



SPEECH MANIPULATION AND ITS LINGUOPRAGMATIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS OF INFLUENCE

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Abstract

This article analyzes the essence of the phenomenon of speech manipulation, its linguistic and psychological characteristics, main methods, and mechanisms of influence in the communicative process. In addition, manipulative units found in advertising, political speech, and everyday communication are explained through examples. The negative consequences of speech manipulation and the ways of protecting oneself from it are also discussed. Descriptive, comparative, and pragmatic analysis methods were used during the research.

Keywords: speech manipulation, pragmatics, communication, rhetoric, psychological influence, manipulative strategy, discourse, emotional influence.

Introduction

In modern communicative processes, language functions not only as a means of transmitting information but also as a powerful mechanism influencing human consciousness. In particular, the phenomenon of controlling people through speech, namely speech manipulation, is becoming increasingly widespread in mass media, advertising, political speeches, and internet communication. Through speech manipulation, it is possible to exert hidden influence on the emotions, views, and decisions of listeners or readers. In the fields of pragmatics, psycholinguistics, and discourse analysis, this issue is considered one of the important objects of research. This is because manipulative speech can affect a person's independent thinking and alter their decision-making process.

Main Part

The Concept of Speech Manipulation

Speech manipulation is the process by which a speaker exerts hidden or indirect influence on the consciousness of a listener in pursuit of a particular goal. In this process, language units and communicative strategies are used to control a person's thoughts, emotions, or behavior. Manipulation usually serves the following purposes: controlling thoughts; arousing emotions; influencing decision-making; encouraging specific actions; reducing resistance. One of the main characteristics of speech manipulation is its hidden nature. The listener often does not realize that they are being influenced [1]

Main Methods of Speech Manipulation

1. Manipulation Through Psychological Pressure. Psychological pressure is one of the most widespread forms of manipulation. In this method, the desired result is achieved by influencing a person's emotions.

Intimidation. In the intimidation method, negative consequences are emphasized: *"If you do not do this, there will be bad consequences."* This approach creates anxiety in a person and restricts their freedom of decision-making.

Inducing Guilt. Here, a feeling of remorse is created in the listener: *"Everything was ruined because of you."* As a result, the person may feel guilty and submit to the manipulator's demands.

Shaming. This method is based on exerting pressure through public opinion: *"Not everyone behaves like this."* In this case, social stereotypes are used as a manipulative tool [2].

1. Manipulation Through Linguistic Units

Use of Emotional Vocabulary. In manipulative speech, emotional and expressive linguistic units are actively employed. For example: *"a tragic situation," "surprisingly," "heroically."* Such expressions influence the listener's emotions and reduce their ability to analyze information objectively.

Euphemisms. A euphemism is the softening of a negative or harsh meaning through indirect expression. For example: using *"special operation"* instead of *"war,"* or *"staff optimization"* instead of *"dismissal of employees."* Through this method, the true essence of reality is concealed.

Metaphor and Imagery. Metaphorical expressions strengthen manipulative influence: *"Life is a battlefield."* Such figurative expressions create strong associations in the human mind[3].

2. Statistical and Authority-Based Manipulation

In many manipulative texts, statistical data are used. However, the source is often not specified: *"According to research, 90 percent of people behave this way."* Likewise, referring to unknown or unverified authorities is a common form of manipulation: *"Famous scientists also support this opinion."* In such cases, the listener tends to accept the claim without verifying the evidence[4].

Negative Consequences of Speech Manipulation

Speech manipulation has a negative impact on both society and individual psychology. In particular:

- social distrust increases;
- a person's independent thinking weakens;
- incorrect decisions are made;
- the balance between emotion and logic is disrupted.

Therefore, the study of manipulative communication is considered one of the urgent tasks of modern linguistics and psychology[5].

Methods of Protection Against Speech Manipulation

To protect oneself from manipulative influence, the following skills are of great importance: developing critical thinking, verifying information, identifying sources, avoiding excessive emotional reactions, asking questions, and conducting analysis. These methods play an important role in ensuring a person's information security.

The Difference Between Speech Manipulation and Rhetoric

The table below presents the main differences between rhetoric and speech manipulation in communicative discourse. Although both phenomena aim to influence the audience through language, they differ significantly in their purposes, methods, and ethical foundations. Rhetoric is generally regarded as an open and ethical form of communication that seeks to persuade, inform, and express ideas clearly. In contrast, speech manipulation often involves hidden intentions, psychological influence, and indirect control over the listener's thoughts or behavior. Understanding these



distinctions is important in linguistics, pragmatics, psychology, and media studies, as it helps identify ethical communication practices and recognize manipulative strategies in social interaction [6].

Rhetoric

Conveys ideas openly and clearly

Adheres to ethical norms

Informs the listener

Has an open communicative purpose

Speech Manipulation

Controls ideas in a hidden manner

Ethical violations may occur

Attempts to control the listener

Hidden interests dominate

While rhetoric is mainly manifested as the art of effective speech, manipulation differs as a mechanism of hidden influence[7].

Conclusion

Speech manipulation is one of the complex pragmatic phenomena of the communicative process, serving to influence human consciousness through linguistic means. Manipulative strategies are widely used in advertising, political discourse, mass media, and everyday communication. Their primary purpose is to covertly control the decisions of listeners. A thorough study of this phenomenon is important for developing information culture in society, fostering critical thinking, and protecting individuals from manipulative influences. Therefore, speech manipulation remains one of the pressing research areas in linguistics, psychology, and communication theory.

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