

## Appendix C

### Screenshots of the Experiment

- 701 Below we present experiment instructions as displayed to participants. Where necessary,  
702 we have added explanations as captions.

**Figure C1**

As a security measure, please type 'prolific' (lowercase)  
backwards below:

Next

**Figure C2****Welcome**

Thank you for your interest in our study.

Please note that this study contains attention checks and failing them will result  
in a rejected submission.

Next

**Figure C3**

*Study information and consent page. Note that 'Next' is greyed out. This happens when participant input is needed prior to continuing. In the current image, 'Next' is greyed out because participants could only continue after agreeing to the information letter and giving consent.*

Max-Planck-Institut für  
Bildungsforschung  
Max Planck Institute for Human  
Development

Center for Adaptive Rationality

**Study Information and Statement of Informed Consent for Adult Participants**

Thank you for your interest in participating in our study called "Study on Online Misinformation". Please take your time to read this text carefully. If you have any questions, we are happy to answer them via Prolific Messages. By agreeing to this form, you agree that you have read the information presented and that you are willing to participate in the study.

**Type of Research**  
In this study, we want to investigate how individuals categorise news as being accurate or inaccurate.

**Procedure and content of the study**  
You will be presented with news items and you will have to judge whether the news items are accurate or inaccurate. You will also be asked on how confident you are of your judgement and whether you have seen the news items before. Your responses will be collected electronically and stored anonymously.

**Are there any risks involved?**  
No.

**What will happen to the information and data collected?**  
This study is a research project of the Max Planck Institute (MPI) for Human Development. The data collected will be used for research purposes only.

Your personal contact data (name, etc.) will be stored separately from the study data. The study data will be stored under an individual code number so that it cannot be linked to you during the analysis. The code number is stored on a separate code list in a secure location, and can only be accessed by a limited number of individuals working on the project. The code list is the only link between your contact data and your study data. After completion of the study, the code list will be deleted, and it will no longer be possible to link the study data to you.

The study data (but not personal contact data) may be shared with co-operation partners for collaborative analysis. The study data may also become publicly accessible via research databases or scientific publications (typically via the Internet). This makes it possible for other researchers to check or replicate the results of the

I have read and understood the conditions outlined above, and have had the opportunity to clarify open questions.

I consent to participate in the study and agree to the collection, storage, and use of my data as described above.

Next

**Figure C4**

**Great, let's get started!**

This study consists of two parts.

1. News Categorization Task
2. Short Questionnaire

Next

**Figure C5****News Categorization Task**

You will observe a series of news headlines that previously appeared on a social media feed (e.g., Facebook). The headlines are from 2020 and will be a mix of **true** and **false** news.

**For each news headline, you will be asked:**

1. Whether you think that the news headline is accurate
2. How confident you are that your answer is correct
3. If you have seen or heard about the news headline before

**Next**

**Figure C6**

Here's an example of the format in which the news headlines will be presented.



CNN.COM

**Trump letter attacking Schumer is sent as President says 'this  
is not the time for politics'**

Back

Next

**Figure C7**

For each news headline, we will ask you whether you think it is accurate (true news) or inaccurate (false news), as shown below.



CNN.COM

Trump letter attacking Schumer is sent as President says 'this is not the time for politics'

**Do you think the above headline is accurate?**

Yes

No

Back

Next

**Figure C8**

*This screen was not included in the control treatment (no-time-pressure treatment).*

You will have **6** seconds to respond to the accuracy question.

Time remaining will be indicated via a countdown timer.

**Please note that you will not receive a bonus for the trials in which you exceed 6 seconds.**

Back

Next

**Figure C9**

Next, you will be asked to indicate the confidence you have in your answer on a six-point scale ranging from 50-100%. This scale indicates the probability that you think your answer is correct.

Confidence level	Probability of being correct
50%	50 out of 100 cases (Guessing)
60%	60 out of 100 cases
70%	70 out of 100 cases
80%	80 out of 100 cases
90%	90 out of 100 cases
100%	100 out of 100 cases (Completely confident)

A confidence of 50% implies that you are guessing: your probability of being correct is 50% (i.e., correct in 50 out of 100 cases where you say "50%").

A confidence of 70% implies that you are moderately confident: your probability of being correct is 70% (i.e., correct in 70 out of 100 cases where you say "70%").

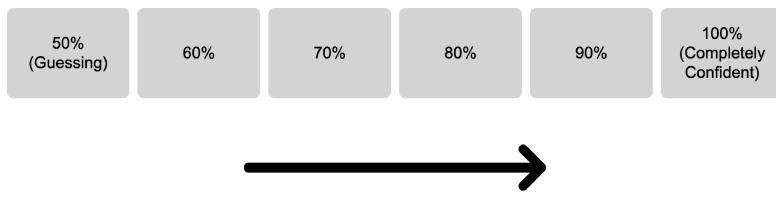
A confidence of 100% implies that you are completely confident: your probability of being correct is 100% (i.e., correct in 100 out of 100 cases where you say "100%").

[Back](#)[Next](#)

**Figure C10**

Here's what the confidence scale will look like.

**How confident are you that your answer is correct?**



Back

Next

**Figure C11**

Finally, we will ask you if you are familiar with the news headline.

**Are you familiar with the news headline (have you seen or  
heard about it before ?)**

Yes

No

Back

Next

**Figure C12**

*The final sentence of this screen starting with "As a gentle reminder" was not included in the control treatment.*

**Bonus payment**

You will be awarded **0.05 GBP (approx. 0.07 USD)** per news headline you correctly judge to be true or false.

The total possible bonus over 32 trials is **1.60 GBP (approx. 2.25 USD)** and will be added to your **2.50 GBP (approx. 3.50 USD)** flat-fee.

**As a gentle reminder: please note that you will not receive a bonus for the trials in which you exceed 6 seconds.**

Back

Next

**Figure C13**

To check if you've understood everything correctly, we'd now like to ask you some comprehension questions.

The study will end if you fail to answer a question correctly after three attempts.

Please also note that you will not be able to return to the instructions after this point.

Back

Next

**Figure C14****Comprehension Check 1**

Imagine you believe the news headline to be accurate, how  
should you answer the question below?

**Do you think the above headline is accurate?**

Yes

No

**Figure C15****Comprehension Check 2**

Imagine you have absolutely no idea if the news headline is accurate or inaccurate, that is, you are guessing. How should you answer the question below?

**How confident are you that your answer is correct?**

50% (Guessing)	60%	70%	80%	90%	100% (Completely Confident)
-------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	--------------------------------

**Figure C16**

**Comprehension Check 3**  
Imagine you believe your judgment about the news headline is correct in 90 out of 100 cases. How should you answer the question below?

**How confident are you that your answer is correct?**



**Figure C17****Comprehension Check 4**

Imagine that you believe you've seen the news headline before,  
how should you answer the question below?

**Are you familiar with the news headlines (have you seen or  
heard about it before)?**

Yes

No

**Figure C18**

**We're nearly ready to go!**

To bring it all together, you will now do a practice trial.

Next

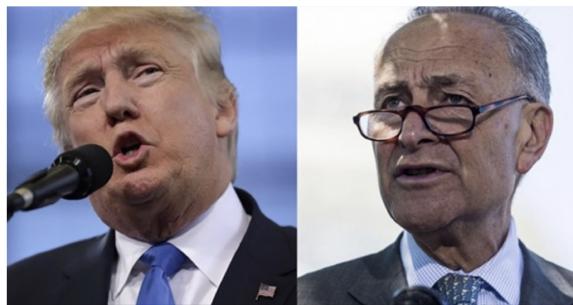
**Figure C19**

*The cross-hair appeared for 1 second.*



**Figure C20**

*Participants had 6 seconds to answer the veracity question in the time-pressure treatment. The countdown timer did not appear in the control treatment.*



CNN.COM  
Trump letter attacking Schumer is sent as President says 'this is not the time for politics'

**Do you think the above headline is accurate?**

Yes

No

5s

**Figure C21**

CNN.COM

Trump letter attacking Schumer is sent as President says 'this is not the time for politics'

**How confident are you that your answer is correct?**

**Figure C22**

CNN.COM

Trump letter attacking Schumer is sent as President says 'this  
is not the time for politics'

**Are you familiar with the news headline (have you seen or  
heard about it before?)**

Yes

No

**Figure C23**

---

**We're ready to go!**

You will see a total of 32 news headlines. After the first 16 news headlines there will be a chance to take a break.

**Please do not refresh at any point as this will end the study.**

Enjoy and press '**Next**' to start.

**Next**

**Figure C24**

*Start of mock trial. There were a total of 16 trials in the first block and 16 trials in the second block. Within each 16 trial block, an attention check trial (see below) was randomly interspersed.*



**Figure C25**

**Do you think the above headline is accurate?**

Yes

No

5s

**Figure C26**

APNEWS.COM

**With no new law to curb drug costs, Trump tries own changes**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Unable to land the big deal with Congress to curb drug...

**How confident are you that your answer is correct?**

**Figure C27***End of mock trial.*

APNEWS.COM

**With no new law to curb drug costs, Trump tries own changes**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Unable to land the big deal with Congress to curb drug...

**Are you familiar with the news headline (have you seen or  
heard about it before?)**

 Yes No

**Figure C28**

*Start of attention check trial. Each attention check trial included 3 attention checks. As there were two attention check trials in the experiment, that made a total of 6 attention checks. Instructions to answer the attention checks correctly were presented in text format on the image.*



**Figure C29**

THIS IS AN ATTENTION CHECK.

Please select 'Yes' for the accuracy question; '70%' for the confidence question; 'Yes' for the familiarity question.

**Do you think the above headline is accurate?**

Yes

No

5s

**Figure C30**

THIS IS AN ATTENTION CHECK.

Please select 'Yes' for the accuracy question; '70%' for the confidence question; 'Yes' for the familiarity question.

**How confident are you that your answer is correct?**

50% (Guessing)	60%	70%	80%	90%	100% (Completely Confident)
-------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----------------------------------

**Figure C31***End of attention check trial.*

THIS IS AN ATTENTION CHECK.

Please select 'Yes' for the accuracy question; '70%' for the confidence question; 'Yes' for the familiarity question.

**Are you familiar with the news headline (have you seen or heard about it before?)**

Yes

No

**Figure C32**

**Halfway there!**

If needed, you can take a break.

When ready, press '**Next**' to continue.

Next

**Figure C33**

*Start of mock trial for the second block.*

+

**Figure C34**

*Note the message that was presented when participants failed to answer the veracity question within the allocated six seconds.*



NYTIMES.COM

**Justice Dept. Says Facts Did Not Justify Continued Wiretap of Trump Aide**

**Do you think the above headline is accurate?**

Yes

No

0s

**Please try to respond within the allocated time.**

**Figure C35**

NYTIMES.COM

**Justice Dept. Says Facts Did Not Justify Continued Wiretap of Trump Aide**

**How confident are you that your answer is correct?**



**Figure C36***End of mock trial.*

NYTIMES.COM

**Justice Dept. Says Facts Did Not Justify Continued Wiretap of Trump Aide**

**Are you familiar with the news headline (have you seen or heard about it before?)**

**Yes****No**

**Figure C37**

*Start of second attention check trial.*



**Figure C38**

THIS IS AN ATTENTION CHECK.  
Please select 'No' for the accuracy question; '90%' for the confidence question; 'No' for the familiarity question.

**Do you think the above headline is accurate?**

Yes

No

5s

**Figure C39**

THIS IS AN ATTENTION CHECK.  
Please select 'No' for the accuracy question; '90%' for the confidence question; 'No' for the familiarity question.

**How confident are you that your answer is correct?**

50% (Guessing)	60%	70%	80%	90%	100% (Completely Confident)
-------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----------------------------------

**Figure C40***End of second attention check trial.*

THIS IS AN ATTENTION CHECK.

Please select 'No' for the accuracy question; '90%' for the confidence question; 'No' for the familiarity question.

**Are you familiar with the news headline (have you seen or heard about it before?)**

Yes

No

**Figure C41****Short Questionnaire**

We'd now like to ask you a few demographic questions. This will be followed by a short quiz.

Next

**Figure C42**

*Choices for demographic questions can be seen via the drop down menus.*

Demographics

What's your age?

✓ select

18    gender do you identify with the most?

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

Next

**Figure C43**

Demographics

What's your age?

Which gender do you identify with the most?

select  
Male  
Female  
Other

**Figure C44**

**Demographics**

How interested are you in information about what's going on in government and politics?

✓ select

Extremely interested      how many days do you talk about politics  
Very interested  
Moderately interested  
Slightly interested  
Not at all interested

Next

**Figure C45**

**Demographics**

How interested are you in information about what's going on in government and politics?

select ▾

During a typical week, how many days do you talk about politics with family or friends?

✓ select

0  
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7

Next

**Figure C46**

*For these two questions, participants could not choose the same option twice.*

Demographics

Where do you get most of your news from?

✓ select

Family and/or friends  
News websites and apps  
Printed Newspapers and/or magazines  
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)  
Television and/or Radio

Where do you get your news from?

Next

**Figure C47**

**Demographics**

Where do you get most of your news from?

select

Apart from the above, where else do you get your news from?

✓ select

- Family and/or friends
- News websites and apps
- Printed Newspapers and/or magazines
- Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)
- Television and/or Radio

Next

**Figure C48**

**Demographics**

Which of the following best describes your political preference?

Strongly Democratic  
Democratic  
Lean Democratic  
Lean Republican  
Republican  
Strongly Republican

Next

**Figure C49**

*To avoid anchoring effects, the slider's thumb was deactivated and was only activated once once the slider had been clicked (see below).*

**Demographics**

On a 0-100 scale, how much did you support **Donald Trump** during the 2020 Elections? (click on slider to activate)

Low Support      Somewhat Supportive      High Support

Value:

Next

**Figure C50**

*Example of what the slider looked like once activated.*

**Demographics**

On a 0-100 scale, how much did you support **Joseph Biden** during the 2020 Elections? (click on slider to activate)

Low Support

Somewhat Supportive

High Support

Value: 76

[Next](#)

**Figure C51**

We will now finish with a quiz consisting of four short questions.

Next

**Figure C52**

Short Quiz

If you're running a race and you pass the person in second place, what place are you in?

Next

**Figure C53**

Short Quiz

A farmer had 15 sheep and all but 8 died. How many are left?

Next

**Figure C54**

Short Quiz

How many cubic feet of dirt are there in a hole that is 3' deep x 3' wide x 3' long?

Next

**Figure C55****Short Quiz**

Emily's father has three daughters. The first two are named April and May. What is the third daughter's name?

Next

**Figure C56**

Short Quiz

Have you seen at least one of the four quiz questions before?

✓ select

Yes

No

Next

**Figure C57****General Feedback**

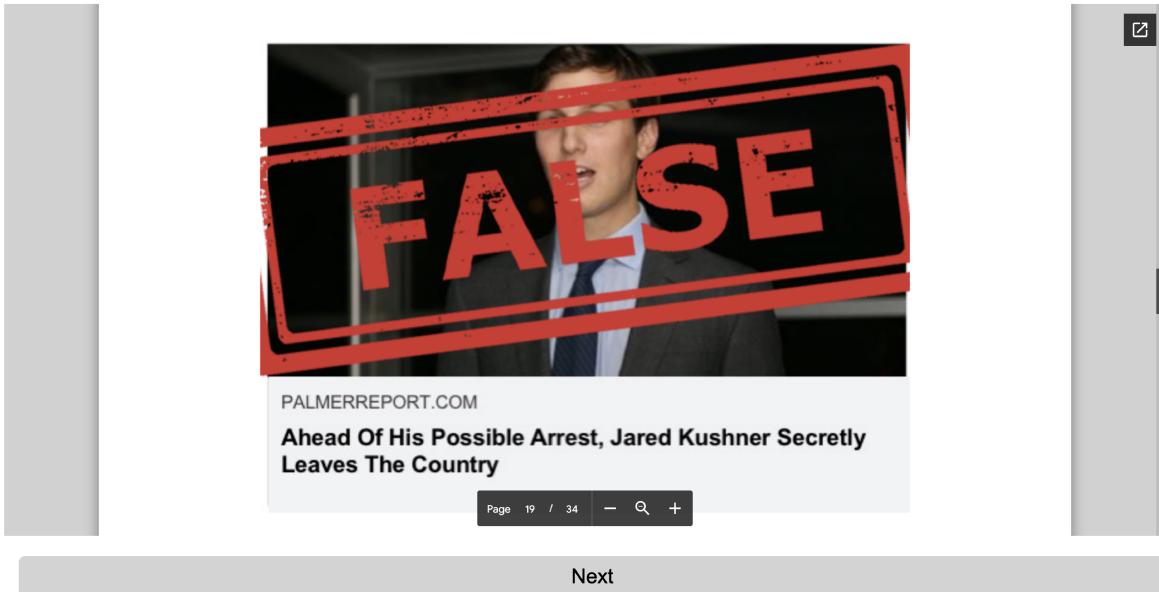
Do you have any feedback or suggestions for the study, such as: Were the instructions and questions easy to understand? What did you dislike? What did you like? Were the headlines clear?

[Next](#)

**Figure C58**

Upon study completion, participants were debriefed on the veracity of the 32 news headlines, with false headlines being clearly signposted as 'FALSE' to reduce the risk of misinformation being spread (Lewandowsky et al., 2012).

We have shown you 16 true headlines and 16 false headlines. To avoid the spread of misinformation, all items are listed below for review. The news headlines were verified for their true and false status at time of collection.



Next

**Figure C59**

**All done!**

Thank you for participating.

You judged 13 headlines accurately and hence your bonus is 0.65 GBP  
(approx. 0.92 USD).

Pressing '**Next**' will bring you back to Prolific.

Next