A) SUMMARY OF A RESEARCHED SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE

In the age of social networks and online communication, issues such as Fake News become increasingly important (Spohr, 2017, p. 150). What is meant by Fake News are articles containing purposefully wrong content in order to lead people to a certain opinion (p.155). They particularly are an issue in the context of political and ideological polarization (p. 155). The article of Spohr (2017) discusses exactly this topic and raises the question whether ideological polarization on social media is driven more by the so-called selective exposure or filter bubbles (p. 150). In addition, he deals with the influence of Fake News on polarization with regard to ideological issues (p. 156). His argumentations regarding the abovementioned questions are supported by recent studies and experiments so that the article represents a general overview of these topics. In this way, the author first describes the phenomena of filter bubbles and selective exposure that can influence the spreading of Fake News as well as the receive of them on the individuals’ side (p. 152f.). Filter bubbles are created by social media algorithms that present personalized content to the user that corresponds to the previous information consumption (p. 153). In this way, people primarily receive information they rather want to consume (p. 153). This corresponds to the phenomenon of selective exposure. It states that individuals are likely to consume information that fits to their existing views and beliefs and inversely tend to avoid information that differs from that (p. 153). This behavior could have a high impact on consequences of Fake News when people rather believe positive (fake)news consistent with their own views or negative stories about opposing views (p. 156). In this way, spreading of Fake News shared by those ideological groups can be intensified (p. 156). In addition, this can be furthered by social media where large groups often organize each other as semi-isolated groups (p. 151). Such communities work as echo chambers which always resounding own beliefs and views – even beyond the political spectrum to other aspects of life (p. 152). Due to the fact, that these people are mostly surrounded by their own concepts and opinions, constructive political discussions of different political ideas may not take place anymore (p. 153). As a conclusion the author claims that social media platforms need to address the problem of Fake News and misinformation by further barriers (p. 157). Furthermore, he pays attention to the citizens itself that should be aware of issues such as Fake News and the potential of social media to be used in ideological polarization (p. 157). To form an opinion should be an active process characterized by openness and the use of different information sources (p. 157). With reference to recent studies, the author also comes to the conclusion that both filter bubbles and selective exposure play an important role in political polarization (p. 157). Thereby, the impact of the described echo chambers should not be neglected, too (p. 175).
B) ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

As an example of the relevance of Fake News in political issues as well as ways of handling their appearance the Ukrainian crisis since 2014 can be adduced. In this context, Khaldarova and Pantti published an article in 2016 dealing with Fake News and the so-called information war by Russia (p.2). Due to the authors, they tried to influence the way the Ukrainian crisis is perceived within the country and across its borders worldwide (p. 2). The main problem turned out in the article is that Fake News were used for propaganda purposes – for example through blaming or misleading images quoted out of context (p.5).

As a basis, an example for a project fighting against Fake News dissemination is illustrated (p. 3). The StopFake-website was launched by Ukrainians with the intention to detect wrong stories and images published by Russian media and the internet (p.3). The ways to handle a fake story varied, but were all based on checking facts by paying attention to inconsistencies in first instance (p. 5). Afterwards, counter opinion comments were published for example in the form of original images or counter-narratives (p. 9). In addition, the authors presented the study executed by them in order to describe how Twitter users judge different news (p. 2). Therefore, allegedly Fake News posted on Channel One as well as the StopFake statements to it that were shared via social media were chosen (p. 4). Supplementing this, a content analysis of more than 6000 tweets containing an URL of the abovementioned posts on Channel One or StopFake was executed. 34% of these tweets were posted from Ukraine while 27% were from Russia and further 17% from the United States (p.11). The analysis showed that 50% of the news from Channel One were regarded with distrust (p.11). Comments expressing this were mainly posted by Ukrainian users by making use of sarcasm and disgust (p.12). Furthermore, the authors conclude that Twitter users are rather aware of strategic narratives initiated by Russian mainstream media (p. 15). That means that they have shown mistrust towards Channel One and some of them even highlighted inconsistencies and demonstrated their ability to seek information about a certain news story on their own (p.15).

This example demonstrates that Fake News can be part of political issues. Due to further examples such as the presidential election in the US (2016) or the EU referendum in the UK (2016) I would like to come to the conclusion that nowadays fake news are a highly sensitive issue as information landscapes has more and more channels through the different possibilities of the internet and particularly social media. For me, this raises the question whether Information Literacy and its concepts and ideas could help dealing with these problems?