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The Topic Of Media-Disseminated Mis-Information And Dis-Information As An Integral Part Of General Education In Slovakia

ABSTRACT

The occurrence and spreading of online mis-information and dis-information is a phenomenon that adversely affects various areas of social and political life on a global scale. At the transnational (especially European) level, regulatory mechanisms are currently being sought, which would be able to limit their occurrence or easy distribution through online space - or possibly to enable an individual to build up a defence against their influence. Defensive instruments are designed specifically at the educational level. In Slovakia, the issue is currently being given more attention in the context of school education in connection with initiatives of the teachers and institutions that create educational projects and campaigns as well as methodological tools for the implementation of the topic in education (cf. Kačinová, 2018). However, these should be supported by a compulsory curriculum, specific educational topics and educational objectives. The present study examines the situation in Slovakia with focus on the lower secondary and upper (complete) secondary general education.

KEY WORDS

Mis-Information. Dis-Information. Fake news. Information Disorder. Media and Information literacy. Complete secondary general education. Learning standards. National Educational Programme. Slovak school.

Studies

1. Introduction

The current extent of dissemination of media (online) content representing reduced quality of information at the level of false information and the degree of its individual as well as social impact has resulted in international strategic initiatives aimed not only at regulating the problem but also at developing appropriate measures.[1] A conceptual framework for **typologizing false content disseminated via social networks was introduced in the** Council of Europe's *Information Disorder Report* of November 2017. It contains the concept of the so-called *Information Disorder* and specification of their three basic categories:

a) *Mis-Information.* Information that is false, but not created with the intention of causing harm; it is also false information that is disseminated, but not with the intention of causing harm;

b) *Dis-Information.* Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country; it is also false information that is deliberately disseminated to cause harm;

c) *Mal-Information.* Information that is based on reality, used to inflict harm on a person, organization or country; it is also the dissemination of genuine information that causes harm, often by publishing information of a private nature.[2]
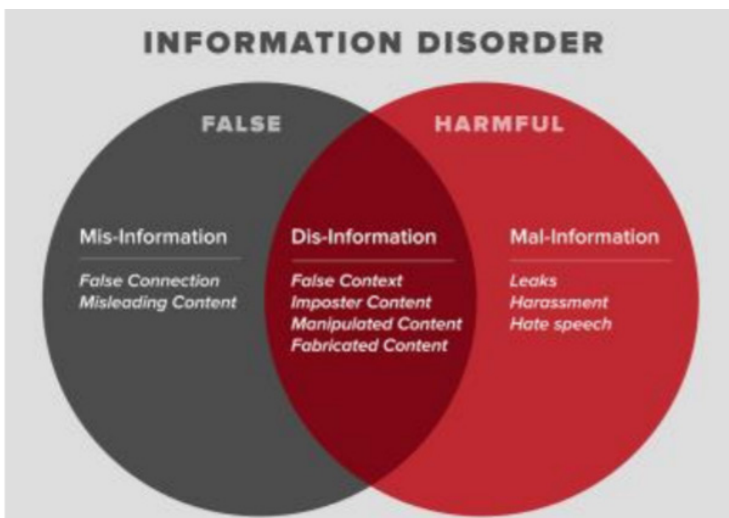

FIGURE 1: *A model of three types of the so-called information disorder according to Warldle*

Source: WARDLE, C., DERAKHSHAN, H.: *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making.* Strasbourg : Council of Europe, 2017, p. 20.

This model attempts to show the intersection of the individual types of information disorder around the concepts of falseness and harm. It includes some types of hate speech and harassment under the mal-information category, as people can be targeted using real information (for example targeting someone based on their religion) to cause harm.[3] In terms of the occurrence of the individual types of false information and content („*fake news*", hoaxes, conspiracy theories), the intersection can be perceived especially between the first

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[1] Compare to: HOSSOVÁ, M.: Fake News and Disinformation: Phenomenons of Post-Factual Society. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 27-35.

[2] WARDLE, C., DERAKHSHAN, H.: *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making.* Strasbourg : Council of Europe, 2017, p. 20.

[3] WARDLE, C., DERAKHSHAN, H.: *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making.* Strasbourg : Council of Europe, 2017, p. 20.

two categories. At the same time, the authors of the study suggest a relation between the third type of information disorder and the first two categories.[4] Also the so-called misleading content which, in the light of the above typology, is classified in the first category, should be classified in the category of dis-information if there is the intention of the creator or disseminator to cause harm. A more precise enumeration of the different types of mis-information and dis-information circulating in the information ecosystem is presented in the *First Draft* approach[5].

FIGURE 2: *Types of Mis-and Disinformation according to Warldle*

Source: WARDLE, C., DERAKHSHAN, H.: *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making.* Strasbourg : Council of Europe, 2017, p. 20.

In view of the impact and damage caused, there is a particular threat of disinformation, which is the umbrella concept for types of intentionally created or disseminated content lacking information quality and of a detrimental nature. According to P. Nutil, the concept refers to deceptive, misleading, false information intended to influence the judgment and opinion of an individual, multiple persons or the whole of society. In terms of meaning, it coincides with „fake news", some hoaxes or conspiracies.[6] Distinguishing disinformation from other types of similar unreliable information is well reflected in the definition of the Communication from the European Commission *Tackling online disinformation: a European approach* COM (2018) 236 of 26. 4. 2018. In this document, disinformation is understood „*as verifiably false or misleading information that is created, presented and disseminated for economic gain or to intentionally deceive the public, and may cause public harm. Public harm comprises threats to democratic political and policymaking processes as well as public goods such as the protection of EU citizens' health, the environment or security. Disinformation does not include reporting errors, satire and parody, or clearly identified partisan news and commentary.*"[7]

4   WARDLE, C., DERAKHSHAN, H.: *Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making.* Strasbourg : Council of Europe, 2017, p. 21.
5   WARDLE, C.: *Fake news. It's complicated*. [online]. [2019-02-27]. Available at: <https://firstdraftnews.org/fake-news-complicated/>.
6   NUTIL, P.: *Médiá, lži a příliš rychlý mozek: Průvodce postpravdivým světem*. Praha : Grada, 2018, p. 18.
7   *European Commission. Tackling online disinformation: a European Approach. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*. [online]. [2019-02-20]. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1585378190912&uri=CELEX:52018DC0236>.

Eliminating the causes of the massive spread of online information disorder substantially relates to the need to develop specific educational measures at the educational level for both professional media content creators and their users.[8] In a particular way, it is covered by the concept of MIL (UNESCO). This holistic concept, cumulating several types of literacy or competences related to information and media, within the context of this topic, includes in particular:

a) Competent work with information and media resources - access, analysis, critical evaluation, production and use of information and its communication (especially in the media and through the media) – these are the basic qualities contained in most MIL (UNESCO) definition approaches.[9];

b) Journalistic literacy (includes literacy in the field of journalistic professional and ethical standards, especially understanding of language and reporting conventions as a genre, recognizing how they can be misused for harmful purposes; recognizing and distinguishing quality journalism from pseudo-journalism (dubious quality information), the ability to recognize and resist manipulation in relation to disinformation presented as reports).[10];

c) Human rights literacy (right to freedom of expression, right of everyone to seek, receive and impart information and ideas; use information, media and technology to defend human rights in their diversity, strengthen intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, defend privacy and combating all forms of inequality, hatred, intolerance, violence and extremism).[11]

The application of effective educational strategies to confront phenomena such as „*fake news*" or hoaxes relates to the development of focal target dimensions of media literacy or media competence, especially the ability to recognize and evaluate media content:

- Masterful orientation in various written and spoken communications, along with the ability to quickly distinguish essential factual information from an „*information ballast*";
- Recognition of hidden meanings, manipulation techniques, inaccurate, incomplete information, statements;
- Distinguishing a serious, verified message/statement from a subjective, non-factual communication[12];
- Evaluating the communication intent of media statements, associating them with other statements.[13]

The development of the ability to differentiate information according to the quality and identification of mis-information and dis-information in symbiosis with an understanding of the socio-ethical contexts of the occurrence and impact of information disorder is becoming

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[8] Compare to: *Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology. (European Commision). A multi-dimensional approach to disinformation : Report of the independent High level Group on fake news and online disinfsional approach to disinformation*. Luxembourg : European Union, 2018.; IRETON, CH., POSETTI, J. et. al.: *Journalism, 'Fake News' & Disinformation : Handbook for Journalism Education and Training.* [online]. Paris : UNESCO, 2018.

[9] HOPE CULVER, S., GRIZZLE, A.: *Survey on Privacy in Media and Information Literacy with Youth Perspectives*. Paris : UNESCO, 2017. [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000258993>.

[10] Compare to: IRETON, CH., POSETTI, J. et. al.: *Journalism, 'Fake News' & Disinformation : Handbook for Journalism Education and Training.* Paris : UNESCO, 2018.

[11] GRIZZLE, A., SINGH, J.: Five Laws of Media and Information Literacy as Harbingers of Human Rights: A Legacy of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science. IN SINGH, J., KERR, P. et al. (eds.): *MILID Yearbook 2016. Media and Information Literacy: Enabling Human Rights, Countering, Hate, Radical and Violent Extremism*. Paris : UNESCO, 2016, p. 24-39. [online]. [2019-04-01]. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246371>.

[12] NIKLESOVÁ, E.: *Mediální gramotnost a mediální výchova*. České Budějovice : Vlastimil Johanus, 2010, p. 24.

[13] MIČIENKA, M., JIRÁK, J. a kol.: *Základy mediální výchovy*. Praha : Portál, 2007, p. 9.

an important part of media education or journalistic alphabetization models. Pérez Tornero et al. define two basic models:

a) The instrumental model which is based solely on learning about the technical differences between false reports and verified journalistic information.

b) A model that is more closely linked to the problem of creating a democratic society and respect for human rights.[14]

The first model preferably includes the development of knowledge, abilities and skills related to the differentiation of fact, false report and „*alternative fact*" (or understanding of the mechanisms of their dissemination) and is centred on the epistemological values of truth and falsity. In the context of the complexity of the problems related to the occurrence and spread of online disinformation, this mechanistic model seems inadequate. Although in the context of the first instrumental model based on the aforementioned concept the development of an individual´s qualities related to the technical aspect of distinguishing true and false reports on the Internet prevails, the model can be perceived more comprehensively. It regards the need to develop media competence in learners who should also have a certain level of philosophical (epistemological) understanding of the problem, centred specifically on the problem of media-presented truth in relation to objective truth.[15] The second, more complex model, puts media education processes in the broader context of defending social interest and is centred on the sustainability of social values, or values of humanism, human rights and democracy. However, the above-mentioned need to reconstruct the factual dimension of discourses and journalistic information remains essential in this model.[16] In the context of the second model, the development of media literacy is linked to the formation of the historical, civic, and ethical awareness of the individual. It concerns the development of qualities such as:

- To learn to identify dis-information supporting prejudices and not respecting the cultural differences of persons belonging to different minorities (especially Roma, immigrants), but also denying the universal validity of human rights and critically reflect on their consequences; at the same time it is necessary to develop value attitudes in the individual such as understanding, solidarity, respect, empathy, etc.;
- To know and understand to what extent certain disinformation campaigns are or may be aimed at discrediting international institutions (EU, NATO), countries (USA, Russia), aimed at challenging the existence and functioning of a democratic establishment, the validity of democratic values and anti-system-oriented; at the same time, learning to recognize the importance of core political institutions and concepts;
- To understand that certain historical events are a constant subject of conspiracy, at the same time to learn facts about historical phenomena, as well as to understand that there may not always be clear and definitive interpretations of them.[17]

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[14] PÉREZ TORNERO, J. M. et al.: ¿Cómo afrontar las noticias falseadas mediante la alfabetización periodística? Estado de la cuestión. In *Doxa Comunicación*, 2018, Vol. 2, No. 26, p. 228. [online]. [2019-02-20]. Available at: <http://dspace.ceu.es/bitstream/10637/9499/1/Como_JMPerez%26SSamy%26STejedor%26CPulido_Doxa_ Comuni_2018.pdf>.

[15] Compare to: GÁLIKOVÁ-TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: Media and Truth in the Perspective of the Practice and Life Form of the Modern „Homo Medialis". In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 4-19.; FEDOROV, A., LEVITSKAYA, A.: Comparative Analysis of the Indicators' Levels of Students' Media Competence Development in the Control and Experimental Groups. In *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy*, 2017, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 16-37.

[16] PÉREZ TORNERO, J. M. et al.: ¿Cómo afrontar las noticias falseadas mediante la alfabetización periodística? Estado de la cuestión. In *Doxa Comunicación*, 2018, Vol. 2, No. 26, p. 228. [online]. [2019-02-20]. Available at: <http://dspace.ceu.es/bitstream/10637/9499/1/Como_JMPerez%26SSamy%26STejedor%26CPulido_Doxa_ Comuni_2018.pdf>.

[17] KAČINOVÁ, V.: *Fenomén „fake news", hoaxov a konšpiračných teórií v kontexte mediálnej výchovy*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2019, p. 71.

2. Objective and methodology of research

Based on the need to develop resistance mechanisms of the individual to various types of information disorder as part of an action plan to address the dissemination and impact of online dis-information in EU countries, especially at school education level[18], our research aimed to determine the level of implementation of the topic in compulsory school education in Slovakia. We focused on lower and upper secondary education, which we consider to be central to the topic.

The research problem was specified in the form of the following research questions:
RQ 1 *In which selected educational areas or subjects at the lower and upper level of general secondary education is the topic of mis-information and dis-information integrated?*
RQ 2 *How are the individual focal objectives of developing media literacy (MIL), in the intersection with the topic of mis-information and dis-information, incorporated into the compulsory subjects of the lower and upper secondary education?*

The methodological tool was a qualitative content analysis of the learning (performance and content) standards of selected compulsory subjects in the educational areas as part of the National Educational Programmes for lower secondary education and upper secondary education providing complete secondary general education.[19]
The following educational areas and subjects were selected as focal in the intersection with the topic:
- Language and communication (Slovak language and literature);
- Mathematics and Information Work (Informatics);
- Man and society (History, Civics);
- Man and values (Ethical Education, Religious Education /Religion – Catholic Church);
- The recommended target outcomes of the cross-curricular topic of media education for lower and upper secondary education.

The analytical categories of the content analysis were specified according to the above-mentioned focal categories of information disorder (mis-information, dis-information), the focal objectives of media literacy and MIL concept or journalistic alphabetization models.

3. Results

The issue of dis-information, false reports and hoaxes as a separate educational topic is new and not anchored in the content of compulsory school education in Slovakia. The analysis of curricular documents - innovated learning standards for compulsory subjects at lower and upper secondary level (the second grade of primary schools and grammar school - complete secondary general education) implies that its title is not explicitly mentioned in any thematic unit of the focal subjects. However, it can be implicitly identified primarily within the framework of the required development of pupils' ability to distinguish and assess the veracity of information resources, especially media sources. The development of these skills is required for pupils in the teaching of several subjects in educational areas. At the same time, the selected subjects contain further focal objectives overlapping with the topic.

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[18] E.g. „*Council conclusions of 30 May 2016 on developing media literacy and critical thinking through education and training (2016/C 212/05), 2016; Tackling online disinformation: a European Approach, 2018.*"
[19] These documents are the core curriculum documents setting out the compulsory content of school education at the various levels of education.

Educational area: Language and Communication

Slovak language and literature

Within the application of cross-subject competences to receive and process information and to think critically at grammar school, the pupils should be able to „*assess the credibility / reliability / relevance of the information sources on the basis of which the text was created*" or „*perceive the problems raised by the text and to identify the errors and contradictions contained in the text*" as well as „*to infer from the text information which does not appear directly in it but results from it*", i. e. „*critically read the texts*".[20] At the same time, within the development of communication language competences, pupils acquire knowledge of the journalistic style typical of mass-media production in comparison with other language styles (educational, administrative, speaking, colloquial).[21]

Educational area: Mathematics and information work

Informatics

The subject covered by the educational area is crucial in that area. In addition to developing the technical skills of working with new technologies, it focuses on using the Internet as a tool for gathering relevant information, which includes developing a reflective and assessment approach of pupils to the sources of information obtained, also in relation to the detection of potential manipulative elements. At grammar school, within the thematic unit Information Society - Security and Risks, the ability of pupils to „*evaluate the credibility of information on the Web*"[22] is developed. At the same time, in the thematic unit Communication and Cooperation - Web Search the pupil learns to „*evaluate search (e.g. accuracy and quality of the searched information ...).*"[23] However, the topic of assessing the quality and credibility of information on the web is already addressed to pupils in primary schools. Within the subject, they also learn to develop their analytical and evaluation thinking in information work. In the 6th year, within the scope of the curriculum of Algorithmic problem solving - problem analysis, the pupil should be able to „*decide the truth/falseness of a statement, to choose elements or options according to the truth of the statement, to describe the relationship between information in their own words, to give a counterexample in which something does not apply*".[24] In the same year, within the thematic unit Communication and Cooperation - Working with Websites, they learn to „*assess the purpose of the website*".[25] The pupils leaving the 8th year, within the thematic unit Communication and Cooperation - Web Search, similarly to grammar school, should be able to „*find different types of information on the Web, assess the accuracy and quality of theinformation found*".[26] Within the thematic unit Communication and Cooperation - Working with Communication Tools in the 6th year, pupils are required to acquire procedural knowledge

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[20] *Slovenský jazyk a literatúra – gymnázium so* štvorročným *a päťročným vzdelávacím programom. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/sk/svp/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/inovovany-svp-gymnazia-so-stvorrocnym-patrocnym-vzdelavacim-programom/jazyk-komunikacia/slovensky_jazyk_a_literatura_g_4_5_r_novy.pdf>.

[21] *Slovenský jazyk a literatúra – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/sjl_nsv_2014.pdf>.

[22] *Informatika – gymnázium so* štvorročným *a päťročným vzdelávacím programom. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-30]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/informatika_g_4_5_r.pdf>.

[23] Ibid.

[24] *Informatika - nižšie stredné vzdelávanie. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/informatika_nsv_2014.pdf>.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

to follow the rules of netiquette[27], which also implies the way of dealing with problematic online content. Similarly to grammar school, the thematic units Information Society - Security and Risks, Information Society - Digital Technologies in Society are specified in the 6th and 8th grades as focal in terms of the relevance of the issue. After their completion, pupils should be able to, for example, *„discuss the risks on the Internet"* (know the risks on the Internet and social networks)*…, „discuss the credibility of information on the Web…"*[28]

Educational field: Man and society

History
Primary and secondary school pupils learn to search for and use various sources and media resources to obtain relevant information about historical facts (e.g. newspapers, magazines, websites) that they also learn to verify. They learn to distinguish fact and fiction, critically evaluate various sources of information, for example, multiple websites on a single topic.[29] Pupils are required to ask adequate questions about historical facts in working with different sources of information, a certain research approach that creates the basic prerequisite for knowing and understanding the facts. The above-mentioned as well as media resources thus become instruments of cognition, understanding, exploration of history and historical events, phenomena and processes. The subject enables understanding the essence of the historical facts which become objects of dis-information or conspiracy. It also involves cultivating the pupils' historical consciousness *„which reflects respect for other nations and ethnicities, as well as respect for cultural and other differences, people, different diversified groups and communities. It thus contributes to the development of the value scale of a democratic society. It also attaches importance to the democratic values of European civilization".*[30] Undermining and relativising these values are among the main objectives of disinformation campaigns.[31]

The subject of history, in particular, offers space for processing the educational topic in the classroom. The teaching should be aimed at developing pupils' ability to understand the breadth and importance of the influence of media on various aspects of the individual's social and life reality that they complete. They should be able to recognize, interpret and critically evaluate the influence of media on the construction as well as the configuration of areas of reality or history, including through the creation and communication of pseudo-facts, dis-information or myths. The starting point is a critical study, analysis and comparison of various information sources with the presented social as well as historical events.[32]

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[27] *Informatika - nižšie stredné vzdelávanie. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný štátny vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/informatika_nsv_2014.pdf>.

[28] *Informatika − nižšie stredné vzdelávanie. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný štátny vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/informatika_g_4_5_r.pdf>.

[29] *Dejepis - nižšie stredné vzdelávanie. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný štátny vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/dejepis_nsv_2014.pdf>. cf. *Dejepis − gymnázium so* štvorročným *a päťročným vzdelávacím programom*. *Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný štátny vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <http://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/dejepis_g_4_5_r.pd>.

[30] *Dejepis − gymnázium so* štvorročným *a päťročným vzdelávacím programom*. *Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2020-03-15]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/dejepis_g_4_5_r.pdf>.

[31] KOVANIČ, M.: *Dezinformácie a výučba informačnej gramotnosti na slovenských stredných* školách. Bratislava : Inštitút strategických politík n.o., 2018, p. 18.

[32] KAČINOVÁ, V.: Hoaxy, fake news – problémové oblasti a metodické nástroje spracovania edukačnej témy v procese mediálnej výchovy. In BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L., RYBANSKÝ, R. et al. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2018. Realita & mediálne bubliny*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2018, p. 41.

Civics

Another important subject in the content of which it is desirable to explicitly include the topic, but in the context of the required compulsory content of teaching at Slovak schools it is currently only implicitly implemented, is Civics. Currently, however, teaching the subject at both levels creates wider conditions for assimilating the educational theme by encouraging the development of pupils' cognitive activities in the form of exploratory learning and encouraging the search, exploration, discovery as a prerequisite for cognition and understanding of the present time[33], including acquiring awareness of the functioning of national and transnational units (the European Union) and their institutions or basic concepts of state and law. The main objectives of the subject are to teach pupils to think and act democratically, recognize the basic principles of democracy, recognize their rights and obligations and defend the rights of others, acquire the rules and standards of social coexistence, take responsibility for one's own views, attitudes and consequences of action, build a tolerant approach to other views, attitudes, values and cultures as well as lead them to active civic engagement, one of the important preconditions of which is critical thinking.[34] The thematic unit Human Rights and Freedoms is particularly important in elementary school education, in which they learn to „*recognize the manifestations of discrimination in specific situations*"[35] and acquire knowledge of the concepts of human rights and freedoms, prejudices, discrimination. At grammar school, students acquire knowledge of similar issues (including the topic of extremism) within the thematic units Citizen and the State and Man and Society. In addition, students of grammar schools deal with, within the framework of acquiring the categorical conceptual apparatus of philosophy and the development of philosophical reasoning, epistemology and its problem areas (especially the objectivity of knowledge).[36] The application of these issues to current social problems, which inherently includes the field of online mis-information and dis-information, is a logical result of educational intentions. At the same time, a supplementary analysis of the issue at the level of complete secondary vocational education[37] shows that students learn to seek information about global problems and to evaluate them objectively as well as to distinguish facts from myths.[38] The learning standards thus specifically identify the issue of the spread of myths in the context of various global topics in today's world, so it can be stated that it explicitly responds to the spread of dis-information (although the term is not used in the standards).[39]

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[33] *Občianska náuka – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/obcianska-nauka_nsv_2014.pdf>; cf. *Občianska náuka – gymnázium so* štvorročným *a päťročným vzdelávacím programom*. *Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-30]. Available at: <http://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/obcianska_nauka _g_4 _5_r.pdf>.

[34] Ibid.

[35] *Občianska náuka – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/obcianska-nauka_nsv_2014.pdf>.

[36] *Občianska náuka – gymnázium so* štvorročným a *päťročným vzdelávacím programom*. *Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-30]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/obcianska_nauka_g_4_5_r.pdf>.

[37] It is one of several forms of secondary vocational education taking place in secondary vocational schools, which represent a parallel system to secondary general education at grammar schools. This education system has a similar concept to that of grammar schools in general education subjects, but the content is reduced, in some areas modified, as in this case. Overall, however, the content of education is similar in the researched area, as evidenced by the analysis of the author. See: KOVANIČ, M.: *Dezinformácie a výučba informačnej gramotnosti na slovenských stredných* školách. Bratislava : Inštitút strategických politík n.o., 2018, p. 21.

[38] *Občianska náuka. Vzdelávací* štandard pre *študijné odbory, ktorých absolvovaním žiak získa* úplné *stredné odborné vzdelanie*. [online]. [2019-05-08]. Available at: <http://siov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/obcianska_nauka_USOV.pdf>.

[39] Compare to: KOVANIČ, M.: *Dezinformácie a výučba informačnej gramotnosti na slovenských stredných* školách. Bratislava : Inštitút strategických politík n.o., 2018, p. 21.

Educational area: Man and values

At both levels of education, the compulsorily optional subject of Ethical Education supports the issue especially in the development of literacy in the area of awareness raising and personality prerequisites for respecting human rights. Its aim is to *„educate a personality with his/her own identity and value orientation, in which respect for man, life and nature, cooperation and prosociality occupy an important place".* [40] In particular, the development of prosociality, which is at the heart of the ethics of interpersonal relationships, with the value dimension of mutual human understanding and coexistence, i. e. human sympathy and humanity[41], but also the acquisition of other ethical values and standards of behaviour and the development of communication and social skills[42] create a more general personality basis for confronting the problem of the occurrence and dissemination of mis-information and dis-information. Similarly, another compulsorily optional subject is Catholic Religious Education, the role of which is, inter alia, to *„promote the value orientation of pupils so as to benefit their personal and social development".* [43] Religious education helps develop the key competences (learning, problem-solving, communication, social and interpersonal and existential) of pupils.[44] It is also *„education for responsibility for one's own actions, teaches pupils to think critically, not to be manipulated or to be manipulators, to understand one's own actions and the actions of others in the context of different life situations".* [45] The overall contribution of ethical education as well as religious education can be perceived at the prevention level by forming the human qualities of the subject as a communicator of online information content. It implies a dimension of an awareness of a sense of responsibility and the practice of responsible individual behaviour in the online space in relation to others who may be negatively affected by the dissemination of false content.

In particular, school education creates the prerequisites for effectively combating the phenomenon of dis-information in the context of media education, which is defined as a compulsory cross-curricular topic of the subjects at both levels of education through all the focal objectives. The issue is indirectly implicated in the so-called expected outcomes of media education as a cross- curricular topic, which define the requirements for pupils' performance according to the level of education. For example, a grammar school student should be able to *„create a critical analysis of a selected media case, a report from several sources - domestic and foreign (method of processing, hidden interests in various sources ...)."* [46] At the end of the 9th year he/she should be able to *„describe the benefits and risks of the Internet, especially social networks and formulate possibilities, principles of safer use of new technologies;... accept ethical aspects in the use of media - netiquette"* and at the same time *„to understand both the positive and negative aspects of freedom of expression (ethics in the media, ´canards´, paparazzi)".* [47]

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[40] *Etická výchova – gymnázium so štvorročným a päťročným vzdelávacím programom, Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-30]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/eticka_vychova_g_4_5_r.pdf>.

[41] Ibid.

[42] *Etická výchova – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/eticka-vychova_nsv_2014.pdf>.

[43] *Náboženská výchova/ náboženstvo – Katolícka cirkev – gymnázium so* štvorročným *vzdelávacím programom. Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-30]. Available at: < https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/nabozenska_vychova_nabozenstvo_katolicka_cirkev_g_4_5_r.pdf>.

[44] Ibid.

[45] *Náboženská výchova – náboženstvo – Katolícka cirkev – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie Vzdelávací* štandard. *Inovovaný* štátny *vzdelávací program*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/nabozenska-vychova-katolicka_nsv_2014.pdf>.

[46] BIZIKOVÁ, Ľ.: *Metodické odporúčania* k *napĺňaniu cieľov prierezovej témy mediálna výchova*. [online]. [2019-11-19]. Available at: <https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/nove_dokumenty/ucebnice-metodiky-publikacie/medialna_vychova_odporucane_vystupy.pdf>.

[47] Ibid.

The latter outcome implies dis-information, but in the context of print media. Therefore, an educational theme typical of social media is a current challenge for media education in the context of school education - or possibly teaching within other educational areas.

At the same time, it is clear that compulsory school education in Slovakia creates up-to-date conditions for the formation of pupils in the given area by supporting their interest in learning about social phenomena, abstract logical thinking and critical thinking, especially in the context of work with information sources, development of democratic civic awareness, respect for human rights and values, etc. For example, the national educational programmes define the following general educational objectives for grammar schools, i. e. those that pupils should learn in the course of complete secondary general education:

- *„To deepen students' abstract and logical thinking with an emphasis on understanding the causal, functional and developmental relationships between phenomena and processes;*
- *To teach students to solve problems, tasks, to conduct research and to draw logical conclusions;*
- *To encourage students to think critically, using a multilateral approach to addressing tasks;*
- *To teach students to place the acquired information / knowledge in a meaningful context of life practice;*
- *To strengthen students' approach to respecting human rights and responsible participation in a democratic society;*
- *To motivate pupils to be interested in the world and the people around them, to be active in protecting human and cultural values...;*
- *To encourage students to become aware of the global interdependence of events, developments and problems at local, regional, national and global levels".*[48]

4. Conclusion

The educational topic of mis-information and dis-information can be identified in its partial aspects within all the educational areas or cross-curricular subjects examined. *„Media and information literacy research should respond to the fundamental changes in education and the ever-expanding range of educational options beyond its traditional forms and limits".*[49] However, it is absent in the form of a coherent thematic unit in the current compulsory educational programmes for lower and upper secondary education. This is primarily due to the novelty of the phenomenon to which the educational programmes innovated in 2014 and 2015 are not yet responding. In its implicit form, however, it is possible to identify the topic at both levels of education more significantly in the subjects of Slovak language, Informatics, Civics, History and the cross-curricular topic of media education (Research Question 1), in particular as part of the required development of students' ability to differentiate and assess the truth of information sources, especially media sources, and in the context of learning topics related to increasing personal cultivation, responsible civic and historical awareness and sensitivity to the issue of accepting human rights. As we believe, in addition to the aforementioned, the subjects of Ethical Education and Religious Education also bring important incentives in this regard. The content of

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[48] *Štátne vzdelávacie programy pre gymnáziá. (Úplné stredné všeobecné vzdelávanie).* [online]. [2019–05–09]. Available at: <http://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/statny_vzdel_program_pre_gymnazia.pdf>.
[49] AROLDI, P., MARIÑO, M. V., VRABEC, N.: Evaluation and funding of media and information literacy. In FRAU-MEIGS, D., VELEZ, I., MICHEL, J. F. (eds.): *Public policies in media and information literacy in Europe: cross-country comparisons.* Abingdon : Routledge, 2017, p. 216.

education thus covers the focal qualities of media and information literacy, or media education and journalistic alphabetization models, in the intersection with the topic of mis-information and dis-information (Research Question 2).

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