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LINGUOPRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF MANIPULATIVE DISCOURSE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK POLITICAL AND MEDIA TEXTS

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Abstract

This article examines the linguopragmatic features of manipulative discourse in English and Uzbek political and media texts. The study treats manipulation as an implicit communicative strategy aimed at influencing the addressee's perception, evaluation, and interpretation of social reality. The analysis focuses on framing, evaluative vocabulary, metaphorical modelling, presupposition, implicature, modality, rhetorical questions, repetition, and headline compression. English political and media texts tend to employ security, crisis, competition, freedom, and institutional responsibility frames, whereas Uzbek texts frequently activate stability, development, national interest, moral unity, and collective responsibility frames. The article argues that manipulation is not produced by isolated linguistic units alone, but by the interaction of language, context, cultural memory, and audience expectations. The results demonstrate that comparative linguopragmatic analysis helps reveal hidden persuasive mechanisms and contributes to the development of critical media literacy. The findings are relevant for discourse studies, political communication, pragmatics, and comparative linguistics.

Keywords: Manipulative discourse, linguopragmatics, political discourse, media discourse, framing, presupposition, implicature, metaphor, evaluation, pragmatic influence.

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Introduction

In contemporary political communication and mass media, language functions not only as a means of transmitting information, but also as an instrument of influence, evaluation, and ideological orientation. Political speeches, news reports, analytical articles, interviews, press releases, and online media texts often present social reality through carefully selected lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic choices. These choices shape the audience's understanding of events, determine what is foregrounded or backgrounded, and guide readers toward a preferred interpretation. Therefore, the linguopragmatic analysis of manipulative discourse in English and Uzbek political and media texts is an important area of modern comparative linguistics.

Manipulative discourse may be defined as a form of communicative behaviour in which the speaker or writer attempts to influence the addressee indirectly, without openly declaring the persuasive intention. Unlike direct persuasion, manipulation often operates through implicit meaning, emotionally marked vocabulary, selective nomination, presupposition, implicature, metaphor, modality, rhetorical questions, and compositional emphasis. In political and media contexts, these tools may legitimize authority, discredit opponents, construct danger, create solidarity, or present a particular decision as natural and inevitable.

The comparison of English and Uzbek materials is especially significant because both languages share universal mechanisms of pragmatic influence, while also reflecting different cultural and ideological traditions. English political and media discourse commonly activates frames related to security, freedom, crisis, competition, democracy, and personal responsibility. Uzbek political and media texts, by contrast, often rely on frames of stability, national development, public welfare, collective unity, moral values, and social responsibility. These differences are not merely linguistic; they are connected with audience expectations, socio-political experience, and culturally established models of public communication. The purpose of this article is to identify and compare the

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main manipulative strategies and pragmatic influence devices in English and Uzbek political and media texts. The research pays particular attention to how linguistic forms become tools of hidden evaluation and how pragmatic meanings are constructed within specific discourse situations. The relevance of the study lies in the growing need to understand the mechanisms of political and media influence in an era of information overload, digital communication, and ideological competition. From a practical perspective, such analysis contributes to critical reading skills and media literacy. From a theoretical perspective, it expands the study of discourse, pragmatics, and cross-linguistic political communication by demonstrating how manipulation is realized through both universal and culture-specific language patterns.

Literature Review

The theoretical basis of this research is connected with critical discourse analysis, pragmatics, appraisal theory, metaphor studies, and political communication. Machin and Mayr explain how hidden ideological meanings are produced through lexical choice, agency, modality, and multimodal representation [3]. Martin and White's appraisal theory is useful for identifying evaluation, attitude, graduation, and engagement in media texts [4]. Verschueren's pragmatic theory helps reveal how meaning depends on contextual choice and communicative intention [8]. Hyland's work on metadiscourse provides a basis for analysing writer-reader interaction and stance [2]. Van Leeuwen's approach to social actor representation clarifies how inclusion, exclusion, and legitimation are constructed in discourse [7]. Musolff's study of political metaphor demonstrates how analogy shapes public reasoning [5]. Baker, Gabrielatos, and McEnery show the value of corpus-assisted discourse analysis in media representation [1]. Partington's analysis of political argument highlights the strategic role of press discourse, briefing language, and argumentative framing [6].

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Research Methodology

The study applies qualitative comparative discourse analysis supported by limited quantitative observation. The research material consists of selected English and Uzbek political speeches, media reports, analytical articles, and headlines dealing with social, political, and public issues. The units of analysis include evaluative words, metaphors, frames, presuppositions, implicatures, modal constructions, rhetorical questions, repetitions, and headline structures. The method combines linguopragmatic interpretation, contextual analysis, semantic classification, and cross-linguistic comparison. The purpose is not only to count linguistic devices, but also to explain their pragmatic function in influencing audience perception and evaluation.

Analysis

Manipulative discourse in English and Uzbek political and media texts is realized through a complex interaction of lexical, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic devices. In English media discourse, manipulation is frequently based on crisis nomination and threat construction. Expressions such as “security threat”, “political battle”, “economic collapse”, “migration crisis”, and “urgent reform” frame events as conflict, danger, or necessary action. These expressions reduce complex social processes to emotionally accessible models and encourage the audience to accept a specific interpretation.

In Uzbek political and media discourse, manipulative influence is often connected with collective values and national development. Expressions such as “barqaror taraqqiyot” / “stable development”, “xalq manfaati” / “public interest”, “ma’naviy tahdid” / “moral threat”, and “yangi bosqich” / “new stage” create a positive or negative evaluative background before the event is fully explained. Such constructions guide the reader toward approval, concern, solidarity, or responsibility.

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Presupposition is another important tool. Phrases such as “it is clear that”, “experts warn”, “once again proved”, or “barchaga *ma'lumki*” present debatable claims as already accepted truths. Rhetorical questions also restrict interpretation by implying the desired answer. Metaphors simplify abstract political realities by turning them into journeys, battles, storms, recovery processes, or protective shields. Thus, manipulation is not limited to one device; it emerges from the cumulative effect of framing, evaluation, metaphor, modality, and textual organization.

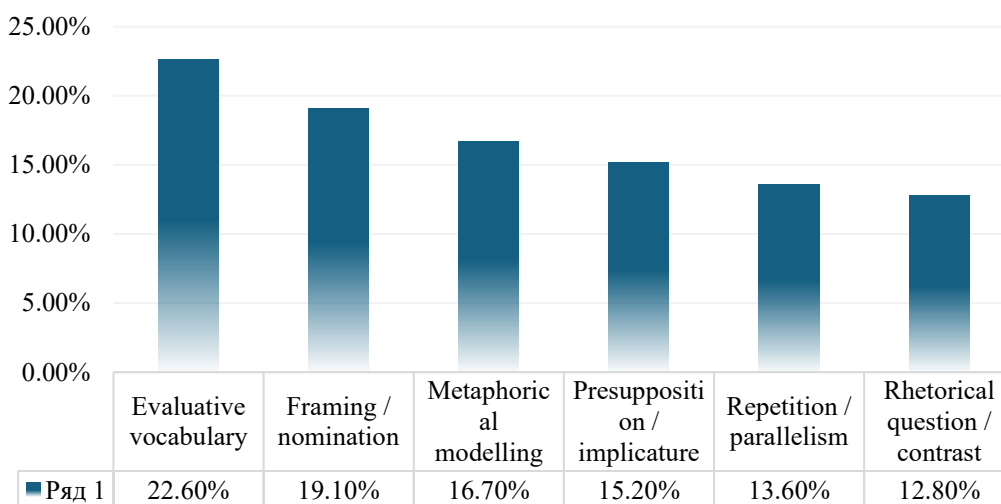


Figure 1. Frequency of Manipulative Devices in English and Uzbek political-Media Texts.

The bar chart shows that evaluative vocabulary is the most frequent manipulative device in the analysed corpus. This is natural because evaluation is the quickest way to form the reader’s emotional and ideological response. Framing and nomination occupy the second position, since political and media texts often influence the audience by naming events through crisis, reform, threat, stability, or development models. Metaphorical modelling also has a strong pragmatic role, because it transforms abstract political processes into familiar images. Presupposition and implicature are less visible but highly effective, as they

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present hidden assumptions as shared knowledge and guide the audience's interpretation indirectly.

Table 1. Comparative linguopragmatic features of manipulative discourse.

Aspect	English political-media texts	Uzbek political-media texts	Pragmatic function
Dominant frames	security, crisis, freedom, competition	stability, development, public welfare, unity	Directing interpretation
Metaphors	battle, storm, recovery, road	path of development, moral shield, new stage	Simplifying political reality
Evaluation	urgent, dangerous, historic, controversial	dolzarb, ezgu, tahdidli, muhim	Creating emotional attitude
Presupposition	it is clear that, experts warn	barchaga ma'lumki, yana isbotlandi	Presenting claims as facts
Modality	must, should, may, could	zarur, shart, mumkin, muqarrar	Constructing obligation or probability
Rhetorical strategy	contrast, accusation, warning	appeal, unity, moral responsibility	Strengthening persuasive effect

The table demonstrates that English and Uzbek manipulative discourse share many universal linguistic mechanisms, but differ in cultural orientation. English texts often rely on conflict, risk, individual choice, and institutional responsibility. Uzbek texts more frequently appeal to collective unity, social stability, public interest, and moral values. These differences show that manipulation is culturally adapted: the same pragmatic function may be realized through different semantic fields. For example, threat construction in English may be connected with security, while in Uzbek it may be connected with moral danger or social instability. Therefore, comparative analysis reveals both common pragmatic mechanisms and national discourse specificity.

The findings indicate that manipulative discourse should not be understood only as a set of negative linguistic tricks. In political and media communication, manipulation may appear as a normal persuasive mechanism used to organize public attention, create emotional involvement, and simplify complex information. However, its problematic aspect lies in the hidden control of interpretation. When evaluative words, metaphors, presuppositions, and frames

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are used systematically, the audience may accept a preferred viewpoint as objective reality. English and Uzbek texts show that manipulation depends not only on language structure, but also on cultural memory, political context, and audience expectations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the linguopragmatic analysis of manipulative discourse in English and Uzbek political and media texts shows that pragmatic influence is produced through the interaction of lexical, semantic, syntactic, and contextual devices. Evaluative vocabulary, framing, metaphor, presupposition, implicature, modality, rhetorical questions, repetition, and headline organization serve as the main instruments of hidden persuasion. In English discourse, manipulation is often realized through frames of security, crisis, competition, freedom, and institutional responsibility. In Uzbek discourse, it is more frequently connected with stability, development, national interest, collective unity, moral values, and public welfare. The comparative analysis proves that manipulative discourse has both universal and culture-specific features. Universal features include hidden evaluation, selective emphasis, and implied meaning; culture-specific features appear in the preferred frames, metaphors, and value-based appeals. The study confirms that political and media texts must be analysed not only as linguistic products, but also as pragmatic actions aimed at shaping public consciousness. Further research may apply corpus-based methods, genre comparison, and multimodal analysis to identify manipulative patterns in digital media, social networks, and televised political communication.

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