

1. Introduction

Propaganda is one of the most powerful and underestimated weapons in the XXI century. With the appearance of social media and the development of technologies, propaganda was able to spread quickly and widely around the world. Now it can influence public opinion, behaviour, and attitudes to the variety of issues. Currently it is essential to recognise propaganda and analyse information that we get. The idea to describe what propaganda is, was basically motivated by Walton (1977) who offered the criteria for the identification and the analysis, with the following evaluating of argumentation used in propaganda.

2. Literature review

As we know, the role of propaganda is essential. For example, it can participate in the formation of public opinion. Propaganda can be used to form a certain opinion in the society about political, social, economic and other issues. For instance, it is a good way to create a positive image of the government and its representatives. This can include a certain propaganda campaign aimed at highlighting the positive qualities of the rulers and their achievements. Moreover, propaganda practices to cover up negative aspects of governmental performance. This can include ignoring the negative or even distorting information to hide the non-appropriate consequences of making decisions. In his surveys Walton (1977) commented that propaganda is an instrumental type of discourse that is justified by the use of argumentation and consequences. Such arguments are not necessarily fallacious, but care is needed to watch for dialectical shifts in using.

The issues of analysing the use of propaganda were also popular with other scientists. According to Mull et al. (2013), for the majority of people propaganda conjures up thoughts about bad actions and evil manipulation due to the information. While this may be partially true, propaganda in the simplest form is the selective presentation of information in such a way as to promote a particular training of thought. While propaganda can sometimes be an extremely powerful tool of persuasion, it is by no means always effective and is not necessarily a deceptive tool used exclusively by those with malicious intentions. However, propaganda is better categorised as a sub-set of public diplomacy, rather than being equivalent to public diplomacy. Obviously, propaganda is not always lying. Walton (1997) described that sometimes

it is a use of argumentation that is not directed towards the truth of a matter.

Prominent researcher Jewett (1940), who suggested two main types of propaganda. First is considered to be "Black and white propaganda". It is a type of propaganda where the world is presented as bipolar: there is only a "right" and a "wrong" side. This type of propaganda is often used to promote hatred and manipulate people's emotions. Second is considered to be "Informal propaganda". It is a type where messages are communicated informally, such as through social networks, discussions among friends or communities. The purpose of this type of propaganda is to influence people's opinions by using their personal connections and interactions with others.

Defining propaganda can be complicated. It can take multiple forms and use a variety of methods to manipulate people's minds. If we speak about identification of propaganda and analyse it, we should mention again Jewett (1940) who used other vital important techniques such as content analysis, discourse analysis and critical thinking. He searched for patterns in the language and images used in propaganda, and examined the underlying messages and values conveyed. To detect propaganda, Jewett (1940) practised usage of a variety of methods, such as analysing media content, tracking the spread of ideas and messages across different platforms, and observing the effects of propaganda on individuals and groups. The author also studied the history of propaganda and its implementation in various contexts, including political campaigns, advertising and war.

Overall, these methods were interdisciplinary, they involve knowledge from such fields as communication studies, psychology, sociology and political science. The prominent scientist Lee (1945) also mentioned this chain in his investigation. The aim of his work was to promote critical thinking and awareness of propaganda and to provide tools and strategies to counter its effects, but regarding another survey of propaganda scrutiny he argued that it is important to train people to think critically and analyse information to recognise propaganda techniques instead of being influenced by them. In general, the author admitted that propaganda can be a dangerous and destructive force in the society, and that it is important to combat it through education, critical thinking and free public speaking.

Even these days, with a big amount of sources, certain countries are suffering from propaganda imposed on them by the government. According to Aron (2015), Russian Federation using more than half billion dollars per year in order to achieve their goals. Their channel RT is aimed not to sell what could be called «the Russian brand», but to devalue notions of democratic transparency and accountability, to undermine trust in objective reporting, littering the news with half-truths and quarter-truths. Unfortunately, the big percentage of the Russian population absolutely follow the thought that has been imposed on them by the government thanks to propaganda.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, my survey shows that propaganda is an extremely dangerous weapon, that can impose a controversial thought, stir up conflict on a peaceful ground, make people believe in a lie. It is important to have your own knowledge and opinion in order not to succumb to it. Before we start to believe in the information, it's better to check all recourses, be attentive and sustainable because propaganda could be very persistent and repeat over and over again to convince people that it is correct. However, the available research has some limitations, such as using obsolete and quantitative data. The research usefulness has been severely decreased because of this. To sum up, everyone can choose himself what to believe, but it is important that a person does not live in the world of illusions that propaganda has created for him.

4. Reference list

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Literature review assignment assignment (approx. 1000 words)

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