Fake news: virus, weed, water or villain?
The framing of fake news in the United States of America

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“Young researchers from talented students”
The bad news at Deutsche Bank AG just got worse. [...] the bank inadvertently transferred 28 billion euros ($35 billion) to one of its outside accounts...

https://www.bloomberg.com/markets/fixed-income

"Studies have shown that Coca-Cola is among the most-admired and best-known trademarks in the world. In fact, it is documented that ‘Coca-Cola’ is the second-most widely understood term in the world, after ‘okay’.


"...if children or even babies listen to music composed by Mozart they will become more intelligent.”

INTRODUCTION

- Corpus of Contemporary American English
  - 2010 – 2014: 13

- Collins Dictionary – ”Word of the Year 2017”
  (https://www.collinsdictionary.com/woty)
  - ”false, often sensational, information disseminated under the guise of news reporting”

- Oxford English Dictionary (http://www.oed.com/)
FRAME SEMANTICS

- Frame = system of concepts (Fillmore 2006: 373)
- Frame semantics: ”the study of how linguistic forms evoke or activate frame knowledge” (Fillmore and Baker 2009: 317)
  - „A lexical unit evokes a frame...” (Andor 2010)
- Content words, e.g. *Tuesday*
METAPHORS AND FRAMING

- Prototypical indicators of framing (Krippendorff 2017)
  - Tax relief vs Tax cut (Lakoff 2004)

- Metaphors & knowledge structures (Thibodeau & Boroditsky 2011)
  - Crime is a virus infecting the city of Addison
  - Crime is a wild beast preying on the city of Addison

- Figurative framing (Burgers et al. 2016)

Framing Fake News

- How is the concept fake news framed by the media in the USA?
  - News
  - ”Pressure of coherence” (Kövecses 2005)
  - Intertextuality and intratextuality (Kövecses 2017)
    - Red tape – excessive complexity in official routine
    - ”The Americanization of Japan’s Car industry shifts into higher gear” (Kövecses 2005)
DATA

- News on websites
- 2016 – 2017
FRAMING FAKE NEWS

USA TODAY
The New York Times
Los Angeles Times
Chicago Tribune
The Washington Post
Most likely sources of fake news stories in the United States as of January 2017

- Facebook: 58%
- Internet News Sites: 51%
- Twitter: 49%

Share of respondents who thought they'd encounter fake news stories

102 articles

- ≠ videos, ≠ editorials, ≠ captions

Sentences

Conceptual metaphors:

1. FAKE NEWS IS AN ENEMY
   - combat fake news
   - crack down on fake news

2. FAKE NEWS IS A VIRUS
   - fake-news epidemics
   - plague of hoaxes and fake news

3. FAKE NEWS IS WEED
   - root out fake news
   - weed out fake news

4. FAKE NEWS IS WATER
   - tide of fake news
   - wield buckets in fake news flood

https://revolutionarypaideia.com/2011/01/13/facebook-is-becoming-fakebook-2/
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FAKE NEWS, FACEBOOK AND FRAMING

• Negative
• **FAKE preserves** (Lakoff & Johnson 1980)
  – Perceptual properties
  – Motor-activity properties
  – Purposive properties
• **FAKE negates** (Lakoff & Johnson 1980)
  – Functional properties
  – History of function
FUTURE RESEARCH

- Fake news in different contexts
  - Donald J. Trump
  - *Fake News Award*
  - FAKE NEWS IS AN ENEMY
- Fake news & news in general
REFERENCES

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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