates a new order in Europe and the world and helps the Ukrainian people to free themselves from Moscow's occupation for a Sovereign Soborny Ukraina (Ukrainian State) and a new order in the whole world". So, if the authors of "The First Lesson for Students in Grades 9-11. Ukraine Starts with You" had dared to read the full text of this "Act..." to the Ukrainian students, they could have been convinced that the Ukrainian nationalists had wanted to live together with the Nazis under their laws and, therefore, to accept and welcome all their actions (such as the genocide of the Jews, keeping children and adult civilians of various nationalities in concentration camps of death, etc.).

Thus, under the guise of patriotic education, the authors of "The First Lesson for Students in Grades 9-11. Ukraine Starts with You", by manipulating with (another propaganda technique) "virtue words" of *patriotism, independence, national identity*, attempt to instill ideas to justify Nazism and its collaborators.

This kind of "patriotic media educational" material is by far not the only one in the information and communication space of Ukraine (see, for example: Bakka et al, 2016; Cherepovska, 2010; 2017; Collection..., 2015; 2017; 2020; Filonenko, 2020; Ivanov et al., 2016; Kharitonyuk, 2020; Koropatnyk, 2015; 2017; 2020; Lazorenko, 2020; Media..., 2021; Naidenova et al, 2018; Naidenova, Dyatel, 2020; Vlasyuk et al., 2019; Yuksel, 2020; Zental, 2020; Zorya et al., 2021, etc.).

Therefore it is critically important to be aware of frequent propaganda and disinformation techniques, such as labeling, "demonizing" a political enemy; appeal to authority, testimonial (the use of real and fictitious statements of persons with high authority for propaganda purposes); common man/plain folks (maximally simplifying information, attempting to convince the audience that the propagandist's positions reflect the common sense of the people); mosaic presentation of information (when, along with truthful information and theses, for example, the ideas of justifying Nazi criminals are introduced); blocking the critical and rational perception of the message by appealing to the simplest emotions, dysphemism (the choice of words with extreme negative connotation , such as "aggressor", "occupier", etc. in relation to another state); constant, obsessive repetition of certain statements, regardless of the truth; exploitation of slogans, myths and stereotypes (for example, glorifying figures unacceptable for a truly democratic society); the introduction of the necessary (false) information into, at first glance, neutral messages; unbalanced accentuation of only positive or only negative facts and arguments, while suppressing the opposite, etc.

As a result of our research, we have developed and graphically presented (Fig. 5) a theoretical media education model aimed at the effective development of the audience's skills to reasonably resist false (or partially false) information contained in anti-Russian Ukrainian Internet communication sources (taking into account the ability to analyze political, ideological , economic and other motives that determine anti-Russian propaganda in Ukrainian media educational Internet communication portals, websites), indicators, and ways of assessing the effectiveness of the above model.
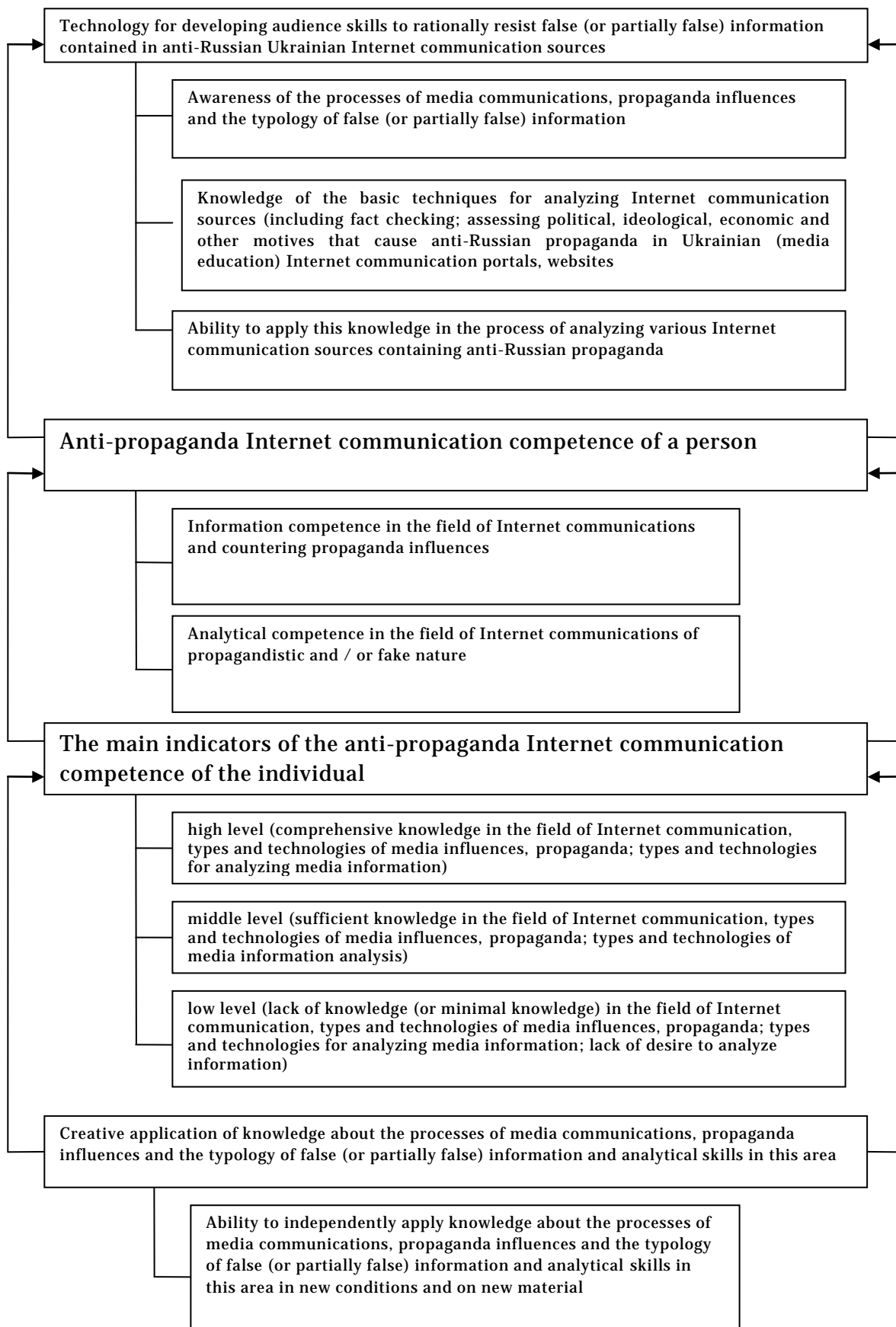
Technology for developing audience skills to rationally resist false (or partially false) information contained in anti-Russian Ukrainian Internet communication sources

Awareness of the processes of media communications, propaganda influences and the typology of false (or partially false) information

Knowledge of the basic techniques for analyzing Internet communication sources (including fact checking; assessing political, ideological, economic and other motives that cause anti-Russian propaganda in Ukrainian (media education) Internet communication portals, websites

Ability to apply this knowledge in the process of analyzing various Internet communication sources containing anti-Russian propaganda

Anti-propaganda Internet communication competence of a person

Information competence in the field of Internet communications and countering propaganda influences

Analytical competence in the field of Internet communications of propagandistic and / or fake nature

The main indicators of the anti-propaganda Internet communication competence of the individual

high level (comprehensive knowledge in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies for analyzing media information)

middle level (sufficient knowledge in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies of media information analysis)

low level (lack of knowledge (or minimal knowledge) in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies for analyzing media information; lack of desire to analyze information)

Creative application of knowledge about the processes of media communications, propaganda influences and the typology of false (or partially false) information and analytical skills in this area

Ability to independently apply knowledge about the processes of media communications, propaganda influences and the typology of false (or partially false) information and analytical skills in this area in new conditions and on new material

Fig. 5. Theoretical media education model aimed at the effective development of the audience's skills to reasonably resist false (or partially false) information contained in anti-Russian Ukrainian Internet communication sources

The main building blocks/units of this model are as follows:

Unit 1. Technology for developing audience skills to rationally resist false (or partially false) information contained in anti-Russian Ukrainian Internet communication sources:

- awareness of the processes of media communications, propaganda influences and the typology of false (or partially false) information;

- knowledge of the basic techniques for analyzing Internet communication sources (including fact checking; assessing political, ideological, economic and other motives that cause anti-Russian propaganda in Ukrainian (media education) Internet communication portals, websites;

- ability to apply this knowledge in the process of analyzing various Internet communication sources containing anti-Russian propaganda.

Unit 2. Anti-propaganda Internet communication competence of a person:

- information competence in the field of Internet communications and countering propaganda influences;

- analytical competence in the field of Internet communications of propagandistic and/or fake nature.

Unit 3. The main indicators of the anti-propaganda Internet communication competence of the individual:

- high level (comprehensive knowledge in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies for analyzing media information);

- middle level (sufficient knowledge in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies of media information analysis);

- low level (lack of knowledge (or minimal knowledge) in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies for analyzing media information; lack of desire to analyze information).

Unit 4. Creative application of knowledge about the processes of media communications, propaganda influences and the typology of false (or partially false) information and analytical skills in this area:

- ability to independently apply knowledge about the processes of media communications, propaganda influences and the typology of false (or partially false) information and analytical skills in this area in new conditions and on new material.

Thus, the developed theoretical media education model, aimed at the effective progress of the audience's skills to reasonably oppose false (or partially false) information contained in anti-Russian Ukrainian Internet communication sources (taking into account the ability to analyze political, ideological, economic and other motives that determine anti-Russian propaganda in Ukrainian media educational Internet communication portals, websites) consists of the following main structural units:

Unit 1. Technology for the development of audience skills is reasoned to resist false (or partially false) information contained in anti-Russian Ukrainian Internet communication sources (knowledge about media communication processes, propaganda influences and typology of false (or partially false) information; knowledge of the basic techniques of Internet analysis communication sources (including verification of facts, political, ideological, economic and other motives causing anti-Russian propaganda in Ukrainian (media education) Internet communication portals, websites; the ability to apply this knowledge in the process of analyzing various Internet communication sources containing anti-Russian propaganda.

Unit 2. Anti-propaganda Internet communication competence of a person (information competence in the field of Internet communications and countering propaganda influences; analytical competence in the field of propaganda and / or fake Internet messages).

Unit 3. The main indicators of anti-propaganda Internet communication competence of the individual (high level (a wide range of knowledge in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies of media information analysis); medium level (limited knowledge in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies of analysis of media

information); low level (lack of knowledge (or minimal knowledge) in the field of Internet communication, types and technologies of media influences, propaganda; types and technologies of analysis of media information; lack of desire analyze information).

Unit 4. Creative application of knowledge about the processes of media communications, propaganda influences and the typology of false (or partially false) information and analytical skills in this area (including the ability to independently apply knowledge about the processes of media communications, propaganda influences and the typology of false (or partially false) information and analytical skills in this area in new conditions and on new material).

Issues of modern media culture and media literacy education in the context of anti-Russian propaganda: interpretations of leading Ukrainian scientists' works

Anti-Russian propaganda in modern Ukraine is massive and very aggressive. In this article we try to shed light on the complexities of problems that Russian consumers of mass media may face and the contribution of media competency to the testing of media texts for understanding of their real meaning. With this purpose in mind we have presented instruments and technologies of communication which Ukrainian scientists use as anti-Russian propaganda. We consider that the ability to analyze and argue against false (or partially false) information in modern media texts is critically needed for both Russia and Ukrainian consumers.

In this article the issues of propaganda are discussed and illustrated in ways to facilitate the comprehension of the Ukrainian mass media context which is becoming more and more ideological since 2014. Accordingly, many Ukrainian politicians and journalists have begun to argue that Russia is the main source of false and unverified information. They categorically call Russian press "Russia's lying propaganda" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 29). In this political environment, which is determined by the conditions of convergence with the West and confrontation with Russia, it is little wonder that front-line Ukrainian media educators and media researchers have turned to contrpropaganda against Russia, using the elements of information warfare: deception, falsification of facts, pretentious selection of materials, one-sided view and other similar destructive means and arsenal.

If media is to be used to full advantage of our two countries it is necessary to develop a climate in which both parties participating in the discussion should adhere to moral standards and values of academic and professional ethic. By this we mean that scientists should be honest, avoid double standards and use scientifically based data in their activity. But it is not the case with such Ukrainian authors as G. Pocheptsov, V. Ivanov, Y. Emets-Dobronosova, N. Koropatnyk, O. Voloshenyuk, O. Mokroguz and many others, who are the ideologists and supporters of the so-called "*pro-European course*" of the Ukrainian government. Most media texts of these authors give readers not information to form their own opinion on a problem, but ready-made solutions, which are not only too politicized, but mostly distorted. This is especially dangerous when disinformation is launched deliberately, massively and "industrially" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 28). And one cannot but agree with this Ukrainian media expert! But the problem is that many Ukrainian media pedagogues (as well as G. Pocheptsov) understand this kind of phenomenon (namely *using manipulative technologies and disinformation*) very one-sidedly. In their works, they argue that Russian propaganda is acting illegally, using methods of disinformation, and at the same time, they deliberately keep silent about similar facts in the works of Ukrainian, West European or American media.

The words of M. Koropatnyk who says that Ukraine only conducts non-systemic counter-propaganda work responding to "Russian aggression" (Koropatnyk, 2016: 172) are the case in point.

In our study we rely on a research content approach, which includes identifying the content of the phenomenon under study, taking into account the totality of all its elements, the interaction between them, cited facts, analysis and synthesis of theoretical conclusions, etc. Our choice of research methods and their treatment have been guided by views of what media culture is, and how media education can serve the interests of the development of media culture in the context of anti-Russian propaganda in modern Ukraine.

Considerable attention is given to the analysis of monographs, books and articles on anti-Russian media propaganda written by Ukrainian experts after 2014.

One way or another, readers become involved as targets in some forms of propaganda. That's why we give particular emphasis to assessment and analysis of methods that readers themselves can implement to understand who and how manipulates their own consciousness by distorting genuine sources, historical events and documents.

I think that readers need to understand the nature of manipulation activities in the field of media and it is essential that the products of manipulation are to be properly comprehended and assessed by them.

Media competency involves more than readers' extracting and using knowledge produced by mass media. In many situations media consumers are in position to influence or even to requisition the information they want to receive. Consumership at this level always demands some knowledge of what writers can and cannot do for the target auditorium.

The theme of Russian-Ukrainian relations has become very relevant in recent years after the referendum in Crimea and rise of instability in the Donbass and Luhansk regions on the border with the Russian Federation. However, even earlier many Russian philosophers and prominent figures of science and culture also raised the issue on the relationships between Russians and other representatives of the Slavic peoples.

For example, F. Dostoevsky paid great attention to the "Slavic question" in his journalistic works. This was due to the national liberation movement of the South Slavic peoples against the Turkish yoke in the second half of the XIX century. In 1877, in his philosophical and literary journal *Diary of a Writer*, F. Dostoevsky published an article, which he called very eloquently: "One very special word about the Slavs that I have long wanted to say" (Dostoevsky, 1877). In it, he gave a deep analysis of the situation and made a visionary forecast about the development of future relations between the Slavic peoples and Russia. Then it was mainly about the Slavic peoples of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Romania, that gained independence from the Turkish Sultan thanks to the military intervention of the Russian Empire.

However, the opinion of the great Russian writer, expressed 150 years ago, can be successfully extrapolated to today's relations between Ukraine and Russia. Dostoevsky wrote: "I know that we do not need to demand gratitude from the Slavs, we need to prepare for this ahead. After their liberation, they will begin their new life, I repeat, precisely with the fact that they will beg for themselves from Europe, from England and Germany, for example, the guarantee and protection of their freedom, and even though Russia will be in the concert of the European powers, but they will do it in defense against Russia. They will certainly begin by declaring to themselves, if not directly aloud, and convincing themselves that they do not owe the slightest gratitude to Russia, on the contrary, that they barely escaped from Russia's love of power at the conclusion of peace by the intervention of the European concert, and if Europe had not intervened, Russia, having taken them from the Turks, would have swallowed them immediately... For a long time, oh, for a long time yet, they will not be able to recognize the unselfishness of Russia and the great, holy, unheard-of raising of the banner of the greatest idea in the world, of those ideas that man lives and without which humanity, if these ideas cease to live in him, stiffens, cripples and dies in ulcers and impotence... This cunning teaching ... will inevitably develop into a scientific and political axiom for them (Slavs). Moreover, they will even speak of the Turks with more respect than about Russia. Perhaps for a whole century, or even more, they will continuously tremble for their freedom and fear the love of power of Russia; they will ingratiate themselves with the European states, will slander Russia, gossip about it and intrigue against it" (Dostoevsky, 1877).

It is very difficult to comment on the words of F. Dostoevsky today. However, we need to emphasize the conclusion that Dostoevsky made: "If nations do not live by the highest, unselfish ideas and the highest goals of serving humanity, but only serve their own "interests", then these nations will undoubtedly perish, stiffen, become exhausted and die" (Dostoevsky, 1877).

But some modern Ukrainian politics and media experts are having a hard time accepting the whole value of these ideas about peaceful coexistence with Russia. Indeed, it is evidenced by numerous Ukrainian publications that have recently received coverage in Russian research studies of A. Fedorov, A. Levitskaya and some others (Fedorov, 2019; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020). For our research study we choose predominantly the last works of Ukrainian authors (G. Pocheptsov, V. Ivanov, etc) and are going to describe our findings about the state of anti-Russian propaganda through their analysis. Furthermore our findings are highlighted in more detail.

Recently media research and media education in Ukraine have been developing in the bosom of a propaganda approach "with a tangible taste of anti-Russian orientation" (Fedorov, 2019). Although until 2014 in the positions of modern Ukrainian media researchers there was terminological and content mismatch within the framework of the ideological approach, now their

positions are becoming more and more pro-Western and anti-Russian. We draw this conclusion basing on the analysis of the latest works written by Ukrainian media experts.

Examining publications of G. Pocheptsov for the first time one is immediately struck by the breadth of author's knowledge relevant to media topics. Such knowledge covers a vast domain, including issues of communication and intercultural communication, disinformation and information wars, mechanisms of media influence on public opinion, media toolkits for cognitive transformation and many others.

Here are just a few chapter titles from G. Pocheptsov's monograph "(Dis)information" published in 2019: "How the disinformation campaign works", "Fakes and disinformation as manipulative tools", "Disinformation and its friends", "Strengthening the fight against disinformation" and others. He recommends to take into account that today "informational space increasingly breaks its ties with physical space, on the reflection of which it was previously built" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 108); "social media created the world of many truths. The danger of this condition is that in a polarized world everyone is ready to fight for their truth (Pocheptsov, 2019: 113); social media gave a new toolkit for it- post-truth and fakes (Pocheptsov, 2019: 114); so far they defeat the truthful information, because recognition of fakes requires a complex toolkit, which the average consumer does not have" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 50) and so on and so forth.

Considering the high level of author's scientific qualification, one might conclude that he uses all knowledge that he has at his disposal in accordance with the principles of academic honesty. A closer look suggests otherwise. Knowing the laws and mechanisms of propaganda and disinformation, the author utilizes them very skillfully in order to manipulate the minds of readers. Particularly in recent years, at every opportunity the author cites examples solely of the "negative actions" of Russia and its "agents" from the secret services, etc. It means that G. Pocheptsov handles the information intentionally and deliberately. He contradicts himself and violates the laws that he promulgates.

As our analysis of G. Pocheptsov's works shows the author has a thorough knowledge of the subject under consideration and freely operates with quotations from English-language sources. Understanding the underlying mechanisms of the formation and operation of the modern information space, he skillfully uses all the techniques known to him that can actively influence the change in the picture of the world in relation to Russia of a wide range of readers. G. Pocheptsov writes that readers are more likely to trust an expert who knows very well the topic under discussion. He is precisely such an expert. And he skillfully uses his authority in order to convince everyone of the destructiveness of the Russian mission in the world political arena.

It is interesting to analyze the content of G. Pocheptsov's publications in accordance with his own classification of the methods for managing information perception. Analysis of G. Pocheptsov's works allows us to systematize these manipulative methods as follows:
1. retention of the necessary topics, events, interpretations in the information space;
2. construction of information (assembling an event from fragments);
3. fragmentation of events;
4. paralipsis or understatement vs unwinding the topic;
5. pulling facts from the past, etc. (Pocheptsov, 2019).

As for the use of the method of retention of the necessary topics, events, interpretations in G. Pocheptsov's works we may showcase many examples. He constantly repeats that:

"Russia is an aggressor", "Russia applies methods of information war and wages cyber war against Ukraine" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 11);

"The Russian version of the information war is based precisely on misinformation (Pocheptsov, 2019: 13);

"Kremlin controls accounts in Twitter" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 16);

"Russian media are no longer a source of reliable news. They are returned in a certain sense to the Soviet version of perceiving them as propaganda" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 16);

"Russian troll factory intervenes in the US presidential campaign" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 22).

There are many others, similar examples of this kind. Such cases of "Russian media intervention" can be found throughout all recent articles of G. Pocheptsov.

G. Pocheptsov's familiarity with techniques of assembling an event from fragments and his masterful use of construction of information can be seen in the following sample. G. Pocheptsov

writes the chapter in the monograph under the title "Influence operations in the model of terrorism". In doing so, he mentions an article "Propaganda of the deed 2008: Understanding the phenomenon" by Bolt and coauthors, who quoted M. Bakunin as the nineteenth century philosopher and 'father of terrorism'. The reference to the words of M. Bakunun 'we must spread our principles, not with words but with deeds' is justified by the research logic of English-speaking authors. In the case of G. Pocheptsov's article the question arises to the author's logic: why does he mention Bakunin? The solution is quite simple: it turns out that Russia is the birthplace of terrorism and of its father – Bakunin. From our point of view, the emphasis on the Russian surname of Bakunin in the context of G. Pocheptsov's article looks pretentious and strained. We dare to assume that G. Pocheptsov brings Bakunin to the fore for the sole purpose: to show that there is a Russian trace in terrorism! And even though Russia is actively fighting international terrorism, the reader will have an aftertaste of the Russian side effect! (Pocheptsov, 2019).

G. Pocheptsov explains how the mechanism of fragmentation works. "To describe the event, a new "alphabet" is created that satisfies the goals of the communicator. The event will be "cut" into such components so that the desired message can be composed from them. The journalist, the host of the program, the expert will repeat verbally what has already been done by cutting" (Pocheptsov, 2017). Accordingly he himself in his works uses this method exclusively for ideological and anti-Russian propaganda purposes.

Here is only one of the author's tenets: "Russia seeks to change the entire model of the world, both individual and mass consciousness". To prove this statement G. Pocheptsov sites the article of L.A. Way and A. Casey (Way, Casey, 2018) where scientists from Canada try to assess the impact of Russia on elections in the world since 1991. L.A. Way and A. Casey identified two waves of Russian meddling since the early 1990s and examined a data set of all 27 Russian electoral interventions since 1991. This is what G. Pocheptsov meticulously quotes in his monograph. We have found the whole text of Canadian writers and it turned out that they concluded: "However, an examination of both of these waves shows that Russia's efforts have made little difference. ... there are reasons to be skeptical of the claim that Russia swung the election for Trump. First, Russian information warriors produced far less fake news and polarizing rhetoric than did domestic and other international sources. Russia simply added to the already deafening cacophony of inflammatory rhetoric and misinformation" (Way, Casey, 2018). It is interesting that G. Pocheptsov doesn't mention this inference which Canadian experts made on the basis of scientific evidence and reasoning. This example vividly illustrates how G. Pocheptsov uses so called "fragmentation".

Another example of using manipulative methods by G. Pocheptsov (unwinding the topic) is as follows. He writes: "We live in a world full of erroneous information. But it's a completely different matter when such information is created deliberately, industrially, as was the case with the intervention of a Russian troll factory in the US presidential campaign. Industrial work is in stark contrast to chaotic work. Moreover, the "core" of this work was held by a huge number of trolls (different sources speak of the number working from 600 to 1000) and the amounts that the holding operated (1 million dollars per month)" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 24).

Since the author gives this information in one paragraph, the reader understands that this huge troll factory is Russian. At the same time he does not disclose the source of information. Perhaps it is reliable, perhaps not. But until now it has not been proven that it was Russia that was involved in the work of the mentioned troll factory. Further G. Pocheptsov writes that the same trolls attacked Macron's presidential campaign, Brexit, Catalan referendum, a series of elections in Eastern European countries, Ukraine, Georgia, Syria, etc. And again, the reader cannot help but guess that this is the malicious handiwork of Russia. From our point of view this is a prime example of how, "*in the right hands*", unverified information becomes disinformation since the author does not give any evidence and presents the doubtful information as reliable and already proven.

At the same time, completely different data is officially announced on this issue at a press conference after the summit of Russia and the United States presidents in Geneva (June, 2021). V. Putin unequivocally stated: "From American sources it follows that the largest number of cyber attacks in the world are carried out from the US cyberspace. In second place is Canada, followed by two Latin American countries and then Great Britain. Russia is not included in this list of countries from whose cyberspace the largest number of cyberattacks of various kinds is carried out. In 2020

the United States sent 14 requests to Russia for cyberattacks and in 2021 – 2 requests. To each of the requests the US received an exhaustive answer. But in 2021 alone, Russia sent 35 requests to the United States on cyber-attacks from the United States, and over the past two years there were about 80. And not a single Russian request was awarded a response" (Putin, 2021). The Russian president also stated that it must be admitted that the issue of cyber-attacks is very serious, and therefore, it is necessary to reach a consensus on the importance of joint Russian-American work in cyberspace (Putin, 2021). However, pro-Western Ukrainian authors rarely pay attention to this kind of data.

G. Pocheptsov writes a lot on the issues of how to counter disinformation. His recommendations on the perception of inaccurate information and fakes are very detailed and meticulously spelled. His main message is – if you want to understand whether you are dealing with disinformation, then you need to answer two questions: does this information have evidence and whether this fake information was beneficial to someone (Pocheptsov, 2019).

It is necessary to emphasize that all kinds of media information strategy should be directed by some form of preliminary inquiry or investigation. But for pro-Western Ukrainian authors there is no reason to test or assess evidences. Their consciousness is distorted by hypotheses about the harmful influence of Russia on the whole world and especially on Ukraine. However, it is known that a hypothesis is a conjecture that one has reason to believe is true but for which adequate evidence is lacking. How do the authors such as G. Pocheptsov explain the lack of necessary evidence for testing their hypothesis? And are they really trying to prove their hypothesis about the destructive power of Russian propaganda? Obviously, not! Disinformation – is a part of their plan. They know that disinformation is a formidable weapon because it is refuted ex post facto after it has fulfilled its negative destructive mission. G. Pocheptsov writes about it in such a way: "Now it becomes perfectly possible to live by the rules and without them at the same time. The informationally complex world turned out to be incapable of self-regulation. ... From time to time, the formula of this kind appears and allows to combine truthful and untrue information to enhance the credibility of messages. ... this method can be denoted as the transformation of an individual fact into a symbol, into a sign. In the next step, this sign already living its new life in virtual space, leaving space informational" (Pocheptsov, 2019: 15). Moreover, to clarify the mechanism of this formula, the author chooses examples from the past of Soviet press, when a metallurgist who gets an apartment becomes a reflection of the whole country, just like the unemployed American, rummaging in a garbage can, becomes an iconic picture of America.

Recently, G. Pocheptsov has been waging an open war with Russia. He willingly accuses Russia of undermining social stability in different countries, playing off social groups with opposing interests, meddling into established Western democracies, etc. In his opinion all this is done with the help of Russian media with the only aim – to throw the country (namely the US, Germany, France and Britain, among others Ukraine) into a chaotic period and to stir up outrage. In the article "Fakes like news without real events" (Pocheptsov, 2019) he writes that during the United States' 2016 presidential election American social groups with different opinions "for" and "against" immigration, for" and "against" Islam were taken to the streets. This was done through Russian media intervention guiding from St. Petersburg (Pocheptsov, 2019: 63). Again, he does not indicate sources of information. Following the logic of the author's theoretical propositions about manipulation in media sphere, we can understand that he is not impartial. Undoubtedly, the author is ideologically engaged and acts within the framework of the modern Ukrainian political conjuncture constantly making serious accusations against Russia.

Even when G. Pocheptsov indicates the source of information to which he refers he is not completely veridical. In the article "Communication technologies, describing the world, actively create it" he cites the George Orwell's 1940 Review of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and draws a perplexing conclusion: "By the way, Orwell once wrote in a review of Hitler's book that people do not want a simple comfortable existence, they are ready to sacrifice themselves for great goals. It was this discovery of Hitler that Orwell emphasized" (Pocheptsov, 2016).

But we believe that it is unfair to do such an assumption about Orwell's main idea of the Review. We are absolutely convinced that it is not what Orwell really wanted to say. Let's split up the Review content and come up with our own conclusion.

Already in 1940, Orwell realized that the figure of Hitler was very attractive to the masses. He noted: "But Hitler could not have succeeded against his many rivals if it had not been for the attraction of his own personality, which one can feel even in the clumsy writing of *Mein Kampf,* and which is no doubt overwhelming when one hears his speeches... The fact is that there is something deeply appealing about him" (Orwell, 1940). That's why he talked about the phenomenon of Hitler's personality. Orwell wondered how was it that Hitler had been able to put his monstrous plans to create an indestructible state into effect.

Orwell was struck by the inertness of Hitler's intellect, his static view of the world which didn't develop: "it is difficult to believe that any real change has taken place in Hitler's aims and opinions ... It is the fixed vision of a monomaniac and not likely to be much affected by the temporary manoeuvres of power politics". But, nevertheless, Orwell emphasized the danger of fascism and Nazism: "However they may be as economic theories, Fascism and Nazism are psychologically far sounder than any hedonistic conception of life" (Orwell, 1940). Therefore, Orwell warned everyone (and this was 1940!) from underestimating the personality of Hitler, who was able to lead people under the slogan 'Better an end with horror than a horror without end'. Orwell deduced: "Now that we are fighting against the man who coined it, we ought not to underrate its emotional appeal" (Orwell, 1940). And we believe that the main message of Orwell's Review was a warning about the threat of fascism and its ideology.

Thus, we see that G. Pocheptsov uses Orwell's material in a one-sided perspective, taking the author's words out of context and interpreting them in his own way, he takes the reader away from the general concept of Orwell's Review. This is the example of the power of communicative technologies, which allows any person to describe the world from his own angle, forming someone else's mind and thereby creating a different model of the world. And G. Pocheptsov uses this mechanism of consciousness manipulation rather skillfully.

Content analysis of G. Pocheptsov's publications reveals the growth of his negative attitude towards Russia. We have found out that his focus is shifting toward anti-Russian trend in the assessment of modern political life. The author's tone has radically changed towards the designation of conflict and confrontation in relation to Russia. There is a bias in the choice of examples and excerption of a certain kind. The essence of the statements is characterized by repeated and obsessive themes of war, confrontation, terrorism, which, according to G. Pocheptsov, are initiated by the Russian side. A comparison of the author's publications of the late 1990s and works published after 2014 shows a multiple increase in statements about the war on the part of Russia, while reducing critical references to the West, the United States and Ukraine. We may conclude that his efforts are aimed at presenting a completely distorted picture of reality. To lift a phrase from G. Pocheptsov's statement about cognitive mapping and operational coding: "We are talking about the search for certain structures within which there is a real processing of information by a person" (Pocheptsov, 2001: 427).

On close inspection we may also find out that Ukraine experts, as a whole, has become more aggressive, ideologically biased and overweighted in the process of media education. Especially since 2014 clear features of anti-Russian propaganda can be traced in many Ukrainian publications, monographs and textbooks on media education. Along with this, these publications contain unwarranted criticism of Russian media scientists and their scientific approaches to media literacy, media education, its content and methods.

For example, in the article "Media education and media literacy: definition of terms" (Ivanov, Schkoba, 2012). V. Ivanov and his coauthor O. Schkoba analyzed 47 theoretical works of different authors. Among them there are 6 works of Russian media educator and researcher A. Fedorov. His works have been quoted by V. Ivanov and O. Schkoba many times (32 times) in relation to the history and methodology of media education, to the theoretical foundations of media literacy, to the concepts and theories of media literacy education, its main goals, principles and types which A. Fedorov carefully studied, systematized and elucidated. V. Ivanov and O. Schkoba write: "He (A. Fedorov) analyzed various definitions of this concept (media education, media literacy, education aux medias, medienpadagogik, educacion para los medios) and conducted a survey of experts from different countries of the world on this issue. In addition, based on studying the views of Western scientists, he identified eight theories of media education" (Ivanov, Schkoba, 2012: 44).

Despite the fact that Ukrainian authors call A. Fedorov the leading media educator in Russia, they conclude: "the researcher clearly lacked knowledge about basic theories of mass communication. Out of sight remained, for example, the later leading theories of gatekeepers, spirals of silence, cognition, learning, etc., that are more adapted to the present time" (Ivanov, Schkoba, 2012: 44).

Why do the authors make such a judgement? Their reasoning seems particularly strange.

The position of the authors becomes clear when one has got acquainted with the conclusion of the article under consideration. V. Ivanov and O. Schkoba urge Ukrainian media educators to be guided not by the works of Russian experts, but by the approaches and theories of Western and American scientists. This is how they explain their point of view: "But it is necessary to note that, first, in Western countries for a long time there is already a permanent practice of media education, which can be and it is necessary to be guided, secondly, by theoretical developments Ukrainian scientists are not aimed at formation critical thinking autonomous from the media personally – (as in many Western countries), and to master media equipment and the use of opportunities media in the learning process. It should be noted that most media education specialists are held captive by outdated ideas about the power of media influence. But even considering this error, the conclusions of Western scholars on ways to implement conducting media education and achieving media literacy as a result, a critical view of the media they are of great importance for the development of Ukrainian media education" (Ivanov, Schkoba, 2012: 52).

We believe that when conclusions are based on ideology and anti-Russian orientation, then distortions of the kind considered here are likely to occur. In this regard, we make the essential deduction: this is a part of the anti-Russian propaganda technology. Such articles are not written by chance, but within the framework of anti-Russian propaganda crusades and image promotion campaigns that are specially planned and also have "execution and evaluation stages" (Ivanov, Schkoba, 2012: 52). In this case, the 'executors' are known. And it is not difficult to guess about those who are planning these anti-Russian attacks and evaluating their results in Ukraine.

With the beginning of an active confrontation between Ukraine and Russia, American (and, in general, West European) politicians became seriously interested in the development of media education in Ukraine. It is clear that in the context of sanctions against the Russian Federation, these politicians are very interested in the development of media education in Ukraine with a propaganda bias and with a tangible taste of anti-Russian orientation.

And the result of this influence is obvious. For example, in 2019 in the materials of the Seventh international scientific and methodological conference: "The modern space of media literacy and prospects for its development" (Ivanov, Voloshenyuk, 2019), we practically do not find references to Russian-language sources. References to publications of Ukrainian, German, French and English-speaking authors prevail. In the brochure of the collection of conference materials in the list of references to 39 articles there are 432 bibliographic sources. Only 37 of them are written by Russian authors. These figures are indicative and prove that anti-Russian tendencies are growing in the sphere of media education. This move is largely determined by both the foreign curators and the modern Ukrainian trend towards Russophobia. It is noteworthy that the publication of the "Collected papers" was supported by *The Deutsche Welle Academy* which is Germany's leading organization for the development of international media.

Assuming all these it would not be superfluous to analyze at least some textbooks on media literacy that came out in Ukraine after 2014. For example, textbooks on media education published in Kiev in 2015-2017 (Gumenyuk, Potapova, 2015; Ivanov et al., 2016; Ivanov, Voloshenyuk, 2017). They are already based to a large extent on Western developments; there are almost no references to Russian research findings and practical experience. This is a response to the trends in Ukraine that appeared back in 2015, which challenged for a change in the media education on the assumption of Western experience. These new textbooks emphasize ideological confrontation and informational enmity with Russia. One of them is the manual for teachers "Media literacy at the lessons of social disciplines" edited by V. Ivanov, O. Voloshenyuk, O. Mokroguz (Ivanov et al., 2016). It is worth mentioning that the creation and publication of the manual has been made possible by the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The editors of the Manual write that this publication is the first attempt to integrate media literacy into the teaching of social disciplines. The first two sections of the book discuss what

media, media education, media literacy and basic methods of critical thinking are. In the sections 3-11 – lesson plans and summaries for the courses "history of Ukraine" and "world history" and "Man and the world" are presented. The manual is recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (letter 1 / 11-19172 from 29.12.2015).

The analysis of the manual's content shows that the book has already been written as a counter propaganda one: teachers are taught how to resist Russian media propaganda using numerous examples. The authors intentionally involve children in considering the controversial historical problems of hunger, repression, conflicts which were allegedly introduced into the life of Ukraine from the outside, namely from Russia. Indeed, the themes of hunger and repression in the 1930s, Stalin's personality cult are not easy problems to analyze and understand in the school curriculum. But the authors of the textbook select such a material, both textual and visual, that sets students up for the conclusion: Russia is a hostile force that is capable of torturing, killing, and starving the citizens of Ukraine.

Let's contemplate as an example a task from the manual in which students are asked to ɘreview, compare and evaluate posters about the life of pioneers in the Soviet Union ("Pioneer! Learn to fight for the cause of the working class"; "Pioneers, strengthen the defense of the Soviet country: more circles of young friends of Osoviachim"; "May our Motherland live and prosper!") and adolescents in Nazi Germany who are loyal to Hitler ("Youth serves Führer"; "Officers of tomorrow"; "Ten years in the Hitlerjugend") (Ivanov et al., 2016: 152). The posters are set next to each other. This manipulative technique gradually leads students to judge them as phenomena of the same essence (which is certainly not the case). After the section "Nazism and propaganda. Propaganda as a repeater of ideology" students are offered a set of questions, that they must answer after comparing the posters, and the task: "Name the common features of all the posters". Such manner of presentation of information (assimilation of opposite entities, blurring of boundaries, confusion of ideologies and concepts) undoubtedly creates cognitive dissonance in students' heads and distorts their worldview.

We think it is necessary to draw special attention to this problem of media education in order to ensure that Ukrainian students are not outrageously misled on the matters of this sort.

Another very urgent problem is connected with the position of some Ukrainian authors on the issues of the Second World War. The aforementioned manual is a living proof. Their authors argue that Russian media deliberately politicize this topic and use it for manipulative purposes to split Ukrainian society. They claim: "This is dangerous, because often people who use the Soviet concept of historical memory of the Second World War believe that the Ukrainian state is building some other history, where the heroes are those whom they have always considered enemies. The mythology of the Second World War is now actively used in Russian propaganda, which tries to discredit Ukraine, which declares a pro-European course and attempts to go beyond the Soviet and post-Soviet mentality and ideology" (Ivanov et al., 2016: 133). Such a position, in my opinion, is unacceptable.

Here is the title of the section devoted to the Second World War from the manual: "World War II for Ukrainian People: Among Totalitarian Ideologies" (Ivanov et al., 2016: 115). After reading it, one gets the impression that during the war time the Ukrainian people were absolutely apolitical, and were under the cruel influence of two totalitarian ideologies that were tearing them apart. This is how the myth is born about the Ukrainian people as a victim or the "sacrificial calf" suffered from external enemies, almost equal in harmfulness. This approach is also prompted by the visual representation of the two leaders of these opposing forces: Hitler and Stalin, as well as a commentary by the authors of the manual: "The posters offered to you are an ideological weapon of the opposing parties of the World War II, which was widely used on the fronts, in the rear and on occupied territories. On the territory of Ukraine, they aimed to incite to enmity between the Ukrainian population, which resulted in the most tragic conflict – a fratricidal war. History has shown that totalitarian regimes viewed the media information as a propaganda tool, they became a means of manipulation, shaping human behavior, influencing based on her ideological choice" (Ivanov et al., 2016: 162).

That is, it becomes clear that such textbooks purposefully form the identity of Ukrainian schoolchildren outside the common culture and history with Russia, falsifying, distorting and denying the centuries-old experience of our economic, spiritual and civilizational unity.

It is no coincidence that Putin on July 12, 2021, came out with an article "On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians", in which he stated: "In fact, the Ukrainian elites decided to justify the independence of their country by denying its past, however, with the exception of the issue of borders. They began to mythologize and rewrite history, to obliterate everything from it that unites us, to talk about the period when Ukraine was part of the Russian Empire and the USSR as an occupation. The common tragedy of collectivization, the famine of the early 1930s, is passed off as genocide of the Ukrainian people" (Putin, 2021).

The obtained results allow us to state that since 2014 there is a steady increase in anti-Russian propaganda in the works of leading Ukrainian media experts and in textbooks on media education for schools and universities. In them different instruments and technologies of communication are used to negatively influence the perception of the Ukrainian audience of Russia, its politics and culture. Especially disturbing is the fact of massive anti-Russian agitation aimed primarily at such target groups and audiences as schoolchildren, students, young people, and school teachers. This is due to the active introduction of disinformation and anti-Russian rhetoric into the content of textbooks on media education. This may have a further negative impact on the children's audience in Ukraine and lead to an aggravation of socio-cultural confrontation, cause an increase in intolerance and development of large-scale ideological extremism. That's why We argue that it is necessary to actively resist lies in the media, challenge unsubstantiated accusations, and work to counteract the growing scale of aggressive anti-Russian propaganda at all levels, especially in the youth educational environment. Of course, this proves the relevance and importance of media education in a situation where new problems arise, including ideological, national and cultural ones.

We are convinced that the use of media manipulative technologies for the purpose of escalating hostility and hatred is unacceptable.

Conclusions

Thus, we have developed and proposed the following characteristics for an individual with a high level of media competence:

- motivational criterion of media competence: the desire to seek materials for educational, scientific, research purposes; the desire to obtain new information; a wide range of genre, thematic, emotional, gnoseological, hedonistic, intellectual, psychological, creative, ethical, aesthetic motives for contacts with media and media texts, including: the choice of a diverse genre and thematic spectrum of media texts with the mandatory inclusion of nonentertaining genres; the desire for recreation, compensation for entertainment

- the contact criterion of media competence: daily contact with various types of media and media texts;

- informational criterion of media competence: knowledge of most types and genres, media languages, basic terms, theories, basic facts about the history of media culture, the work of media culture figures, media audience typology, a clear understanding of mass communication and media influences;

- the perceptual criterion of media competence: identification with the author of the media text, while retaining the basic components of "primary" and "secondary" identification (except the naive identification of reality with the content of the media text): that is, the ability to relate to the author's position, which allows predicting the course of events of the media text "based on the emotional and semantic correlation of the plot elements, perception of the author's thought in the dynamics of the sound and visual image, synthesis of the thoughts and feelings of the audience in figurative generalizations" (Usov, 1989: 314);

- the interpretative/assessment criterion of media competence: the ability to analyze the process of media functioning in society, taking into account a variety of factors on the basis of highly developed thinking. Analysis of media texts on the basis of media perception ability, close to "complex identification", ability to analyze and synthesize the spatial and temporal form of media text, understanding, interpretation (interpretation), involving comparison, abstraction, induction, deduction, synthesis, evaluation of the author's concept in the context of the work structure, historical and cultural contexts (with the expressed argumentative agreement or disagreement with the authors' position of media text creators, evaluation of moral, emotional, aesthetic, social and other aspects of media text). In general, this level of interpretation, assessment of the media text is based on the high levels of "informational", "motivational" and "perceptual" criteria of media competence.

- practical-operational criterion of media competence: the ability of independent practical use of various kinds of media; the ability to choose, create/disseminate media texts (including those created personally or as part of a group of people) of various kinds and genres, the ability of active self-education in the practical sphere of media

- creative criterion of media competence: a pronounced level of creativity in various media-related activities (perceptual, playful, artistic, research, etc.).

As for the teacher, here the characteristics of the criteria of his high level of effectiveness of activities that contribute to the development of media competence of students in the analysis of media manipulative influences are as follows:

- motivational criterion of the teacher's activity: versatile motives of media-educational activity: emotional, gnoseological, hedonistic, moral, aesthetic, etc.; striving to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of media education;

- contact criterion of the teacher's activity: weekly classes with the audience in the process of media-education, promoting the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences;

- Informational criterion of teacher activity: systematic awareness, extensive theoretical and pedagogical knowledge of media and media education, typology and essence of media manipulation

- Technological criterion of the teacher's activity: developed technological skills in the field of media and media education activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences;

- Evaluative criterion of teacher activity: comprehensive mastery of ways to assess audience knowledge and skills in the field of media education and analysis of media manipulative influences;

- Practical-operational criterion of the teacher's activity: high quality of practical media-educational activities that contribute to the development of the audience's media competence in the process of analyzing manipulative media influences;

- creative criterion of the teacher's activity: a pronounced level of creativity in the media-educational activity that contributes to the development of the audience's media competence in the process of analyzing the media manipulative influences.

We have also developed a theoretical model for the development of students' media competence in the process of analyzing manipulative media influences as follows (see Fig. 1 for details):

1) diagnostic (ascertaining) component: the establishment of the levels of development of media competence of the audience with a focus on the ability to analyze media manipulation; questioning, testing, analysis of the creative works of the audience, observation;

2) content-target component: theoretical component (block of learning the history and theory of media culture, block of development of media education motivation) and practical component (blocks of creative and analytical activities on the media material);

3) the results component (block of final questioning, testing and creative works of the audience and the block of the final statement of the levels of development of media competence of the audience with an emphasis on the ability to analyze media manipulation).

The necessity of diagnostic and outcome components of the model is justified by the fact that at the beginning and at the end of the implementation of the main structural blocks it is important for the teacher to have a realistic idea of the levels of development of media competence of a given audience with an emphasis on the analysis of media manipulative influences.

The following criteria (attributes) of the audience's media competence are, of course, necessary for the full-fledged practical implementation of this model:

- motivational (motives for contact with media and media texts: genre, thematic, emotional, gnoseological, hedonistic, psychological, moral, intellectual, aesthetic, therapeutic, etc.)

- contact (frequency of communication/contact with media and media texts);

- informational (knowledge of terminology, theory and history of media culture, the process of mass communication)

- perceptual (ability to perceive media texts);

- interpretative/evaluative (ability to analyze the process of media functioning in society and media texts of different types and genres);

- practical-operational (ability to choose particular media and media texts, create/disseminate one's own media texts, ability to educate oneself in the media sphere)

- creative (creativity in various aspects of media-related activities (perceptual, playful, artistic, research, etc.).

We believe that this model meets the optimality indicators developed by Y.N. Usov (development of systematic knowledge about media culture, skills of media text analysis; consideration of dialectical unity of education, development, education; possibilities of expanding audience communicativeness; focus on personal development) (Usov, 1989: 32).

As for the theoretical model of effective media education activities of (future) teachers, promoting the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences, we presented it as follows (see in detail in Fig. 2):

1) diagnostic (ascertaining) component: ascertaining the levels of effectiveness of media-educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the analysis of media manipulations; questioning, testing, analysis of creative works of (future) teachers, observation;

2) content-target component: theoretical component (block of learning the history and theory of media culture, block of development of media education motivation and technology of classes with the audience) and practical component (blocks of creative and analytical activities on the media material, with a focus on the analysis of media manipulative influences);

3) results component (block of final control testing of (future) teachers, analysis of the results of their creative tasks on the media material, with a focus on the mastery of media education anti-

manipulation technologies; block of the final statement of the effectiveness levels of media education activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the analysis of media manipulations.

For full practical realization of this model (Fig. 2), of course, the following criteria (attributes) of effectiveness of media-educational activity of (future) teachers contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences are necessary:

- motivational (motives of media-educational activities of (future) teachers that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences: emotional, gnoseological, moral, legal, etc.; the desire to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of media and media education and resist media manipulative influences)

- contact (frequency of (future) teachers' contacts with audiences in the process of media education activities that contribute to the development of audience media competence in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences)

- informational (awareness, theoretical and pedagogical knowledge of (future) teachers in the field of media, media education, typology and essence of media manipulation)

- technological (technological skills of (future) teachers in the field of media education activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences);

- evaluative (knowledge of (future) teachers on how to assess the knowledge and skills of the audience in the field of media education and analysis of media manipulative influences)

- practical-operational (quality of practical media-educational activities of (future) teachers that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences)

- creative (level of creativity of (future) teachers in media-educational activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences).

Thus, we have not only developed a theoretical model of the development of media competence of students of pedagogical universities/faculties in the process of analysis of media manipulative influences, but also theoretical models of effective media educational activities of (future) teachers, promoting the development of media competence of the audience in the analysis of media manipulative influences, as well as media educational activities promoting the development of media competence of the audience in the analysis of the reliability of media texts.

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