

FACT CHECK IN WORLD EXPERIENCE

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Abstract:

This article discusses the importance of fact-checking not only in investigative journalism, but in all aspects of journalistic activity.

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Fact-checking is important not only in investigative journalism, but in all aspects of journalism. This is the determination of the inconsistency between the information and the fact, which is considered to be true. Factchecking can be a pre- or post-announcement check. Usually, factoids, inaccuracies, errors are removed from the text before publishing the article. This will help to avoid serious problems such as lawsuits and editorial discrediting. Fact-checking is usually done by journalists and editors, but some media outlets have a permanent fact-checker position. In authoritative publications, fact-checkers are considered not as ordinary technicians, but rather as specialists whose work requires high professionalism, and in the future most of them will become reporters or full-time editors. Articles by non-professional journalists, especially material submitted by readers or third-party experts, as well as some political statements require special scrutiny. Here are some fact-checking recommendations for journalists:

- 1) After making sure that you have spelled the speaker's name correctly at press conferences, ask about his official position, membership in public organizations, and other titles. After the interview, be sure to get as much contact as possible from the speaker, such as mobile and work phone numbers, e-mail, and social media accounts.
- 2) Never use source error as an excuse. If the source gives you information, ask him where he got the information.
- 3) Find official information, reports and records that can confirm, refute or complement the information you have been told. Photos and videos will help confirm some details.

4) If there is something in your notes that you do not fully understand or have doubts about, do not hesitate to call the speaker again.

5) Show the material to a fact-checker to make sure you understand everything correctly and do not mislead the reader.

6) If you work in online media, after posting the material on the site, invite readers to openly report any inaccuracies and errors in the article. It's easy to correct a mistake by thanking an attentive reader.

Consumers of information are exposed to a large amount of different information every day. In the conditions of the information society, with the availability of a large amount of information, many risks can arise. Today, it is becoming increasingly difficult to manage, retrieve and process data. Information can be used both for enlightenment and for controlling human consciousness and behavior. The evolution of methods and sources of information transmission and reception has led to the appearance of terms such as "fake news", "clickbait" and "factchecking". Unreliable news has emerged due to the side effects of modern media capabilities and significant changes in the perception of information by stakeholders.

It should be noted that fact checking is an important indispensable tool of modern journalism. On the other hand, there is also the problem of society's inability or unwillingness to distinguish reliable information from false information. According to world experience, more than 50 percent of information consumers cannot distinguish wrong information. In particular, 23% of users deliberately distribute information even if they know it is unreliable. Especially, this situation happens more against the background of events of political and social importance in the world. Populism and manipulation, as well as false information hidden by false facts, are the main methods of introducing political decisions into public consciousness. By observing ethical principles such as independence, objectivity, objectivity, and accuracy, the trust of the audience appears and the reputation of mass media is formed. The main rules of fact-checking are as follows:

1. Search for a primary source or confirm information from several independent sources. Access to primary sources is a professional requirement for a serious and responsible journalist. A source is the person from whom the original statement or action originates. Also, the source can be a person who participated in the events (witness) or is closely familiar with the original source. It will never be superfluous to check information from various sources, get comments from experts and people



on the subject. But for the students to better understand the context, it is necessary to separate the source from the comment.

2. Opinion of the opposite party. The logical continuation of the first rule is as follows: no matter how many sources you talk to, if they all adhere to the same position, then the material loses objectivity. The number of respondents who are supporters does not really work for quality and objectivity. In any situation there are at least two sides, two poles. At least try to contact all the participants and interested parties involved in the event. Often, journalists ignore this basic principle that saves them from boring statements.

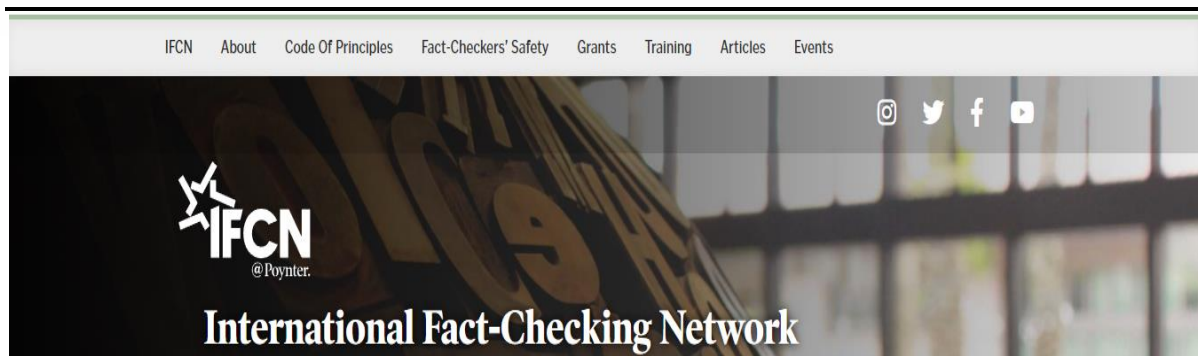
3. The ability to recognize fakes. A necessary skill for a fact-checker is to learn to recognize fakes. It is not as easy as it seems at first glance. Fake information should be understood as all conscious fakes and simulations. This includes typos and technical errors. A lie becomes the truth when given public attention. That's why it's so important to spell check people's names, occupations and titles, check dates, names, addresses, etc. Critical thinking and technical skills are required to recognize fake news.

4. Accuracy of facts is more important than efficiency. Emotions are the dangerous enemy of the fact-checker. When it comes to "sensations" in the work of a journalist, there is often a temptation to give in to the general mood and pass unnecessary information as fact. Some media outlets are interested in publishing factoids because they are popular with their audience. There is often a danger of publishing a lie here.

5. "Clean" use of social networks as sources. Social networks simultaneously facilitate and complicate the work of journalists and editors. Ideally, for every fact you find in them, you should find at least two or three confirmations. Thanks to the Internet and social networks, you can contact relatives and friends of the participants of the event, talk with colleagues and acquaintances.

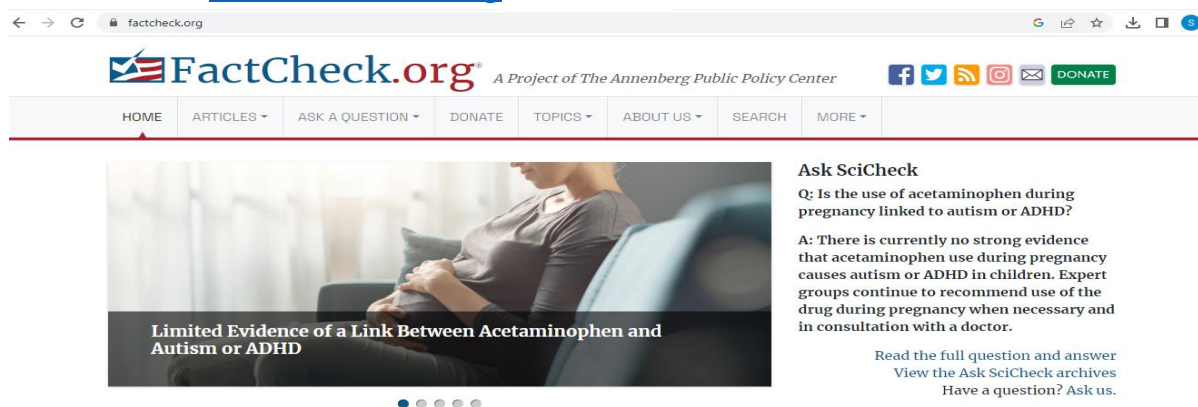
If we look at the world experience, in 2015, the international fact-checking network "IFCN" was established in the USA. The organization brings together fact-checking experts from around the world. Representatives of 19 countries of the world such as Germany, Turkey, Great Britain, France, Italy will participate in this process.





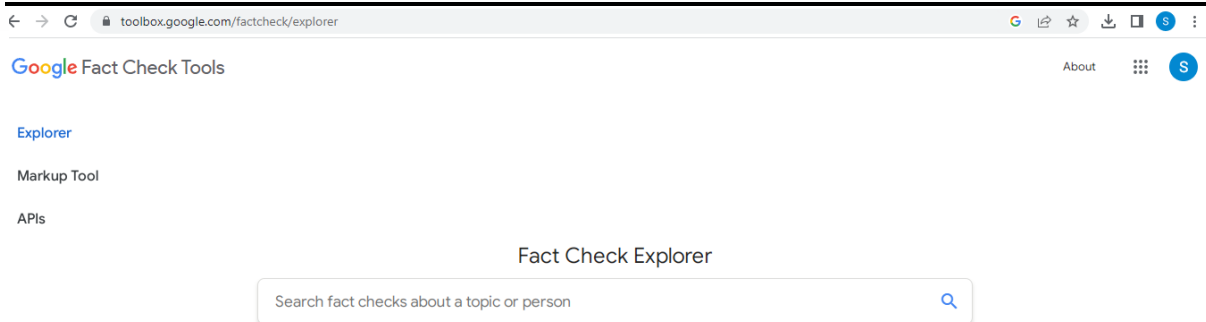
Ekaterina Mizulina, executive director of the National Center of the Russian Federation, director of the Safe Internet League, said, "The problem of spreading fake news is really urgent all over the world. The reason is that they can even cover the entire country in one day, which poses a threat to the physical or mental health of citizens.

Currently, fact-checking sites that identify fake news are operating in most countries. There is also www.factcheck.org.



Online platforms have also announced a fight against fake news. The Facebook social network uses fact-checking algorithms that help identify fake information and limit its repetition. The investigation of suspicious information on Facebook begins after receiving a complaint from users of the social network or after the moderators independently identify a problematic message. After that, the social network places a label on approved posts where users can get additional context. Google also has Fact Check Explorer, a tool designed to ease the work of fact-checking experts, journalists, and researchers. A check mark appears on the information checked by the system.





Yandex.ru also has a fact-checking program. The publication is sent to multiple fact-checkers in random order. From four to eight hours are allocated for checking one material. During this time, it will not be visible in the general recommendations feed and will only be available via a direct link.

The concept of fact-checking entered traditional journalism along with new media. A fact is information supported by reliable evidence. Different people may have different views on the same story, but we cannot argue with the facts. Therefore, the fact should not only be established, but also double-checked. Tampering with facts is a crime against objectivity and accuracy. In modern digital media, the concept of "factoid" is becoming more and more relevant. This is a fact that does not exist at first, and when it is published in the mass media, it gets a live reaction and evaluation. Most people follow automatism and stereotypes and believe in the surface form without critically accepting the essence. Unconfirmed facts, fake news by propagandists, cybercriminals, network trolls and other manipulators of all directions are carefully inserted into the form of current news. The main weapon of the fact-checker is to check the power of skepticism, professional disbelief and truth. Here, the logic and means of fact-checking mainly correspond to the methodology and technologies of scientific works. In addition, a specialized source studies course for historians can improve the quality of a journalist's work with sources. Unfortunately, those working in mass communications often do not know how to use the power of fact-checking.

To understand the nature of factchecking, it is necessary to consider the process of its creation. Historically, the formation of journalism is characterized by the fact that news gradually began to be seen as a basis for conducting political battles, and information became a valuable commodity. Its value increased as a result of the reporter's reporting based on his personal observations and the instructions of the opposite parties. Thus, as a result of journalists' ability to distinguish facts from



various fabrications and rumors, a reliable reputation for journalistic activity was formed. This activity began to be profitable, and as a result, the first news agencies were established: the Associated Press in America (1846), Reuters in England (1851) and Havas agency in France (1835). According to the founders of the agency, the potential audience can be narrowed as a result of any political bias. The desire to convey information accurately and impartially gave rise to the "muckrackers" movement, which started journalistic inquiry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in America. As a result of the development of journalistic inquiry within the framework of quality media, international and national ethical standards began to emerge among industry professionals. Standards are characterized as recommendations for journalists, like rules of ethics. The desire for objectivity and neutrality created the institution of ombudsmen, which points out journalistic errors and inaccuracies. The idea of protecting students' rights to reliable information first appeared in Japan. The ombudsman is the mediator between the editorial obligations and the results expected by the audience, and is the final decision-maker in the interaction. Fact-checking emerged as a result of increased experience within the framework of journalistic inquiry and ombudsman activities. Currently, fact-checking has begun to work across a wide spectrum of journalistic activities rather than "working on mistakes". Meeting the audience's need for new information is the reason for the development of verification - the process of verifying the reliability of distributed information by confirming or refuting it.

Journalists and experts specializing in this field are called fact-checkers. According to the rule, fact-checkers conduct verification through a large number of confirmations from various organizations and the public. In our opinion, objective and independent fact-checking is one of the most powerful tools of journalism. Giving facts that are unbiased and not based on a clear source increases distrust in the media and experts. In the standard form of fact-checking, which includes the first source of information and experts, 3 important stages of editing in the approval or rejection of the finished material are distinguished:

- checking the compatibility with the context;
- check style and grammar;
- check the level of reliability and prove the given facts. Speaking about the problem of fact-checkers, it should be noted that they work along the tracks of the already "damaged" flow of information, the disclosure of fakes is not able to change the



concepts that have arisen on the basis of disinformation. This conclusion is based on the results of a scientific study published by the publication "Psychological Science" under the title "psychological meta-analysis that refutes disinformation". The problem is that correcting the fakes spread online does not seem to be enough, because it becomes difficult for the audience to believe the correct, real information. The Guardian's social and new media editor Martin Belam notes that "to put an end to this stupidity, fact-checking alone is not enough, we need to decide what is the most effective way to spread the truth." In most cases, fakes appear on the Internet. The Internet has become a "convenient" environment for "amateur" mass media, which does not have the task of checking information again and again. According to Stephen Pritchard, editor of the Observer (the Guardian's Sunday edition), a self-respecting publication always corrects factual errors by rebuttal or correction, unlike quality publications, which are amateurish. and publications make corrections based on links to the top of the false and uncorrected materials that have been distributed. As a result of distrust towards traditional mass media, amateur mass media spread their views in the media market by means of manipulation and try to legitimize their actions in this way. In order to be justified from mistakes and falsification, he uses the principle of assigning responsibility to his opponents: "the best defense method is attack". However, according to various experts, amateur mass media are not as well-known as specialized and opinionated blogs. Another reason for professional journalists' anxiety is churnalism.

The term came into everyday life as a result of BBC journalist Vadim Zakir's use in 2008 to refer to a new form of journalism that emerged as a result of mechanically sorting through texts "packaged" by news agencies and PR departments. This term was reflected in the process of Cardiff University research: 80% of British news was created based on this template, while only 12% was written by reporters. In April 2013, The Sunlight Foundation, a non-profit organization that advocates for openness and transparency, partnered with the Media Standards Trust to launch churnalism.com, a site that identifies "patterned" journalistic material. Brian McNair, a British media researcher and professor of journalism, suggested using the term "media objectivity" as a concept against fake news and alternative facts. In addition to checking sources and verifying information to clearly demarcate facts and opinions, the work of a journalist should be open so that he can analyze his thoughts, and then he will achieve transparency: the limits of working with



information should also be clarified. According to scientists, it is necessary to reconsider the definition given to the concept of impartiality when it comes to the globalization of mass media in the digital era. The framework of public discussion that supports democratic processes must overcome the "cultural chaos" of the Internet today. In contrast to the traditional interpretation of objectivity, scientists cite the increase of various forms of quasi-journalism. This form of journalism means competition not only for professional journalists, but also for Internet users and Internet advertisers.

As an important addition to the technical innovation in identifying and exposing fakes in journalistic activities, media literacy projects in primary, secondary and higher education introduced in different countries can be cited. According to the publication "Full fact", fact-checkers from all over the world developed lesson plans for schoolchildren aged 9-11 and 14-16 in 13 languages within the framework of IFCN. . As for the students of higher educational institutions, the manual "Lib Guide" on identification of fake news and projects was prepared. In addition, the American Library Association has partnered with regional libraries to develop a program called "News Know How" that helps young people become "informed consumers" of mass media, expose propaganda and check fakes. Thus, fact-checking began to be separated from the legislative stage of a journalist's work as a separate activity. At the international level, this is called fact-checking, that is, checking the facts for their reality. International media literacy projects are aimed at forming "conscious consumers" of mass media and the ability to distinguish fake news independently.

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