

# Speech Impact and Manipulation

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MANIPULATION



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# **SPEECH IMPACT AND MANIPULATION**

Methodological manual

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Methodological manual “Speech Impact and Manipulation” is designed for MA students of 70230101 – Linguistics (English language) specialty, within the course “Modern Linguistics”. The manual suggests theoretical overview and practical tasks on the topic devoted to speech impact, its types, and influence on an addressee. Negative impact, precisely speech manipulation and its strategies are analyzed separately. The proposed tasks help in identifying the types of speech impact, thus, practicing the learned material. The purpose of the manual is to familiarize the students with pragmatic peculiarities of speech that is how the intentions of an addressor might be influencing an addressee and what pragmatic strategies contribute to the realization of this impact.

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## Topic 1. Speech Impact and Its Types

Language is a means of communication. People speak not only to exchange information, but also to exert a certain influence (impact) on the interlocutor. Some scholars claim that in linguistics there is a special trend dealing with these problems of speech impact effectiveness [Стернин, 2001].

**Speech impact** is defined as a science about an effective and civilized communication. It is based on interrelations of cultural, social linguistics and psycholinguistic components and it is realized with the help of specially selected linguistics means. The aim of any speech impact is some reconstruction of the addressee's world picture, modification of his value hierarchy, changes in behavior and emotional state. In the most general sense, speech impact can be represented as the transfer of meaning from the addresser to the addressee; it is social or communicative interaction, which has a specific characteristic to exert influence on the interlocutor. Under the influence of speech in general sense E.F. Tarasov means that "any speech act carried out by transferring to the object (addressee) some essential for him information in order to take some place in the future in the speaker's activity" [Тарасов, 1990, с. 5].

The ideas of speech impact are dated back to the ancient times and the emergence of rhetoric in ancient Greece and Rome. Suffice it to mention the names of great philosophers and orators (Aristotle, Titus, Cicero, Pericles, Julius Caesar) [Шелестюк, 2014, p. 138]. At present, the interest of scholars to the problems of theory of speech impact and effectiveness of communication has considerably increased. This interest is motivated by social and political factors, such as the development of democracy, freedom on the one hand, and economical factors, such as competitions, advertising – on the other. Besides, there are some psychological and communicative reasons motivating the development of theory of speech effectiveness, and that is a great emphasis made on human communication in all spheres of people's life [Стернин, 2015].

In its modern sense speech impact is a process of selecting linguistic means so that a desired impact on the addressee's consciousness and

activity is achieved. Speech impact is directly connected with pragmatic parameters of communication: social conditions and linguistic personality of the addresser and addressee. In this respect much attention is paid to the problems of subjective modality: the addresser's opinion, evolution, and attitude. Speech impact can be carried out silently through gestures, glances and even postures, to which people, who beg with a hat or a mug in their hand, can be best exemplified. Moreover, in deaf and dumb people, all meanings are transmitted in sign language, including those related to the impact [Gillette, 1995, p.157].

The process of impact can be resulted in: changes in individual consciousness, behavior, emotional state, knowledge about the world, attitudes to the facts and events of the real world. Speech impact is subdivided into direct/indirect.

**A direct impact** is accomplished by explicitly expressed communicative aim and it works according to the "stimulus reaction" principle. This type of impact requires the accomplishment of certain requests, orders and wishes. The aim of such impact is easily understood by the addressee. Usually, imperative sentences are used to express a direct impact (*Keep silent; First think, then speak; Do not be late*)

**An indirect impact** is accomplished by indirect speech acts whose communicative aim is not explicitly presented. F.eg.:

*It is stuffy here (An implied meaning is: Open the window,*

*You are too little to ask me such questions (Do not ask me such questions).*

Vlasyan, G.R., relying on the work of Parshin, P.B., highlights the main prerequisites for the emergence of speech impact: *psychological; cognitive; logic, 4. sociological, communicative-semiotic, structural-semiotic.*

Under *psychological* prerequisites, the mentioned linguists understand the vulnerability of person's consciousness and his/her craving for a false interpretation of what was said. With *cognitive* prerequisites, they connect a person's idea of world and the use of the world model by the manipulator in their own purposes. In the *structural-semiotic* premises, scientists find the speaker's ability to impose his/her

own idea of what is said to the listener, even without wanting it [Власян, 2007, с. 32-33].

Based on the investigations of different linguists (Sternin, Fyodorova, Leontiev, Issers, etc.), generally, the following **types of speech impact** might be distinguished:

- to make somebody do something (expressing the addressee's will). This type of impact is usually achieved by using directives, which express commands, orders, requests, suggestions.

*Give me a cup of coffee. Make it black.*

Influence can be expressed both in positive and negative forms:

*Could you lend me a pen, please?*

*Do not touch me or I'll kill you.*

- to persuade somebody to do something or to convince in something. This type of impact raises the question of argument. Argumentation is a set of statements in support of an opinion or proposed course of action. It is expressed in an orderly way, and is used to try to convince someone that the opinion or course of action is correct. For example, the speech of the lawyer who defend the accused can serve as an illustration. The process of argumentation consists of the following steps:

*Thesis → reasoning → conclusions*

Argumentation intends to change the convictions of other. Argumentation is a combination of devices as analogy, enumeration, classification and others. The addresser tries to appeal to the addressee's critical thinking choosing arguments which get thesis agreement and approval. It is to be stressed that the arguments should be true, not false. The addressee is supposed to find convincing explanations and proofs. Here many types of speech acts such as: assertive, directives, commissives, rogatives, expressives are used. However, the predominant role is given to verdictives, justifying the defendant.

- to exert an emotional impact on the interlocutor. Emotions and emotiveness are important constituent of communication. It is worthy of note that emotionally charged speech acts owing to sensuality of human

psychics are more effective means of impact than devices of logic. This type of impact can be accomplished by almost all types of speech acts.

*Directives combined with emotions: More out of the way!*

*Commissives in case of oaths, threats, pledges: I swear I will never tell anyone.*

*Expressives form the communicative center of this type of impact. They are used to express thanks, condolence, congratulations, and apology.*

*Happy birthday! Awfully sorry! Congratulations! It is kind of you to say so.*

No less important in this respect are verdictives expressing an appraisal, an opinion, or an approval: *That was an excellent idea.*

- to influence the interlocutor's consciousness so that he might make a decision. For example, in advertisements which are aimed at making the customer buy the product, different ways to influence the addressee's consciousness are used. One of them is to refer to authoritative competent sources: *This model of the car is acknowledged all over the world.*

- to influence the human's subconsciousness in order to implicitly impose some ideas or behavior on him. This type of impact is connected with the psychological phenomenon of suggestion. An implicit impact that makes people change their mind or behavior. This effect can only be achieved by obtaining the addressee's liking and trust, and it often involves an emotional impact. The level of the human's suggestibility depends on his intellectual capabilities. The lower is the intellect, the higher is the level of suggestibility and vice versa.

- to influence the addressee's world perception so that some reconstruction of his individual world picture is caused. This type of impact can be mainly acquired in the process of literary communication and it is often b.

Many types of impact such as argumentation, emotional impact and suggestion are very widely utilized in rhetoric. It is well known that various kinds of logical and emotional arguments have been used in rhetoric since Aristotle's times.

*Who is here so vile that will not love his country?*

*Have I not suffered thing to be forgiven?*

On her turn, Petrenko, V.F. distinguishes three main types of speech impact. The first type is *verbal impact*, whose characteristic is the change in the attitude of the subject to some object. This type of influence is used by speakers, in appeals, slogans and advertisements. The scientist emphasizes that the attitude to a single object can be changed by assigning to it vivid images, rich in emotional content. The next type of speech impact is not aimed at changing connotations of a single object, but on the formation of a *common emotional mood*. This type of influence is based on the attitude of the recipient, taking the emotional mood as a starting point, perceiving the world with position of the generic or collective 'we'. Emotions determine the possible forms of behavior of the subject. Finally, the third type of speech impact is directly related to a *change in the individual consciousness* of the subject, the introduction of *new categories and concepts*. This type is primarily concerned with scientific and methodological texts [Петренко, 1990, с. 328-331].

Sternin, I.A. identifies the ***main factors of speech impact***. In total, there are 14 of them, united into three main groups:

1. *the factor of the speaker* (everything that refers to the physical side of the speaker's activities, including appearance and non-verbal communication);

2. *addressee factor* (everything that relates to taking into account, who the message is aimed at);

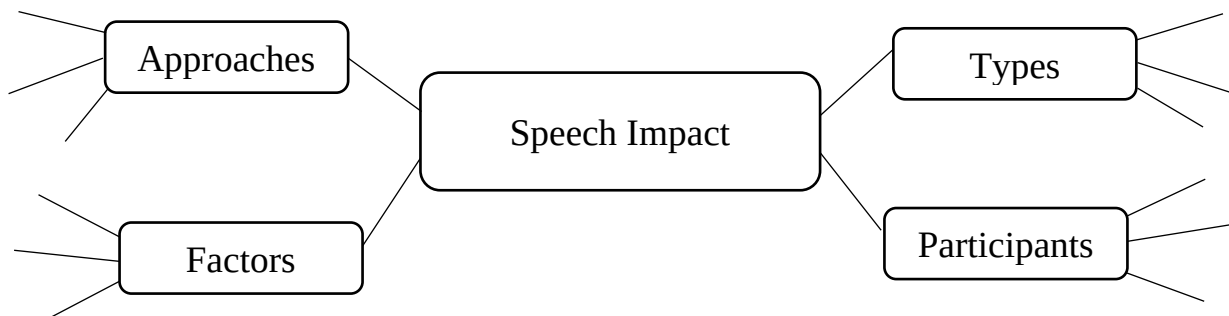
3. *the factor of the message* (what refers to filling the content, construction and forms of language expressions of the message, the conditions of its transmission).

These separate groups of factors are aimed at emphasizing the information. Thus, speaker factors include appearance, behavior and speech of the speaker. The addressee factor appeals to him/her in modern rhetoric indicating a different perception of information by the audience. The author emphasizes that gender sign is also important for the effective implementation of speech impact – male and female audiences perceive differently the same examples of argumentation: women are more

susceptible to inductive reasoning, and men to deductive. Further, scientists distinguish methods of speech impact, based on the methods of human influence on other people [Sternin, 2015, p. 21].

### ***Practical Part***

**Task 1.** Identify the aspects of speech impact based on the theoretical material that you have read. What should be taken into consideration to exert successful impact on the interlocutor?



**Task 2.** The “but” Eraser: Take the given negative sentences and rewrite them using “and” or eliminate the conjunction entirely to make the sentences sound more positive for the interlocutor. Make sure you produce positive impact.

F.e.g., “I like your design, but the colors are off” to “I like your design. We can make the colors pop even more by doing the following...”

1. I know you are tired, but you promised to help me with the groceries.
2. You said you wanted to stay home, but you were the first one ready to go out.
3. It might look simple, but you will find it much harder to realize.
4. You did a good job on the presentation, but you missed a couple of key numbers at the end.
5. I would love to approve this right now, but you still need to get the analysis improved.
6. I understand your point, but you lack sufficient argumentation.
7. The soup is delicious, but you have put too much salt.

**Task 3.** Loss vs. Gain Framing. Develop the following situations in both ways to exert impact on the interlocutor.

F.e.g.: *Loss*: “If you don’t upgrade, you risk losing data.”

*Gain:* “Upgrading ensures your data remains secure and accessible.”

1. Missing lessons; 2. Changing surname; 3. Lending money; 4. Deceiving friends; 5. Getting a pet; 6. Starting smoking; 7. Leaving the country.

**Task 4.** People process the world primarily through visual, auditory, or kinesthetic channels. Adjusting your language to match theirs drastically increases impact. Take the given statements and transfer them into embodied process types.

F.e.g. “I understand the problem” into:

*Visual:* “I see exactly what you mean.”

*Auditory:* “I hear what you are saying.”

*Kinesthetic:* “I can grasp the weight of this situation.”

1. I cannot get the issue. 2. I understand the risks. 3. We can change the situation. 4. I disagree with you. 5. Explain this rule to me. 6. This is a bad idea. 7. I remember this case. 8. Let’s start the program.

**Task 5.** The Rule of Three. Create slogans or persuasive points using three elements (any parts of speech might be activated).

F.e.g. “We need to work faster, smarter, and together.”

1. We need to improve productivity. 2. You should finish the work. 3. There might be GDP increase. 4. The movie needs to be shot. 5. The program is to start going. 6. Nature protection will save the planet. 7. Beauty saves the world.

## Topic 2. The Ways and Linguistic Means of Speech Manipulation

A special type of impact is ***speech manipulation***. To manipulate means to skillfully cause the people to think or behave in the way you want them to. This type of impact is connected with the phenomenon of “true/false”, and presupposes and intentional distortion or misinterpretations of the truth and true facts.

Recently, manipulation has increasingly become a subject of research, as more and more investigations are devoted to the possibilities of language control, defining manipulation as covert influence, the use of language to achieve specific goals of the manipulator at the expense of the recipient [Kapa-Myp3a, 2003, c. 47-49]. It should be noted that this phenomenon must be considered precisely from this perspective, as manipulation is usually accomplished through linguistic techniques and methods. Following psychologists, linguists have also begun to address this issue. Scientists such as Karasik, I.V., Kopnina, G.A., Sternin, I.A., Sentenberg, I.V., Tarasova, I.P., Fisher, R., and others have drawn attention to the techniques and means of manipulative influence [Ярцева, 2023, c. 339-346].

In *psycholinguistics*, manipulation is understood as a type of psychological influence, the skillful execution of which leads to the hidden emergence of intentions in another person that do not coincide with their actual desires. When considering the concept of manipulation in *linguistics*, a significant difference from other fields is that the object of manipulation here is the ***linguistic personality***.

The theory of linguistic personality was fully developed by Karaulov, Yu.N. using Russian language data. Based on his conception and other research in this area, the following definition can be given: “linguistic personality is a manifold, multi-component and structurally organized set of linguistic competences, a certain linguistic correlate of the spiritual world of a personality in the integrity of his social, ethnic, psychological, aesthetic characteristics.” The linguistic personality model includes semantic, pragmatic, cognitive, and cultural layers, reflected in the verbal layer [Ashurova, Galieva, 2016, p. 154].

Effective manipulation targets all levels of its organization and utilizes all appropriate linguistic means. Linguistic manipulation requires the presence of both interlocutors: the addresser and the addressee, or in this case, the manipulator and the manipulated, and communication between them is essential [Зимняя, 2001].

In *pragmalinguistics*, verbal manipulation, as it has been noticed, is associated with the phenomenon of true and false and involves the deliberate distortion or misinterpretation of truth and true facts with the goal of manipulating the recipient's consciousness. Manipulation can result in changes in individual consciousness, behavior, emotional state, knowledge of the world, and attitudes toward real-world facts and events.

There are several ways to manipulate the addresser's consciousness:

- a) misinformation;
- b) a biased selection of the facts, which the addressee does not notice;
- c) ignoring or husking up some information;
- d) substitution of notions.

The effect of the manipulation can be achieved by the following linguistic means:

- intentional ambiguity created by an abundance of stylistically marked expressions;
- syntactic means, such as impersonification and passive constructions;
- lexical means: the recurrent use of abstract words of broad semantics such as: *idea, people, democracy, motherland*; highly evaluative adjectives such as: *terrible, greatest, indisputable*; amplifiers: *everyone, everybody, no one*;
- euphemistic expressions [Ярцева, 2023, с. 339-346].

The strategy of manipulation is widely used in different spheres of communication. In political discourse:

*"You are always writing: bombing, bombing, and bombing. It is not bombing. It is air support."* These are the words of a general addressed to the journalist with the aim to conceal the truth.

In social sphere of communication:

*“I am an old cripple, drawing an old-age pension, working hard to raise vast quantities of vegetables on an allotment and well aware that, one of these days, I shall die. All this is fact. If, however, I listen to voice of officialdom it turns out that I am a disadvantage senior citizen, registered as disabled, drawing a retirement pension, renting a leisure garden, and presumably, immortal because I shall never die – I shall merely pass away.”* (The Sunday Times, 29 June, 1980)

This speech event is abundant in stylistic devices. The main stylistic device is euphemism, which is ironically presented here to reveal its function of concealing the state of things as they really are. Suffice it to compare the following expressions:

- old – disadvantaged citizen
- cripple – disabled
- old-age pension – retirement pension
- allotment – leisure garden
- die – pass away

In social communication euphemistic expressions are often used to denote the so-called “non prestigious professions”.

- Secretary – office manager
- Charwoman – cleaning lady
- Undertaker – funeral director
- Press agent – public relations counsel
- Janitor – superintendent

Kara-Murza, S.G. focuses on the fact that manipulation is not forcing the addressee to do as the addresser wants, but rather the ability to convince him to want to fulfill the will of the addresser on his/her own. He refers to the main signs of manipulation as “spiritual, psychological impact”, while not excluding any physical impact, but at the same time it is necessary to make a small caveat: manipulation can be performed with the help of non-verbal means, for example, when a person squeezes the other shoulder when pronouncing certain words, thereby emphasizing the full significance of these words. The scientist also adds that manipulation is a hidden effect, because the basis of manipulation is not pressure, but persuasion of the addressee [Kapa-Myp3a, 2003, p. 49].

Manipulation aims at creating sufficient cognitive background in the addressee's mind, avoiding direct influence and control. For this purpose, it employs various techniques to attract attention, exert emotional impact, mislead interpretation of perceived information. Generally, manipulative strategies act through ***three levels of realization***:

- Conceptual, realizing intentions through conceptual systems, such as frames, knowledge structures, metaphors, etc.
- Discursive, realizing through text structure, categories and text interpretation.
- Linguistic, employing linguistic means on various levels of the language [Usanova, 2025, pp. 71-72].

The mechanisms of language manipulation are very diverse. Even phonetic and prosodic features of speech can have an impact potential. Thus, before one type of audience it is important to have codified pronunciation and intonation, and before another – a touch of dialect speech will be advantageous. However, apparently, the widest arsenal of means of influence is the lexical level. It all starts with the choice of a word to denote a particular reality. Of course, the vast majority of objects have fixed names, so that we rarely think about how they should be called, for instance, 'door', 'apple', 'milk', 'car', 'room', etc. [Weinrich, 1965, S. 47]

Still, along with this, there are concepts that allow different understanding, subsuming under different categories, which gives rise to additional shades of meaning and association. Clearly, the choice of the word is important from the point of view of an accurate reflection of reality. However, it often also serves manipulative purposes. So, the murder that occurred can be called a tragedy or a crime, but only the second name entails the question of the perpetrators, who should be punished [Паршин, 1986, с. 129].

### ***Practical Part***

**Task 1.** Manipulating causality and agency by altering sentence structures. Politicians and media outlets often use the passive voice to

obscure responsibility. Try rewriting controversial corporate or political headlines by omitting the active subject to see how blame shifts.

*F.eg.:* The police officer fired the tear gas. To: The tear gas was fired. (The instigator is completely removed from the statement).

| Active Voice                                                           | Passive Voice |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| “Tech Titan Fires Whistleblower Following Data Breach Coverup”         |               |
| “Pharmaceutical CEO Defends Price Hikes on Lifesaving Drugs”           |               |
| “Hedge Fund Managers Plunder Pension Funds in Hostile Takeover”        |               |
| “Automaker Conceals Fatal Flaws from Regulators”                       |               |
| “Lawmakers Block Voting Rights Legislation in Midnight Session”        |               |
| “Prime Minister Awards Lucrative Contracts to Major Campaign Donors”   |               |
| “Intelligence Agencies Hack Social Media Accounts of Domestic Critics” |               |
| “Supreme Court Justices Overturn Decades of Settled Precedent”         |               |

**Task 2.** Deconstructing Presuppositions. A presupposition is an implicit assumption that must be true for the sentence to make sense. Speakers use this to sneak ideas past the listener’s critical filter. Identify the hidden assumptions in the given questions and statements.

*F.eg.:* “Why did the company’s reckless policies cause this failure?”  
Hidden Assumption: The policies were reckless, and they directly caused the failure.

“When will you stop interrupting the meeting?” Hidden Assumption: You are continuously interrupting the meeting.

1. “How can we streamline our operations to match our competitor’s **superior efficiency**?” 2. “**Why** are you **refusing** to support a policy that saves lives?” 3. “We **regret** that the team fails to see the value of these mandatory weekend shifts.” 4. “The public **fails to realize** how dangerous this new technology is.” 5. “If you **start** treating your teammates with respect, our project will succeed.” 6. “We need to **restore integrity** to our local government.” 7. “**After** you see the immediate return on investment from our software, you **will** want to upgrade to the premium tier.” 8. “What did you do with the confidential files **after** you downloaded them?”

**Task 3.** Emotive Saturation. Words carry specific pragmatic and emotional weights. Manipulative speech often involves swapping neutral terms for highly charged, evaluative ones to steer the audience’s emotional response.

*F.eg.:* **Neutral:** The government adjusted the tax rates by 2.5%.

**Positive Spin:** The government optimized tax structures to promote community growth. **Negative Spin:** The government imposed a brutal tax hike on hardworking citizens.

Rewrite the following neutral paragraph using emotionally charged “spin” vocabulary.

### **Local Officials Merge Two Regional High Schools**

The regional school board voted on Thursday evening. The vote passed 5-2. They will merge Oak Creek High School and Pinecrest Academy. This change starts next school year. The Pinecrest Academy campus will close. Its 450 students will move to Oak Creek. This merge will cut administrative costs by 15% each year. The board will spend the saved money on new technology. They will also use it for building repairs. Public town halls will begin next month. Officials will discuss new bus routes there. They will also finalize schedules and staff assignments.

**Task 4.** Watch the videos on the topic **Prebunking Manipulation Techniques: Emotional Language**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qE8Q6Fj\\_2Rg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qE8Q6Fj_2Rg)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER64qa\\_qnWg&t=18s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER64qa_qnWg&t=18s)

and answer the following questions:

- How does emotional language foster manipulation effect?
- What emotions are applied more frequently?
- What other techniques do the manipulators use?
- How should an addressee avoid being manipulated?

**Task 5.** Interpretation of Acronyms. To attract attention some slogans and announcements use abbreviations or acronyms. Identify the meaning of the following acronymic social adds and provide more examples of the similar technique in English and your native social discourse.



### Topic 3. Pragmatic Strategies to Influence an Addressee

The research on the influence of speech is represented by several fields, such as argumentation theory, speech impact theory, speech genre theory, etc. Influence on the addressee might be realized via the influence on individual and/or collective consciousness and behavior, accomplished through various speech means, in other words, through messages in natural language. The influence of speech sometimes also includes paralinguistic semiotic systems, which primarily include facial expressions, gestures, postures, as well as the aesthetic codes of verbal creativity and graphic means of text design, such as color, font, enumeration, etc. Graphic means perform an informational and expressive function and operate in close interaction with verbal components [Паршин, 1996].

When considered in a narrow sense, the speech influence is understood as the use of the design and functioning of the aforementioned sign systems, primarily natural language, to construct messages with an increased potential for impact on the addressee. In a broad sense, verbal influence can be identified with the process of verbal communication, considered in terms of its purposefulness. Scientific research shows that in any act of verbal communication, participants pursue specific nonverbal goals that ultimately influence the actions of the interlocutor [Власян, 2007].

Blakar, R.M. argued that it is impossible to express oneself “neutrally” as even informal conversation involves “exertion of power,” that is influencing the perception and conceptualization of the world by the interlocutor [Блакар, 1987, с. 96]. Thus, any aspect of the linguistic structure can serve as a tool of verbal influence. On the other hand, there is only one tool of verbal influence that is the use of significant variations in the linguistic structure.

The main ***pragmatic strategies and tools*** of verbal influence can be identified as those having *logical-rhetorical*, *psychological*, and *psycholinguistic aspects*. The following methods of verbal influence might be distinguished: *persuasion*, *inducement (expression of will)*, and

*suggestion*, while highlighting two aspects of suggestion: *affective (emotional) suggestion* and the *formation of unconscious attitudes*.

Shelestyuk, E.V. has proposed a ***classification of types of verbal influence***, the corresponding speech acts, techniques, methods, illocutionary goals of verbal influence, and its specific characteristics. They might be summarized as following [Шелестюк, 2007, с. 24-25]:

- Suggestion-infection, in some cases motivation and persuasion, which presupposes conventional social impact: the choice of language, vocal dynamics, and prosody for the presentation of an utterance is based on the illocution (formal, friendly, flirtatious, intriguing, ingratiating, etc.); personal and status relationships with the addressee, their socio-cultural characteristics, gender, age, self-esteem, and emotional state. The use of non-verbal cues (facial expressions, gestures, posture, distance between speakers);

- Persuasion with elements of suggestion, which presupposes:
  - Informing-clarification (“non-judgmental” information): selection and arrangement of messages, arrangement of communicative and semantic blocks within a message, etc.
  - Proof, justification, argumentation-exposition or composition: selection and arrangement of theses and arguments.
  - Argumentation-action: “guiding” the addressee imposing on him a certain sequence of actions (observation, comparison, delving into the topic, generalization, criticism, etc.) [Демьянков, 1983].
  - Manipulative argumentation: disguise and substitution of thesis, illogical arguments. Controlled inference. Selection of facts and arguments acceptable to the speaker, shifting emphasis to secondary details, changing the scale of phenomena, half-truths. Deliberate disinformation. “Double standards” of evaluation. Sophisms, logical traps.
- Inducement, suggestion, which presupposes:
  - Persuasion: language design, specific voice parameters and prosody, paralinguistic techniques taking into account the specifics of the situation, personal and status relations with the addressee,

socio-cultural characteristics, gender, age, self-esteem and emotional state of the addressee.

- Appeal: attention-grabbing, the imagery of key words, their vivid kinesthetic characteristics, the use of controlled associations, stereotypes, emotional repetitions, creating the illusion of free choice, winning over the addressee by appealing to certain values, playing on the addressee's inclinations (hedonism, orientation toward a reference group, imitation of the behavior patterns of the immediate environment, etc.).
- Emotional influence: emotional pressure, the formation or change of an emotional attitude towards someone (something) through vocal dynamics and prosody, other linguistic and paralinguistic means of expressing emotions.
- "Infection": conveying your emotional state, assessments and encouragement to follow your example.
- Motivation (will expression), which presupposes:
  - Command: language design, specific parameters of voice and prosody, paralinguistic techniques taking into account the specifics of the situation, personal and status relations with the addressee, socio-cultural characteristics, gender, age, self-esteem and emotional state of the addressee.
  - Compulsion: speech influence from a position of strength, verbal aggression, appeal to the emotion of fear, the instinct of striving for protection and safety, the use by the manipulator of psychological techniques of substituting parental figures, the "halo effect", regression of the addressee to earlier stages of personal development, etc.
- Suggestion, persuasion, which presupposes:
  - Moral and ethical assessments: the use of speech dynamics, means of nomination (paraphrases, euphemisms, "labels") with emotional and evaluative connotations, the use of stereotypes, etc.
  - Social and legal assessments: the same as in the Persuasion and Command.

For the addressor, speech influence can be *intentional* or *unintentional* (unplanned, accidental). For the addressee, it can be *overt* (conscious) or *covert* (unconscious). Accordingly, **four types of pragmatic influence** can be suggested [Ozyumenko, 2019, p. 21]:

- 1) intentional + overt;
- 2) intentional and covert;
- 3) unintentional + overt;
- 4) unintentional + covert.

*Options 3 and 4*, which are sometimes associated with the psychological concepts of imitation and contagion, should be discarded, since the impact of speech should be determined based on the speaker's target context, not the addressee's reaction. Thus, situations of accidental, unplanned impact are excluded from further consideration.

The central category of *option 1* is persuasion. Influencing the recipient's consciousness involves appealing to their own ability to perceive and critically understand reality, analyze and compare facts, draw conclusions, and persuade them to change their point of view in their favor through arguments or reasons. Argumentation can be logically correct or incorrect. Incorrect argumentation arises from logical errors, including errors in thesis, errors in arguments, and errors in their connection. If the errors are intentional – that is, if the recipient is intentionally misled and forced to draw a false conclusion – then they are called *sophisms*.

It would be incorrect to claim that option 1 is realized only through pure rational argumentation. A speaker can achieve their goal through emotional influence – persuasion, requests, threats, blackmail. The line between *options 1* and *2* is drawn not by the opposition of reason to emotion, but by whether the influence is conscious on the part of the recipient. To be fair, it should be noted that this line is not entirely clear. There are cases where the addressee is not even aware that s/he are being influenced, but suspects it or simply intuitively senses that “something is wrong here” [Озюменко, 2019, с. 28-34].

*Option 2* is the key to the concept of suggestion (as well as to option 1 – the category of persuasion). Suggestion presupposes a weakening or

loss of conscious control over the receipt and processing of information. Suggestion excludes the rational principle and relies on the sensory-associative aspects of consciousness. This option appeals to those who wish to influence the addressee by driving their critical judgment below the threshold of awareness, often with obscene goals. Option 2 might be considered manipulative. In addition to the distinctive properties of suggestion in general, or more precisely, the intentionality of the influence on the part of the speaker and its concealment from the addressee, it is characterized by a number of more specific features, such as: the speaker views the addressee as a means to achieve their own goals; the speaker seeks to gain personal gain, which is understood in the broad sense as dominance, control, exploitation; the influence contradicts the addressee's initial will; the addressee creates the illusion of independence in decision-making.

### ***Practical Part***

**Task 1.** Targeting Logic. Master shifting an addressee's perspective through logical persuasion rather than just commanding. Pick a controversial topic. Write down your arguments supporting or opposing it using only raw facts. Next, rewrite the argument, but this time format it as a mutually beneficial solution. Present both versions to a groupmate. Ask them, which version made them feel valued, engaged, and more likely to support the idea.

*Examples of controversial topics:*

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Technology &amp; A.I.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A.I. in the Workplace: Should governments penalize companies that replace human workers with Artificial Intelligence?</li><li>• Social Media: Should social media algorithms be regulated by law to protect the mental health of users under 16?</li><li>• Deepfakes &amp; Liability: Are A.I. developers responsible for the malicious use of their generative models?</li></ul> |
| <i>Ethics &amp; Morality</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assisted Dying:</b> Is physician-assisted suicide a fundamental human right for the terminally ill?</li> <li>• <b>Animal Rights:</b> Is the use of animals in scientific and medical research ever ethically justifiable?</li> <li>• <b>Surveillance State:</b> Does the loss of personal privacy to state-level surveillance outweigh the security benefits?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                            |
| <p><i>Law &amp; Criminal Justice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Death Penalty:</b> Is capital punishment a justifiable deterrent for violent crime, or a violation of basic human rights?</li> <li>• <b>Drug Legalization:</b> Should all recreational drugs be decriminalized and treated as a public health issue rather than a criminal one?</li> <li>• <b>Corporate Accountability:</b> Should large corporations be subjected to higher criminal and financial penalties for environmental violations?</li> </ul> |
| <p><i>Economics &amp; Environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Climate Change:</b> Should governments impose direct carbon taxation on large corporations to combat global warming?</li> <li>• <b>The Future of Work:</b> Is the universal adoption of a 4-day workweek economically viable and beneficial for worker productivity?</li> <li>• <b>Wealth Inequality:</b> Should there be a legal cap on personal wealth accumulation to prevent extreme economic disparity?</li> </ul>                                   |
| <p><i>Education &amp; Society</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Standardized Testing:</b> Are standardized tests an accurate metric of student intelligence and school quality, or do they promote educational inequality?</li> <li>• <b>Cancel Culture:</b> Does public “canceling” in digital spaces encourage necessary social accountability, or does it stifle free speech and prevent rehabilitation?</li> </ul>                                                                                                        |

**Task 2.** Targeting Emotion (oral practice). Build trust and rapport by connecting with the addressee’s feelings and communication style: have a 10-minute conversation with an interlocutor about a frustrating issue. Focus entirely on their emotional state. Listen without immediately offering a logical solution, foster response. Use the pragmatic strategies

given in theory above to exert the emotional impact. Mirror their body language, match their vocal tone, and occasionally summarize what they are feeling.

*Example of the topic for conversation:* “It sounds like you feel overwhelmed when the deadline changes at the last minute.”

**Task 3.** Managing Common Ground. Choose a complex project or concept you know proficiently. Try to explain it to someone who has zero background in the field. No terminology is allowed. You must rely solely on analogies and metaphors. Use emotional language. This tests your ability to adapt your “audience design” so your message lands perfectly with the specific listener. Check afterwards, whether the topic was understood properly asking questions.

**Task 4.** Targeting the Buddy System. Make a conscious effort to find one-two genuine things to praise or thank a groupmate. Try not to make it sound artificial or flattering. People are more likely to be influenced by those, whom they like, both personally and professionally. Do not ask for anything in return right away. The goal is to build a cooperative connection so that when you eventually **do** have a request or an idea to pitch, a foundation of positive association is already in place. The request should not be offensive, academically dishonest or subduing.

F.e.g., request to give you *decent* characteristics with positive and negative sides included, and analyze whether it is really objective.

#### Topic 4. Speech Manipulation in Advertisement

The strategic use of language in advertising is a particularly clear example of verbal manipulation. Advertisers carefully plan their messages to maximize impact, employing strategies that enhance the appeal and memorability of their messages. This includes the use of slogans that are concise and compelling, often using language that evokes an emotional response in the audience [Megentesov, 2007, p. 75]. Advertising offers numerous examples of linguistic manipulation, which can serve as an excellent platform for studying manipulative techniques.

Depending on the advertising objective, the following **types of advertising** might be distinguished. *Informative advertising*, used to inform potential consumers about the appearance of new goods, services, and ideas on the market. *Persuasive advertising* is aimed at creating electoral demand. This type of advertising is used primarily when a new product is offered in a highly competitive environment, and it is necessary to emphasize its advantages over other products on the market. *Comparative advertising* is aimed at comparing the main characteristics of products, one of which is just appearing on the market, while the other – with similar characteristics – already occupies an appropriate place in the market [Weinrich, 1993, p. 47].

The following **basic principles of advertising** might be identified:

**a.** Generate the interest of the potential consumers by successfully using manipulative techniques such as drawings, illustrations, and other elements that appeal to the target audience. **b.** Maintain interest by emphasizing the benefits of your offer and hiding the drawbacks. **c.** Create desires or associations that the potential client will associate with the benefits of purchasing the advertised product or service. **d.** Emphasize the advantages of goods and services, for example, by indicating that price depends on better service and higher quality; it is essential that the client experience a “special attitude” that evokes corresponding associations [Ковалёва, Бондаренко, 2020, с. 120].

Manufacturers and advertisers are interested in ways to enhance the effectiveness and impact of advertising texts through the use of specific

linguistic devices that make the message more appealing. Advertising is intended to impress potential consumers, attract their attention, and persuade them to purchase a particular product. To achieve this psychological impact, various communicative and pragmatic strategies and tactics are widely used. However, it is essential to understand how to achieve the desired result using only standard means. To attract the addressee's attention, such linguistic and pragmatic devices are crucial not only to make a strong impression on the recipient but also to encourage them to choose the advertised product. Researchers focus primarily on how ads present information to create the "required" picture of the product for the recipient. Specifically, advertising texts may exclude "undesirable" details from the given description, conversely, introduce unnecessary ones, distracting or confusing the general audience, amplify or downplay certain fragments of information, replace specific formulations with more general and vague ones, and confuse judgments expressing objective knowledge with subjective opinions [Weinrich, 1993, p. 47].

The strategy of manipulation is actively used in various commercial spheres. The manipulation of linguistic means has become widespread in advertising, both verbally in commercials and audio advertisements, and in written form – on banners, packaging, etc. One of the most common techniques applied in advertising is the use of value-based strategies, which ground on influencing the target audience by creating, reflecting, or incorporating various personal and societal value orientations in advertising materials. As a result of this influence, consumers begin to genuinely believe not only in the necessity of purchasing a product, but also in the values and behavior patterns reflected in advertising materials.

Advertising often uses techniques of manipulative argumentation that involve ***factual and logical-verbal manipulations*** [Шелестюк, 2007, с. 26]:

- misinformation and falsification;
- fabrication of facts;
- the technique of "bias", which includes the selection of acceptable facts, half-truths (silence), emphasizing unimportant, but beneficial for

the speaker components of information; positive or neutral lexical design of views acceptable for the manipulator and negative - unacceptable; placing opinions beneficial for the manipulator in “strong positions” at the beginning and end; one-sided argumentation; “double standards”, etc.;

- generalization and stereotyping of situations, personalities;
- changing the true scale of events and phenomena;
- fragmentation of the presentation of information, preventing the formation of a holistic image of the situation; deliberate schematization or detailization of information and its arrangement among other facts and arguments;
- disguising the thesis and arguments with speech acts that are not characteristic of them;
- manipulating the mode of utterance;
- using the persuasive potential of sophisms.

According to creative advertising specialist Suggett, P., advertising uses ***an additional classification of speech manipulation strategies*** [Suggett, 2016]:

- omission – concealing significant negative facts about a product;
- error – incorrect presentation of facts;
- exaggeration – overstating the characteristics, quality, and significance of a product;
- denial – denial of important information related to a product or circumstances associated with it;
- minimization – downplaying negative information;
- reinvention – recreating previously known concepts as if they did not exist before.

The use of *generally accepted values* in advertising and their *reinterpretation* is frequently applied, what influences the addressee’s consciousness and evokes a corresponding reaction in his/her mind. Furthermore, values’ incorporation directs people in evaluating a specific advertised product: it can present the advertised object as positive (desirable) and worth purchasing, or, conversely, as negative and worth avoiding. Research into the application of values reflected in advertising

messages, as well as their frequency of use in advertising for specific goods and services, is being conducted in various fields.

For instance, an analysis of commercial video advertising representing family values conducted by Alipova, Yu.Yu. revealed that this type of value is most frequently used in advertising for food and beverages (36.5%), pharmaceuticals (19.1%), and personal hygiene products (14%). Furthermore, advertising creators often use the image of “mother and child” (20%). A study of leading family values revealed that popular values in advertising are those related to raising and caring for children, the democratization of relationships, and marriage [Алипова, с. 28-30].

Different ***types of linguistic means*** fostering addressee’s attention are used in advertisement slogans. These include both visual means, such as fonts, abbreviations and acronyms, enumeration, color play, as well as textual means, such as the usage of the phonetic, morphological, and lexical transformations, stylistic devices and expressive means, language mixture, references to the works of literature, art and cinematography, etc.

Let us observe some examples of the usage of several types of linguistic means in advertising to manipulate an addressee<sup>1</sup>.

- ***Misinformation.*** Advertisement by Coca-Cola claims that Coca-Cola Vitaminizer “will boost your immune system and help fighting free radicals”. Advertisement by Nivea body cream ensures that it will “significantly reduce your body size”. These assertions are misleading as the given statements cannot be proven and no scientific research has approved these claims.

- ***Biased selection of facts.*** Super Weight Loss Accelerator advertisement refers to the audience with assumption that it “will help you lose 50lbs in 10 weeks”, husking the information that taking the peals should be combined with physical exercise and selective nutrition.

- ***Substitution of notions.*** The following add demonstrates substitution of facts, which even might cause health danger to purchasers:

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<sup>1</sup> Majority of examples are taken from <https://www.adsoftheworld.com/>



- *Big concepts or loud words.* The advertisement by POM juice claims that by drinking their juice “you can cheat **death**”. Add by Aspirin PLUS gives the example of dinosaurs as those, who died because of lack of their pills and suggests that taking their pills “can prevent **extinction**”:



- *Stylistic devices and expressive means.* The usage of stylistic means in advertisement varies from single insertions to the full texts. For instance, the usage of metaphors might be seen in adds of band aid by Johnson & Johnson “say hello to your child’s new **bodyguards**” and of juice Tropicana “your daily **ray of sunshine**”.

The abundance of stylistic means, such as metaphors, epithets, parallel constructions, defeated expectancy can be observed in the advertisement by BT Communication Solutions<sup>2</sup>:

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.adsoftheworld.com/brands/bt>

*Dave is a rabbit. He was a fish but now he's rabbit. And he's being chased by a fox. Because he's dreaming. He's dreaming because he's relaxed. He's relaxed because his organization is doing really well. It's doing really well and the profits are up. They are up because everything's running smoothly. It's running smoothly thanks to BT's communication solutions. BT's communication solutions help solve your communication problems. Which is why Dave is a rabbit.*

*BT. In business communication is everything.*

- *Register variations:* casual, interview (“90% of the questioned agreed...”), personal (“I have used “Tide” for several months and...”), scientific (“2 clinical investigations were carried out...”).

- *Repetition.* The use repetition is an integral part of advertising which is used for many pragmatic reasons: a) to attract the interlocutor’s attention; b) when the speaker is in a state of strong emotional tension; c) to remove some obstacles in communication [Ashurova, Galieva, 2013, p. 106]. In the following slogans different types of repetitions might be observed:

“**No more** excuses. **No more** silence. **No more** violence”

“**You** are not **you** when **you** are hungry”

“If your colleagues **can take** Facebook **breaks**, you **can take** fruit **break**”

“Hard **breakfast**? Soft **breakfast**? No **breakfast**?”

“Love **it**. Hate **it**. Be careful with **it**.”

“Unleash your new **power** with new Q10 **power**”

“**Nobody is going** to get you out of bed in the morning. **Nobody is going** to be there to cheer for you. **Nobody is going** to push you to keep going when you hit the wall. **Nobody is going** to make you be who you want to be.”

- *Code-switching and word-formation.* Language mixture is frequently applied when the add is directed to bilingual purchasers. This increases the ability to express mixed cultures, and when combined with compelling, culturally relevant messages, it is an effective way to connect with a bilingual audience [Sugget, 2016]. Examples of language mixture can be seen in the following adds, which apply both lexical and morphological interference to address bilingual audience<sup>3</sup>:

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hispaniconlinemarketing.com/2015/05/using-spanglish-to-take-your-hispanic-marketing-to-the-next-level/>

**League of Conservation Voters**  
Sponsored (demo) · 🌱

Like Page

Your abuela's remedy for mostly everything está en peligro because of pesticides. Act now to protect the honeybees!  
[http://bit.ly/Protect\\_Honeybees](http://bit.ly/Protect_Honeybees)



**LOSE THE BEES**  
LOSE ABUELITA'S REMEDY

We must protect the honeybees!

Help us protect abuela's traditional remedy: miel con limón. Pesticides are killing our honeybees at record numbers, putting our supply of fruits and vegetables at risk. Tell Congress to act now to save the honeybees!

LCV.ORG

**League of Conservation Voters**  
November 7, 2014 · 🌱

The moment you realize you have always supported businesses with zero emission vehicles. <http://bit.ly/1puk4up>



**BUY A PALETA  
SAVE  
EL PLANETA**

El paletero, bringing you cool happiness without smog

If you buy from el paletero or any other business that doesn't pollute the air, you're already an environmentalist. Make it official: únete a la comunidad de ecologistas [latin@s](mailto:latin@s) y descubre qué más puedes hacer para proteger el planeta.

Sign Up

LCV.ORG

## Practical Part

**Task 1.** The “Weasel Word” Hunt. Identify words that create the illusion of a strong promise without offering any concrete guarantees. Read the following slogans and highlight all passive verbs and vague adjectives. Cross out words like *virtually*, *helps*, *acts*, *up to*, or *fights*. Then, read the sentence again to see what is *actually* being promised.

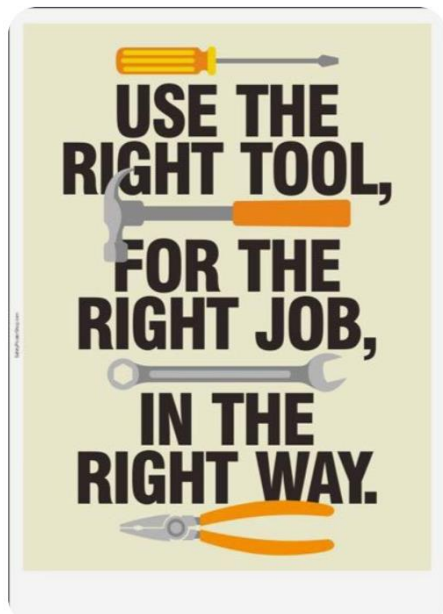
F.e.g., “**Helps** lower cholesterol” just means it might assist, not that it guarantees results.

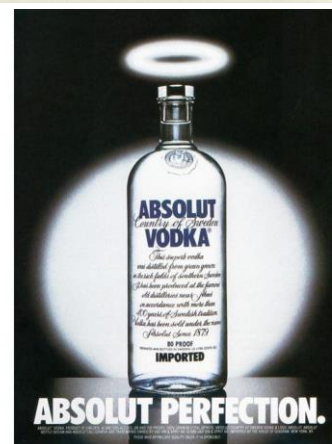
“Up to 12 hours of protection.” “Virtually spotless shine.” “Helps clear acne fast.” “Save up to 50% on your next bill.” “Fights the signs of aging.” “Helps support immune health.” “Kills up to 99.9% of germs.” “Leaves dishes virtually grease-free.” “Almost invisible on the skin.” “For skin that looks younger.” “Now with 30% more shine!” “Cleans better than the leading brand.” “Our most advanced formula yet.” “Makes you feel like a new person.”

**Task 2.** Stylistic devices and expressive means. Identify, what stylistic choices have been made in the following ads. Specify the type of a stylistic device or expressive means (phonetic, lexical, syntactic).



**Task 3.** Identify the manipulative techniques used in the following ads. Specify, how they might be influencing the consciousness of a buyer: what specific aspect they are appealing to.





**Task 4. a)** Watch the video **15 Tricks Advertisers Use to Manipulate You Every Day** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osZNK4L6hMQ&t=46s>) and answer the following questions:

- What visual deception is used by the advertisers to make products look attractive in the ads?

- What manipulative techniques are used in the given advertisements?
  - How are time and money aspects being applied in ads to manipulate the buyers?
  - How is emotional impact produced in the ads?
  - What application of color, sound and smell fosters the purchasing desire?
- b)** Discuss in pairs or groups, what other manipulative techniques and aspects you have noticed in the popular foreign and native advertisements.

### **Topic 5. Speech Manipulation in Political Discourse**

Politics is a struggle for power in order to put certain political, economic and social ideas into practice. In this process, language plays a crucial role. Power as the force in society that gets things done, that is why modern media devoted to political issues are transforming from informative to influential. They influence a person's worldview, their way of thinking, their style, and their cultural type [Gevorgian, 2011]. The influence of political texts increases during periods of political instability, various crises, and conflicts. During these periods, political discourse actively manipulates language to influence public opinion, as its primary goals are to discredit opponents, strengthen political positions, and neutralize negative public sentiment.

According to Van Dijk [1985], addressor is able to influence the mental models, knowledge, attitudes and eventually even the ideologies of recipients indirectly controlling their future action. That is, mentally mediated control of the actions of others is the ultimate form of power, especially when the audience is hardly aware of such control, as is the case in manipulation. Most forms of discursive and communicative access, such as control of setting, interaction, topic or style will be geared toward mind controlling of participants, recipients or the audience at large, accordingly, the resulting changes in the psyche would be preferable to those in power and would generally be in their interests.

Fairclough, N. views ideologies as constructions of reality, which are built into various dimensions of the forms and meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination [Fairclough, 2015].

Political analysts observe manipulation as a type of argumentative discourse that allows for the reproduction and strengthening of the power of a particular political group. Moreover, the manipulator plays a key role in this, exerting influence through manipulative discourse [Van Dijk, 2006]. At the same time, proponents of the pragmatic approach believe that manipulation is a skillfully constructed context. It helps convey information in such a way that, given several assumptions, only those favorable to the manipulator emerge in the recipient's mind, while the context conceals or blocks other assumptions [Mailat, 2013]. Thereby, the recipient of the text follows the direction proposed by the manipulator.

Depending on the nature of information transformations in political discourse, the following types of manipulation can be distinguished [Polyakova et al., 2020, pp. 29-30]:

- Referential manipulation, which is associated with the distortion of the denotative/referent image in the process of determining reality. It can be of two types:

- a) Attention manipulation. This is a change in pragmatic focus, which changes the point of view and, accordingly, the way of perceiving the denotative. The recipient perceives this in favor of the manipulator.

- b) Factual manipulation. This is a distortion of facts (lie, falsification of facts, exaggeration, allusions, creation of referent ambiguity).

- Argumentative manipulation, which is associated with the violation of communication postulates, which can manifest itself as:

- a) Violation of the logic of text development or the integrity of the text (f.eg., avoiding an answer, changing the topic of conversation); husking quantitative indicators of accuracy and introducing qualifications of uncertainty [Tibunko, 2011];

- b) Avoiding the burden of proof, for example by using an immunization strategy that involves formulating a view in an irrefutable form that requires no evidence. Or avoiding the full presentation of

information supporting the expressed view, in particular by omitting quantitative indicators of certainty and introducing qualifications that indicate uncertainty.

Based on the classification proposed by Parshina, O.N., the following ***manipulative strategies and tactics*** can be identified ***in the political discourse***. The first is the strategy of *self-presentation (creating a politician's image)*. This strategy includes the *tactic of equating oneself with others* (demonstrating affiliation with a particular social or political group); and the *tactic of confrontation* (dividing society into “friends” and “enemies”).

- In major, there are two **strategies of persuasion** used by politicians:

1. Argumentative strategy (persuading the addressee through arguments). This substrategy includes several tactics, namely:

- a) the tactic of proven evaluation (when the speaker attempts to evaluate something and prove their point of view);

- b) the tactic of contrastive analysis (comparing and contrasting facts, events, results);

- c) the tactic of demonstrating a point of view (predicting the development of events, commenting on future goals);

- d) the tactic of illustration (citing examples and facts).

2. The dissemination strategy (a strategy for influencing people's behavior by coercing them to action or choice), which includes the tactics of promises and appeals.

- The next **strategy** is **the struggle for power**, and it includes the following sub-strategies:

1. The strategy of discrediting and attacking (undermining the opponent's authority, humiliating, damaging their reputation, etc.);

2. The manipulative strategy (various dishonest tricks to make the recipient believe the speaker). This strategy uses techniques such as making impossible promises, unproven facts, and exaggerations, as well as manipulative tactics, including politeness tactics, tactics for distracting the recipient from the real problem, and revaluation tactics.

- Another strategy is **the strategy of self-defense** (convincing the baselessness of various accusations). Tactics such as explaining disagreement and criticism are appropriate here.

- Also, there might be distinguished **strategies for maintaining power**, as well as an **informational** and **interpretative strategy** (informing citizens about the most important events in social, economic, and political life). Here are applied tactics such as problem recognition; an emphasis on the positive aspects of things; information clarification; commentary; the strategy of examining the problem from a different perspective; and the strategy of identifying a solution.

- Such a **strategy as shaping the audience's emotional state** is also worth mentioning. Functional tactics here include unification (uniting all people as representatives of a single nation), appealing to the emotions of recipients, and the strategy of taking into account the audience's values (their value system) [Паршина, 2005, с. 68-77; Shigapova et al., 2021].

Generally, speech manipulation in politics involves the deliberate use of *rhetorical devices, cognitive biases, and emotional triggers to shape public opinion, mobilize supporters, or conceal unfavorable truths*. Rather than engaging in rational debate, politicians use these tactics to control public opinion, shape public opinion, and influence voter behavior. The goal of any political leader is to gain and maintain the sympathy, affection, understanding, trust, and support of the citizens. However, this is rarely achieved through rational persuasion based on logical evidence. This explains why political leaders often employ certain manipulative tactics in discussions, strategies, and means of influencing the recipient's feelings, emotions, and subconscious to create and maintain a desired image.

The analysis by a set of scientists [Chilton, 2008; Thomas, 1995; O'Keefe, 2002; Kinch, 1998, etc.] makes it possible to **summarize the manipulative techniques** into the following:

- Emotional Impact. Rather than relying on facts and policy, politicians often use emotionally charged language to evoke strong feelings such as fear, anger, or hope.

a) *Fear Stimulation*: emphasizing threats to national security, the economy, or personal safety activates the brain's threat processing center, which suppresses critical thinking and increases support for extremist or authoritarian decisions.

b) *Hope and Renewal*: broad, inspirational slogans are used to create emotional momentum and rally followers around a forward-looking, though often vague, narrative.

- Group Identity and "Us vs. Them." Political rhetoric often uses social identity theory to create rigid in-groups (supporters) and out-groups (opponents or scapegoats).

a) *Polarization*: portraying opponents as enemies, corrupt, or fundamentally incapable of governing the country, encouraging voters to blindly support their party regardless of specific policy views.

b) *"Hidden Signals"*: usage of coded language that has standard meaning to the general public but carries a specific, hidden message designed to resonate with a specific target group.

- Exploiting Audience Ignorance. Involves the deliberate use of complex terminology, statistics, or specialized concepts that are difficult to verify or understand for the general public. This creates the impression of the speaker's expertise or the seriousness of the situation, ultimately creating a distorted perception of reality.

- Double Speech and Euphemisms. Double Speech is language designed to deflect responsibility, make negative actions look positive, or prevent clear communication.

a) *Euphemisms*: softening harsh realities. F.eg., referring to the devastating consequences of war as "overseas contingency operations" or "collateral damage."

b) *Alternative Truths*: reinterpreting established facts or statistics to create parallel narratives that serve a specific partisan agenda.

- Cognitive Distortions.

a) *Gaslighting*: repeatedly denying verifiable facts or spreading disinformation until the public begins to doubt their own memory, perception, or reality itself.

b) *Oversimplification*: reducing complex systemic problems (such as inflation or immigration) to isolated causes, such as blaming a specific person or policy, which allows candidates to offer simple (but unimplementable) solutions.

## *Practical Part*

**Task 1.** Positive-Self vs. Negative-Other. As it was mentioned in the theoretical part, politicians frequently categorize the world into “Us” (friends) and “Them” (enemies) to mobilize their base. Using manipulative techniques write a paragraph applying a polarized language: write a short paragraph pitching the policy to a crowd. Use highly emotive, glowing adjectives for your supporters (“our visionary community”) and fear-driven or dismissive terms for opponents (“fringe interests”, “doomsayers”).

The topic: **A new environmental policy is being proposed.**

Check your draft to see if you relied on hyperboles or metaphors of struggle. The goal is to make the listener feel morally obligated to support you while viewing opposition as illegitimate.

**Task 2.** Listen to the speech by D. Trump delivered 25 September 2018 at the UN General Assembly:

*<https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/september-25-2018-address-73rd-session-united-nations-general>*

- Identify, how D. Trump is appealing to the audience and what manipulative techniques he uses in his speech.

- Pay attention, how successfully the President is promoting self-image as a successful president with such phrases,

as “*In less than two years, my administration has accomplished more than almost any administration in the history of our country*”; “*...the United States is stronger, safer, and a richer country than it was when I assumed*



*office less than two years ago*"; *"The United States is the world's largest giver in the world, by far, of foreign aid."* Find other phrases used by D. Trump to create a positive image of himself.

**Task 3.** The Framing and Re-Omission. Attempt to change the pragmatic focus of a sentence without altering the core facts. Involves taking an objective statement and manipulating it using different rhetorical lenses. You should rewrite the following statements using:

- a) Euphemisms to mask the negative terms
- b) Shifting the blame to a phantom opponent

*F.eg.:* "We reduced the education budget by 15% this year" to a) "We are streamlining educational investments to maximize fiscal efficiency and modernize the curriculum"; b) "Our structural reforms are a necessary response to the financial mismanagement we inherited".

1. "We are raising corporate taxes by 4% to fund infrastructure." 2. "Our military drone strike missed the target and killed twelve civilians". 3. "We are closing three coal-fired power plants to meet carbon emission targets, which will eliminate 1,200 local jobs". 4. "The government is reducing funding for public hospitals by 8% due to budget deficits".

**Task 4.** Analyze the excerpts from the speeches of the Nigerian politicians<sup>4</sup>. Identify, which lexical manipulative techniques have been used in these passages. How would you rewrite the following texts to make them sound less manipulative?

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<sup>4</sup> The texts of speeches are delivered from:  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311983.2020.1864913#d1e229>

*I would like us to place on record our appreciation for the efforts of our ... thank our supporters up and down the country for their perseverance ... We have worked very hard in the last 18 months ... We have tried to ensure all processes in our party formation ... Nigeria in my experience has never been so divided ... We in APC are resolved to bring change to Nigeria. We plan to do things differently. (President Buhari Declaration 2015)*

*Our journey ... determination of our people and strong support from friends abroad we have today a truly ... I would like to thank the millions of our supporters who believed in us even when the cause seemed hopeless. I salute their resolve ... ensure their votes count and were counted. I thank those who ... (President Buhari 2015 Inaugural 2015)*

*I am going to address ... I am going to address the people ... those of you who will attain ... I am addressing ... I do not want to ... we are spent already, I will crave your indulgence Nigerian youths ... those of you who are here, listen to what I am saying. I am going to address political gatherings ... I am going to dwell ... I am focusing on the young people. I say ... I will repeat it ... and I believe all of you want to be relevant ... I will not keep you here for too long because we still have the opportunity ... (President Jonathan Declaration 2015)*

*I am mindful that I represent the shared aspiration of all our people ... I assure you that this dream of Nigeria ... those of us that you have elected to serve must show ... we must demonstrate ... we must strengthen ... (President Jonathan Inaugural 2011)*

**Task 5.** Read the transcript of the full text of Hilary Benn's speech on corruption:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2006/feb/03/development.internationalaidanddevelopment>

The speech is highly manipulative: identify the techniques used by the speaker to appeal to the audience and to belaud the anti-corruption measures. Specify, which aspects are covered more intensively. Underline lexical and stylistic means used for manipulation purposes.

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