ABSTRACT
Continuous transformations of the socio-political space are affected by digital technologies, which are created by the representatives of the “digital immigrants” and communicated by the “digital natives” as various social projects. This trend offers new implications and innovative forms to conventional technologies (political, social) by transforming them into complex multicomponent systems; besides, this requires from the researchers revolutionary innovative analytical methods and tools, based on hybrid research approaches. Socio-political and linguistic methods in particular, are to be developed in order to analyze the current reality. Political culture transformation as affected by the digital technologies results in post-truth politics and fake news dissemination, which demands that the researchers study particular linguistic units (neologisms and hashtags produced by digital personalities), capable of modifying the information and news space which determines the socio-political agenda, and of inducing social action offline. Regarding new linguistic units from the point of view of political science and linguistics would allow for identifying the principle of the revolutionary new relationships between citizens, truth and social action. Many people using the online space as a primary source of political content reject critical thinking regarding the sources of this information and are affected by the “filter bubble,” which results in destructive practices of social engagement and manipulation of mass consciousness. Thus, there is a strong demand for modern mechanisms of political content management, since the causes, methods and mechanisms, as well as the participants of the process of information production and dissemination are very different from the ones that existed before the revolution in the information and communication technologies and the onset of Internet and social network technologies.
Introduction

The Presidential Campaign of the current US President Donald Trump made analysts, political strategists, journalists, politicians, civil right activists reconsider their attitude to the online network technologies and reassess their influence on politico-social systems globally (Pătruț and Pătruț 2014). Donald Trump used the Internet, and social networking sites in particular, as a principal communication tool. The first stage of his communication strategy was based on neglecting conventional channels of communication (for example, TV), and focusing on communication algorithms of social networks (Ryabchenko and Malysheva 2017).

What makes the fundamental difference between the Internet and television as a channel of a communication? What are the principles of forming a communication strategy? Through network technologies the Internet makes any item of information (including a marketing message) ultimately target-oriented (Carrington 2014). Television as a means of mass communication lacks such an opportunity: not only does the same message bear a particular conceptual meaning, but it is infused with a personalized delivery and perception mechanism. In contrast – as long as an adequately developed online-content management system exists – it is possible to have an online conversation with any Internet user as if it is a friendly chat of co-thinkers. The result of a wisely designed system of political content management was that Donald Trump succeeded in delivering the content to every prospective voter virtually person-to-person. Given that, each prospective voter received exactly the information he/she had been searching for. Undoubtedly, the content produced was not only versatile in subject, it contained various affective features, and inherently was blunt propaganda (Cutting 2002).

The Presidential Campaign 2016 in the USA makes it obvious that not only should we describe the transformations in the socio-political systems induced by information and communication technologies, but also assess the use of innovative social technologies (Marin and Wellman 2011) based on online content analysis. This requires modern scientific approaches and hybrid research teams in order to perform analysis and predictive modelling. In particular, to analyze the model and practices of political content management and assess its impact, researchers require a variety of methods: mathematical modelling of social networks and communities, and relational sociology methods as regards network data enhanced by methods of linguistic discourse analysis.

The theoretical basis of the research

On-line space development inevitably results in social space amplification and sophistication of the ongoing processes. On-line space is no longer a kind of a virtual space made up of various simulacra. It is becoming an inseparable part of social reality, producing the processes which determine and transform entire socio-political systems through digital communications (Fairclough 2003).

In 2001 Marc Prensky published an article entitled “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants” which presented a classification of all people as regards their relation to digital technologies: “digital natives” refers to a generation of people born during or after the advent of digital technologies; while “digital immigrants” are the people born
before the digital onset (Prensky 2001). This division is not just a manifestation of a generation gap, rather it is an attempt to focus the researchers’ attention on the fact that, in the first place, the two groups are the representatives of two completely different worlds in terms of their mindset and philosophy.

“Digital natives” observe the social reality from an egalitarian perspective, i.e. the horizontal structures which develop and function in a society based on equality – equality as a balance of opportunities for individuals. The fundamental social idea, which is a driving force for them, is sharing: allowances, benefits and possessions; and the cornerstone of their worldview is moral values. Nevertheless, they are skeptical about traditional values and social institutes: marriage, religion, government. Deciding to withdraw from these institutes, they proclaim themselves as their microsegments, i.e. independent entities. The stronghold of “digital natives” viewpoint is genuine democracy and quality. These are the implications of their refusal to accept the forms of government based on control and centralized reign. “Digital natives” are the people who have introduced and are effectively promoting an innovative social technology of crowdsourcing. A drawback to the viewpoint “digital natives” is that they are reluctant to create anything which requires huge investment; besides they tend to break down complex problems into segments for solution. Such an approach is unlikely to be efficient and fruitful, as it completely downplays the value of vertical organizational structures which are essential for large-scale problem solving in the projects involving vast territories, a number of countries or continents.

“Digital immigrants” are a generation of people, distinctive in their aggressive, competitive and goal-oriented attitudes and behavior. “Digital immigrants” aim at reaching their objectives, which disagrees with the veneration of moral values among “digital natives.” Regardless of their agility in achieving goals, “digital immigrants” might overlook the implications of their actions in the long-term perspective. Workaholics are a common manifestation of such a “whatever-the-cost” attitude.

The paradox of “digital natives” vs. “digital immigrants” viewpoint analysis is that the latter, predominantly, invented complex digital technologies and systems which are actively being exploited by “digital natives”: the Internet, microchip and cloud technologies, blockchain. Thus, it is crucial that “digital natives” and “digital immigrants” should develop through collaborating and co-learning, as, when it comes to elections, for instance, “digital natives” come to polling stations to choose a candidate from an assembly of “digital immigrants.”

What are the things “digital natives” can teach “digital immigrants”? Firstly, to develop and implement network solutions, to collaborate, despite geographical boundaries and huge distances. In return, “digital immigrants” can teach “digital natives” to achieve goals efficiently, to accumulate resources and scale up local projects. The “Ushahidy” local social project sets a good example of such a scale-up, as subsequently it was heavily implemented in various spheres of social engineering across multiple countries (Ryabchenko et al. 2016). It is crucial that “digital immigrants” through collaboration with “digital natives” are capable of reviving and re-channeling the course of action of existing institutes. As regards the technologies used by “digital natives”, it is worth mentioning that it is not uncommon that these technologies are used differently from what they had been originally conceived and designed for by “digital
immigrants.” SMS, for example, was designed by Finnish engineers as a text messaging service for mobile devices, applied in case the device is switched off, out of reach or is unavailable (Lischka 2009). According to most sources, the first SMS text-message was sent in Britain in 1992. It was really hard to imagine that a technology that had been unpopular among the mobile technology users for quite a long time would one day become very common and widely spread, providing impetus for an entire trend in social communication services, such as Twitter, for example. “Digital natives” preferred all possible text-messages exchange services to telephone conversations thus reviving public interest to text information, the excitement declined with an advent of television and visual means of communication.

“Digital natives” are continuously transforming the seemingly conventional technologies (online technologies, social technologies, political technologies etc.), either enhancing or diminishing their impact on the development of socio-political communications. A particular mention should be made of the transformations that are currently taking place in the online space. The result of these modifications is that production of political content as a political strategy is no longer the privilege of conventional mass media and political strategists.

In 2017 the number of people actively using social networks all over the world exceeded 3 billion (the current world population is 7.5 billion people, updated April, 2017). Besides, the growth trend accounted for 1 million active users per day in the first quarter of 2017. All these people produce hundreds of thousands of messages (which are the core of network data) various in content. Likewise, they are in need of consuming the content produced by other users. On the one hand, it inevitably causes various socio-political transformations which modify methods of communication and produce innovative social practices aimed at enhancing the generative potential of information and communication technologies; on the other hand, the “fact/myth” conceptual entity is being substituted by a construct functioning within the “fact/alternative fact” dual conceptual framework. The post-information society or a network society has come to a new “post-truth era” stage in its development. It means that the transformation of information and communication technologies, while providing virtually boundless opportunities for political content production, shapes the primary vector for the social growth due to techniques of restraining and/or channeling public discourse such as, for instance, fake news and the “filter bubble.” The 2015–2018 electoral periods allow the accumulation of empirical material, which is the online political content “subject field.” Thus, there arises the need to develop the “political content” theoretical construct, as well as theoretical models, instrumental and empirical measurement tools applied to political content, which might interpret the modifications in public policy and management – globally or nationally. The development of modern society in the post-truth era (Keyes 2004) and its functioning within the “online/offline space” social attractor, resulted in an acute deficit of theoretical patterns and approaches in modern science, which would enable research of new semiotic flows–critical for shaping the political content (Tambuscio et al. 2015) that produces new identities, new opportunities and barriers, new equality—and likewise inequality—in social frameworks. Under such circumstances, there arises the need to extend the interpretation potential of the
existing approaches, and to develop modern models of political content management, in order to balance current political practices and existing theoretical constructs.

Research design and methods

Online space, through the diversity of its information and communication technologies, allows the participants of the modern public space to be in continuous and varied interaction. The result of such interaction is that political content is continuously produced and disseminated. Unlike offline political content, the online political content undergoes alteration by the users of social networks and communities, which is the core of their interaction. Likewise, alterations in political content cause modifications in the social networks and communities, thus shaping social and political action in the offline space. A comprehensive study of political content is based on a network approach which implies considering socio-political processes and their participants as global social graphs (Harary 1969). The social graph is based on the fact that the world around us consists of networks, not of groups, and the nature of the participants in the network interaction is determined by the intersection of these networks (Wasserman and Faust 1994).

Network analysis based on mathematical modeling of social networks and communities consists of interpretation and presentation of the current processes as an activity of scale-free networks (Barabási 2009). Network analysis is to be supplemented with cultural components of social action (local practices and unique interpretations, discourses, patterns and norms). Thus, classical mathematic modelling applied in social network analysis (Knoke and Yang 2008), which is structural network analysis, is to be completed with the methods of relational sociology, enhanced by linguistic discourse analysis. The idea of applying complex methods of the relational sociology is that socio-political reality is to be regarded as dynamic and evolving interactions (transactions), ongoing and continuous processes, integral to the contexts. A transaction as a dynamic process rather than its constituent elements is in the focus of the relational sociology. This approach would allow for researching not only the structural, but also the cultural components (regarded as local practices and unique interpretations, discourses, patterns and norms), which are studied inseparably from each other. Structural network analysis enhanced by relational sociology would allow the analysis of social networks and communities which produce political content not as “static nodes among inert entities” (Emirbayer 1997), but rather as dynamic actors exercising managerial influences through political content. This would allow for developing and verifying the explanatory model of political content management in the online space.

Linguistic discourse analysis is necessary to study the processes of production and interpretation of meanings in the political content produced by social networks and communities. Linguistic discourse analysis is represented by content analysis, discourse analysis, semantic analysis of tags and hashtags (folksonomy analysis) (Lee 2018). Quantitative content analysis or content analysis is a special research tool which uses various formalized procedures so as to identify regularities, basic trends in the information flow management in order to find out the communicator’s intentions when
replicating this flow and predict possible reactions of the audience to this information (Zappavigna 2018).

Using this approach, network data (including media texts) are considered as an objective (but dependent) reflection of interests, requests of the parties involved in the communication process (Szomszor et al. 2018). Besides network data are studied inseparably from the social context (Gnedash 2015). The distinctive feature of content analysis in network data research in comparison with the other methods of the research is that its procedure involves calculating the frequency and the amount of references to certain semantic units of the text under analysis (Solis 2011).

Thus, the quantitative characteristics of network data obtained make it possible to draw conclusions about the qualitative content of online content, including latent information. The legitimacy of using content analysis to research online political content is supported by the fact that online content, which is a first-order reality for content analysis, is always a product of human activity. Therefore, it retains the traces of impact of various social and psychological factors. Hence, it is possible to detect and measure these factors through identifying corresponding indicators or referents of these factors in the text (Salazar 2017). Thus, the purpose of content analysis is comprehensive understanding of deeper extra-textual reality. Relying on such an analysis through some credible evaluation we draw conclusions about the likelihood of a political event or a phenomenon, predict the trends in its development as well as the potential public reaction to it.

Discourse analysis is a particular modern research method that has been shaped on the basis of diverse theories relating to various spheres of scientific knowledge: ethnography, social and cultural anthropology, linguistics etc. Community is a key notion in most theoretic approaches to discourse analysis. It determines the ways social actors speak and think and consequently determine their role in social practices (Fairclough 2003). Discourse analysis theoretical constructs are less speculative, and extend our overview about the contents, structural components and functions of the analyzed phenomena. Besides, discourse analysis is distinctive from other qualitative sociological research methods, such as conversational analysis, methodology of ethnicity research or narrative analysis method, as in discourse analysis a particular text or a particular communicative situation is researched within the frameworks of large-scale socio-political structures – text corpus, discursive information, historical context. One more distinctive feature of discourse analysis is that it regards socio-political reality not as some static entity but rather as a continuously developing construct. The emphasis is therefore put on the ways of political content production, dissemination and consumption. Thus, discourse analysis allows for studying not only the way language produces, represents and interprets political content, but a different more complex aspect of this intricate interaction – the way that language shapes and develops the substance of communicative processes, both online and offline, in the post-truth era. In other words, the key conception of discourse analysis is a dialectical recursive interaction between language and socio-political reality which in more radical approaches (“the theory of discourse”) is assimilated with discursive reality.

Semantic analysis of tags and hashtags (folksonomy analysis) is a technique to analyze the practice of users’ collective categorization of the content – produced, spread
and consumed by them (texts, media texts, pages of sites, links, posts in blogs, images, audio recordings, photos, video clips etc.) in the online space through arbitrarily chosen tags, called tags and hashtags.

Folksonomy analysis allows us to determine the structural and qualitative characteristics of online political content. Interpretation of folksonomy analysis findings creates a matrix of discursive and informative meanings characteristic of the online media ecosystem (Scott 2018).

The application of the above-mentioned research methods and techniques would allow for the development and verification of the theoretical model of digital personality in the post-truth era, as well as the design and testing of a hybrid research tool set for political content analysis in the online space. Such an explanatory model and classified practices of political content management in the online space would allow the estimation of potential dynamic processes and pragmatic impact of political content and digital personality on political system institutes, as well as the performance of actors in public policy and practice. Besides, it would enable studying the forms of political engagement and communications in the online and offline spheres of modern states within the framework of the post-truth era.

**Result**

Online space creates a particular variation of a communicative situation at an interpersonal communication level suitable for a person, a company or an application (for example, a chat-bot – all of which are active participants of online space—to function as a “digital personality”. A “digital personality” is determined by the freedom of entry and exit into/out of the communication space, discreetness of perception, seeming anonymity and global-scale targeting. All these factors result in discursive opportunities for a digital personality: freedom of opinion; influencing the construction of social conceptual framework; structuring and spreading scenarios of a prospective reality. “Digital personality” generates particular linguistic units in online sphere – neologisms, hashtags – thus, generating and modifying the information and news space which determines social and political agenda.

Neologisms are new lexical entities which appear in the language due to the social demand to be able to denote a new object or a phenomenon. They retain a feeling of freshness for the native speakers, and have not been accepted by literature standards, not have they yet entered common literary use. The analysis of neologisms can be regarded as a fact of the historical development of language, its evolution through time, and, which is fundamental, its influence on transformation processes in various social structures (Timofeev 1971).

Neologisms are divided into several categories as to the sphere of their use:

- **Scientific neologisms** are vocabulary units, produced in order to denote scientific inventions, i.e. the notions and phenomena, which do not exist in a language. Examples include: x-rays (November 8, 1895), prion (1982) – an abnormal protein, an agent, provoking neurodegeneration diseases in people. Unlike a virus it does not contain a nucleic acid; it neither activates a counter-reaction of the
immune system, nor does it break down under extreme temperatures; beetle bank
(early 1990s) – a strip of grass and/or perennial plants within a crop field provid-
ing habitat for and fostering the insects which are natural enemies to pests.

- Pop-culture neologisms are words or phrases from a mass-media context used to
describe popular phenomena in pop-culture; these neologisms can be regarded as
a slang subcategory. Examples are: wardrobe malfunction (2004) – a sudden
instance of unintentional nudity in public; fauxhawk (mid 2000s) – a hairdo style,
popularized by David Beckham.

- Imported neologisms are words and phrases borrowed from another language.
They are commonly used to describe phenomena which are absent in the recipient
language. An example would be tycoon, which does not have an equivalent in
Russian and can be interpreted as a “multibillionaire” or a “bigshot”, a “magnate.”

- Trademarks are neologisms, used to denote a trademark and ensure its ultimate
uniqueness and distinguish it from other brands especially in online space. In case
trademarks are not protected, they are genericized and become common nouns.
Examples: Kodak – a brand name for a camera unit and photographic items;
Kleenex – a brand name and a name for hygiene items; hoover – a brand name
and a common noun for the vacuum cleaner.

- Nonce words are words coined for a particular communication task in a particular
context and usually used as a stylistic device. Example: grok – a word coined by
American writer Robert A. Heinlein in 1961. The Oxford English Dictionary
defines it as a verb, which means to understand intuitively or by empathy. It has
almost been integrated into the language system, though with some transforma-
tions to its meaning.

- Inverted neologisms are words coined by means of spelling (or pronouncing) a
standard form of a word backwards. An example is redrum, which is the result of
altering the word “murder” by spelling it backwards. It is commonly used as a
stylistic device in literature and film industry as well as in lyrics. Such neologisms
are similar to palindromes, which when spelled backwards give an existing word.3

- Political neologisms are words or phrases aimed at creating a particular discussion
point in the public space; according to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic
relativity, they influence the socio-political mental map of development. An
example is the phrase crisis state – meaning a state exposed to an acute crisis. The
governing institutions face some issues and struggle both inside and outside the
state, and in such a case they are unlikely to manage the conflict and solve the
issues caused by the socio-political stress. In other words, there is a danger of the
state system collapsing. Some political neologisms are created in order to render a
negative attitude to the described notion or a phenomenon. For example, a bre-
moaner (pejorative) means a person who regrets Britain leaving the EU. This
neologism is commonly associated with such words as whingeing, contemptuous
(of the norms of international trade) or unpatriotic; for example, “Damn the
Bre moaners and their plot to subvert the will of the British people”4

Not only do political neologisms describe but they also express a particular attitude
towards the modern socio-political reality. Besides such axiologiness,5 various stylistic
values, or connotations, the lexical meaning the word is charged with can be conveyed by a single morpheme: genocide (1943) originates from Greek genos, which means “race” and the Latin suffix -cide meaning “act of killing”; by a word, such as pro-life (1961); or by a whole phrase, for example dog-whistle politics (1990), which is a political term to describe a particular type of a political campaign and public speeches, based on the use of code words which appear to have one meaning for the general public but, in fact, mean a different thing for a particular audience. The term has a pejorative or a negative connotation and is based on the analogy to dog whistles with high frequency of vibrations, the sound of which is beyond human hearing.

Political neologisms which can be also divided into foreign and domestic policy neologisms (Miniar-Beloroutcheva 2012) are a distinct category of neologisms with its own structural, morphological and semantic peculiarities. Political neologisms are a really efficient means of public attitude management. As long as a particular phenomenon or an event acquires the “correct” linguistic nomination, politicians usually gain a competitive advantage by bringing bright, topical neologisms into common use. Besides, axiologiness, the value attributed to the newly coined words, enhances language users’ awareness of the substance of the described phenomenon, and, therefore, serves as a really vivid and efficient allusion to the fact or event in question. And online space does contribute to the manipulative power of neologisms as a technology that influences public attitudes.

“Digital personality” while functioning in the post-truth era and experiencing the necessity of describing and conceptualizing the socio-political reality produces innovative tools of linguistic nomination which is a kind of a particular linguistic “self-investigating” process. “Self-investigating” is a process or a phenomenon which comes as a public response to the abundance of fake news and the sources of its production and dissemination. “Self-investigating” has become a characteristic feature of the post-truth era and the world in which the truth does not matter any longer. People tend to solve current social issues relying on their own potential and beliefs, thus avoiding any engagement or interaction with official governmental institutions.

During the US election cycle 2016 online space generated a neologism “pizzagate” which referred to a conspiracy theory according to which an American elite supporting H. Clinton, a candidate for the presidency, was allegedly implicated in some relationship with a pedophile organization. This theory was due to the dissemination throughout social networks and communities of some claims that a popular Washington pizzeria “Comet Ping Pong” was associated with a child sex ring of high-ranking Democrats. The content labelled with a neologism “pizzagate” was being produced by the internet users engaged in analyzing John Podesta’s online correspondence (Podesta is a former chairman of Hillary Clinton’s 2016 presidential campaign) published by WikiLeaks website in 2016. The theory was based on the assumptions that some frequently used linguistic terms denoting food were, in fact, code words relating to pedophile issues and human trafficking. These allegations actively, discusses by Twitter users, were picked up by multiple fake news websites, labelling the related content with #pizzagate hashtag. The theory was criticized and claimed to be fake news by numerous mass media of a wide political spectrum: ranging from The New York Times to Fox News (Ruth 2016). The Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia
qualified “pizzagate” as “a fictitious online conspiracy theory.”

All these antecedences could have been treated as a conventional political defamation strategy. However, on 4 December, 2016 Edgar Maddison Welch, a 28-year-old North Carolina citizen, discharged a large-caliber rifle inside the “Comet Ping Pong” pizzeria casing some damage to the building fortunately with no injuries reported (Siddiqui and Svrluga 2016). Welch was convinced he had been liberating the children, who, as to his misconception, were harbored in the pizzeria cellar; subsequently, he was taken into custody. He explained to the police how he had been deluded and the reason why he had crossed the whole country packed with weapon: the cause is the conspiracy theories in online space which eventually triggered an armed vigilantism. Welch had decided, as he later claimed, to “self-investigate” (Stableford 2016). In the “post-truth era” framework – which is, in fact, an embodiment of the disinformation swamp – this phrase reveals the essence of ultimately new format of relationships between people and of the balance between truth and social action. Millions of people like Welch reject critical a attitude towards the sources of information. Being circumscribed by the so called “filter bubble” they apply a “do-it-yourself” approach when searching and verifying the information and facts which is not, in fact, a real investigation – it does appear to be “self-investigating”. The collocation “self-investigating” can be regarded as a neologism due to the new transformed meaning the word has acquired. The standard use of the phrase “self-investigation” has a meaning of spiritual exploration of your inner self. The Oxford English Dictionary does not define this phrase, the only definition refers to the word “investigation”, which is “the action of investigating something or someone; formal or systematic examination or research.” However, the prefix self- bears the meaning of “of or directed towards oneself or itself”, as in ‘self-hatred’, for instance; and [performed] “by one’s own efforts; by its own action”, as in ‘self-acting’; or “on, in, for, or relating to oneself or itself”, as in ‘self-adhesive’. These definitions mean that the meaning of such notions as “self-investigating” or “self-investigation” – spiritual exploration of your inner self – has transformed into discovering the truth by an independent investigation and verification of facts, as repercussions of a massive, uncontrolled, irresponsible production and dissemination of disinformation or blatantly fraudulent content and defamation.

Certainly, the causes, methods and techniques as well as the participants of the process of information production and dissemination are ultimately different from those which existed before the breakthrough in information and communication technologies and the onset of the Internet and social networks. In this respect, the social and cultural development is more interesting in terms of scientific and technological advances which have revolutionized the techniques and methods of information dissemination rather than in terms of the coinage of neologisms.

Language displays the outer world to an individual; it represents cultural legacy, retains it and passes it along so as to prescribe particular behavioral conventions, world views, ethnic identities from generation to generation. During his lifetime, an individual discovers objects and phenomena which afterwards in the process of evaluative re-conceptualization might become charged with a particular cultural value and function as a symbolic substitute for this value, or a symbol, the substance of which is an entity significant in terms of spiritual, moral and ethical values.
Symbols have always been an output of human cognition. As regards the culture, symbol is a sign implying exploitation of its primary meaning as a container for the secondary meaning. The most common idea of a symbol is of some entity, which is an expression plane\textsuperscript{10} for different, usually more culturally valuable content. A symbol implies a general principle of unfolding the condensed content, i.e. a symbol can as well be regarded as a method of data coding, likewise the method of its transmission.

Digital personality produces and uses hashtags which are regarded in our research as digital iconic symbols which by being combined with key words acquire a pragmatic potential\textsuperscript{11} and are aimed at producing an expected impact on a recipient.

In 2009 the social platform Twitter implemented an innovative method of linking all the hashtags (a word or a phrase preceded by a “#” symbol) to hyperlinks forwarding to the search results (Panko 2017) associated with all recent messages which included the given hashtag or a regular spelling of the words comprising this hashtag. This decision of Twitter administration was due to the fact that earlier in 2007, during a massive forest fire extinguishing operation, a Twitter user, Nate Ritter, suggested using the “#sandiegofire” hashtag to group all the messages associated with the disaster (Panko 2017). Then, the hashtagify.me online platform started.\textsuperscript{12} The site enables searching for popular hashtags, as well as identifying related hashtags. The importance of hashtags is not only due to their ability to group the messages similar in subject; hashtags enable the researchers of online social networks, and the entire online space, to study a dependent entity through folksonomy, generated by multiple users of online social networks and communities. Folksonomy is a collaborative practice of classifying the subjects of information items by attaching hashtags or tags to them (tags are the text markups, logically associated with the classified information item) (Bell 2009). An information item can be a post, a podcast and the like, on an online social network, a website, a blog, or an online-media site.

This article deals with an analysis of the “fake news” theme cloud. The research undertaken involves an analysis of the dependent definition/classification of the “fake news” theme cloud given by Twitter users via a #fakenews word search on the hashtagify.me website. The findings are presented in Figure 1.

Based on the findings obtained we conclude that Twitter users indirectly define the “fake news” theme cloud through the following constituents of the cloud: “MAGA”, “Trump”, “CNN”, “MSM”, “Russia”; “media”, “AmericanPravda”, “PizzaGate”, “CNNBlackmail”, “tcot”.

![Figure 1. Top 10 Twitter hashtags associated with #fakenews.](image-url)
“MAGA” is a political neologism developed and spread as a hashtag by D. Trump’s team during 2016 US presidential campaign. It denoted a call for the revival of America’s former greatness – “Make America Great Again.” “Trump” is an official hashtag to mark up all the content associated with Trump Election Campaign 2016. “CNN” is an official hashtag of a cable and satellite television news channel “Cable News Network”, owned by “Turner Broadcasting System” company. “MSM” (Mainstream media) is a hashtag used to refer to various media influencing masses of people. This hashtag represents and shapes prevailing attitudes in the news and information field, not in online space exclusively but in offline space likewise. “AmericanPravda” is a political neologism, coined by James O’Keefe to mark up any materials published by him which contain information denouncing the democrats. “PizzaGate” is a political neologism which is an allusion to the Watergate scandal and is associated with pedophile issues, B. Obama’s Administration (through applying #DrainTheSwamp hashtag) and #WikiLeaks. “CNNBlackmail” is a hashtag that is associated with a clip affair on the “Reddit” social media website, featuring President D. Trump punishing CNN for dissemination of presumably fake news. “Tcot” is a popular hashtag-acronym referring to “Top Conservatives on Twitter”. It is aimed at facilitating the users who hold conservative views to find likeminded people in the online space.

As the analysis of the theme cloud has shown, it comprises the components most frequently referred to. In terms of the style of all the constituents of the cloud, the related hashtags have the same evocative potential as regards their base hashtag (which is essential for entering the cloud). Besides, they all have a negative connotation, as they relate to the base hashtag #fakenews, which meaning contains not only such components as fraud or counterfeit but also mockery, satire, and parody (which is why fake news is also called news satire or mock news). The Online Cambridge Dictionary defines “fake news” as false stories, stories that are being disseminated on the Internet or via other media as news, and are usually produced as a means of influencing political processes or as a joke. Thus, each of the presented components, as well as all combined, show attitudes of the users to the notions presented by the hashtags, as associated with scandals, ignited by dissemination of intentionally misleading information and thus utterly unreliable. The relevance of each of the presented components with a fakenews concept therefore indicates a negative image trend for the notions expressed by the hashtags in the #fakenews theme cloud, the diminution or total loss of credibility.

On the morphological level the cloud is made up of simplexes – simple or uncompounded words (Trump, Russia, media), blend words – lexical units formed from parts of two or more other words (PizzaGate, AmericanPravda, CNNBlackmail) as well as acronyms and abbreviations (CNN, MAGA, MSM, tcot, or Tcot, TCOT).

Regardless of the comparative explicit neutrality of some lexical units, constituting the cloud (Trump, Russia, media, CNN, MSM, tcot), they are dubious in nature, as users’ background knowledge of the socio-political situation in the world allows one to draw conclusions about the way the components in the theme cloud relate to the fakenews concept. Donald Trump is renowned as a disseminator as well as an ardent fakenews fighter; there is a lot of disinformation about Russia – Trump relationships on the Internet; CNN and other MSM (mass media) as well as new media, are actively
generating and disseminating fake news on the most topical issues of the modern world; *tcot* hashtag is routinely used to mark up any content, relating to the activity of conservatives. However, this is more likely to express negative attitude to the marked-up content (the messages on Twitter marked up with this hashtag contain such components as ‘illegal’, ‘violation’, ‘radicalization’, ‘Clinton Radical Muslims’, ‘Las Vegas Shooting’, ‘Defend liberty from the ideological highwaymen’). Other constituents of the cloud (PizzaGate, CNNBlackmail, AmericanPravda) are more explicit in their evaluative modality and are characterized by the duality of direction – they negatively address both parties involved in the scandal represented with the given hashtags. #PizzaGate implicitly expresses correlation to Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump’s opponent. However, they were Trump’s supporters who had been promoting fake news on high-powered Washington politicians’ involvement into the issues of large-scale child sexual harassment (Kopan 2016). #CNNBlackmail expresses a trend of free speech repression and intimidation of journalists by the authorities (scandalous allegations issued by D. Trump to accuse MSM of fake news dissemination); on the other hand, it discriminates against MSM in terms of ethical issues (a scandal, involving users of the social media Reddit). #AmericanPravda’s constituent “Pravda” is an allusion to the official newspaper of the Soviet Union. It implies current relationships between Russian and American authorities, as well as abundance of fake news related to this issue. However, it is also associated with a name of a notorious political agitator, therefore, the information which he spreads is utterly unreliable.

New linguistic units – neologisms and hashtags – become not just the tools of communication in online space, they can trigger a social action which is interpreted according to a classical definition by M. Weber, as an action involving in its target-setting other people or determined by their being and behavior. Furthermore, it does not matter whether other people benefit from this particular action or suffer from its negative implications, whether others are aware of the fact that some action has been taken, or whether it has been a success or a failure. Thus, for instance, in the course of Presidential Campaign 2016–2017 in France, the Mayor of Bordeaux and the first Republican Presidential Primary 2016 candidate–Alan Juppé quit the Race. The spread of an item of fake news about the relations between Alain Juppé and some organizations – that were close to radical Islamists, like “Muslim Brothers,” whose activities are banned in the majority of countries worldwide, Russia included – did play a significant role in the decision made by the candidate (Roux 2016). The impact that viral dissemination of fake content throughout the popular social media had was that a nickname “Ali Juppé” had developed strong associations with the politician, thus, strongly attaching an “#alijuppé” hashtag to the online content containing any defamatory information about the politician. Therefore, the news and information field was characterized by continuous negative background hype around his political campaign that accompanied any content published by the politician. In fact, the “#alijuppé” hashtag transformed the digital personality of the politician, raising a public outcry online and likewise offline.

This example illustrates the need to develop analytical and evaluative methods and techniques to research new linguistic units produced by digital personalities, which thereby produce new digital personalities and modify socio-political processes through political content management.
Discussion

Dependency determination of each of the constituents of the theme cloud enables their linguistic and pragmatic extension. Thus, it is possible to determine the dependency of any object in the online space. The analysis of online objects dependencies would allow for describing and interpreting the roots of various processes in socio-political space and their pragmatic effect.

Conclusion

The current reality which caused the onset of modern discursive strategies, models and techniques of language use – manipulative techniques to reach expected results in particular – enabled the entrance of multiple discourses, including a political discourse, into the online space.

The existing text corpus – which comprises the texts, continuously changing and evolving in their pragmatic potential – sets new goals in terms of researching the ways language transforms, as well as strategies, models and techniques used to ensure its functioning within online space. Obviously, due to technological advances the pragmatic potential of the text is extended on a scale which is hard to imagine or assess. This process, like any other (particularly large-scale and effective) phenomenon, can be regarded both from the point of view of its constructive and deconstructive effect on the social environment.

The impact of the deconstructive effect, linguistic and discursive practices can have, can be compared to an atomic bomb – large-scale utter destruction and destructive effect for many centuries.

Deconstructive effect could be induced by following factors of the online discourse:

- impunity of the content producers for the content and the implications of its publication and dissemination;
- lack of awareness, among the participants of online interaction, about the substance of online verbal communication (communication and information dissemination in the social networks and communities) which is, in fact, the social action, having particular implications, various in impact and scale;
- absence of analytical models to predict the potential direction of online discourse development relying on the linguistic analysis of the current discursive practices;
- absence of descriptive models and online discourse management schemes, which is why there is no possibility of identification, monitoring or management of discursive practices bearing destructive potential (cause interethnic and international conflicts, or destructive action against the nation, state and/or other states).

Online space is an extensive field for the researchers in terms of studying the innovative ways of language use: shortened forms, unconventional spelling of words or punctuation use, modern grammar structures (for instance, as regards memes creation). The above mentioned characteristics of language functioning in online space
have some peculiarities in terms of style and pragmatic potential which depends on the sphere (an individual or a community account in the social network, a blog or an official MSM website), likewise the actor, on whose behalf the posts are published (a politician, a media person, a journalist or a regular user). To assess the impact, the language system transformations have online and determine new semiotic flows, innovative methods and tools for hybrid studies are to be developed.

Modern society is interspersed with the processes started in multiple horizontal structures of online public sphere. These practices result in transformations of socio-political systems and as global markers of changes affect virtually all spheres of human life regardless of geographical location or social status. To study these processes, we need to develop innovative fundamental research approaches and tools to analyze network data which these processes are comprised of as political content. Thus, theoretical and fundamental models, empirical measurement tools and applicable measurement tools are to be developed, in order to study political content and explain changes in public policy and public administration globally and/or nationally.

Notes

1. Information obtained from Internet Live Stats: https://www.internetlivestats.com/one-second/ Accessed 9 October 2018.
2. For the definition see: http://www.thefullwiki.org/Fake_news Accessed 25 July 2019.
3. For description and examples see: http://www.sightwordsgame.com/vocabulary-words/word-play/reverse-pair/ Accessed 25 July 2019.
4. The title of an article, which can be read here: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-3833496/DAILY-MAIL-COMMENT-Whingeing-Contemptuous-Unpatriotic-Damn-Bremoaners-plot-subvert-British-people.html Accessed 20 August 2019.
5. Axiologiness or the axiological dimension – “the attribution of values of various kinds to the lexical configuration”. See: http://lectmania.ru/1x15fb5.html Accessed 20 August 2019.
6. For examples of neologisms see: http://top-topics.thefullwiki.org/Political_neologisms Accessed 20 August 2019.
7. Linguistic nomination – a process of attaching specific meanings and implications to the content through the external (plane of expression) and internal structure (plane of content) of linguistic units. See: https://slovar.cc/rus/lingvist/1466165.html Accessed 20 August 2019.
8. The online statement can be found here: https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/arrest-made-assault-dangerous-weapon-gun-5000-block-connecticut-avenue-northwest Accessed 20 August 2019.
9. For definition see: https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/investigation Accessed 20 August 2019.
10. An expression plane is a linguistic term, which refers to an organized body of material means representing linguistic messages; it is opposed to a content plane. See: http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Expression%20Plane Accessed 20 August 2019.
11. Pragmatic potential is a linguistic term, which refers to the ability of a linguistic context to enable social action.
12. The site may be found here: http://hashtagify.me/ Accessed 20 August 2019.
13. “Reddit” is a new format of social media websites, which allow the registered users post hyperlinks to any online content they like. “Reddit” exercises the rating system for the most popular content – which is eventually posted on the front page of the site. It is one of the most popular sites in the world – it ranks 7 among most frequently visited site
according to the Alexa Internet, and 25 according to SimilarWeb. The founders explain its name by a play on words, or pun – “I read it on Reddit”.

14. See: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fake-news?fallbackFrom=british-grammar Accessed 20 August 2019.

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Notes on contributors

N.A. Ryabchenko has a PhD in Political Sciences. Much of her research is devoted to mathematical modelling and network analysis of public politics in the online space. She has solved a number of issues with regard to the interaction of authorities and civic society, through developing a methodology of stochastic modelling applied to online social networks.

V.V. Katermina has a PhD in Philological Sciences. Her field of expertise is language theory, discourse analysis, theory of nomination, communication theory and lexicography. Recent studies have been devoted to the analysis of English political neologisms in mass-media discourse and post-truth politics as a type of political culture. She is the author of more than 185 articles, 3 monographs and two dictionaries.

O.P. Malysheva has a PhD in Philological Sciences. Her field of expertise is language theory, discourse analysis, socio- and psycholinguistics, communication theory and political studies. Recent studies have been devoted to political campaigns implemented through the online space and the assessment of the impact of novel linguistic units on socio-political system transformations.

ORCID

Natalia A. Ryabchenko http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6980-2894
Veronika V. Katermina http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9141-9867
Olga P. Malysheva http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8285-0508

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