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**MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY**

Session 10 "Verify – mind the sources!"

INTRODUCTION (20 MIN)

Introduction/Motivation: Topic Game **Word of Mouth**

Activity	● Topic Game 'Word of Mouth'	15"
Objective	● Examining playfully what gets lost when messages are passed on from one person to another and understanding that the original sources are often not traceable	
Steps	● 2" Welcome the students, introduce the topic of the new session, and explain the game ● 5" Round 1: Let the students stand in a circle and ask a volunteer to whisper any piece of information into the next person's ear, for instance a sentence, a headline or slogan. After the information has gone full circle, compare the original message with the final message ● 5" Round 2: Let the students form two rows. Both rows try to pass the same message (e.g., a headline from a newspaper). Which group is fastest? Whose information is delivered more accurately? ● 3" Conclude: Explain what a "source" is. Information gets lost or fuzzy when being passed through several "hands". As a recipient, you have no clue what the original information was or who the source was. When competing for speed (like on the Internet),	

	accuracy is often sacrificed for speed – which leads to misinformation
Material	● Newspaper
Notes	

BODY PART (50 MIN)

Trainer Centered: Guided input: Sources on social media

Activity	● Guided input	**20"**
Objective	● Students examine sources on their newsfeeds and differentiate between reliable and unreliable sources ● Students recall how to verify a source	
Steps	● Prepare cards for sources on social media: "friend"," strangers", "funny pages I like", "institutions", "news media", "companies", "politicians", "sponsored ads", "celebrities" ● Prepare a flipchart with the questions "How trustworthy are the sources for public information?" and design a scale starting from "untrustworthy source" to "trustworthy source" ● 2" Screen or show a Facebook-newsfeed and explain, what is meant with "sources on social media" ● 8" Hand the cards to the volunteers and let each volunteer evaluate the trustworthiness of the indicated source by pinning it to a certain area of the scale and providing a reason. Guide your students to	

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MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

	reflect, what are more and what are less trustworthy sources on social media for public issues. Sensitize the students that anybody can post and comment on social media, that some people use false identities or stay anonymous, that there are no editors to check posts for accuracy and truthfulness, and that people use social media not only to inform others, but to influence or manipulate others
	● 10" Demonstrate by using an example how you can verify sources (see Guideline "Debunking fakes", upper half, source analysis) and/or displaying the video example (https://www.bloomberg.com/news/videos/2021-01-20/how-to-fact-check-your-social-media-feed-video) and note down keywords
	     o About sections
	     o Research author
	     o Verify contact data
	     o Verify odd domain names
	     o Evaluate trustworthiness of author / source

Material	● Flipchart "Sources on social media" ● PPT-Presentation "Verify sources on social media" ● Projector, WiFi
Notes	

Trainee Centered: Research and practice: Verifying sources on social media

Activity	● Research and practice verifying sources	**25 "**
Objective	● Students practice verifying a source on social media and using search engines	
Steps	● 3" The trainers explain the task, visualize the questions on a flipchart and group people sitting next to each other into pairs ● 17" The students practice the tools for source verification and research a source from their newsfeed using a search engine. This source can be a website or an unknown institution, … ● 5" One volunteer student demonstrates the process and the results of his / her source verification	
Material		
Notes		

Trainee Centered: Game balloon guessing - Top 3 news feed

Activity	● Topic game: balloons	**20 "**
Objective	● Students can detect or identify posts on their newsfeeds that reinforce their beliefs and interests	
Steps	● 10" Divide the group into two halves. Ask your students to scroll through their newsfeeds and find three kinds of posts or stories that they often find on their newsfeed or that reinforce their own	

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MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

	beliefs. Hand each student a balloon and let them write their three topics on their balloon. Ask both groups to put all their balloons in one corner of the room ● 5" Ask each student to grab a balloon from the other group's corner without knowing whose it is. Have them read the topics out loud and let them guess, whose "filter bubble" they have in their hands. Count the points of correct guesses ● 5" Summarize and conclude that everyone needs to be aware of these filter bubbles and should actively seek information from sources outside their own "bubbles" or belief system
Material	● Balloons
Notes	

3. CONCLUSION (15 MIN)

Open questions, Summary & conclusion: Discussion Filter Bubble & Algorithm

Activity	● Guided discussion	15"
Objective	● Students define what echo chambers or filter bubbles are and explain their consequences (the division of society)	
Content	● 3" Explain the news feed algorithm, why Facebook uses it, what factors are considered and that the company can easily change the details of the algorithm. Explain that these algorithms result in a filter bubble, where the information someone received is strongly filtered	

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	2" Display this video explaining filter bubbles and algorithms: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mh1dLvGe06Y 10" Discuss with your students the consequences of the filter bubble. Discuss effects for individuals (narrow world view) and for society (polarized citizens). You can guide them to understand "echo chamber", where existing beliefs are reinforced and even amplified. Since sensational or highly emotional posts get more reaction, these quickly dominate the discussion and polarize society - Conclude, that it is important to be aware of this effect and don't use social media as only information channel
Material	Flipchart "Social Media Algorithms – Filter Bubble"
Notes	

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ANNEX

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Source verification Content verification

Debunking disinformation

- Source verification
  - Who published the information?
  - How trustworthy is the source?

- Content verification
  - Is the information itself correct? (fact, figures...)

Debunking disinformation

- Source **verification** to evaluate whether the author / source of information is trustworthy

- About section

- Research the author / source (google the source)

- Verify contact data (adress, phone number, website…)

- Verify odd domain names (misleading url's)

Debunking disinformation

**Content verification** to check whether the information is factual and true

Check: Neutral or sensational?

- Does the story or post use sensational or provocative language?

- Does it evoke strong emotions of anger, outrage or fear? If so, the author may be trying to provoke an emotional response.

- Professional journalists and media usually report neutrally and do not try to play with the audience's emotions.
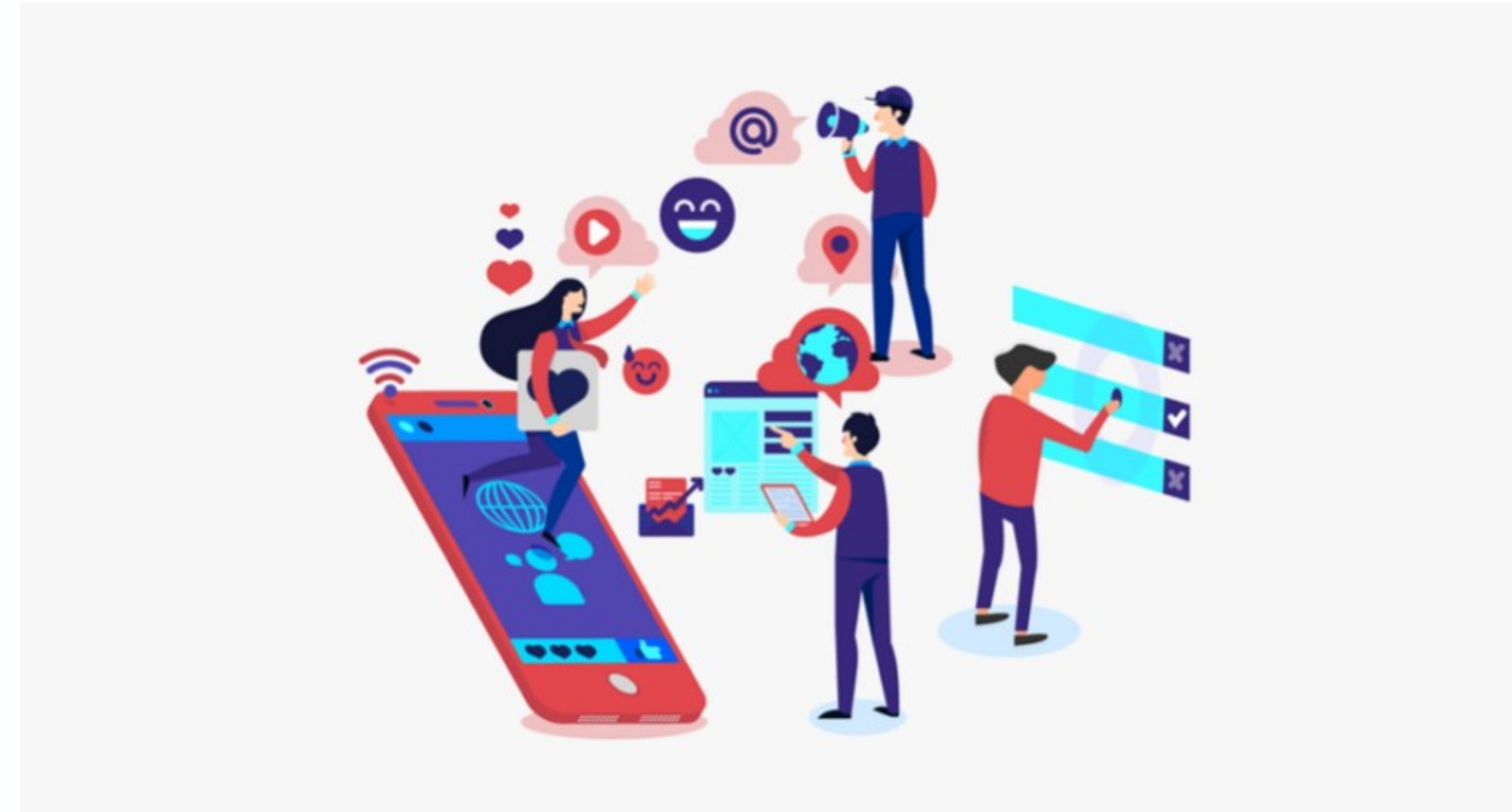
Debunking disinformation

Content verification to check whether the informat[ion]
is factual and true
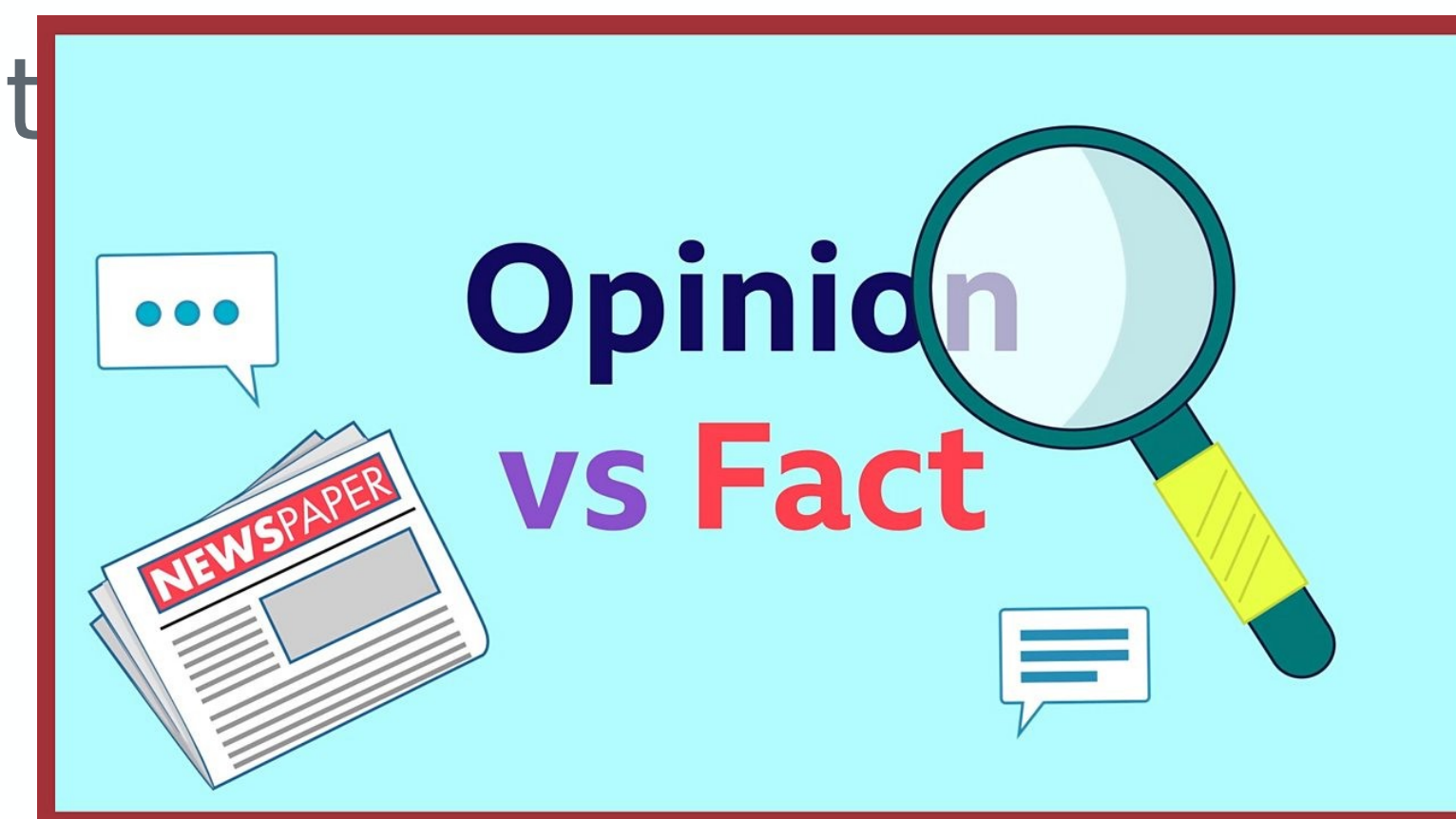
Check: Facts or opinions?

- Does the story or post transport the author's opinion rather than presenting facts? If so, the author may try to influence the audience, not primarily inform it.

- Professional journalists and media usually aim to report factually, neutrally and objectively. They clearly label opinion pieces to distinguish them from factual news writing.

Debunking disinformation

Content verification to check whether the information is factual and true

Check: Accuracy

- Do you think the reporting is truthful?

- Are facts, names, and numbers correct?

- Is the story reported neutrally without bias?

- Are all relevant aspects and angles of the topic presented?

- Have other trustworthy sources reported the same information independently of one another?

Debunking disinformation

Content verification to check whether the information is factual and true
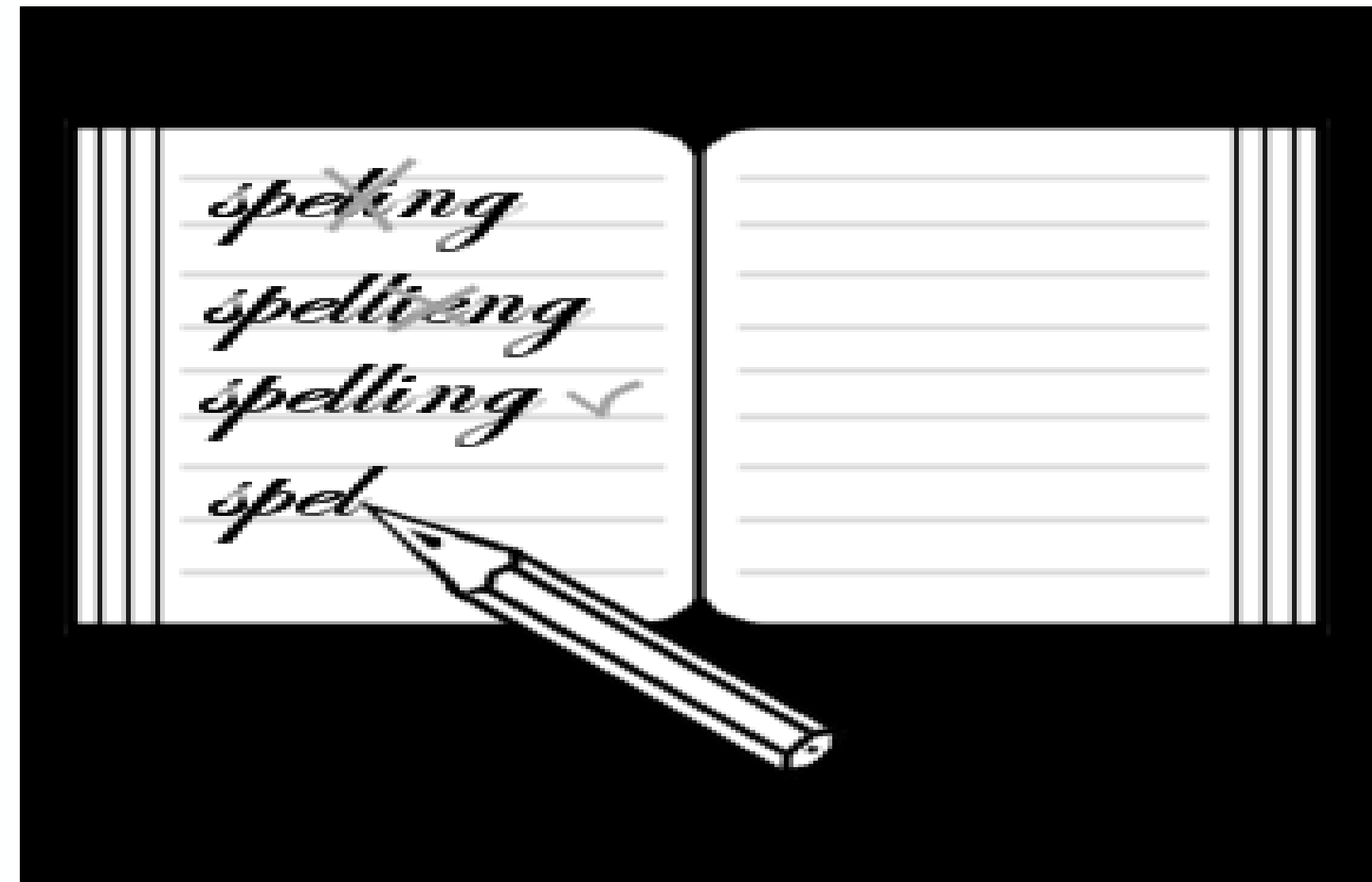
Check: Spelling and grammar

- Analyze language, grammar and spelling. If the text contains many spelling mistakes, words that are very emotional, or even curse words, it probably was not published by a professional journalist, author or organization.

Debunking disinformation

Content verification to check whether the information is factual and true

Check: Design and visual impression

- Analyze the web design. Bad web design or a website that uses ALL CAPS can indicate that the source is not trustworthy and that the information needs to be verified.

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Thank you

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