Identifying fake news

Christoph Hülsmann, e-lang citizen team

Teacher sheet

Task

Your students will be given the following task.

> You will prepare, in groups, an interactive presentation for your fellow students from your institution in which you give them guidelines for identifying and acting against fake news.

Sites

Sites to learn about fake news

The following sites offer information on fake news in French, English and German. These are official/public websites or (serious) journalistic sources. They can be suggested to learners in order to facilitate a targeted introduction to the subject. However, if desired, learners can do independent research from the start or search for more reliable sources.

- In French:

    - https://www.gouvernement.fr/fausses-nouvelles-guide-des-questions-a-se-poser-face-a-une-information;

    - https://www.banq.qc.ca/services/fausses_nouvelles/;

    - https://www.dw.com/fr/reconna%C3%AEtre-une-fake-news/a-60317025.

- In English:

    - https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/research-assistance/fake-news;

    - https://www.factcheck.org/2016/11/how-to-spot-fake-news/;

    - https://www.bbc.com/news/av/stories-51974040.

- In German:

    - https://correctiv.org/faktencheck/wie-erkenne-ich-falschmeldungen/#section-b2e62b3;

    - https://www.bpb.de/themen/medien-journalismus/stopfakenews/;

    - https://swrfakefinder.de/#fakenews.

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Software for creating presentations

The following tools allow you to create interactive presentations (e.g. importing images, videos, animations, sounds, music, polls, quizzes, etc.). They are available in a free version but require registration.

- Canva: available in several languages (see bottom left of the page to change the language).
- Genial.ly: available in 5 languages including French and English (see top right to change language).

CEFR level - For B1 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

	Dimensions covered	Possible specific objectives
Digital Citizenship	Ethical and responsible	Learning to act against fake news: do not share it, spread it, or report it.
	Critical	Verifying the veracity of information in texts that are published and disseminated on the Internet.
	Competent	Learning to assess the degree of reliability of information, sites or messages.
Meaning-making literacy	Multimodal Literacy	Knowing how to create meaning by combining textual and visual elements (images).

Main language activities

- Written reception: read about fake news and ways to identify it.
- Written production: create a presentation.

Possible steps

- Show the learners an example of a fake news story and ask them for their opinion on the content and context (without telling them that it is fake news).

- Tell them that this is fake news.

- Present a series of news items (screenshots of headlines/images) and ask them whether they think it is real or fake news.

- Discuss the growing importance of digital media, the increasing consumption of information on social networks and the increase in fake news, to raise awareness of the way in which information is fabricated, i.e. the path of information from its collection to its publication in the media.

- Present different ways of identifying fake news (by proposing, if desired, internet sites): what are the most common methods used by the authors of fake news? Invite discussion on the ways in which one can actively act against fake news.

- Divide the class into several groups. Each group works on one aspect of the topic (e.g. definition of "fake news", motives and potential perpetrators of fake news, clues to identify them, possible measures to act against fake news, etc.).

- Choose (from the applications listed above) a template or create your own for the presentation.

- Design the presentation, taking care to include interactive elements.

- Ask the teacher for feedback and make changes (if necessary).

- Disseminate the product within your institution by publishing it on the internal platform or website of the institution.

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Student sheet

Task

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CEFR level - From B1 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

While completing this task, you can:

- learn about an important current topic and fake news;

- learn to question the veracity of information found in texts that are published on the internet or in messages that are broadcast;

- learn to identify fake news using different strategies;

- learn to act actively against fake news.

Hints

Keep in mind who you are addressing

Your target audience is your fellow students, who - unlike you - may not yet have delved deeply into the phenomenon of fake news.

Work on the language-related aspects

For the development of the presentation, it may be useful to review how to give advice in the target language (use of the imperative or infinitive, for example).

For you to think about

While completing this task, you can reflect on the following:

- What characterises fake news?
- Who creates fake news? For what purpose?
- In which contexts and on which platforms are fake news particularly common?
- Do you know of any software that you could use to identify potential fake news?