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Philology. General and Comparative Linguistics. (General Linguistics)

Linguistic features of fake news

ABSTRACT

of Ph.D. thesis

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The dissertation work was discussed and directed for public defense by the Department of General, Indo-European and Balkan Linguistics at the Faculty of Slavic Philology of the SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" on 23 March 2023.

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Content

I.   Introduction

Pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli.

De litteris, De syllabis, De Metris, Terentianus Maurus

1 .1. Introduction to the topic and relevance of the research

The topic of disinformation, post-truth, hybrid wars, represented by the metonymy of fake news, as well as their detection and exposure, has been flourishing in the last ten years. Scholars have pointed back in antiquity examples of disinformation, propaganda, and manipulation, citing sources that record events from the earliest history of the world, but all today cohere on several key ruptures in our modernity that have brought the topic firmly into relevance.

As many have pointed out, the war in Ukraine began in 2014 and in the field of media, to become today absolutely dominant and to be defined as the first real hybrid war. However, a more visible event of disinformation for the world public before the war in Ukraine was the vote in the UK in the referendum to leave the European Union on 23 June 2016. At that time, nearly 52% of Britons gave their support to leaving the European Union, and today we are witnessing the aftermath of this event. The same year, 2016, was also a pivotal year because of another political change that affected the whole world – the vote for President in the United States and the winning of the office by the Republican Donald Trump, who today has his own social network called TruthSocial [1]. The two events – Brexit and Trump's victory – seemed so improbable to analysts in 2016 that before they happened, no one believed they would come to such outcomes. In the aftermath, the explanation turns out to be the new old phenomenon of information manipulation, this time reinforced by the role of new media – the then uncontrolled social networks and their redefined messages to certain audiences. These messages managed to radically change public attitudes and influence the course of history.

The investigation into the unexpected 2016 twist brought to light troll factories in the Macedonian city of Veles controlled by Donald Trump advisor Stephen Bannon, as well as the spectacular manipulations of the company Cambridge Analytica, for which the former Facebook and current Meta is paying nearly a billion dollars for a class action lawsuit in 2022 [2]. It appears that through social media news messages, the UK Brexit vote and Trump's election were predetermined. The die is cast.

The manifestations of disinformation do not cease with these important events. Today, less than a decade after the revelations about the role of social media manipulation, the world has been confronted with the pandemic spread of the sars-cov-2 virus – popularly known as the coronavirus that caused the infectious disease COVID-19. The pandemic and the lack of vaccination has caused an unprecedented increase in death rates, which has led to a reduction of life expectancy across the

[1]https://truthsocial.com/
[2]https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-64075067

world, and Bulgaria is one of the worst affected countries. This disease, which has led to the deaths of millions of people[3], has been followed by an infodemic – a new phenomenon as defined by the World Health Organization – the rapid and widespread dissemination of inaccurate and inaccurate information, in which it is difficult to learn essential information about an issue[4]. The world has witnessed another wave of misinformation – this time regarding health – that has physically endangered people's lives (Posetti, Bontcheva, 2020), and today, according to UNICEF, 67 million children worldwide have missed one or more vaccinations within three years [5].

The infodemic is not over yet; Europe and the US were coping with the consequences of Brexit and Donald Trump's rule; meanwhile fierce military actions started within the borders of the European continent, which are being fought with all means, including disinformation. In this historical setting – of infodemic, physical and informational warfare, and a manipulated civil vote by social media – the relevance of the study of disinformation is more than expected.

1.2. Motivation
The author of this study has extensive experience as an international editor who covered a number of the aforementioned events on a daily basis – from their very inception, to their development, and in some cases, to their dissipation.

First-hand journalistic experience and a linguistic university background triggered the scholarly interest in analysing the possible ways of detecting disinformation and led to the present study.

Although focused on linguistics, it also draws on other disciplines because of the nature of the topic of misinformation itself, which cannot remain solely in the field of linguistics. The study is a kind of a snapshot of the current problems arising from propaganda, manipulation and disruption of the media in Bulgarian and international context.

1.3. Aim and objectives
The aim of the study is to find out the linguistic characteristics of disinformation in the news in the post-truth era, the language of the study is Bulgarian. The ultimate goal is to make it easier to recognize so-called *fake news*, which are a metonymy of disinformation. Disinformation refers to demonstrably false or misleading information that is created, presented and disseminated for economic gain or to deliberately mislead the public, the consequences of which may be detrimental to society.

The research problem is to examine the existence of linguistic features that could predict these *fake news* – i.e. disinformation, in the media in Bulgarian; and to describe these linguistic features.

In order to accomplish the goal, the following tasks will be solved:

- A historical review of cases, related to disinformation will be made;

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[3]https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/
[4]https://www.who.int/health-topics/infodemic#tab=tab_1
[5]https://www.unicef.org/reports/state-worlds-children-2023

- An overview of the fields, connected to the understanding of the phenomenon of disinformation will be made;

- A review of the philosophical approach to the topic of truth will be given;

- A conceptual apparatus in Bulgarian will be created – a kind of glossary, related to the topic of disinformation and new journalistic notions;

- A list of headlines from the news stream in Bulgarian will be collected to provide a basis for the linguistic contextual analysis; the collected news headlines will be mainly from online media;

- A previous experience in detecting misinformation in different languages and in Bulgarian will be analyzed; a list of possible linguistic markers already described as suggestive of disinformation will be derived;

- A linguistic phenomenon – evidentiality and in particular the renarrative and its homonymic forms will be analyzed; the renarrative will be also considered from a historical perspective;

- A particular case of disinformation that is indicative of the phenomenon will be demonstrated;

- Implications for linguistics and the detection of disinformation will be offered.

1.4. Object and subject of the study
The object of the research is the Bulgarian language, and the subject of the research are the media texts published in the online media, as well as the so-called *transmedia publications* – where content is published both online and in printed version. Special attention is paid to the headlines in media texts. On the one hand, they are closest to the new type of online information, which does not allow long texts in social media – that is why journalistic headlines resemble *tweets*. These headlines also resemble messages from the social channel *Telegram*. On the other hand, in the headlines, journalists apply all their skills to attract the attention of readers, concentrate the information and use all their imagination. However, the headlines can be used to guess how truthful the news content is, thanks to the techniques used – linguistic features that can be read as a flag, a warning, a hint of disinformation or of unreliable information.

In recent years there has been a certain ambivalence of the media, reflected in so-called *transmedia journalism* and *transmedia storytelling*. The phenomenon, in which journalists simultaneously produce several different types of texts, identical in theme and content, but different in style and execution. Texts are made for different types of media – for newspapers, for online publications on websites and for social networks. Thus, the story is told in different ways – additionally to the printed version, the story is also put as a message on social media, sometimes supported by video. Online content is different.

News headlines will be analyzed with particular attention because of their main role in disinformation.

1.5. Hypothesis

The hypothesis is that there may be found formal linguistic features that suggest that some text is not credible, or more generally: that it is disinformation.

Apart from lexical and graphical markers, the main focus of the study falls on the category of evidentiality in Bulgarian. Evidentiality grammaticalises the speaker's cognitive states related to receiving the transmitted information from a particular source and to its classification (Nitsolova, 2008). The hypothesis is that certain linguistic features of Bulgarian – such as the renarrative of the **hypercategory** of the reproduced speech realis II – may suggest to the reader that the content presented is not credible and, as a consequence of its use, the news presented with this linguistic form does not meet journalistic standards of credibility. In verifying the information presented marked by these linguistic characteristics, we are witnessing disinformation.

The other hypothesis is that there are certain linguistic constructions used in journalistic texts as headlines that suggest the possibility of unreliable information.

1.6. Methodology

The study requires an interdisciplinary approach. As there are philosophical, journalistic and linguistic parts, different methods from the mentioned sciences are applied. General scientific methods have also been used – analysis of information, synthesis of data, generalizations of the knowledge gathered and drawing conclusions based on the analysis and synthesis.

Initially, the different points of contact of the topic of disinformation detection with the different sciences are listed and described, and directions for further interpretations are given.

From a journalistic point of view, a list of different concepts in the field of disinformation detection is made. The various relationships between these concepts are explored; a kind of glossary, dedicated to the terminology, is compiled – it also could be perceived as a linguistic achievement.

In the philosophical part, a brief historical overview of the concept of truth through different philosophical theories is given. The emergence of disinformation and the realization of fake news are analyzed through the methods of phenomenology and in particular through the theory of potentiality. On the other hand, the maxims of the philosophy of language, established by Grice, are analyzed, as well as the relation to Grice's *cooperative principle*. In this particular analysis the focus falls on the presentation of news. The linguistic phenomenon of renarrative and its homonymous forms are examined as opposed to the informativeness of utterance. Through Habermas' critical theory, the theme of truth in language is refracted and an analysis of a new structural transformation of the public sphere is proposed, in Habermas' own words. The truth and fiction dissolve into simulacra is also mentioned through Baudrillard's poststructuralism.

Different methods are applied in the linguistic part. The existing information on the topic of disinformation in Bulgarian language is analyzed. A list of already defined markers is compiled. New additional linguistic markers are proposed after new analysis on the lexical and grammatical level.

The use of these markers is demonstrated by contextual analysis. The manifestations are examined in detail, the reasons for the use of certain grammatical forms and of particular lexical units are analyzed. Renarrative and its homonymous forms are examined.

Investigating the reasons for the creation of misleading information, a psycholinguistic analysis is also made – we examine the reasons for the particular journalistic behaviour and desire for greater, faster and easier popularity. Eyewitness accounts are also appended to present some of the psycholinguistic factors in the generation of misinformation.

A historical-linguistic method is applied in the review of the renarrative, on the one hand by commenting on the origins of the renarrative, and on the other hand by suggesting that the use of the renarrative will be displaced and replaced in the future, following the changes in journalism for more unclear headlines in web-based media.

For empirical support of the observations we manually collected a corpus of headlines, not annotated and structured, but which gives illustrative material.

Theoretically the study lies in the field of linguistics – morphology, semantics, text linguistics.

1.7. Procedures
The scientific-theoretical procedures of the study are mostly related to linguistics. Although the manifestation of the topic in other scientific fields has been reviewed, the analyses are mostly at the level of morphology and pragmatics.

Applied scientific procedures are related to the analysis of data – a corpus of titles demonstrating the linguistic phenomenon, and case studies are also provided.

The practical-applied procedures are related to the possibility that the derived rules could be applicable in automatic language processing with the methods of computer linguistics (NLP) to limit misinformation.

1.8. Difficulties
The first major difficulty is to limit the study of disinformation and so-called *fake news* in the field of linguistics. As a subject of research, disinformation is multi-layered and comprehensive and it is the subject of study by a number of sciences. It can be analyzed from psychological, social, philosophical, logical, ethical, military and other points of view.

The second difficulty is related to data collection. In the vast field of information and many media that provide different data, it is difficult to decide which object is worth to be analyzed. Currently, disinformation researchers are trying to figure out the rules to select malicious information worthy of analysis. In the present study news headlines with certain linguistic characteristics were selected.

The third difficulty is the conceptual apparatus. Although largely resolved, there is still some vagueness about the concepts, associated with disinformation. The study proposes unification of the glossary, used in the Bulgarian language.

The fourth difficulty in disinformation analysis is the dynamic environment – often examples of disinformation disappear *without a trace* and ingloriously from the easy-to-change internet. Therefore, during the selection, the data must be archived. Otherwise, some of them become unprovable. This phenomenon is another falsification of information – kind of second degree of falsification.

The fifth difficulty is related to the fast development of disinformation – it outpaces its analysis, and at any moment the creators of deliberately incorrect content find new ways to misinform, they are one step ahead of the hunters of disinformation.

II. Conceptual apparatus

In order to make it clear what we are talking about in the present work, a conceptual apparatus, organized into clusters, has been developed, which describes different concepts of disinformation. This chapter has a descriptive, systematizing and defining character – it offers a list of definitions of some notions, that have entered in Bulgarian in recent years as a result of the digitization of the media; in the apparatus there are also and older concepts, but related to the field of disinformation.

A difficulty in systematizing the concepts, surrounding disinformation, is also caused by the extraordinary dynamics of the topic. Only from the beginning of the writing of this study until its last revision, a number of new concepts were added. In this sense, it should be taken into account that many of the concepts are neologisms, some are still used only with their English versions, some are transcribed or translated into Bulgarian, and others are a kind of professional slang of journalists and professionals. Even not in Bulgarian language, many of these concepts are also used in Bulgaria. To solve the problem with the non-Bulgarian spelling, some Bulgarian transcriptions have been proposed, but the description of this work is not the main subject here. The concepts in English have been proposed, where it is necessary, and a historical reference has been made in where it is needed.

Currently, there are various attempts to *stabilize* knowledge in the field of disinformation in Bulgarian. The most serious is the publication of Ireton and Posetti's handbook entitled *Journalism, Fake News and Disinformation* (Ireton and Posetti, 2021), where the basic concepts of disinformation are defined. Some of the terms are also found in the "Dictionary of new words in the Bulgarian language" (Blagoeva et al., 2021), the manuals of Dimov and Ivanov (2020) and the work of Awad et al. (2021). The Bulgarian Ministry of Transport, Information Technologies and Communications publishes an online dictionary[6]. The dictionary is bilingual – with English and Bulgarian articles, but it contains errors, probably due to machine translation and lack of editing of the Bulgarian content.

These notions are described in the study: *fake news* (news that is not proven and it is manipulative)*, disinformation* (deliberately manipulated harmful information)*, inaccurate information – misinformation* (no malicious intent when providing the inaccurate information) *and malicious*

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[6]https ://www.mtc.government.bg/bg/glossary

information – malinformation is false harmful information)*, propaganda* (dissemination of views in a way where recipient of the message accepts it as his own)*, manipulation* (deliberate and covert incitement of another person to experience certain states, to take decisions and to carry out actions to achieve the instigator's own goals) *and information war, hybrid war* (a military concept, related to actions, that include a complex of conventional and non-conventional, military and non-military means to achieve specific political, economic, etc. goals)*, post-truth* (in the realm of post-truth is distinguished by mistrust of facts)*, infodemic (*too much information – true and false, in which an individual cannot navigate)*, information overload, pollution* (inappropriate, random, inadequate and low-quality information)*, oporki* and *narratives* (main theses of media or propaganda machines with a certain goal)*, Internet bias (*lack of critical attitude to the information presented online)*, astroturfing and coordinated inauthentic behaviour* (creating an impression of a spontaneous mass reaction of society to a fact, event or idea)*, clickbait* (attention-grabbing headlines)*, deepfake* (fakes, generated by artificial intelligence – texts and visuals)*, mushroom sites* (sites that look alike real sites but copy each other)*, microtargeting* (targeting people with personalized ads, political messages, etc.)*, echo chambers, bubble* (a closed circle of like-minded people and where they hear only their own opinion and convince themselves of it)*, effect of illusory truth* (the tendency to believe that false information is true after we are exposed to it repeatedly)*, trolls, haters, leakers, bots* (various players in the online disinformation scene with different functions)*, webactivism* (activism in an online environment)*, churnalism and lazy journalism* (imitating of journalism)*, gaslighting* (psychological harassment, in which the abuser questions the adequacy of the victim and belittles the facts and her real perceptions)*, media literacy* (*and* different types of literacy are defined like *digital literacy* with its synonyms IT/information technology/electronic/electronic information literacy, like *literacy*, *Internet literacy*, *hyperliteracy, debunk disinformation, prebunk disinformation (*the ability to expose disinformation or in advance to suppose that something may be of misleading content)*, data journalism (data (driven) journalism, slow journalism, journalist and fact-checker (*these concepts are related to journalism, with verified sources and essential topics and data)*, cancel culture or call-out culture, transmedia journalism and platformization of news* (presentation of the same news on different platforms – on paper, online, in audio-visual media)*, infotainment* (entertainment through information). Full explanations are not included here due to the limitations of this text.

III. The topic of fake news in history and journalism

The major popular cases in world history related to fake news are depicted. Several aspects have been consider – a historical overview has been made, and meanwhile the issue of falsification of history has been also discussed. Anecdotal incidents presented in various documents are described. The role of users – readers in the perception and dissemination of misinformation is emphasized.

Historically, a number of curious cases have been noted – the story of the Egyptian pharaoh Ramses II (1279 - 1213 BC), who lied after his failure in a battle with the Hittites, that he had won, and his people never understood the truth; the "Art of War" from the 6th century BC where Sun Tzu explains that a compromise between truth and falsehood is necessary to resolve conflicts; the popular hoax of the Roman emperor Octavian Augustus, who spread a claim about Mark Antony

and his love affair with the Egyptian queen Cleopatra; the rumours in the Middle Ages and a number of fake relics, fake ancient sculptures, fake documents, through the first *fake news* – the story of the first printed newspaper in the US, the New York Sun in 1835, which published news about alien civilization on the Moon, just to gather more readers. The case goes down in history as "The Great Moon Hoax of 1835"; the Bulgarian experience with the show "Ku-ku" from December 22, 1991; the Brexit and Cambridge Analytica cases, as well as the fake interviews of the 2018 reporter Klaas Relotius[7] of *Spiegel*[8]. Misinformation is not a trademark of modernity, but it has simply been called differently throughout world history.

A review of dubious facts confirms the popular assertion that history is written by the winners. There are certainly many ambiguities and doubtful facts. From Antiquity to the present, all kinds of artefacts, folklore, manuscripts, documents, chronicles, letters, frescoes can be questionable. The Roman Church produced Donatio Constantini in the 8th century to legitimize its right as a single religious institution. The Popes claimed that the document was given by Emperor Constantine the Great. Some scholars believe that the document was compiled during the time of Pope Stephen II (752-757), while others believe that it happened in the middle of the 9th century.

To fabricate an *authentic document* from ancient times became something of an intellectual fad among students in the various European universities of the Middle Ages. Mystification and fabrication of texts is not new.

The view of history is not unambiguous – there is a difference in the perception of historical events by the winners and the defeated. We have witnessed similar disputes even today[9]. However, it is important to be aware that not everything is one-way and extremely clear, so that we are not prejudiced and, as a result, limited in our knowledge.

The loss of confidence in journalism has been noted. The current state of journalism cannot be summed up lightly. Still, one observation sticks out to us: the importance of transparency to trust in the news. *Transparency is the new objectivity*, said Dr. David Weinberger of Harvard in 2009[10].

A lie spreads much faster and more widely than the truth, especially when it comes to fake political news, news about terrorism, natural disasters, science, urban legends or financial information. The aphorism about a lie going around the world while the truth is tying its shoes is a good metaphor. By impact, fake news is 70% more likely to be retweeted (shared on Twitter) than true news.

IV. Other scientific areas associated with disinformation

As the topic is interdisciplinary, special attention is paid to the frontier areas of knowledge related to misinformation. The approach is organized along the axis from the particular individual to the community – developing in the direction from psychology, medicine, physiology, to sociology, political science, passing through law, public relations and reaching education.

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[7]https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/dec/09/germany-exposure-journalist-claas-relotius
[8]https://www.spiegel.de/
[9]https://bntnews.bg/news/kakvo-pishe-v-uchebnicite-po-istoriya-v-republika-severna-makedoniya-1087585news.html
[10]https://nexa.polite.it/nexacenterfiles/masera 2016. pdf

It is difficult to prioritize which science has the greatest role in countering misinformation.

There is a significant difference between what people believe and what they share on social media. This difference is largely due to inattention, much more than to purposeful sharing of misinformation. It may therefore be successful in prompting social media users to focus more on accuracy.

Lewandowsky commented on the theory of inoculation – inoculation is based on the idea that if users are warned that they could be misinformed and are given examples of possible ways in which they may be misled (like *prebunking* described above), they will become more sensitive to misinformation (Lewandowsky, 2012).

From a legal perspective, the European Commission proposes to create a new independent European Media Services Council, composed of people of national media authorities. The Board would promote the effective and consistent implementation of the EU media legal framework, by assisting the Commission in the development of guidelines on media regulatory issues. It will also be able to issue opinions on national measures and decisions affecting media markets and their concentration.

In 2021, the European Commission proposed the so-called *Strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation*, and in 2022 the new *Code* is already a reality[11].

V. Philosophy and language

When it comes to truth and the search for truth, it is inevitable that the research touch philosophical propositions. There is utilitarian definition of disinformation that includes the public interest. Recently the new profession of the fact-checker appeared – insisted that the truth is not another point of view. An important clarification that should be a starting point for analyses of the phenomenon of disinformation.

Consensus on what we disagree on is important. We must constantly bear in mind the remark of Jürgen Habermas, according to whom there has never been so much knowledge about our ignorance (Jürgen Habermas über Corona: "So viel Wissen über unser Nichtwissen gab es noch nie")[12].

Grice's maxims, renarrative and dynamic semantics
Grice's maxims are a wonderful platform for interpreting evidentials in Bulgarian. If Grice's maxims are violated, this may also be expressed through evidentials. Nitsolova summarizes it while both the indicative and the conclusive mean some adequate awareness of the speaker about what is communicated, the other two evidentials – renarrative and dubitative do not mean awareness of the speaker about what is communicated, but they mean awareness from the point of view of a third person, to whom the information of the speaker relays. At the same time, with the renarrative, the speaker does not give any own assessment of the truth of the message, and with the dubitative, the speaker also expresses doubt about this truth (Nitsolova, 2016). Grice's second maxim – we will

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[11]https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/code-practice-disinformation
[12]https://www.fr.de/kultur/gesellschaft/juergen-habermas-coronavirus-krise-covid19-interview-13642491.html , last viewed on 18.4.2023

call it *don't lie* (The maxim of quality, where one tries to be truthful, and does not give information that is false or that is not supported by evidence) appears in a specific, grammaticalized version.

By using renarrative, the speaker tries to make his statement true, even though he suspects that it may not turn out to be true, because of the possible untruth, contained in the representing by renarrative.

Indeed, in renarrative, the speaker does not give any evaluation, but by sharing the information, he/she multiplies the statement. The question of whether renarrative violates Grice's maxims is multi-layered. On the one hand, no one could prove to what extent the speaker is certain about the statement. The use of the renarrative implies some doubt, which, however, is implicit and not clearly expressed, as in the dubitative. The renarrative is distinctly different from the dubitative. Therefore, on the other hand, the requirements of Grice's maxims are met – something is said, and it could be truthful and adequate.

The use of renarrative seems to violate the requirement that the utterance is informative as necessary. The speaker violates the informativeness requirement by saying something that is in excess of what he might not be sure of, and thus violates truthfulness.

The question of what extent this statement is more informative than Grice's demands is important. At the same time, however, the speaker says all this in order to give evidences. Due to the lack of evaluation, the speaker can be exonerated – on a pragmatic level, he/she is not responsible for his/her statement, and we can trust that he/she has fulfilled the principle of adequacy and sufficiency of information, because it cannot be proven whether he/she is convinced of the facts or not.

About the maxim *Not say things that you cannot back up with evidence* – here the renarrative completely violates it – the speaker has no evidence if the notion is truthful. But the mere quoting of a thing, said by another person, is an evidence. Nitsolova is right when she says that between the two poles – truth and untruth, conditioned by adequate and inadequate awareness of the speaker, there are a number of transitional cases.

Through the prism of dynamic semantics, a renarrative is used, but and the role of the participants in the interpretation of the message is important – it depends on how exactly these participants will interpret the message – as true or not, as possible or not, as credible or not. In this sense, the reasoning can go further – whether interpretation makes a message true or not, and whether the interpreter is ultimately responsible for truth? The tool of dynamic semantics makes it possible to suspect that the speaker is trying to put all the responsibility on the interpreters of such kind of utterance, and they will certainly contribute with adding context to the utterance and bring additional knowledge. In this sense, whether the acquired knowledge is true or not – seems to remain at the expense of the interpreter.

To help determine the truth, there is the so-called truth-conditional semantics (Carston, 2011), which deals with truth and where the meaning of a sentence consists the truth, and the parts of the sentence contribute to the meaning.

If we follow this semantics, the renarrative is in a special place – it seems to destroy language itself. The renarrative attributes a certain property to an object and takes it away at the same time. Here the renarrative comes into conflict with the informativeness of the utterance. As Polimenov says, the meaning of our speaking about the world is such that, in order to be informative, an utterance can both inscribe to an object a certain property and deny it. This would resemble, Polimenov says, a game of chess in which we make a certain move, and immediately return it. He concludes that "person, saying something, contradicts himself, and does not actually say anything; it is impossible to make a real move in the language game with a contradictory statement" (Polimenov, 2018).

Confusion and lack of a stable basis for determining what is true exists today in determining the so-called *fake news*. There are thousands of proofs, and this sloppiness, this fluctuation has been used by promoters of different theses. Vatsov recalls that Bogdan Bogdanov, repeatedly and on different occasions, said that truth is nothing but a momentary "stop" of the usual fluctuation of meanings in discourse and stabilization of a paradigmatic meaning: *stopping to truth is a kind of preservation of a certain good meaning* (Vatsov, 2016).

In early April 2020, in an interview with Germany's Frankfurter Rundschau, Habermas shared his views on the coronavirus crisis[13]. There are several key sentences of the great philosopher. One of these is his position "*There has never been so much knowledge* of *our ignorance* and of *the compulsion* to *act* and *live* under *uncertainty*."

Just two years later, in the fall of 2022, Habermas published a new book entitled *Ein neuer Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (*New structural change in public sphere)[14]. In it, he criticizes social media and says that in a liberal democracy, not only do all citizens have equal political rights, but they are also equal participants in the discourse. The problem, however, writes Habermas, is that not all citizens participate in the discourse with the same level of knowledge, the same concept of justice, and the same principles of debate. This could lead to extremism, warns Habermas. Since the triumph of the Internet, rationality and knowledge, based on fact, are no longer guaranteed, he says, as he criticizes the accumulation of media power in major social media platforms.

VI . An overview of researched linguistic markers of misinformation

Renarrative is one of the hallmarks of disinformation. However, the developments to date provide a solid foundation and direction for future work by clearly defining disinformation detection strategies. For clarity, we present them in a list, as they can serve as a protocol, as a strategy to tackle disinformation.

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[13]https://www.fr.de/kultur/gesellschaft/juergen-habermas-coronavirus-krise-covid 19-interview-13642491. html
[14]https://shortest.link/onL 1

Summary of the main strategies used in computational linguistics to detect fake news in Bulgarian:

1.   Key words, hedge words, specific lists of verbs (modality), adverbs, adjectives.

2.   Checking whether the words from the news headlines are also in the text – how appropriate is the title.

3.   Checking whether the text contains author, date.

4.   Checking the website on which the text is published and creating a list of credible sites.

5.   Checking whether the text quotes sources – are there links to sources.

6.   How many special characters are in the title.

7.   The extent to which there are spelling errors in the title and throughout the text.

8.   Check for slang words.

9.   Check the mood of the text (sentiment analysis).

10.   Lists of „emergency words".

11.   Evidentiality (witness, cites source, lack of such information).

In Bulgaria, as well as all around the world, work is being done in the same direction, with the methods for English, redefined for Bulgarian, taking into account Bulgarian peculiarities. Despite the extensive analyses and work done, there remains a wide field for research, and the present work try to contribute to fill some gaps. The present work proposes additional linguistic markers and strategies that could be perceived as a flag for disinformation in Bulgarian – the renarrative (see *The renarrative as a sign of possible disinformation* and *Uses of the renarrative in the media*), and additionally a whole series of markers, that have not been described in detail in the literature so far (see *Other markers of misinformation*).

        VII . The renarrative as a sign of possible disinformation
7.1. Additional markers of possible disinformation in journalistic texts: introducing the idea of renarrative
A few additional markers, that may play role of a flag of disinformation, are also introduced. We put the hypothesis that the renarrative and its homonymous forms could be a flag for questionable content, and we add also some new general linguistic markers to the list with already indicated in the previous chapter.

News headlines will be in the focus of the analysis. They undergo dynamic development over time. In Bulgaria, after the era of communism, in 1989, the headlines became more informative and journalists tried to tell the whole information in them. As a result, readers started to read only the headlines in newspapers, without the content, and many of the headlines remain in the collective memory as anecdotes. In the new age of online media, a different approach is required. If the

newspaper is initially paid for and then read, in the online media the interest must first be aroused, and the readers are provoked to pay attention to the text. Today, even world-renowned online publications (previously print-only) offer information in the news headlines, without being completely comprehensive, to attract the interest of readers. After being attracted, the reader has to pay to read the whole text.

The title can also be perceived as a brand – a brand of a particular publication and a particular author. Although it is expected to be informative, it may contain word games, neologisms, shifting meanings just to attract the attention of the readers. Word game headlines are not necessarily related to misinformation, but should be read carefully.

The renarrative also is presented in headlines. As Duzen writes, evidentiality has a special role in detecting disinformation (Duzen et al., 2022). The category of evidentiality is fundamental for the Bulgarian language. Gerdzhikov notes that it is one of the most important markers for the Bulgarian language in all its dialects (Gerdzhikov, 1984). The present study examines the use of the renarrative and its role in disinformation.

The thesis is that renarrative in Bulgarian could be used in journalistic texts to say something that is not necessarily verified and reliable, according to the requirements of the journalistic profession. At the same time, thanks to the renarrative, journalists acquire a kind of professional alibi before themselves and the public: that they do not spread something unverified, they do not misinform, because the form of the renarrative does not contain any certainty and what they report about really happened.

Thus, the use of renarrative, on the one hand, fulfils a purely practical function – journalists manage to communicate some fact to the audience, which is both reported and veiled, because it is not clear whether it actually happened. At the same time, what is reported is not fully verified, but the journalists have left a trace, a sign of the lack of this verification, and have indicated this duplicity, using renarrative. It is important to note that all of this renarrative functionality is implicit, internal. It is not used on purpose, it is not a learned skill, it is not a strategy to be taught in school or university. In this sense, it is important to consider the use of renarrative.

The reason journalists use renarrative is not always related to the idea of disinformation. Often, journalists are forced to publish news that are not fully verified, but they must do, if they want to maintain the interest of the public and want to be on the same level as their colleagues in the rest of the media and not miss a news. The dynamic of the digital media in recent years and the possibility of correcting the already published texts in real time provoke journalists to use this form of renarrative even more. The possibility of later editing of the text and even the removal of the traces of misleading message cause a certain irresponsibility, looseness in journalistic behaviour, motivated also by the lack of *Charter for journalistic ethics*.

7.2. Evidentiality in Bulgarian in historical aspect
Evidentiality is one of the characteristics distinguishing the modern Bulgarian language from the Old Bulgarian language. The so-called *restatement of the verb action (преразказване на*

глаголното действие), as evidentiality was called during most of the 20th century, is one of the most typical features of Bulgarian compared to other Slavic languages, but also in relation to most Indo-European languages (Gerdzhikov, 1984). It is also considered one of the most important signs of the unity of Bulgarian in all its dialects (Gerdzhikov, 1984:3).

7.3. The term evidentiality in world linguistic literature

Although widely used, the concept of evidentiality raises many questions. Evidentiality in many languages goes with other linguistic categories (Dendale and Tasmowski, 2001). According to Dandal and Tasmovski, researchers of evidentiality pose three main questions: 1) the semantic domain of evidentiality and subdomains; 2) the relationship of evidentiality with modality; 3) the extension of evidentiality/mediality into a grammaticalized morphosyntactic category.

Tarpomanova poses other four questions to the definition of evidentiality: 1) is the identification of an independent verb category evidentiality motivated; 2) what is the primary meaning of evidentiality; 3) in which languages it can be assumed that there is a grammaticalized manifestation of evidentiality; 4) are evidentiality and admirativity part of one category or two separate categories (Tarpomanova, 2015).

The relationship between modality and evidentiality is a topic often discussed both in linguistic typology and in studies of specific languages possessing an evidential category (Aleksova, 2017). There are four main approaches to evidentiality, according to Aleksova: 1) epistemics and evidentiality are two different things (Aikhenvald, 2004); 2) they partially overlap (Nitsolova, 2008); 3) evidentiality is part of epistemic modality (Gerdzhikov, 1984); 4) there is a higher-ranking category covering evidentiality, understood as a source of information, and epistemic modality, covering epistemic possibility, probability, and certainty.

The modern term evidentiality is Anglo-Saxon, but it has been adopted in Bulgarian linguistic science, although it competes with epistemic modality, they have clear difference. Roman Jakobson was the first to write about evidential in 1957 (Jakobson, 1957).

The common understanding is that all languages have a way of specifying the source of information. Some Indo-European languages (such as Germanic and Romance languages) convey information from through modal verbs (Spanish: *deber de* (can be translated as 'should'), Dutch: *zowen* (should), German: *sollen*, or other lexical devices (like adverbs) or phrases ('it seems to me').

These linguistic markers that show the source of information in European languages are optional. The Australian researcher of Russian origin Alexandra Aikhenvald says that each language has its own way of noting the source of information, but not in every language this is a grammatical expression of information source (Aikhenvald, 2004). Studying nearly 500 languages, she claims that about a quarter of the world's languages have some form of grammatical evidentiality (Aikhenvald, 2004).

7.4. A typology of evidentiality

Evidential systems of languages, according to Aikhenvald, are divided into five types according to the attitude to firsthand information or not (or systems with two choices): 1. Firsthand versus non-firsthand; 2. Non-firsthand versus the everything else; 3. Reported versus everything else; 4. Sensory evidence versus reported; 5. Auditory versus everything else. According to Aikhenvald, in the Bulgarian language, the opposition goes along the axis firsthand versus non-first hand.

7.5. Discrepancy in different languages

There is also a discrepancy in the conceptual apparatus in different languages. Without claiming to be exhaustive, we give an example with French. Despite the acceptance of the term *evidential*, it should be noted that there are also the terms 'verificational' and 'validational', which sometimes replace *evidential*. French linguists use the term *mediative*, except in some recent years' works. This is a result of Gencheva's work on *L'énonciation mediatisée* – mediated speech (Guentcheva, 1996). In the French tradition, Dendale notes that many linguists, when analyzing conditionnel, reject the term *évidentialité* (evidentiality) on the grounds that it is a copy of English and prefer the term *médiatif* (mediative) (Denadale, 2001). In French, the authors (Dendale, Burova) use *le conditionnel de conjecture, de reprise* (*to repeat, retell*), *journalistique* (journalistic).

The work with evidentiality in diachronic plan in French shows that the *conditionnel de reprise* already exists on the pages of the so-called *first French newspaper* La Gazette of Theophrastus Renaud (Théophraste Renaudot). As early as 1631, there is an example of a journalistic conditional (Burova, 2013) in relation to reporting something that is not quite certain whether it happened. The use of evidentiality in journalism is not only a Bulgarian patent, but a practice that appeared relatively soon after the appearance of Gutenberg's printing press.

7.6. Review of the concept of evidentiality in Bulgarian linguistics

Two linguists make a detailed review of the attitude towards evidentiality in Bulgarian linguistics – Georgi Gerdzhikov, as regards the period from the Bulgarian liberation to the end of the 20th century, and Ekaterina Tarpomanova – for the period from 1984 to the present day.

Following Gerdzhikov's typology, Ruselina Nitsolova adds new moments in the definition of evidentiality (Tarpomanova, 2015). Nitsolova places the source of information in the center, describing several main oppositions in the category: own/outside information; information from personal/general experience; direct/indirect information; way of obtaining the information (sensory perception, endophoric perception, inference, foreign speech) (Nitsolova, 2008). Evidentiality is also associated with the cognitive classification of information, which is a continuation of Gerdzhikov's understandings regarding the status of evidentiality as an independent verb category and adopts his model of internal organization – four-member category that contains one unmediated and three mediated members, respectively indicative and conclusive, renarrative, dubitative (Tarpomanova, 2015:16).

7.7. Evidentiality as a grammaticalization of cognitive states

After the detailed historical review, the analysis here accepts Nitsolova's understanding of evidentiality where "evidentiality grammaticalizes the speaker's cognitive states related to received information, transmitted from a source with its classification" (Nitsolova, 2008:332).

Clarifying the essence of evidentiality, renarrative and inferential will contribute to the understanding of the functioning of disinformation in Bulgarian.

Nitsolova also calls it *mediative information*, in French manner. There is still no accepted unified model in linguistics to describe the meaning of evidentiality. Here it will be assumed that evidential meanings are contained in the presuppositions of the utterance. Presuppositions are semantic premises – sentences, more precisely propositions, which must be true in order for the statement to be true (Nitsolova, 2008).

7.8. The two poles: mediated and unmediated evidentiality

Tarpomanova summarizes: "in the evidential system in Bulgarian, direct and indirect evidentiality are opposed" (Tarpomanova, 2015:34). According to Nitsolova-Tarpomanova's categorization, as we will call it here, evidentiality includes the following two main categories in relation to one's own information: 1) direct evidentiality, expressed by the forms of the indicative mood, which are additionally marked with the meaning of direct information, and in some cases when there is a transfer of information to the strong knowledge of the speaker and its source becomes irrelevant to the utterance, indicative forms are unmarked with evidentiality (Tarpomanova, 2015). As Nitsolova notes, the indicative means both witnessing actions taken personally by the speaker and actions representing the knowledge of society – things that are considered as already known, and then, with an indicative, the way of obtaining this knowledge from the speaker is not specifically marked – it is somehow immanent; 2) the mediated evidentiality in the three forms – renarrative (restatement), inferential (inference/non-inference), dubitative (doubt about the re-stated information) (Tarpomanova, 2015).

The three mediated evidentials originate from the past indefinite tense (present perfect) and their common morphological marker is the past (imperfect or aorist) participle, and each of them has its own morphological form – the renarrative in the 3rd person is used without the auxiliary, the inferential is used with the auxiliary *съм* 'to be' in all persons and numbers, the dubitative has an additional auxiliary – *бил*. This idea about the origin of the indirect evidentials is supported by a number of linguists – Gerdzhikov, Nitsolova, Kehaiov.

Following the paradigm, we can demonstrate the third person forms of the verb *чета* 'read' (example Tarpomanova, 2015:35):

indicative *чете*;

renarrative *четял*;

inferential *четял е*;

dubitative *четял бил*.

In the temporal paradigm of mediated evidentials, tenses are grouped in pairs, except for the aorist: common form for present and imperfect – renarrative *четял,* inferential (only imperfect) *четял е*, dubitative *четял бил*; common form for perfect and pluperfect – renarrative *четял бил*, inferential (only pluperfect) *четял е бил*; dubitative is not formed, as *бил* should be repeated*,* which is not acceptable for Bulgarian; common form for futurum and futurum praeteriti – renarrative *щял да чете*, inferential (only futurum praeteriti) *щял е да чете*, dubitative *щял бил да чете*; common form for futurum exactum and futurum exactum praeteriti – renarrative *щял да е чел*, inferential (only futurum exactum praeteriti) *щял е да е чел*, dubitative *щял бил да е чел*; separate form for aorist – renarrative *чел*, inferential *чел е*, dubitative *чел бил*.

It is important to emphasize that evidentiality is not a mechanical designation of the source of information, as, for example, where the sources are specially recorded (Nitsolova, 2008).

Nitsolova describes two poles of distance of the speaker from the transmitted information – with the indicative at one pole – lack of distance, and the dubitative being at the other pole – with the greatest distance. Between them, as separate degrees, stand the inferential (as Nitsolova calls it conclusive) and the renarrative. "One might think that the conclusive, which conveys one's own information, expresses less distance than the renarrative, which conveys other's information. However, it turns out that in narrative texts and in indirect speech the conclusive, which indicates that the information is non-witness and based on common experience, and the renarrative are used in parallel, which from a purely cognitive informative point of view is fully justified, since in both in this case, the real source of information is someone else's speech" (Nitsolova, 2008:356).

The researchers (Nitsolova, Tarpomanova) emphasize that with the inferential the speaker emphasizes that his information is not from first hand, and with the renarrative that not the speaker himself, but a third person has given an assessment of the truth of the message, although the speaker is not object to this assessment. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the inferential and renarrative differ only in third person singular – in the first and second person their forms are the same.

In order to describe the speaker's attitude to the content of the transmitted information, Nitsolova introduced the hypercategory information about the information, transmitted by the speaker and the hypermood of actual speech – realis I and realis II. The hypermood realis I means that, according to the speaker in the actual speech, the proposition *p* represents a real situation *P*, and the representatives of this mood are two evidentials: indicative and inferential (conclusive, according to Nitsolova), where the difference is not only in terms of the designation of the source of information, but also by the temporal forms with which they are realized. The indicative has nine tenses in the three temporal planes – present, past and future, and the inferential has five tenses that operate only in the past (Nitsolova, 2008).

The hypermood realis II means that according to the author of the speech *X* in the reproduced speech, the proposition *p* represents a real situation *P*, and two evidentials represent this mood:

renarrative and dubitative. They differ, according to the assessment of the speaker, reproducing the speech about the assessment of the author of the speech *X*, about the reality of the situation *P*. In the renarrative, the speaker does not object to the assessment of *X*, he/she only emphasizes that, according to *X*, the situation *P* is real, and in the dubitative he/she objects – expresses doubt that *X*'s assessment, that situation *P* is real, is true. The renarrative has five temporal paradigms, and the dubitative has four (Nitsolova, 2008).

7.9. Renarrative
Nitsolova gives a serious warning in her book, dedicated to Bulgarian morphology, in the context of renarrative: "The description of renarrative (other terms: *renarrative forms, renarrative mood, fairytails mood, subjunctive mood, indefinite forms, long past tenses, non-witness forms, imperceptive, auditory, narrative, commentative*) as well as the other evidential forms have a long and painful history in Bulgarian and foreign linguistics" (Nitsolova, 2008:361).

7.9.1. Importance of renarrative
In the semantics of renarrative, it is immanent to suspect or, at least, to signal, that the absence of this directly acquired information is contained. The observation of journalistic texts shows that there are cases where the auxiliary verb is not omitted in the third person singular of the renarrative, and so the renarrative turns from a renarrative into an inferential, according to Tarpomanova's categorization.

7.9.2. Method of extracting the information in the renarrative
Already in the pre-scientific period of the study of renarrative, some authors called it the third-person mood, because only in the third person renarrative and inferential differ by the absence/presence of the present tense form of the auxiliary *съм* 'to be' (Nitsolova, 2008). In connection with this, the question arises whether there is homonymy in the first and second person, or we should think of two variants of syncretic forms with a common meaning.

In the context of the analysis of disinformation, the following remark by Nitsolova is very important: "*X* is the author of the substratum speech, that the speaker repeats. *X* can be completely anonymous, when the renarrative conveys information from the experience of society, for example, in fairy tales, legends, rumours, gossip." Nitsolova distinguishes fairy tales from rumours, saying that the author of the speech *X* cannot be named by the speaker, but in gossip the speaker most often does not want to name the author. She goes even further by saying: "It is possible that the speaker him/herself is the author of the speech, but uses renarrative to convey the information as someone else's speech, so as not to take responsibility for its truth. We can think that the conclusive, which conveys one's own information, expresses less distance than the renarrative, which conveys other's information – that is so-called *allusion au discourse d'autrui,* according to Zlatka Gencheva's definition" (Nitsolova, 2008:368). This decision by the speaker to legitimize his own speech by impersonating someone else is also noticeable in disinformation.

Disinformation is when evidentials are used not in accordance with their grammatical meaning to convey to the listener information, that is false, but it is intended by the speaker to be conceived as

true. "However, this doesn't mean that the renarrative does not have a certain grammatical meaning and that it is only a stylistic variant of the indicative and conclusive, as Friedman thinks", criticizes Nitsolova and supports Gencheva, who considers the most important thing in the meaning of the renarrative is the non-expression of the speaker of some guarantee of the spoken words and the placing of the utterance outside the definitions of "true" or "false".

Tarpomanova (2015) gives examples that in some texts there is also an alternation of renarrative forms without and with an auxiliary verb in one text, and sometimes in one sentence, but it is difficult to make any generalization when and under what conditions this happens. Tarpomanova also notices cases where renarrative forms with an auxiliary verb are used.

Observations of journalistic texts show the same thing – sometimes there is a use of renarrative forms with forms that resemble inferential. There are also doubts whether a certain form could be interpreted as a perfect in indicative instead of renarrative.

An important feature of the Bulgarian renarrative, which is emphasized by many authors, is the possibility of using it in complete and long texts. Renarrative occurs in a variety of styles and genres, and it is possible for an entire text to be sustained in renarrative.

7.10. Inferential
For the inferential as a definition, we will again rely on Tarpomanova's definition: "In Bulgarian, it is used less often than the renarrative, but it is also characterized by a high degree of obligation – if the speaker wants to convey a given piece of information as the result of an inference, he will use precisely the inferential forms" (Tarpomanova, 2015:38). In the present work, the term inferential is used instead of *conclusive*, according to Tarpomanova's terminology (Tarpomanova, 2015).

The morphological marker of the inferential is the presence of the auxiliary *съм* 'to be' in all persons (in contrast to the renarrative, where it is absent in the third person, singular). For this reason, all forms of the inferential in the aorist *ходил съм* ('I have walked') coincide with the forms of the indicative perfect, Tarpomanova recalls the coincidence, which is commented by many researchers of evidentiality (Gerdzhikov, 1984; Aleksova, 2003; Nitsolova, 2008).

Tarpomanova summarizes about the inferential: "As a part of the mediated evidentiality, the inferential conveys indirect information – the speaker presents the events not as witness, but as a person that obtained it from an inference, based on some facts" (Tarpomanova, 2015:40).

7.10.1. Meaning of the inferential
Analyzing the semantics of the inferential, Alexova insists that: "In Bulgarian evidentiality, including the inferential, is part of the linguistic means of expressing epistemic modality, since differences in the speaker's engagement with the information conveyed in the utterance are encoded through the individual evidentials" (Aleksova, 2016).

7.10.2. Obtaining the information via inferential

In the case of the inferential, the speaker signals, that he/she is communicating his/her opinion to the listener, and in the case of the non-conclusive inferential – his/her knowledge, so-called *weak knowledge*, non-testimonial knowledge. "When it is opinion, the speaker thinks that the restricted proposition *p* in the utterance is true in one of the possible worlds, which does not necessarily coincide with the actual world, in contrast to the *knowledge*, where the proposition *p* is true in a possible world, that is necessarily the real world" (Nitsolova, 2008:354). Nitsolova admits that the evidential signs in the meaning of the inferential are intertwined with epistemic modal principles and mentions the subjective modal gramme, proposed by Kutsarov – a presuppositional mood which, together with the imperative and the conditional, is opposed to the non-subjective-modal indicative (Nitsolova, 2008).

Moskova insists on the evaluative nature of the inferential and notes that it is used in the past tense in both non-witness and witness positions of the speaker, and its uses in the non-past tense (e.g. present and future tense) are admirative, due to the combination of the meaning of these tenses and the inferential (Moskova, 2019). Moskova emphasizes that "the conclusive is a gramme of the four-member evidential category, the semantics of which can be defined as marking the degree of commitment of the speaker to the credibility of the transmitted information" (Moskova, 2019).

Journalists use inferential as well as renarrative intuitively to cover up their own lack of directly acquired information.

7.11. Dubitative and renarrative

The present study does not emphasize the other evidential – dubitative. The reason is that the dubitative is not very often used in the journalistic genre. Unlike renarrative, the dubitative is usually used in individual utterances, mostly in colloquial speech, which are often emotionally colored (Nitsolova, 2008:372).

However, the difference from the renarrative is significant – the dubitative not only does not convey someone else's speech, but also means a strong doubt, mistrust of the speaker, regarding the reliability of the information, transmitted by a third-person source. The dubitative directly categorizes the third person's information as unreliable, false.

7.12. Admirative and renarrative

Regarding the admirative, which is homonymous with the renarrative, it should be noted that there are great differences in the opinions of linguists about it. Admirative has been called *innotative, exclamation modality, exclamative*, some Albanian influence has been suggested, which is unprovable. For the present study, it is of key importance that in journalistic texts the admirative is considered a sign of an emotional presentation of the facts and the expression of the subjective opinion of the author, as admirative forms are also found in the headlines, as it is usually about entertainment topics (Tarpomanova, 2015). The present study will show that admirative can also be found in more serious articles, related to politicians.

7.13. Indicative, perfect for constatation

In the perfect, when the speaker observes only the result of the action and not the perfect action itself, the third-person form may lack the auxiliary verb *съм* 'to be'. This kind of stative perfect, called the ascertaining perfect, or perfect for constatation, becomes the basis for the renarrative and the admirative.

7.14. Linguistic homonymy of the renarrative

The forms for the renarrative in the present tense and in the imperfect match the forms of the inferential in the imperfect with a difference in the third person. The form of the renarrative in the present tense and in the imperfect coincides with a special form of the stative perfect – the perfect for constatation, when it is possible to omit the third-person form of the auxiliary verb *съм* 'to be'. Dubitative aorist forms are homonymous with renarrative perfect/pluperfect. The present tense form of the admirative matches the present tense forms of the renarrative.

The various forms of renarrative, inferential, dubitative and admirative are described in detail, and a scheme of homonyms of renarrative is also proposed (Nitsolova, 2008):

Inflections of current speech	Inflections of reproduced speech
Hypermood realis I	**Hypermood realis II**
Indicative	Renarrative
Statal perfect for constatation	Present/Imperfect Tense
аз съм носел, -а, -о (I wore)	носел, -а, -о съм
ти си носел, -а, -о (you wore)	носел, -а, -о си
той е носел, той носел (he wore)	носел, -а, -о
тя е носела, тя носела (she wore)	
то е носело, то носело (it wore, it wore)	Renarrative perfect/pluperfect
	бил съм носил, -а, -о
	бил си носил, -а, -о
	бил е носил, -а, -о
	Aorist renarrative
	носил, -а, - о съм

	носил, -а, -о, си носил, -а, -о
	Dubitative Aorist носел, -а, -о съм бил, -а,-о носел, -а, -о си бил, -а,-о носел, -а, -о бил, -а,-о
Inferential (conclusive) Imperfect носел, -а, -о съм носел, -а, -о си носел, -а, -о е Perfect/pluperfect бил съм носил, -а, -о бил си носил, -а, -о бил е носил, -а, -о Aorist носил, -а, -о съм носил, -а, -о си носил, -а, -о е	X (no change)

Admirative носел, -а, -о съм

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носел, -а, -о е

носел, -а, -о
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Figure 1

VIII . Uses of renarrative in the media

The renarrative and its grammatical homonyms, such as the inferential, the perfect for constatation, are connected to journalistic texts – directly, strongly, inextricably. The other homonym of the renarrative – the admirative – rarely appears in journalistic texts. Here we will give a detailed demonstration of this connection.

8.1. The Renarrative in the Damaskins and the Damaskins as journalism in the Middle Ages

The considered linguistic phenomenon evidentiality is based on the opposition of direct vs. indirect of information (according to Gerdzhikov), i.e. more than any other grammatical category, evidentiality and especially renarrative are related to the provision and mediation of information and the evaluation of information itself in Bulgarian.

Gerdzhikov writes that there is evidence for a clear distinction of the mode of speech category in Damaskins of the 17th-18th centuries, with the category already developed on the basis of the perfect (Gerdzhikov, 1984).

Damaskins are a new literary genre that arose in Bulgaria after the translation of the author of "Treasure", the Greek writer Damascene Studite (or Damaskinos Stouditis, Greek: Δαμασκηνός Στουδίτης) from the 16th century, whose work was translated into Bulgarian by Bishop Grigoriy Prilepski in the monastery "Holy Trinity", in Athos. After the initial translations, the content of these collections changed – it now included various hagiographies, apocrypha, which were creatively reworked by the followers of Damascene Studite. It can be said that damascenes were the media in the Middle Ages in Bulgaria – something like almanacs in Western European literature, as newspapers are in more recent times, and as online digital media today. And in that *medium* – Damaskins – we can already see the manifestation of the category of evidentiality that arose in the spoken Bulgarian language.

Preserving the connection with the Bulgarian written tradition, the Damaskins writers from the beginning of the 17th century created a new type of literary language, analytical in its construction, in which living speech features were seen, and these living speech features were transferred to the written word. The appearance of the Damaskins is also a metaphor for something else – for the push away from the dogmatism of the religious text and from its truth in a philosophical and religious plan and the beginning of interpretations, of retellings.

The representation of evidentiality and renarrative in the media on the Bulgarian lands in a diachronic plan should be the focus of future research, as such research has been done for other languages.

8.2. The renarrative in journalism: the author is unclear
The renarrative and its homonyms the inferential, the perfect and the aorist dubitative also have an added value in the age of disinformation: they can be read as a grammatical marker for a possibly unreliable transmission of the facts.

At the same time, it happens to write the source in the printed version of the publication, because "the printed remains" (to paraphrase the famous sentence), unlike what is written on the Internet, where changes are easy and text can always be updated, edited and deleted. Although there are ways to access the content, posted once on the web, it is quite complicated, difficult and rarely done. For this reason, what is published online can be fraudulent for a period of time, while the printed text is proof of fraud, if it is not correctly conveyed. The particular duality of transmedia journalism could be another topic for in-depth analysis.

Beyond this duality – of the existence of a source in the print edition and the absence of one in the online media, empirical observations show that often after a title in a renarrative, the main information does not have a source, but it is marked only with "anonymous source"/"experts" /"familiar with"/"scholars" etc.

8.3. The renarrative in journalism: pretending to be someone else
Commenting on the functionality of the renarrative, Nitsolova says that sometimes it is possible for the speaker to be the author of the retold speech himself, but with the renarrative to convey it as someone else's speech, "so as not to take responsibility for it (as it already mentioned). Nowadays this *hint* can turn into fabricated evidence. Examples of links to fake sites with fake content are many, and the reference to this type of sites can also be removed, replaced or edited at any time.

In the use of renarrative there is a depersonalization – especially in the third person forms. It is very similar to the depersonalization in the performative It's true!, which Vatsov talks about (Vatsov, 2016) – in the renarrative the author of the statement can depersonalizes himself in order not to be responsible; he depersonalizes and hides himself to institutionalize what is said in the context of this depersonalization of true utterances, of this performative. By saying something through renarrative, we say it is true and declare it true, while hiding ourselves.

Radka Vlahova gives another look at the breakdown of the personal: "One of the most typical characteristics of totalitarian language is its impersonality. I propose this definition to distinguish the linguistic grammatical concept of impersonality from the characteristic of speech in which the concrete person with his personal responsibility for his deeds is absent. The speech of the totalitarian society is dominated by impersonal, reciprocating and indefinite constructions, i.e. constructions in which the subject of the action cannot be identified" (Vlahova, 1999).

8.4. The renarrative in journalism: no guarantee
The renarrative together with the dubitative within the hypermood realis II conveys information whose source is someone else's speech.

Tarpomanova (2015:32) describes the journalistic strategy by saying: "Each journalist who writes a text uses the entire available arsenal of lexical and grammatical means provided by the language to affect readers or listeners in a certain way. Evidential forms are one of the means for this kind of impact. Indicative tenses, especially aorist and imperfect, create a sense of the journalist's commitment to the credibility of his text, but this is because in Bulgarian they can also be charged with a witness attitude, added to the factuality of the indicative as a mood. On the contrary, the renarrative can be used by the author of the text in order to free him/herself from the responsibility for the credibility of the news, by using them, he specifically points out that he is quoting someone else's speech, and with the dubitative – additionally he/she expresses doubt about the other person's speech. However, these shades of engagement or detachment are created on the basis of the main meaning of the category – indicating the source of the information."

8.5. The renarrative is journalism: finding an alibi
Contrary to the indicative, the renarrative can be used by the author of the text in order to release him/herself from the responsibility for the credibility of the news. Avoiding responsibility is an important trick in disinformation. Although there are still no legal sanctions for spreading disinformation in Bulgaria, and general law applies, editors are still largely protected from taking responsibility for the content of a given text, especially when it does not correspond to the truth. In this case, we are not talking about opinions, comments, personal statements, which are also part of journalism. In their fact-checking work fact-checkers are never engaged in checking opinions. The reason is simple – any politician or public figure may have made all kinds of statements to different audiences at different times, which is almost unprovable in the work of fact-checkers. Therefore, they try to analyze facts in terms of events and actions, not a opinion even statement.

The linguistic phenomenon of renarrative in the Bulgarian language plays an essential role in the creation of editors' alibi. It is used massively, and at the grammatical level it is "bruised" that the presented speech is of somebody else – everyone could speak whatever and whenever he wants, it can be assumed that the information, presented through renarrative, can rarely to be credible.

Observations during the collection of linguistic material for this research show that there are online editions that do not use renarrative at all[15]. Evidence for these observations can be difficult to provide because corpora must be created from these media alone to exemplify this claim. It is possible to demonstrate how a news item is presented by different outlets, but again this will not show the trend, due to the limited number of specific cases.

8.6. The renarrative as inauthenticity: the news as fairy tale
Like fairy tales, the renarrative is used in books to describe an old story, with the main tense being the aorist and additional being the imperfect, pluperfect and future in the past (Nitsolova, 2008),

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[15]https :// www.diary_bg/, https ://www.dw.com/en/

and Gencheva (Guentcheva, 1996) says that events speak for themselves, as Benveniste also notes. The storyteller presents himself as completely unrelated to the events, as he remains undefined. Journalists use renarrative, mixing it with other tenses – probably somewhat accidentally, somewhat unconsciously. The switch from indicative to renarrative and vice versa is not always motivated. It is unclear how much journalists think about the grammatical differences between renarrative and indicative, when writing their messages.

Our assumption is that they are not always aware of what grammatical form they are using and why. Such psycholinguistic research in the future may deepen the answers to this question.

8.7. The renarrative as inauthenticity: renarrative and in the headlines
The requirement for reliable information and verification of news content is at the heart of journalism. The journalist is obliged to indicate where he/she gets the transmitted information from, whether he/she is a witness or not. In the age of disinformation, however, we are seeing a breakdown of this requirement. Journalistic headlines are in renarrative when the journalist is not sure of what he/she is reporting and when he/she wants to manipulate.

It sounds almost revolutionary for people who lived before 1989, the possibility that journalists can freely choose whether to believe the official information provided by the institutions or not, which Nitsolova talks about and explains that it has a stylistic effect that is achieved through renarrative: so the register of official speech is lowered to the register of everyday colloquial speech, to hearsay, gossip and the like.

This remark has long since become the norm. As analysts of the new age of disinformation write, one of the main problems in the age of disinformation is that citizens do not trust institutions. This trend to make a distance from the official institutions, that Nitsolova was talking about, has become almost the norm – no journalist wants to be identified with the officials. Without going into details – proof of this is the permanent political crisis Bulgaria, parallel to the crisis, due to the pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

8.8. The newsheadlines – from renarrative to clickbait
In harmony with Nitsolova's indicative requirement, another trend is noticeable – under the influence of online media, the renarrative is giving way to clickbait headlines and headlines in the indicative present tense, which demonstrate information from the future as a fact, that has already happened: *Мъск идва в България* (*Musk is coming to Bulgaria)* [16]. The trend is to use the present tense in indicative of increasingly unreal events, which makes the detection of disinformation even more difficult. An example of such headlines is *Извънземните кацат през X-точки (Aliens land through X-points)*[17].

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[16]https ://bnr.bg/post/101740502/ilon-mask-idva-v-balgaria
[17]https://telegraph.bg/telegraphplus/novini/astro-izvynzemnite-kacat-prez-h-tochki-idvat-s-izblici-na-energiia.-nasa-gi-naricha-portali-v-magnitnoto-pole-348568

8.9. Automatic processing: evidentiality
Osenova writes about evidentiality as a marker of credibility in the development of annotations for technology for real-time analyses of large content, generated by different users (Osenova, 2018). The model she proposed can be further developed and supplemented with the uses of renarrative and its homonymous forms.

8.10. Uses of the renarrative in media – a summary
In summary, we can conclude that we are talking about several manifestations of renerative in journalistic texts.

1. The author is unclear

2. To make yourself as another person

3. We do not guarantee the content

4. As an alibi

5. To be fabulous

6. Renarrative in misleading headlines

8.11. Renarrative and disinformation detection
The problem with the interpretation of the forms in the third person in the grammatical homonymy of the renarrative in the present tense and imperfect, which coincide with the forms of the inferential (conclusive) (as Nitsolova notes – whose interval of reference is mainly in past), with the state perfect for constatation and with the admirative (in the present tense) it was noted by a number of authors (Gerdzhikov, Nitsolova, Tarpomanova, Alexova, Moskova).

The renarrative perfect/pluperfect is homonymous with the dubitative (aorist). The form of the inferential perfect/imperfect differs from the forms of the renarrative perfect/pluperfect only in the third person, as well as the form of the inferential aorist – from the inferential renarrative – again only in the third person.

Instead of disambiguation, in the present study we propose another solution: let us assume that this homonymous construction of the renarrative with inferential imperfect, with perfect, with admirative in the present tense – regardless of its grammatical value and definition – often found in journalistic texts, sometimes could have pragmatic function to mislead. This very form could be indicatot for misinformation.

8.12. Algorithm
It is possible to attempt to compile an algorithm to detect the renarrative/inferential/perfect for constatation/dubitative/admirative. Regardless of the homonymy and coincidence of these grammatical categories, it became clear that they could be an attention-enhancing marker if they appeared in a journalistic text. For this reason, an algorithm for automatic detection of these evidences would also help to automatically detect possible misinformation with the methods of

computational linguistics and automatic language processing. Since we are talking about grammatical constructions with a certain structure, this structure can be described in detail for the entire verb paradigm in Bulgarian and tested on existing corpora.

8.13. Note: The development of children's speech and the use of evidentiality
When considering the use of renarrative in Bulgarian, one assumption is invariably present – although it is used intuitively by native speakers, it is a matter of subtle use, of additional skill, of detailed knowledge of the language. Evidence of the necessary additional sensitivity and skill in the use of renarrative can be found in the learning of Bulgarian as a foreign language and in the learning of Bulgarian as a mother tongue by little children.

Some observations on the linguistic development of children, who are native Bulgarian speakers, show that they perceive the full use of evidentiality at a relatively late age. Initially, children retell events either in aorist or in imperfect tense, regardless of whether they witnessed the action, received the information from another person, or just inferred the event. Future development and research on the topic would shed light on the question to what extent the evidential renarrative, conclusive and dubitative are a sign of a deep mastery of the language.

IX . Other markers of disinformation and trends in journalistic headlines
The renarrative and its homonymous forms are strong markers for detecting misinformation.

The new online environment also requires new means of attracting attention, which are also transformed old concepts. However, in the new online environment, there are signals to indicate that a given piece of information may not be entirely reliable.

Eevidentials have a precisely defined grammatical meaning, which enters into certain relationships with many other linguistic and extralinguistic factors in the text, and evidentiality is only one of the markers of the text's relativity.

Also considered here:

1. Clickbait headlines with specific keywords and constructs

a) who, how, how much

b) here's why, see how

c) words like *truth, lie, big news*

d) unfinished titles with an ellipsis (e.g. *Sweden will vaccinate with AstraZeneca only...* 2021-03-25, 19:39:51)

2. Change in lead content

3. Mixing genres

4. Present predictive tense for something not happening

5. Detection of emotions

6. Disclaimers

7. Satellite websites

9.1. Clickbait headlines – language like *merch* and hiding information
The publications that we indicated as not using renarrative constructions, or at least as extremely rarely using renarrative, mainly use indicative, just as Nitsolova (2008) and Tarpomanova (2015) note – to insist on credible journalistic speech. Clickbait headlines have already been analyzed by computational linguists, along with disinformation (Karadzhov et al., 2018), as well as by other researchers (Mavrodieva, Voynova).

News is also a marketing product, and as marketing products and products of the so-called *merch* - shortened from the English word for merchandising - 'merchandising', today we witness a set of linguistic techniques and strategies that aim to help the selling or rather the reading of this news. To analyze this phenomenon, the advice of marketing analysts on article titles can be useful [18]. According to them, the title of the article in the newspaper should not match the title on Facebook or Twitter. They outline five thematic core titles that sell well:

How to (Как);

Benefits (Ползи);

List (Списък);

Tips (Съвети);

Reasons (Причини).

The following statistics show how the scheme works for the Bulgarian media as well.

It is well known that the media giants Facebook, Twitter, and Google keep their algorithms. Therefore, marketing and media analysts arrive at some assumptions about these algorithms, mainly based on the experience and the likes of a certain message. Many efforts are dedicated in how to attract more readings and greater popularity, and not in search of adequate coverage of any event.

The general conclusion that emerges is that these types of headlines regularly appear in the media. They are like anchors, that should maintain the reader's interest. A closer look shows that such titles are found in certain time zones – when the flow of information is not intense – late at night, on weekends, during holidays, and their purpose is to maintain reader's interest even when they do not exist as real news.

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[18]https://www.mequoda.com/articles/audience-development/social-media-headlines/

9.1.2. More clickbait strategies

Number of guides advise how to spot *fake news*, published by enthusiasts and various organizations[19].

Clickbait headlines act psychologically and resemble to a large extent the experience, offered by television (radio): as if prompting him to read and open the message, the online media allows the reader to "see" ("hear") and discover the news for himself, to judge for himself what it is about and for himself, impartially and based on his own experience, to judge and decide what to extract as information. Very often these "testimonials" are accompanied by promises of photo and video. At the same time, not every reader would have the patience to watch a long minute of video and trust his proposed retelling as authentic. It seems that the aim of the creators of the message in the media is unconsciously or completely purposefully to give more authenticity and truth to the content offered, in contrast to the *fake news*, that has become too popular, which is obviously manipulative and already seems to have become easier to decipher.

In Bulgaria, at the beginning of the new millennium, the news attracted readers by original headlines, editors largely managed to say everything in a few words, which is currently falling apart, due to the natural swing of the pendulum from one extreme to the other. Here *fake news* comes into its own. Today new *broken headlines* (such as Look, How to, etc.) seem to garnish some of the fake news, some kind of *broken fake news*.

The news, presented under these headlines, are not necessarily fake, but often they could be. There are several reasons. The reader leaves himself to the manipulation of truth and lazily accepts what is described as a valuable, without checking, because he is offered complete distance from the event – as if the reader himself was at it (especially if there is a video added, which hardly anyone will look, if not extremely intrigued). According to a taxonomy, proposed by Valchanov, we can rather speak of disinformation – a collection of true, false and semi-true content (Valchanov, 2018).

9.3. Change the content in the lead

As a consequence of the clickbait headlines and the desire for more readings, there is also a change in the lead of the news. The inverted pyramid structure, invariable part of journalism education, is changed. Before the age of social networks, the lead had to contain the important information corresponding to the so-called big five questions – *Who? What? Where? When? Why?*, in some cases with the question *How?*

However, this structure of the inverted pyramid and the informative lead at the beginning of the text are also broken down. Today, paradoxically, the important thing is something else – that **it is not** in the title and from the visible part of the link on the social network. To find the content and the news, the click on the link is a must. The first sentence is often no longer leading, and often too general and unrelated to the text. The real lead follows only after the peculiar introduction, which

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[19]https://library.Lasalle.edu/c.php?g=631369& p =4415013

has attracted more readers. This strategy can be seen as part of the information noise we have noticed.

9.4. Mixing genres

As has been pointed out several times, fact-checking does not check statements, that are personal opinion, because often such statements are unprovable. As long as some facts are being reported, evaluation can be pushed into the content. Similar examples are very common, when it comes to politics and political figures. This strategy is part of the implementation of the so-called *illusory truth effect* – even though something is not fact, when it is repeated, it becomes familiar and begins to be perceived by the reader, despite the initial stress. The mechanism works very much like the Overton window[20], where from the unthinkable and unacceptable, the repeated and rehearsed things become tolerable in society. Disguised under the genre of a news article, the editors' comments act subconsciously on the casual reader. In these cases, apart from disinformation, we also see manipulation.

One of the problems with digital media is that despite the existence of rubrics, readers do not pay much attention. For example, if a text is placed in the analysis or opinions section, the reader will not always pay attention to this fact and could read it as a news.

In addition, there is a fusion of genres – it often happens that the opinions and analyses are not signed, they are published on behalf of the media, which makes them "news" – current and full-blooded, and not just the opinion. Political scientists and sociologists can study this phenomenon.

9.5. Present predictive tense

A common form for certain future actions in the near future in news headlines is the present tense of the verb. In grammar, it is called the present predictive tense (Nitsolova, 2008:265). Sometimes, however, the claims it reported, wouldn't happen – the media put a headline in the present tense on something that's uncertain or just an idea. The goal is again to attract attention, to increase the so-called *четения (readings in terms of impressions)* of a news story. This can also be misleading information, but it is difficult to identify automatically because of the frequency of use of the present tense: *Забраняват на длъжници три години да работят ('Debtors are banned from working for three years')* [21](16.05.2022); *Влизаме в Шенген до края на годината ('We are entering Schengen by the end of the year')* [22] (18.10.2022); *Плащаме в лева, но ни връщат в евро*

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[20]https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/26/us/politics/overton-window-democrats.html

[21]https://trud.bg/%D0%B7%D0%B0%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%8F%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%82-%
D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%BB%D1%8A%D0%B6%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B8-%D1%82%D1%80%
D0%B8-%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D0%B4%D0%B0-%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B1
%D0%BE%D1%82%D1%8F%D1%82/

[22]https://www.plovdiv-press.bg/2022/10/18/%D0%B2%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B5-%D0%
B2-%D1%88%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B3%D0%B5%D0%BD-%D0%B4%D0%BE-%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1 %8F-
%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%B5%
D0%B2/297311/

('We pay in leva, the change in euros (How will we switch to the new currency?')[23] (6.11.2022).
The case with the title *Готвачът на Путин праща кървав чук в калъф за цигулка на Европарламента ('Putin's chef sends a bloody hammer into a violin case at the European Parliament (video)')* is extremely interesting[24].

The use of the present indicative tense can be considered a sign of incorrect information, but the big problem is that the present tense is one of the most used tenses, and it is difficult to distinguish this use from the others. Such usage would only be detected by a human, so automatic detection of such constructions cannot be done.

9.6. Detecting Emotions: Hedge Words
Earlier in the text, the benefit of text sentiment analysis was mentioned, especially if it is done automatically for large data sets. It's not just about determining the positive, negative or neutral setting, but about nuanced emotions, analyzing sentiments. This nuance could contribute to the detection of misinformation, because misinformation is directly related to emotions, as repeatedly noted in the present study. In the English language, dictionaries have already been compiled to support such research – LIWC-22 is periodically updated and new and new data are added to it, which contribute to the automatic analysis of texts. For the Bulgarian language, it is possible to create similar resources to support the automatic processing of texts.

Hedging words are also related to sentiment, because they often paint the picture. However, hedge words are no longer present in the new headline type. Lexical markers such as " *therefore"*, *"therefore"*, *"probably"*, *"perhaps"*, *"hardly"*, *"no doubt"*, " *certainly"*, *"allegedly"*, *"also"* etc., which denote an inference or assumption with some degree of probability or generalization are not present in the titles.

9.7. Disclaimers – a new era in journalism
In recent years, a new type of text has appeared that accompanies the articles – called in English 'disclaimer' and in Russian 'warning' (Russian is mentioned because many websites are blamed by the Russian government as *foreign agent*). In fact, in Western tradition it is a kind of media disclaimer for the published content. Media disclaimers may also warn users about the accuracy and reliability of the media.

Today, the disclaimers could be considered as kind of warning about particular content, although it is not clear with exactly what sign – positive or negative.

Some special formula is seen in Russian opposition media – for example, on the Meduza website[25]. This site was founded by independent journalists from the Russian official media site lenta.ru, who in 2014 had to leave and created their own Russian-language opposition website in Riga, Latvia. The site enjoys great popularity and in just three months has gained over a million readers. On

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[23]https://btvnovinite.bg/bulgaria/plashtame-v-leva-no-ni-vrashtat-v-evro-eto-kak-shte-minen-kam-edinnata-evropejska-valuta.html
[24]https://dnes.dir.bg/svyat/gotvachat-na-putin-prashta-karvav-chuk-v-kalaf-ot-tsigulka-na-evroparlamenta-video
[25]https://meduza.io/

April 23, 2021, the Russian Ministry of Justice declared the site as a foreign agent. Since then, every news item, published on this site, has been marked by a text, that warns that this article is the work of a foreign agent. Since the beginning of the Russian incursion into Ukraine on February 24, 2022, a similar message has been seen on the websites of a number of Russian opposition media outlets, after Roskomnadzor led a crackdown on any media outlet that reported a message different from the official government. Here we will give only one example of such a message: "The following message (material) was created and (or) distributed by a foreign mass media acting as a foreign agent and (or) by a Russian legal entity acting as a foreign agent.'

Similar messages can be read in a number of Russian media, which manage to spread their information through "apocryphal" channels. Their content is conceived as credible and truthful in Europe.

A version of these disclaimers recently appeared in the Bulgarian media with the following clarification:

"IMPORTANT!!! Dear Pogled.info readers, we are restricted because of our positions! Log in directly to the site www.pogled.info. Share on your profiles, with friends, in groups and on pages. In this way, we will overcome the limitations, and people will be able to reach the alternative point of view on the events!?

When you see the "fake news" sign, it means that this article is recommended reading!!!

Subscribe to our YouTube channel/top right/: https://www.youtube.com"[26]

Subsequently, the publication's Facebook account was blocked, and after January 2023, Meta company refused to moderate the accounts in Bulgaria. The topic of Facebook's content moderation algorithms deserves particular attention, but not in this study.

Disclaimers are part of the new era in journalism. Our expectations are that they will appear more and more often, and this is another stream of additional information for the reader to navigate. For the moment, however, it can be said that this is a sign of a special status of the news. For Russian media environment, our opinion is that it is a special kind of protest: when all the texts have a disclaimer, it is as if there is no disclaimer – the news from *special* becomes *standard*, original and true.

9.8. Sites satellites (mushroom websites)
A well-known strategy in building a network of sites to cite (mushroom sites) each other is not surprising. It is also seen in Bulgarian digital media. A similar study was done by Yakimova's team (Yakimova, 2022). In the analyzed examples, it is easy to notice similar connections between media that recognize one or another policy. Satellites, built specifically to multiply a certain type of news,

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[26]https://pogled.info/svetoven/russia/vazhno-mvnr-rusiya-shte-zashtitava-teritoriyata-si-s-vsichki-sredstva.146356

are also recognizable. It is problematic when large information sites have similar behaviour. (*An important analysis of content on the Internet in Bulgarian shows how it is generated.*[27])

9.10. Summary – linguistic markers for detecting misinformation
Clickbait headlines have been analyzed by a number of authors, but we proposed additional strategies for their detection – based on the marketing approach from which we derived keywords, aided by the clickbait strategies of exaggeration, irritation, excitement, special punctuation, imagery, lack of information, ambiguity, incorrect syntax. The lack of connection between the title and the main text is noted. *Google statistics* were used to prove the use of clickbait headlines. More than once in this work, it is emphasized that the personal opinion of a given journalist cannot be news – it can be a comment, but it cannot be considered reliable. Today, due to social media, nuances in journalistic genres are largely blurred, often with a desire to replace position and misinformation.

Another interesting strategy for disinformation is the use of the present predictive tense for something that has not happened and is not happening, just sounds attractive. This strategy relies on the reader's interpretation – the responsibility is his, not the writer's, regardless of the fact that the writer acts in manipulative way.

Real news contains more doubt, which is even often expressed with the help of hedge words. This tendency, which is very strongly present in languages in which retelling is not morphologized, is also found in the Bulgarian language, in parallel with the renarrative and its homonymous forms.

The use of the new type of metatext – disclaimers, which directs the reader to some knowledge, but again the media is not particularly responsible for the statements (in some cases), but states that the presented news is only one of the possibilities, which, however, can be true, but it is not categorical.

Satellite (mushroom) sites add more clutter by multiplying unproven news but prevent readers from easily debunking misinformation.

The strategies described here contribute, along with renarrative, to debunk misinformation.

All the examples, presented here, were supported with specific headlines from the media, which is another resource for future analysis and can enrich the current approach for automatic headline detection.

X. Linguistic experiments with the use of renarrative and its homonyms
622 headlines from online media were collected manually, over the course of 7 years (from 2015 to 2022), from Bulgarian news sites. The reason for not using the existing corpora of the Bulgarian language is the specific task that has been set – to find the renarrative or its homonymous forms in the titles and trace its function. As has become clear from the exposition so far, the titles are

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[27]https://www.investor.bg/a/454-sotsialni-mrezhi/374386-sredno-375-mln-onlayn-publikatsii-se-generirat-v-balgariya-mesechno - this link is additionaly added

indicative of the change in the linguistic environment, as well as being meaningful for the possible detection of misinformation.

The titles are in the presumptive renarrative (inferential of the auxiliary verb *съм*, dubitative, perfect, or admirative).

The digital media sites, from which the headlines were collected, are news sites with relatively high popularity, during the studied period. The media had well-known owners at the time of collecting titles and were legitimate under the laws of Bulgaria. These are not sites of obscure origin, clones, or satellites of other sites, although often the content can overlap and have 100% matches in the content, and even in the titles. The content is related to secular news, sports news and crime news and can be found completely mirrored in a number of the websites without being edited. No particular trademark of publications is seen.

The situation is different with political news, where there are discrepancies, and coincidences show political connectedness of the media and of clusters of sites, close to certain political players. However, the analysis of political content and satellite connectivity is not the aim of the present study, but can be noticed and proved on a case-by-case basis. One recommendation can be made – if the goal is to discover satellite sites, then such research should be done synchronously to demonstrate this phenomenon, setting the political context in which the research would be done, because in a diachronic plan much of the evidence on the Internet can be lost and inaccessible.

One of the main sources was *monitor.bg*. It was shut down on 24 March 2022, and its content was redirected to a new website *telegraph.bg*. Some of the already collected headlines are hard to be found at the time of completing this research, but with the help of Wayback machine[28] some issues can be recovered. Other articles have been completely disappeared, but today are found on satellite websites. Thus, it is obvious that a fundamental principle in fact-checking – the need for backup and archive – is proved. It raises one of the general problems, facing fact-checkers – what are they actually checking, if the content is already gone but *has done its political work* and already influenced public attitudes? Other headlines from the collection cannot be found at all – they stand in the list as a frozen testimony of passed time and only a possible search in the paper flow (because Monitor was one of the newspapers in Bulgaria) of the editions can prove their past existence and the fact, that they were not fabricated for this study. Thus, we are witnessing a kind of replacement of history – those headlines, that more or less shaped public opinion, no longer exist, they are forgotten, after they have played their role, without a trace.

Nevertheless, the linguistic material collected is indicative and analyzed in several different ways.

Post facto – after they were collected, the titles were annotated by three native speakers. The marker by which they are annotated is how true they sound. The possible values, from which the annotators had the right to choose, were three – credible message (with the sign 1), non-credible content (with

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[28]https://archive.org/web/

the sign 0), neutral content (or position of the annotator "don't know" - with the sign 2). Annotations were made manually, without using special software.

After annotation, the content of the articles was manually checked. As mentioned, many of the articles "disappeared" along with the site they were published on. However, a reverse search was performed, and some of the articles were found, even now without using Wayback machine. The main text of the news story was examined, not just the headline. It was checked for:

1) Presence – lack of author.

2) Presence – lack of a link in the message leading to the source.

3) Presence – lack of content related to the title.

The examined examples can be grouped thematically in same way as the departments in the newsrooms – political, criminal-political, criminal, international news, sports, entertainment.

It turns out that the news, that is perceived by readers as real, is mainly when the renarrative is accepted as a retelling of someone else's speech and when it comes to entertainment-related matter – from sports, international trivia, entertaining news. When it comes to crime news, when it has curious details (like "he killed a merchant and burned him at the stake"), they are also perceived as true. This shows that the public is inclined to accept as true any curious facts and to read the attractive titles.

The case of political news is more special. With them, as researchers of partisan media in the US have observed, people are biased – if the news is related to their elected official and is negative, they will accept it as false, and if it is about a politician or person they disapprove of, they will accept the news as true. The phenomenon also exists in the Bulgarian media. Another dividing line is observed today: "pro-Russia/anti-vaccine" in opposition to "anti-Russia/pro-vaccine".

Many of the renarrative titles are perceived equally by the annotators, but there are also those, that lead to complete disagreement. They are usually related to political and more serious topics, where the reader has prior knowledge and prejudice, and based on it makes a decision about the specific text. The renarrative fulfils its role – the journalist reports something, which, however, is later developed by the reader in the direction he decides.

In the second experiment, specific texts are considered – there are cases with the use of renarrative analyzed. In order to see more clearly the difference between the different types of news and the nuances of the use of renarrative, the cases are grouped thematically (as the departments in the newsrooms are distributed) – political, criminal, international, entertainment and sports. The renarrative construction in some cases could be seen as a sign of inauthenticity, or as a signal for thorough fact-checking by disinformation experts.

Of greatest interest is the use of renarratives in political news, because these news are of public importance and misinformation in them can do the most damage. In the first case discussed here, one site cites another, that is not credible, and their mutual citation resembles a vicious circle –

satellite sites cite themselves to give themselves importance and credibility – a typical example of a disinformation strategy. In the second case, the author of the news does not particularly trust what was said and shows his doubt already in the title, as well as attitude towards the characters in the news – again an example of disinformation, but this time in the sense of presupposing a thesis, of taking a position in a news that she should be impartial. In the third case, we again witness disbelief on the part of the author of the news, but at the same time, a note of approval or at least a positive attitude is detected, as towards a displayed cunning. The fourth case shows both doubt about the content, but also self-confidence in one's own right – again there is a mixing of genres – of news with personal opinion and attitude. The fifth case is again a demonstration of a combination of different genres - opinion and news at the same time, and the title, in addition to renarrative, is also reinforced with the clickbait word "Disclosure" and punctuation "!". The sixth case shows uncertainty of several degrees – on the one hand, a renarrative is used, on the other hand, the semantics of the verb in the renarrative is associated with distrust, on the third hand, it is a sociological study that can also be questioned, and on the fourth hand, the title ends with a question mark. But there is news, it has been published, despite all the uncertainties. As noted earlier, an additional sign of possible disinformation is the site itself - the platform itself, which has a dubious name for news connoisseurs "breaking.bg" and is of the satellite site type. However, the sixth example can be considered fundamental in terms of the violation of good journalistic practices. The seventh example shows a clear and to some extent positive trend in the context of freedom of speech, imposed in the Bulgarian media after 1989 – distrust in institutions. If before 1989 the institutions in Bulgaria were indisputable and no one dared to oppose them out loud, then in the following years there was a demonstration of disrespect for the state institutions. On the one hand, it is understood as freedom of speech and positions, but on the other hand, it is pointed out by modern disinformation analysts as one of the prerequisites for the flourishing of fake news. It is curious how the same news is presented in different media from the political spectrum and the transition from trust to complete distrust, expressed again with language markers – from a renarrative to a direct accusation of *lying* ("The White House caught Petkov lying"). There is a complete breakdown of informativeness. The eighth case demonstrates the uncertainty of the editor during the writing of the news. It is implicitly felt and imposed on him to publish it anyway, even though there is no clarity. In this case, the multiple edits of the text of the news can clearly be detected, but this does not make it more qualitatively written or informative. The ninth case again has a mixing of genres – the editor's personal opinion replaces informativeness, and the title is even offensive. In this case, the awakening of an emotion in the reader works, but in addition to the renarrative and mixing of genres, it is also a sign of possible misinformation.

Narrative in crime news coverage acts as a marker of uncertainty, but can rarely be seen as misinformation. However, this is not the case with international news, which is often political or health. There is some peculiarity about them – they arrive in Bulgarian often through official channels and should be authentic. The use of renarrative in international news has different shades, because of the specificity of each international news. If they are political – they can also be misleading, especially if they are related to local, Bulgarian politics. When it comes to criminal

events – catastrophes, assassinations, earthquakes, floods – the renarrative notes dynamics and current state of affairs. However, when a renarrative reflects news, related to health or scientific topics, it should be borne in mind that the information may not have been fully verified and may even have disinformation, as in the cases with the spread of the coronavirus pandemic. However, in the current study, the topic of *fake news* and the coronavirus is not particularly affected, because the attempt is to focus on more general trend for all types of news, and not only on a specific topic.

As has been repeatedly pointed out, when news are fact-checked, the public interest is most important. But when a linguistic phenomenon is analyzed as renarrative, it is also analyzed in cases that are not of exclusive public interest, such as sports news and curious unprovable statements (like *Шекспир пушил марихуана* 'Shakespeare smoked marijuana'). Renarrative is often used in these types of headlines and certainly largely misleading. However, a comparison can be made here – these types of headlines resemble anecdotes – they aim more attention, but no one will be harmed by their content, they can only entertained.

However, it is seen that the renarrative and its homonymous forms could be a sign of inauthenticity content and a marker for misinformation. Subsequent fact-checking would prove whether in each specific case there is malicious information, misinformation or disinformation.

It is important to analyze the topics with used renarrative, in addition to verifying the data by trained journalists and to prebunk – to assume on which topic it is possible to use disinformation and it should be approached with special attention in advance, even before being misinformed about it.

In many of the headlines, reviewed here, we also saw other strategies – such as clickbait headlines, unrelated leading to the headline, offering opinion as news – mixing the genres. These experiments prove that the renarrative works together with other disinformation linguistic strategies and is an integral part of the overall tendency of writers to avoid responsibility, to create alibis, and to shift the responsibility for making the final decision about whether a fact is true or not. on the readers.

XI. Documentary records of misinformation cases

After showing various cases with the use of renarrative and other linguistic markers for detecting disinformation in Bulgarian, this part shows a documentary account of the perception or creation of fake news and disinformation. An angry reaction on Facebook to misinformation content is shown. The following is testimony from the Deputy Minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine about the beginning of the war, the story of recruiting Russian trolls, as well as testimony from the editor-in-chief of a fake news site.

XII. Conclusion

Today, the whole society is agitated by questions of truth, (along with the agitations around the questions of health and peace, which until recently the whole society considered finally settled). Is it possible for journalists to tell the truth and only the truth in their daily work and what resource do they need for this? Who will decide what is true? What is the public interest and why is it on the side of truth? There are more questions than answers.

The development of the linguistic markers and strategies that are used in disinformation, and with the knowledge of which it could be detected, points in one direction – the responsibility is borne less and less by the writer and more and more by the reader of the given content. The use of re-narrative is an emanation of this trend, but this new direction of accountability is not only visible through the use of renarrative, but also through the use of all the language features, highlighted in this text, that can be used to detect misinformation.

Evidentiality distinguishes the modern Bulgarian language from the Old Bulgarian, and renarrative is one of the most characteristic features of the Bulgarian language in relation to other Slavic and most Indo-European languages. Renarrative is also one of the most important signs of the unity of the Bulgarian language in all its dialects. Sociologists and psychologists can analyze why exactly this trait is characteristic for Bulgarians, but it is clear that every native speaker of the language deals with these nuances.

The present work shows where linguistic phenomenon renarrative can be a flag of disinformation (or misinformation).

Certain linguistic characteristics of the Bulgarian language – such as the renarrative of the hypermood of the reproduced speech realis II – can be read as a sign of misinformation is some specific cases. There are other language constructs (clickbait headlines and hedge words) that could suggest false information.

A conceptual apparatus for the Bulgarian language has been compiled to describe disinformation and its manifestations in the media environment in Bulgaria. Defining the concepts is imperative to make the research topic clear. Secondly, a historical review of a number of cases parallel to disinformation, manipulation, mystification, and propaganda was made. It is no surprise that, although it is only in recent years that disinformation has been talked about, the phenomenon is not new and has its manifestations deep back in history. Various historical examples provide guidance for the multifaceted analysis of disinformation. In this sense, it is the object of research of different sciences (such interdisciplinary attempt is made). Understanding the phenomenon is impossible without the prism of psychology, medicine, law. But when it comes to the search for the truth – one must start from the very concept of truth, to step on the philosophical achievements of the truth. The relationship between language and thinking has been the subject of long analyses. Wittgenstein, Quine, Frege, Austin, Searle are philosophers of language, because language is thinking, language is meaning. For Wittgenstein, the question of how language represents reality is essential. It is in the representation of reality where renarrative comes. If the journalist is only a translator (renarrator) of reality, then the reader must interpret the received information – the renarrative offers the possibility to interpret information, based on the little given information, obtained from this morphological category. The reader must understand, interpret, reach the truth presented to him not entirely faithfully. By using a renarrative, the journalist tries to make his statement true, even though he suspects that it may not be, because of the possible untruth, contained in the retelling. Does interpretation make a message true or not, and is the interpreter ultimately responsible for truth? Dynamic semantics makes it possible to suspect that the speaker

is trying to put all the responsibility on the interpreters of the utterance. The renarrative is in a particularly destructive place – it attributes a certain property to an object and simultaneously takes it away, it contradicts the informativeness of the utterance and at the same time it informs. What is said, is said, even if it is corrected later, even if it is cancelled, it leaves a mark, an influences, some modality, predisposes the way of thinking. This is also one of the goals of disinformation – even if it is exposed, it remains a trace, a suspicion, a doubt.

On a purely linguistic level – the renarrative is special. It is one of the signs of mastery of the Bulgarian language – empirical observations show that children master it at a rather late stage of their development, and students of Bulgarian as a foreign language often fail to use it, even though it is included in the curriculum.

Renarrative and its homonymous forms are used in journalistic texts. Along with a number of other linguistic markers, it can be perceived as a sign of possible misinformation or false information. Its use in headlines, which are an emanation of journalistic trends, is particularly significant. For the purposes of the present study, a corpus of renarrative titles was created. Specific cases have been analyzed separately. First-person evidence of victims of disinformation, as well as those, creating disinformation, was also collected. The analysis of individual cases shows that there are several main uses of renarrative in journalistic texts that must be considered and interpreted on a case study basis. The renarrative is used, when it is a retelling and the author of the content is unclear (he may have wished to remain anonymous or be an anonymous source, as he may be depersonalized as experts, scientists, insiders). In these cases, the text really requires a detailed check, because we may be witnessing manipulation and victims of misinformation. Renarrative is also used to say something without saying anything – not vouching for the content, but at the same time presenting that content (as mentioned above – one of the goals of disinformation). Parallel to this use is the use as an alibi for the writer – who refuses to bear responsibility for the content. Renarrative is used in different types of news – political, investigative, criminal, international, scientific, sports, and secular. If its use in the latter two is harmless and brings only entertainment, then when it comes to the substantial public interest of the news, the use of renarrative should be seen as an opportunity to mislead the public.

Renarrative in the Bulgarian language is used together with other linguistic markers and strategies – clickbait titles, hedge words, lack of connection between title and main text, deceptive use of the present tense, disclaimers that capture attention and set a direction for reasoning, satellite sites, in which, if an inexperienced reader decides to check a given news – he will find it multiplied, and instead of doubting, it is possible to assume that he is reading the *truth itself*.

Headlines with *who, how, how much, here's why, see how, the truth about, the lie about, big news* rule the media, and readers end up not getting the information they need, but the responsibility for their wasted time is theirs, because they don't were far-sighted enough not to be misled by these titles. The other case are headlines that use the present tense for something that is expected to happen, but there is no guarantee that it will happen – wishful thinking in order to achieve more click again – the interpretation rests again on the reader's responsibility. He must use his general

knowledge. After the described clickbait headlines, which mislead and do not carry meaningful information, there are introductory sentences – the lead of the news, which are no longer a classical journalistic lead, according to the rules of journalism, but hijacked phrases that only create unnecessary journalistic noise. The reader can get lost in them and only keep surfing webpages, hoping to reach valuable content. This real content may not be reached at all in such "empty" texts.

Nowadays, another new treat is noticed in headlines in some Bulgarian outlets – they are long, but uninformative, again aiming to keep the reader longer on the webpage for more monetization. These long news headlines require reader's vigilance.

Hedging words, slang words, emergency words are being used more and more. Till now they were characteristic only of tabloids in English, but today such use can be found in Bulgarian as well. The absence of such words distinguishes certain media with higher quality journalism.

Due to the particular specificity of online editions, there is a fusion of journalistic genres – personal editorial opinions are presented as proven facts, and comments appear as reliable verified news.

If readers decide to check a news story, they may end up wandering through satellite websites, that duplicate the same manipulative theses.

In many of the texts, an emotional response is provoked, which is often associated with an attempt of disinformation – disinformers rely on strong emotion to arouse more interest in the text.

In many of the articles so-called *disclaimers* appeared. They consist additional remarks to the content, that represent some added information of particular value. Disclaimers are of various types – from saying that the content does not meet certain requirements (in Russia) to drawing additional attention – sort of like a clickbait headline, raised to a degree (the example saying when there is a disclaimer, the news must be read).

The renarrative takes its place in the whole series of already defined linguistic markers for detecting disinformation. It can be considered a sign of misinformation along with all of the above.

Supported by collections of headlines, as well as documentary records of cases, involving disinformation, the work is a kind of testament of the time.

The analyses and strategies for disinformation detection, proposed here, are practical – they can be used not only to detect already created disinformation and to verify the news and narratives found, but also to analyze which topics are likely to be manipulated in future, and which topics can be manipulated it (*the prebunking* described above), thus the effectiveness of tackling disinformation will be much greater.

The present research also demonstrates the tendencies of escaping from responsibility by newswriters, mediators, creators of the texts – the readers are the ones, who have to select, analyze, interpret the news texts and the readers have to make the decisions about the essence of their content – to what extent it is true and to what extent it is not and for what purpose it is made available to the public.

Spotting misinformation is a skill everyone needs today. If we follow Alvin Toffler's maxim, the illiterate of the 21st century is not those who cannot read and write but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn. So finally, we must unlearn that someone else is responsible for us and learn that we make the decisions and we act.

Contributions
1.   Linguistic contributions

1.1.   Systematization and definition of terminology in Bulgarian related to disinformation

1.2.   Analyzing renarrative as a marker of misinformation

1.3.   Derive a scheme to detect the renarrative automatically

1.4.   Gathering a database of headlines (small dataset) and analyzing data related to renarrative and disinformation

1.5.   For the first time, disclaimers are analyzed as a phenomenon in news textual content.

1.6.   For the first time, the evidentiality as a linguistic challenge for native speakers and foreigners is commented

2.   Interdisciplinary

2.1.   Connecting the topic of disinformation with a number of areas of knowledge in Bulgarian
2.2.   Suggestions for future research in the field of disinformation – sociopolitical, psychological, transnational

Further work
A sociological historiographical study – why we witness exactly this type of fake news – fake news as a description of our society. Future research could be done on the topic of how fake news reflects our modern times.

To conduct additional research on fake news automatically with a regular expression, describing the renarrative and its homonymous forms.

Analyzing the cases of the appearance of misinformation, it is possible to propose the topics on which misinformation could be expected in advance (*prebunking*).

Past communion and how it relates to fake news in headlines like *Дъжд от сигнали срещу свещеник, канил монахини на тройки 'Rain of whistleblowers against priest who invited nuns to threesomes'* has not been explored[29]. Such an analysis would deepen the theme of renarrative and disinformation.

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[29]https://novini.bg/show/osemnadeset-plus/756198

While the present text was being prepared, new narratives emerged and were defended and multiplied by different players. They also provide new directions for analyzing the use of renarrative in global hybrid warfare contexts.

Possible research on children's acquisition of renarrative – when it happens, at what age, how.

The fusion of genres and the presentation of political theses and opinions as absolute news could be analyzed more thoroughly from a sociopolitical perspective. This strategy of mixing genres is a kind of misinformation.

Developing the disclaimer theme as a warning about fake news.

A possible study of evidentiality in a diachronic plan – a study of Damaskins books as the medium of the Middle Ages and the manifestation of evidentiality.

An in-depth study of renarrative in the context of dynamic semantics.

Research of the typical Bulgarian narratives related to disinformation, but in a diachronic plan, as well as to what extent they have linguistic characteristics.

The subject of the coverage of scientific news in the Bulgarian media deserves a deeper study.

Research on the lead in the news article – the lead is no longer an answer to the important 5 journalistic questions, but a hijacked introduction that raises even more assumptions than answers.

Exploring the use of the present indicative - as an event that has already happened or as a certain future. There is a trend that is worth analyzing in the context of disinformation and the creation of excessive media noise: under the influence of online media, the renarrative is giving way to clickbait headlines and headlines in the present tense that demonstrate as fact information from the future: "Musk is coming to Bulgaria"[30].

An investigation of AI-generated ChatGPT news texts and their linguistic characteristics is needed.

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