

Recruitment of volunteers and training report

Volunteers were enlisted to annotate texts across Facebook, Telegram, and Instagram. Eligibility criteria for volunteers included Ukrainian citizenship and proficiency in Ukrainian language. Volunteers did not require special skills and knowledge. The average age of the volunteers was 38, the youngest was 22, and the oldest was 64.

The first phase with volunteers includes conducting interviews to evaluate their suitability and understanding of motivation. Next, annotators receive instructions and have their questions answered. Then, each annotator's initial 80 annotated posts are reviewed, and feedback is given via a shared Telegram group.

During the process, there were social and cultural challenges, which are described below:

1. Most volunteers found it difficult to focus for more than an hour a day, after which they said they started to get confused, make mistakes, double-check themselves, or see one type of manipulation everywhere.
2. Most volunteers found it difficult to be involved in the work every day for a week or two and to fulfill the acceptable work hours (they forgot, other plans came up, equipment did not work, etc.)
3. Of the 18 volunteers who passed the interview, only 12 joined the annotation process, and 9 annotated texts for over 3 hours. Therefore, recruitment and training of volunteers should be ongoing to achieve results.
4. Volunteers who said at the interview that they were interested in the topic of propaganda were more involved in annotation than those who did not mind devoting time to a social project, either because it was not difficult or because they would also like to write a diploma thesis on this topic, etc.
6. Depending on their experience and the information field, it was easy for each volunteer to master some manipulation techniques and difficult to find or overlook others. These were the difficulties that everyone faced:
 - labeling the news with manipulation of the emotion of anger because the facts of the news cause anger, although the lexical content of the news does not contain manipulation or intensification of emotions;
 - difficulties in distinguishing between manipulation of appealing to anger and appealing to fear;
 - difficulty distinguishing manipulation with black-and-white narratives;
 - skipping emotionally colored phrases, or vice versa, seeing appeals to emotions everywhere.

As a result, after the annotation process, the following conclusions were formed: recruiting and working with volunteers requires precise planning, writing clear instructions and testing them on several people before the full start, time allocation for interviews and training, identifying patterns of mistakes and additional training, constant recruitment of volunteers and training supervisors to check the quality of work.