

**Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem  
Pedagógiai és Pszichológiai Kar**

**DOKTORI DISSZERTÁCIÓ**

**THE ANALYSIS OF MANIPULATION IN  
HUNGARIAN AND AMERICAN WRITTEN  
ADVERTISING DISCOURSE**

**ÁRVAY ANETT**

**Budapest, 2007.**

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## Abstract

Manipulation and persuasion are widely occurring complex phenomena in human interaction ranging from everyday communication to marketing communication or political discourse. Although persuasion is well-researched in the field of social psychology and linguistics, the notion of manipulative interaction and manipulative strategies have been discussed only in connection with political discourse (Chilton, 2002, 2004, 2005; de Saussure, 2005; van Dijk, 1998, 2006) but not in connection with other types of discourse, such as advertising. Nor has it been examined whether the manipulative strategies of print advertisements written in different languages such as Hungarian and English are similar or language/culture specific. Furthermore, little has been written on the pedagogical applicability of the critical analysis of advertisements.

In order to address these unanswered problems, the current exploratory study takes a threefold (theoretical, empirical and pedagogical) perspective. First, the theoretical perspective focuses on the description of manipulative interactions and maps out five types of manipulative strategies on the basis of the theoretical insights and empirical research results of social psychology, critical discourse analysis, rhetoric, and pragmatics. The strategies are as follows: (1) using information transition with a manipulative intention and without communicative intention; (2) withholding certain propositions; (3) using linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance; (4) using fallacious argumentation and, (5) using false proposition(s).

The second perspective of the study involves the empirical investigation of sixty Hungarian and sixty American written advertisements. The results of the analysis have revealed several similarities between the two corpora. Both in the Hungarian and in the American corpus the top three most frequently applied manipulative strategies are the appeal to the sentiments of the audience, false causal relation and false facts/misrepresentation of reality. Both corpora contain similar varieties of manipulative strategies, out of which appealing to the sentiments of the audience, and misrepresentation of reality display variants (i.e. subtype of a fallacy). The analysis also revealed novel theoretical insights regarding the connection between Gricean maxims and manipulative strategies.

The third perspective of the present study focuses on the pedagogical implications. It is argued that the Manipulation Screener and the analysis itself can be used first and foremost as a teaching aid to develop students' critical thinking (CT) and critical reading (CR) skills, which are practically missing assets of Hungarian education. Moreover, the results of the investigation can be exploited in teaching argumentation skills (both in native and in foreign language) by pointing out the differences between fallacious and non-fallacious arguments. The examples that were brought to illustrate each fallacy and their variants can also be used as a resource of real-life examples. Finally, the analysis of advertisements can contribute to media pedagogy (i.e. critical literacy), which is becoming an important new asset in education. The systematic critical analysis of advertising discourse can raise awareness of students and sensitize them to incorrect discursive practices such as manipulation.

# Contents

<b>Chapter 1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Rationale and the aim of the dissertation.....	1
1.2. Research questions.....	3
1.3. The structure of the dissertation.....	4
<b>Chapter 2. The theory of manipulation .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1. Setting the scene .....	7
2.2. Defining persuasion and manipulation .....	8
2.3. Social psychological approach.....	11
2.4. Critical Discourse Analysis and manipulation.....	24
2.5. Rhetorical approach to persuasion and manipulation .....	37
2.5.1. Ethos .....	39
2.5.2. Logos .....	40
2.5.2.1. Inductive reasoning.....	40
2.5.2.2. Deductive reasoning .....	41
2.5.2.3. Enthymemes.....	41
2.5.2.4. Errors in reasoning – argumentation fallacies .....	42
2.5.3. Pathos.....	49
2.5.4. The problem of truth and falsity .....	51
2.6. Pragmatic approaches .....	52
2.6.1. Manipulation as non-cooperation .....	52
2.6.2. Manipulation as non communication.....	58
2.6.3. Harder and Kock’s theory of presuppositional failure.....	63
2.7. Reconsidering manipulation .....	65
2.7.1. Defining manipulation and the strategies of manipulation.....	69
2.7.2. Information transmission with a manipulative intention and without communicative intention.....	72
2.7.3. Communication with a manipulative intention.....	72
2.7.3.1. The strategy of withholding.....	73
2.7.3.2. The strategy of using linguistically and logically correct elements that force on unconditional acceptance.....	74
2.7.3.3. The strategy of using argumentation fallacies .....	76
2.7.3.4. The strategy of using false proposition(s).....	77
2.7.4. The role of style .....	78
2.8. Manipulative potential/ Strength of manipulative strategies .....	81
2.9. Processing persuasion and manipulation, detecting manipulation from the communicative partners’ point of view .....	83
2.10. Summary .....	87
<b>Chapter 3. Advertising discourse .....</b>	<b>89</b>
3.1. Setting the scene .....	89
3.2. Definition and categorization.....	89
3.3. The creation of advertisements .....	91
3.4. Written advertisements .....	92
3.5. The side-effects of advertisements .....	95
3.6. Advertising and deception .....	95
3.7. Legal consequences of deceptive advertising.....	97

3.8.	Summary .....	101
<b>Chapter 4.</b>	<b>The analytical tool, the Manipulation Screener .....</b>	<b>102</b>
4.1.	Setting the scene .....	102
4.2.	Procedures of the developing of the analytical tool.....	102
4.3.	Manipulative strategies to be investigated.....	102
4.3.1.	Informing the intended addressee without a communicative intention	103
4.3.2.	Withholding information .....	103
4.3.3.	Applying linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance.....	103
4.3.4.	The strategy of using falsity.....	106
4.3.5.	Argumentation fallacies as manipulative strategies.....	106
4.4.	The analytical tool .....	121
4.5.	Pilot analysis .....	122
4.5.1.	The aim of the pilot analysis.....	122
4.5.2.	Insights of the pilot analysis .....	122
4.5.2.1.	The presence of the manipulative strategies outlined.....	122
4.5.2.2.	The difficulty of detecting withholding.....	123
4.5.2.3.	The difficulty of checking falsity.....	124
4.5.2.4.	The merits and limitations of Eemeren et al.'s taxonomy .....	124
4.5.2.5.	Questions about the treatment of emotional appeals .....	125
4.5.2.6.	Treatment of pictures .....	126
4.6.	The Manipulation Screener.....	127
4.7.	The universality of manipulative strategies .....	129
4.8.	Summary .....	130
<b>Chapter 5.</b>	<b>Method of analysis .....</b>	<b>131</b>
5.1.	Setting the scene .....	131
5.2.	Procedures of analysis .....	131
5.3.	The building of two parallel corpora .....	132
5.3.1.	Source of the advertisements .....	132
5.3.2.	Length .....	133
5.3.3.	Topic .....	133
5.3.4.	Sampling procedure .....	136
5.4.	Training the co-coder.....	136
5.5.	Pre-coding harmonization session and the analytical decisions .....	136
5.5.1.	Insufficient arguments .....	137
5.5.2.	Contradictory propositions .....	137
5.5.3.	Utterances manifesting more than one manipulative strategy .....	138
5.5.4.	Categorizing urging .....	139
5.6.	Sample analysis.....	139
5.7.	Post coding harmonization session .....	146
5.8.	Reliability of the analysis .....	147
5.9.	Summary .....	149
<b>Chapter 6.</b>	<b>Results and discussion .....</b>	<b>150</b>
6.1.	Setting the scene .....	150
6.2.	Manipulative strategies in the Hungarian Corpus.....	150
6.2.1.	Non-manipulative fallacious arguments .....	153
6.2.2.	Variants of the fallacy of appealing to the sentiments of the audience	155
6.2.3.	The presence of post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy .....	159

6.2.4.	The strategy of communicating false fact or misrepresenting reality...	160
6.2.5.	The manipulative potential of the fallacy of unclarity.....	162
6.2.6.	Unfair use of presuppositions .....	163
6.2.7.	The role of irrelevant arguments in manipulation .....	164
6.2.8.	The strategy of withholding.....	164
6.2.9.	Other cases of manipulative arguments .....	165
6.3.	Manipulative strategies in the American Corpora .....	167
6.3.1.	Non-manipulative fallacious arguments .....	169
6.3.2.	The strategy of communicating false facts or misrepresenting reality .	170
6.3.3.	Variants of the fallacy of appealing to the sentiments of the audience	173
6.3.4.	The presence of post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy .....	175
6.3.5.	The strategy of withholding.....	176
6.3.6.	Unfair use of presuppositions .....	177
6.3.7.	Irrelevant arguments in American advertisements .....	177
6.3.8.	The manipulative potential of the fallacy of unclarity.....	178
6.3.9.	Other cases of manipulative arguments .....	179
6.4.	Comparing the results of the analysis of the Hungarian and the American corpora .....	181
6.5.	Cultural aspects of the analysis.....	184
6.6.	The connection between Gricean maxims and manipulative strategies ...	188
6.7.	Limitations of the study .....	190
6.8.	Summary .....	193
<b>Chapter 7.</b>	<b>Pedagogical implications .....</b>	<b>195</b>
7.1.	Setting the scene .....	195
7.2.	Contributing to developing critical thinking and critical reading skills ...	196
7.2.1.	Defining and discussing critical thinking .....	196
7.2.2.	Defining and discussing critical reading.....	197
7.3.	Implementing the critical analysis of advertisements in foreign language classrooms.....	202
7.4.	Contributing to media pedagogy.....	203
7.5.	Summary .....	204
<b>Chapter 8.</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>206</b>
8.1.	The summary of the dissertation.....	206
8.2.	Call for further research.....	211
<b>References.....</b>		<b>213</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>		<b>230</b>

## Tables

Table 1.	Major characteristics of persuasion and manipulation .....	10
Table 2.	Summary of social psychological research findings relevant to verbal manipulation .....	23
Table 3.	The summary of discursive manipulative strategies in CDA studies .....	36
Table 4.	Thouless' (1930) thirty-eight tricks and their corresponding fallacies.....	46
Table 5.	Graphical representation of mutual knowledge in manipulation.....	64
Table 6.	A multidisciplinary summary of the insights into manipulation .....	66
Table 7.	Overview of rules for critical discussion and fallacies (Eemeren et al., 2002) .....	110
Table 8.	The categories of the analytical tool.....	121
Table 9.	Procedures of analysis .....	132
Table 10.	Commodity profile of the Hungarian Corpus (n = 60).....	134
Table 11.	Commodity profile of the American Corpus (n = 60) .....	135
Table 12.	Summary of the sample analysis of a Hungarian direct mail letter.....	146
Table 13.	Rank order of manipulative strategies in the Hungarian Corpus (n=60)....	151
Table 14.	Detailed rank order of manipulative strategies in the Hungarian Corpus (n=60).....	152
Table 15.	Rank order of manipulative strategies in the American Corpus (n=60).....	168
Table 16.	Detailed rank order of manipulative strategies in the American Corpus (n=60).....	168
Table 17.	Summary of results in the two corpora.....	181
Table 18.	The most frequent cumulative strategies of the two corpora.....	182
Table 19.	The connection between Gricean maxims and manipulative strategies .....	189
Table 20.	Three models of reading and comprehension .....	198
Table 21.	Likelihood of detecting manipulative strategies.....	202



## Figures

Figure 1.	Strength of verbal manipulative strategies .....	82
Figure 2.	The integrated model of persuasive and manipulative communication recovery (cf. Taillard, 2000, p. 166) .....	86
Figure 3.	The Manipulation Screener .....	128
Figure 4.	Sample direct mail .....	142
Figure 5.	An example for the fallacy of unclarity realized by a diagram .....	179
Figure 6.	Platinum card advertisement .....	180

## **Abbreviations**

AL = American leaflet

AM = American magazine advertisements

ADM = American direct mail

HL = Hungarian leaflets

HM = Hungarian magazine advertisements

HDM = Hungarian direct mail

n = number

RQ = research question

## Chapter 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Rationale and the aim of the dissertation

**Motto:**

“every day we are bombarded with one persuasive communication after another. These appeals persuade not through the give-and-take of argument and debate, but through the manipulation of symbols and of our most basic human emotions. For better or worse, ours is an age of propaganda.” (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1991)

Manipulation and persuasion are widely occurring complex phenomena in human interaction ranging from everyday communication to marketing communication or political discourse. Although persuasion is well-researched in the field of social psychology and linguistics, the concepts of manipulative interaction and manipulative strategies have been discussed only in connection with political discourse (Chilton, 2003, 2004, 2005; de Saussure, 2005; van Dijk, 1998, 2006) but not in connection with other types of discourse, such as advertising. The presence of manipulative strategies in marketing discourse has been referred to by a few researchers (Breton, 2000; Dawkins, 1976; Fairclough, 1989; Harré, 1985, Harris, 2002; Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992; Taillard, 2000), however, the issue has not yet been discussed extensively in the literature. Nor has it been examined whether the manipulative strategies of print advertisements written in different languages such as Hungarian and English are similar or language/culture specific. Furthermore, little has been written on the pedagogical applicability of the critical analysis of advertisements.

In order to address these unanswered problems, the current exploratory study has five major undertakings: (1) it attempts to define manipulation from a multidisciplinary

point of view; (2) it outlines five types of manipulative strategies; (3) it proposes a theory- and corpus-based analytical tool, the so-called Manipulation Screener which is suitable for the critical analysis of persuasive and manipulative advertising discourse; (4) it compares the manipulative strategies of sixty Hungarian and sixty American written advertisements in order to reveal similarities or differences in manipulative strategy use, and (5) it discusses how the analytical tool can be exploited in education.

The treatment of the notion of manipulation is multidisciplinary, since it discusses four major fields of study that bear direct relevance to manipulation: social psychology, critical discourse analysis, rhetoric and pragmatics. In order to provide a comprehensive and dynamic description of manipulative language use, this study examines manipulative interaction both from the manipulator and the manipulee's point of view.

The current study has not only been written in order to discuss challenging linguistic problems but it has been pedagogically motivated as well, since there has been a growing need in the society for developing students' critical reading and critical thinking skills. As an expression of that these skills have recently become incorporated into the Hungarian curriculum, as a requirement. It will be argued in the present study that the guided analysis of advertisements with the help of the proposed analytical tool develops critical reading and critical thinking skills which realize the highest level of discourse comprehension. By raising awareness, readers can more successfully avoid being misled or manipulated.

## **1.2. Research questions**

Since the present study takes a threefold perspective on the notion of manipulation, the research questions are subdivided into three, the first group addresses the theoretical; the second, the empirical; and the third group focuses on the pedagogical perspective.

### **The theoretical perspective:**

1. How can the concepts of persuasion and manipulation be distinguished on a theoretical basis?
2. How can persuasive and manipulative strategies be summarized by an analytical tool which can screen manipulation?

### **The empirical perspective:**

3. What kind of manipulative strategies can be identified in the Hungarian written advertising corpus?
4. What kind of manipulative strategies can be identified in the American written advertising corpus?
5. What kind of similarities and differences are displayed between the Hungarian and the American corpora regarding manipulative strategy use?

### **The pedagogical perspective:**

6. In what ways can the critical analysis of written advertisements be applied for the purposes of developing learners' critical reading and critical thinking skills?

The first research question has been inspired by the fact that the use of the terms persuasion and manipulation is inconsistent and confusing in the literature. Various disciplines approach persuasion and manipulation from different point of views and report on similar or even the same insights with different terminology. RQ 2 inquires

into the process of transforming theoretical research findings into an analytical tool. RQ 3, 4, 5 are intended to explore manipulative strategy use in sixty Hungarian and sixty American advertisements which have been selected according to three criteria: source, length and topic. The aim is to see how the manipulative strategies are manifested in advertising and which are the most frequently applied strategies. RQ 5 focuses on the universality of the manipulative strategies and the potential cultural differences between the two corpora regarding the variants and the use of the manipulative strategies. The question regarding similarities and differences is especially challenging, since advertising is a type of genre that is highly influenced by the well-established Anglo-American advertising industry. RQ 6 touches upon the possibilities of training students to become good critical thinkers and readers who are able to detect undesirable discursive practices, such as manipulation. The research questions determine the structure of the dissertation which is summarized below.

### **1.3. The structure of the dissertation**

Following the present chapter, Chapter 2 discusses the theory of manipulation from a multidisciplinary approach. A variety of theories from four disciplines – social psychology, critical discourse analysis, rhetoric and pragmatics – are introduced in order to explain how manipulation operates in human interaction. This overview of relevant theories is intended to show how each discipline treats the same problem. After presenting a critical survey, a working definition of manipulation and five types of manipulative strategies are outlined in order to provide a solid ground for the building of an analytical tool.

Chapter 3 introduces the genre of advertising. Based on semi-structured interviews with copywriters, this chapter provides a detailed account of the types and the creation of the

advertisements. The chapter pays special attention to the problem of deceptive advertising, and it also discusses its legal consequences both in the Hungarian and the American legal context.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 turn from theory to the application of the theory. Chapter 4 offers a detailed account of the process of the developing of the analytical tool, the so-called Manipulation Screener, including the insights of the pilot analysis.

Chapter 5 elaborates on the procedures of the contrastive analysis from building the parallel corpora to training the co-coder and outlining the analytical decisions. The chapter also contains a sample analysis of a Hungarian direct mail letter in order to illustrate step by step how the coders have carried out the analysis of each advertisement.

Chapter 6 introduces the results and the discussion of the results of the sixty Hungarian advertisements first, followed by the sixty American advertisements. Besides the detailed introduction of the types and variants of the manipulative strategies detected, the chapter compares the findings and discusses the cultural aspects of the analysis. Moving one step further, the chapter shows the theoretical lessons of the empirical investigation by explaining the connection between the Gricean maxims and the manipulative strategies. The chapter ends with a discussion of the limitations of the study.

Chapter 7 adds a new perspective to the study by discussing the pedagogical implications of the critical analysis of written advertisements. The concepts of critical reading and critical thinking are explained as a necessary and fruitful area to be developed in Hungarian education. Several ways are offered to incorporate the critical analysis of advertisements into the classroom.

Finally, Chapter 8 presents the Conclusions, which reviews the extent to which the current study has realized its initial aims and lists the dissertation's contribution to theory, methodology and pedagogical practices. The chapter ends by providing direction for further research.



## **Chapter 2. The theory of manipulation**

### **2.1. Setting the scene**

Persuasion and manipulation have proved of great interest to many social-psychologists and linguists including critical discourse analysts, rhetoricians, and pragmaticists. The most important difference between the two ranges of disciplines in concerning persuasion and manipulation seems to be in terms of the focus on what they find to be the most important aspect and where they draw the dividing line between the two notions.

This chapter aims at answering RQ1 (How can the concepts of persuasion and manipulation be distinguished on a theoretical basis?), by discussing persuasion and manipulation within a multidisciplinary framework: from the point of view of social psychology, critical discourse analysis, rhetoric, and pragmatics.

The chapter was designed, following van Dijk (2006), for the purpose of covering the social, cognitive and discursive aspects of manipulation. Before we embark on the multidisciplinary discussion of manipulation, we need to formulate three major questions that should be answered regarding each discipline: (1) Does the discipline separate persuasion from manipulation?; (2), What are the major insights that are relevant to the study of manipulation?; (3) What does the discipline have to say regarding manipulative language use?

The chapter opens with an overview of the various definitions of manipulation and persuasion, and following that the notion of manipulation will be discussed in the light of the four disciplines. A summary will be provided in order to see to what degree these

approaches are compatible and to highlight terminological overlaps that can easily lead to the trap of rediscovery. The chapter ends with the author's contribution to the theory of manipulation, by formulating a new working definition of manipulation, and systematically outlining five manipulative strategies that have not been discussed in this form, in the literature thus far.

## **2.2. Defining persuasion and manipulation**

The major problem when one starts studying persuasion and manipulation is that the use of the two terms is very often inconsistent, imprecise and confusing. Regarding persuasion, the different disciplines define it more or less in a similar way, and base their definitions on ancient rhetoric following the works of, primarily, Aristotle (see Section 2.5 in detail). According to Webster's Dictionary (1998), to persuade is to "move by argument, entreaty, or exhortation to a belief, position or course of action". Argument targets the rationality of the receiver, whereas the other two do not. The dictionary definition states no more than what Aristotle had written, namely, that besides logical arguments (logos), persuasion is often based on a reputation for credibility (ethos) and emotional appeals (pathos) (Aristotle, 1954). The importance and effectiveness of the latter has been justified by social psychological and psychological research, however, researchers agree that emotional appeals have to be relevant and sufficiently strong in order to be accepted as valid arguments (Brembeck & Howell, 1952; Janis & Hovland, 1959; Littlejohn, 1983; Walton, 1989, 1992).

In contrast to persuasion, the notion of manipulation is far more complicated. Although the critical analysis of political and media communication is becoming a popular research topic, there is still no agreement as to what constitutes manipulation. Various terms are used simultaneously to describe similar instances. Manipulation is used as a

synonym of unfair or faulty persuasion, *doublespeak* (Larson, 1986), *dishonest tricks* or *crooked way of persuasion* (Thouless, 1930), *propaganda blitz*, *sophisticated techniques* or *flaws of persuasion* (Rank, 1976). In keeping with this, manipulative strategies are labeled as *covert strategies of persuasion* (Pinto, 2004), *linguistic masking devices* (Leets, 2000), or *deceptive tactics* (Walton, 1989).

The English word manipulation does not have such a long history. It developed a more abstract sense only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Webster's Dictionary (1998) offers the following definition of the verb *manipulate*: "to control or play upon by artful, unfair or insidious means especially to one's own advantage." Manipulation is artful, hence the 'victims' do not even recognize that they are being manipulated. Manipulative discourse does not use direct persuasion but instead camouflages its real intention. Parret (1994, pp. 230-231) regards manipulation as a unilateral, semi-failed, truncated action, where the manipulator's intention is supported by his cognitive and pragmatic competence. The manipulated party's potential response positions are limited to impotence, obedience or indifference. The most salient feature of manipulation is that it puts the initial contract between the participants at risk, and elicits a return to an uncontrollable polemic. The philosopher, Rom Harre (1985, p. 127) has a similarly moral standpoint. He states that the moral quality of persuasion lies in the fact that the communicator respects his or her audience by treating them as people. However, in the case of manipulation the listeners do not participate as conscious and active entities in the flow of communication; the manipulator treats them as objects.

Breton (2000, p. 25) in his book on manipulation, notes that manipulation is an aggressive and forcible action; it deprives the manipulees of their freedom. He goes on to argue that the majority of today's advertisements contain manipulative utterances and

the reason why informative, argumentative ads are in the minority is that they are supposed to be incapable of changing the attitudes of the potential customers. The following table summarizes both the above mentioned shared and the divergent features of persuasion and manipulation.

**Table 1.**  
*Major characteristics of persuasion and manipulation*

<b>Persuasion</b>	<b>Manipulation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• both belong to social influencing</li> <li>• goal-oriented actions</li> <li>• both form, or change (or sometimes maintain) a certain opinion or attitude in a given subject, according to the communicator's interest</li> </ul>	
move by argument, entreaty, or expostulation to a belief, position or course of action	control or play upon by artful, unfair or insidious means especially to one's own advantage
Cooperative	non-cooperative (in Gricean sense)
open, transparent	indirect, camouflaging its real intention

All the above definitions and conceptualizations regard manipulation as a negative, non-cooperative and unequal phenomenon, whereas persuasion refers to a type of communication in which the communicator intends to influence the choices of his or her communicative partner in an open, cooperative manner. However, it should be noted that there are a few situations where manipulation serves a fair purpose, and in which it takes on the form of legitimate influencing. Psychotherapy, for instance, uses manipulation in the interests of the patient.

The separation of persuasion from manipulation seems to be a manageable task on a theoretical level. However, their separation in practice raises several problems, due to the fact that in real-life situations persuasive and manipulative strategies are very often interlinked (Bańczerowski, 1997a; Breton, 2000; Chilton, 2002; Sıklaki, 1994). The

current study attempts to discuss these difficulties by tackling the complexity inherent in the topic.

### **2.3. Social psychological approach**

The study of social influence is the central topic of social psychology (Allport 1968, Aronson 1972). It offers several theories, supported mainly by empirical research, which aim to explain how persuasion and manipulation work. Researchers of social psychology tend to propose the questions, “What is the effect of manipulation?”, together with “How does it influence people?”. The vast majority of theories focus on changes in persuadees, while the other research trends define persuasion as the reinforcement of existing behavior, attitudes or beliefs.

The first experiments in persuasive communication, at Yale in the late 1940s, aimed at determining its key factors (Hovland, Lumsdaine & Scheffield, 1949; Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953). Although only a few factors were identified, these research projects served as a basis for the outlining of the so-called attitude change theory. It states that humans have certain constraints, caused primarily by attitudes which control our behavior. If persuaders intend to change the behavior of their target audience, they must change those attitudes of the audience that are either preventing the desired behavior, or are causing the undesirable behavior. Since the research projects were rooted in learning theory, the researchers assumed that people would change their attitudes, provided that change was sufficiently reinforced. Hovland, et al. (1953) claimed that persuasion was dependent on the following characteristics: attention, comprehension, acceptance, retention and action. For persuaders, this learning model meant that their message had to be striking, capable of attracting attention, and it has to be comprehensible to the audience. The acceptance stage is the key to the success of persuasion, because if

persuadees reject the message after attending to and comprehending it, they will not be persuaded. The retention stage refers to the persistence of attitude change over time. Finally, the action (i.e. a specific behavioral change) that is requested in the message must be in accordance with the accepted or retained appeals. The Yale approach assumes that people act according to logical patterns which are consistent with the argument of the persuader. Subsequent research studies showed that a message can be persuasive, even if one or two of these steps are missing (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992).

New, influencee-oriented cognitive theories, and research that focused on the success of persuasion, proved to be more fruitful. One such theory is Petty and Cacioppo's (1981) cognitive-response paradigm, according to which every act of persuasion carried out by a means of communication is self-persuasion, which is formed by the background knowledge of the hearer. When the stored knowledge and opinion of the hearer is similar to that of the discourse, they are readily prepared to accept the communicated message. This idea was further refined by Petty and Cacioppo in their elaboration likelihood model (1986). They made a distinction between the central and peripheral route for changing opinions and attitudes. The persuasiveness of a given discourse is judged differently by various receivers, depending on their interests, involvement, motivation and momentary state. Attitude change follows the central route when the hearer is involved and motivated, evaluates the discourse, and considers the seriousness, quality, importance and relevance of the arguments. Conversely, the peripheral route comes in to play when the receiver does not make too much effort at comprehension, and their evaluation of the discourse is based on incidental aspects, such as surface and non-content features (e.g. the number of arguments, the speaker's characteristics, and the reliability of the source). It should be noted that in many situations, both routes are present at the same time but not to an equal extent.

Let us turn now to some relevant empirical investigations that aimed to examine the potentially manipulative effect of language use. Loftus, a well-known forensic psychologist who has been researching the fallibility of eyewitnesses for over twenty years, has carried out several experiments that aimed at proving the effect of language use on human memory. In one such experiment (Loftus & Palmer, 1974), she undertook to test the hypothesis that leading questions could distort accounts of events. Forty-five participants were shown slides of a car accident involving a number of cars, and were then asked to describe what had happened as if they were eyewitnesses. They were asked specific questions, including the question, “*About how fast were the cars going when they hit/smashed/collided/bumped/contacted each other?*”. The independent variable was the word chosen from the underlined selection in the question, and the dependent variable was the speed of the cars as estimated by the participants. It was found that the speed estimated by the subject was affected by the word used (*hit/smashed/collided/bumped/contacted*). Those who were asked the question containing *smashed* thought that the cars were going faster than those who were asked the question containing *hit*. The mean estimate when *smashed* was used was 41 mph, as compared to 34 mph when *hit* was used. The speed reported, in descending order, was as follows: *smashed, collided, bumped, hit* and *contacted*. The findings supported the original hypothesis that the questions affected participants’ memory. This relationship was attributed to the use of the verbs in the questions. The five **verbs** implied information about a certain level of speed, which systematically affected the participants’ recollection of the accident.

In a related study (Loftus & Zanni, 1975) the effect of the **definite article** was proven. One hundred participants saw a film depicting a multiple car accident, and were then asked to complete a twenty-two-item questionnaire. One of the questions was worded in

two forms: fifty participants were asked whether they could see broken headlights, the other fifty were asked whether they could see *the* broken headlights. Those subjects to whom the definite article version was asked were twice as likely to answer that they had seen broken headlights, even if there were no broken headlights at all. Along with other experiments, Loftus managed to demonstrate empirically that misinformation can alter an individual's recollection in predictable and very powerful ways (see also Braun, Ellis & Loftus 2002; Loftus, 1979, Nourkova, Bernstein, & Loftus, 2004). The fact that misinformation can modify human recollection can be explained by the existence of some kind of tacit expectation in the respondents during questioning. This expectation suggests that what the questioner is saying is true (Vosniadou, 1982 cited in Semin & De Poot, 1997, p. 473) (cf. Gricean maxim of quality, see later in 2.6.1).

Following on from the research tradition of Loftus, Semin and De Poot (1997) carried out two consecutive empirical studies that investigated how choice of verb in question formulation influenced respondents' answers. The research paradigm they used was the "question-answer paradigm" (QAP) (Semin, Rubini & Fiedler, 1995). The primary construct of QAP is that there are systematic differences concerning how people answer two questions that differ only in the verb type used in their formulation. For example, the following two questions "Why do you *like* the Washington Post" and "Why do you *read* the Washington Post" elicited systematically different answers, although both questions may appear to be requests to explain one's newspaper preferences. The design was a two-variable between-subjects model, in which **verb type** (action vs. state) and valence (positive vs. negative) were controlled for. The result demonstrated the manipulative effect of question formulation, as the type of the verb (static vs. dynamic) significantly influenced the respondents' answers. The interaction between causal origin and verb type was significant ( $F(1,35) = 30.28, p < 0.01$ ); when the question was



formulated with an action verb, the likelihood of the question sentence subject being in the causal origin of the answer was higher than for the question sentence object. With state verb questions the reverse trend was observed. The general conclusion of their studies is that although communication of meaning is highly sensitive to the content of what one has written down or said, there are **metasemantic features** of narratives that are independent of any particular content. This suggests that the underlying motives of the interviewer could be revealed in the light of thorough analysis of natural conversations (p. 479).

The effect of the above mentioned linguistic tools (differing verb types, definite article) has been proved empirically, which implies that these tools are potentially manipulative, if used with a manipulative intention and with false presupposition (in other words used with misinformation) because in the course of discourse comprehension these linguistic tools can function subconsciously.

The effect of **thematic roles** has also been proved in a study by Trew (1979). In his early study he compared two articles reporting on the same event (a clash between Caribic youngsters and the police) but in differing ways. In one of these articles the Caribic youngsters took on the agent role on significantly more occasions, whereas the policemen were in the patient role, which suggests that different ideological standpoints (or bias) resulted in attributing different thematic roles to the same people. This can obviously influence the readership by implying a certain interpretation of the articles.

Similar research was conducted by Leets (2000), who proved that linguistic masking devices can create differing versions of reality. One-hundred and ninety-three students participated in an attributional experiment, in which they read a brief news story based on an actual naval clash between South and North Korea. A 2x2x2x analysis of variance

demonstrated that **serial prominence**, **abstract language**, and **truncation** produced greater attributions of responsibility, and also influenced impressions of aggressiveness and status.

Howard and Kerin (1994) investigated the persuasive effect of the **order of rhetorical questions and arguments**. In their empirical study they found that if rhetorical questions are placed after arguments, the persuasive power of the discourse increases.

Regarding the research on the manipulative effect of advertising, the debated topic of subliminal advertising is worth discussing first. A **subliminal message** is a signal or message embedded in another object, designed to pass below the threshold of perception. These messages are imperceptible to the conscious mind, but are alleged to be accessible to the subconscious or deeper one: for example, an image transmitted so briefly that it is only perceived subconsciously, but not otherwise noticed (Roger & Smith, 1993, p. 10).

The well-known and oft-cited market researcher James Vicary claimed in 1957 that messages rapidly flashed on a movie screen had influenced people to purchase more food and drink. Vicary coined the term *subliminal advertising*, and formed the Subliminal Projection Company, on the basis of a six-week test in which he flashed the slogans “Drink Coca-Cola” and “Hungry? Eat popcorn” during a movie, using a tachistoscope to project the words for 1/3000 of a second, at five-second intervals. Vicary claimed that during the test, sales of popcorn and Coke in the New Jersey movie theater where the test was conducted increased by 57.5 percent and 18.1 percent respectively. Vicary’s claims were promoted in Vance Packard’s book *The Hidden Persuaders*, and led to a public outcry. In spite of the fact that Vicary’s experiments have not been successfully replicated, the practice of subliminal advertising was banned

in the United Kingdom and Australia, by American networks, and the National Association of Broadcasters in 1958 (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992, pp. 152-153). One of the strongest advocates of the banning was Bryan Key, who published many articles and books on the dangers of subliminal advertising. According to Key (1973), advertisements can work on two levels: beneath the surface of the conscious persuasive message there can be another message exerting influence. Key argued that advertising professionals use this principle to conceal images within advertisements, and that these images have an impact on our decisions and manipulate our behavior, without us even realizing that we have seen the images.

Following the 1950s subliminal message panic, many businesses have sprung up offering subliminal audio recordings, commonly known as self-help tapes, in which the message is usually masked by music. These tapes supposedly improve the health of the listener, or help to change a bad habit. However, there is no evidence for the therapeutic effectiveness of such tapes, except for that which can be attributed to expectancy and belief (Beyerstein & Eich, 1993), although 50 million dollars are spent in this industry every year in the United States (Greenwald et al., 1991 cited in Pratkanis, 2002, p. 155). Could it be that their marketing and advertising strategy is the key to their success?

To sum up, it can be stated that subliminal techniques have been used occasionally in both advertising and propaganda (see for example, the Bush campaign, Crowley, 2000) but the effectiveness of such techniques remains a topic of debate. The sole exception is hypnosis, which is known to affect the perceiver without any conscious awareness on their part.

Sales figures in advertising show that effectiveness can best be achieved with the help of “regular” (non-subliminal) advertisements, which means that the content, layout and

style of the advertisement are just as (or even more) powerful as any subliminal messages behind visual or auditory stimuli. Market researchers and psychologists have pointed out (Larson, 1986; Packard, 1964; Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992; Siklaki, 1994) that the effectiveness of many advertisements is due to the fact that they build their message on psychological content: hidden needs which individuals are usually not conscious of. Applying depth interviews and projective tests, Packard (1964) managed to describe eight hidden needs of a potential customer<sup>1</sup>, namely the need for emotional security, for ego gratification, for creative outlets, need for reassurance of worth, for love objects, for sense of power, for roots, and the need for immortality. Once these needs were established as being compelling to the public, advertisers were able to design their ads accordingly, promising a degree of symbolic fulfillment with respect to such needs.

The customers' need for emotional security can easily be exploited by **appealing to fear** (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992; Walton, 1989, 1992, 2000). This strategy was recognized and practiced by ancient rhetoricians, labeled as the fallacy of ad baculum. Advertisers (and politicians) can exploit this strategy by focusing the audience's attention on a painful fear. In such a frightened state, it is difficult to focus on anything other than getting rid of the fear. The advertiser or propagandist then offers a way to eliminate that fear by suggesting a simple, achievable response that just so happens to be in line with what the advertiser or propagandist wanted you to do all along. According to Pratkanis and Aronson (1992, p. 124),

[a] fear appeal is most effective when (1) it scares the hell out of people, (2) it offers a specific recommendation for overcoming the fear-arousing threat, (3) the recommended action is perceived as effective for reducing the threat, and

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the participants in Packard's research were all US citizens, so the results of his research are not necessarily valid and applicable to other cultures (for example, the need for roots).

(4) the message recipient believes that he or she can perform the recommended action.

The strength of fear appeal is, however, a crucial issue. Researchers (Leventhal, 1970 cited in Pratkanis, et al., 1992, pp. 127-128; Meyerowitz & Chaiken, 1987) have proved in a series of empirical investigations that stronger fear appeal usually has a greater impact on the receivers in terms of inciting them to take positive preventive actions, although too great a threat may easily hinder action. In other words, fear appeals will not succeed in altering behavior if the audience feels powerless to change the situation.

Fear appeals can be useful in urging people to take cancer-preventative measures, to give up smoking or using drugs, but can be unfair in instances where the advertisers drum up obscure fears, and then promote a phony protection, like snake-proof toilet seats, lead mattress-covers to ward off lightning, or sophisticated attaché briefcases that can help tourists defend themselves against terrorist kidnappings and attacks (Larson, 1986, p. 120). Not only can these kinds of extreme threat be exploited, but more minor threats, such as body odor or bad breath (see Example 20) are further areas of consumer susceptibility. In Packard's terms, buying these products promises us "social security".

The need for reassurance of worth bears a resemblance to the need for ego gratification. The former refers to product advertisers who promise that their brand will lead to the buyer being more valued; the latter can be exploited by emphasizing the uniqueness of the consumer. Advertisers know that "special consumers" deserve special treatment and special products. Research has proved that people are especially interested in products that are rare (for example, numbered copies of books or limited editions) and unavailable because the possession of unique, old or valuable objects raises the self-esteem of men (Farquhar, 1987 et al. cited in Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992).

Social psychologists have successfully described and proved the effect of another technique that raises self-esteem and pride. The concept of the **minimum group paradigm** (also known as the granfalloon tick) was first described by Henri Tajfel (1981). In his research he has found that strangers would form groups on the basis of completely insignificant criteria, such as the flip of a coin or the preference for a particular painting. Subjects within such meaningless associations have consistently been found to act towards other members as if they were related or close friends. Researchers offered a cognitive and a motivational explanation for this notion. According to the first one, the knowledge that “I am in this group” is used to divide up and make sense of the world, much in the same way that words and labels can be used to pre-persuade. Differences between groups are exaggerated, whereas similarity among members of the granfalloon is emphasized in the secure knowledge that “this is what our type does”. One serious consequence is that out-group members are dehumanized, and denoted by a simple, often derogatory label. The motivational explanation for these phenomena, is that social groups serve as a source of self-esteem and pride.

What makes this paradigm relevant to the study of manipulation, is that once the advertiser (or politician) has managed to direct us to a pre-ordained group, our self-esteem becomes increasingly linked to that group, and as a result motivates us to defend the group and adopt its customs, often without being conscious of it. This strategy can be manifested in the use of the first person plural pronoun *we* (cf. “*inclusive we*”, Sıklaki, 1994, p. 174), and by the informal address in Hungarian (Bárházi, 2007).

From the point of view of effectiveness, the role of the speaker is crucial. The opinion of respected and credible people (for example, of a scientist) or sources (acknowledged newspapers) are respected and believed regardless of the validity of the content

(Hovland & Weiss, 1951). However, **credibility** can be abused by creating the illusion of it. Over the last decades, advertising a product with a film star or sporting champion has been common practice among marketers. In spite of the fact that the majority of people know that these famous stars are not experts on the products they recommend, research has proved that the opinions of attractive communicators and/or famous people are more likely to be believed and accepted if the message is processed through the peripheral route (Petty, Cacioppo & Schumann, 1983).

Researchers studying consumer decision making processes have shown that objectively equivalent information is responded to differently, depending on the manner in which the information is worded or “framed”. For example, Levin & Gaeth (1988) showed that ground beef was evaluated more favorably when it was labeled as 75% lean, rather than 25% fat. The advertiser cannot be blamed for providing misinformation or even exaggerating. Still, a simple emphasis on positive information elicited positive associations in consumers, and thus manipulated them. The phenomenon has been referred to by psychologists as **positive framing**. Donovan and Jalleh (1999) confirmed Levin & Gaeth’s (1988) findings by proving the robustness of the framing effect on attitudes and purchase intention. The results suggest that consumers need to be wary of products with a ‘fat-free’ label, especially those indicating less than 90%, because these labels appear to increase attribute perceptions and purchase intention, in direct relation to the % fat implied.

Unusual vocabulary, for example, invented terms, can also influence the public. For example, in the 1920s the Listerine advertising group resurrected the word ‘halitosis’ from an old medical dictionary, and started to use the term for a new, invented ‘illness’ related to bad breath. Their print advertisement depicted a young maiden who asked

herself the question “Can I be happy with him in spite of *that*?” The advertisement created anxieties in consumers (cf. fear appeal above) who started to worry about bad breath, something about which they had not worried before. The artificially created anxiety was supposedly quickly cured by the offered solution, Listerine mouth water (Fox, 1984). The similar combined strategy of fear factor and the creating of a new need was applied in the Odorono advertisement in 1919. It was designed to make women embarrassed of their body odor (Appendix B).

Finally, let us review two consecutive experiments (Braun, Ellis & Loftus, 2002) that have proven the effect, not of a linguistic element, but of a special type of advertising, so-called autobiographical advertising. In experiment 1, participants viewed a print advertisement for Disney that suggested they had shaken hands with Mickey Mouse as a child. Compared to the control group, the increased confidence that this event had actually taken place caused by this advertisement has been attributed to a revival of a true memory, or the creation of a new false one. In experiment 2, participants viewed a made-up advertisement that suggested that they had shaken hands with a non-existent character (that cannot be found in Disneyland). Again, relative to the control group, the advertisement increased the confidence that subjects had personally shaken hands with the non-existent character at a Disney resort. The authors summarized their findings by claiming that autobiographical advertising can lead to the creation of a false or distorted memory.

In order to summarize the major findings of the above discussed studies in chronological order, a table has been created. It also indicates whether the tools have been applied in persuasive or non-persuasive discourses, and how the usage of the tool can have a manipulative effect on a general level.



**Table 2.**  
*Summary of social psychological research findings relevant to verbal manipulation*

<b>Author</b>	<b>Potential manipulative tool</b>	<b>Type of discourse in which it was studied</b>	<b>Manipulation occurs if the manipulative intention is present and:</b>
Leventhal, et al. (1970)	Fear appeal	Persuasive	the degree of fear factor is carefully adjusted.
Loftus & Palmer (1974)	Five verbs with speed implications	Non-persuasive	the verbs are used with false implications.
Loftus & Zanni (1975)	Definite article	Non-persuasive	it is used with false presupposition.
Trew (1979)	Thematic roles	Non-persuasive	the roles are fallaciously assigned to characters.
Tajfel (1981)	Minimum group paradigm	Non-persuasive	the group members do not really belong together.
Farquhar, et al. (1987)	Appeal to rarity	Persuasive	the object is claimed to be unique when it is not so.
Levin & Gaeth (1988)	Emphasizing of the positive information	Persuasive	the more positive word is used.
Howard & Kerin (1994)	The order of rhetorical question and arguments	Persuasive	∅
Stubbs (1994)	Ergativity	Non-persuasive	if it had been important to mention the role of agent .
Semin & De Poot (1997)	Action/state verbs in questions	Non-persuasive	the appropriate verb is used.
Donovan and Jalleh (1999)	Emphasizing of the positive information	Persuasive	the more positive word is used.

It can be concluded that social psychological studies prefer the term persuasion to manipulation, and they do not explicitly separate persuasion and manipulation. However, the studies have successfully proved that respondents or participants in research can be intentionally misled and influenced by verbal stimuli, without their realizing it. Participants in the various research studies were forced to come up with a planned conclusion, or form an expected implication in the interest of the creator of the

message. On the basis of the results of the studies it also becomes clear that by exploiting the knowledge of the identified hidden needs of people, they can successfully be motivated to carry out certain actions. In the light of the dictionary definitions, these results can be interpreted as empirical proof of the effect of manipulative language use.

We should note once more that labeling any linguistic tools as manipulative is a matter of definition. If the definition of manipulation includes manipulative intention, the tools can only be labeled as potential tools. The shared characteristics of the linguistic tools cited are that they force acceptance of the propositions, because they shape human comprehension. If the speaker uses them without manipulative intention, for example not knowing that the presupposition created by the tool is false, the speaker cannot be accused of committing manipulation. Regardless of the presence of the manipulative intention, several linguistic tools or their structuring, such as thematic roles, presuppositions, ergativity, positive framing, the order of rhetorical questioning and arguments, will have an effect on the listener because he or she usually has no reason to doubt the sincerity of speaker (even in non-persuasive discourse!) and the truthfulness of a statement or question which is logically and linguistically correct. For this reason, I will call these tools **linguistic tools that force an unconditional acceptance**.

#### **2.4. Critical Discourse Analysis and manipulation**

Manipulation is one of the crucial notions of a relatively young discipline, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The approach taken by critical discourse analysts is ideological; they mostly concentrate on political manipulation between groups and their members, and neglect personal manipulation which takes place between individuals e.g. in families. This section attempts to examine whether the major insights of CDA concerning manipulation are only applicable to political discourse or relevant to

marketing discourse as well. Before turning to the discussion of the theoretical and empirical works of CDA on manipulation, a short summary will be devoted to reviewing the history of CDA in order to understand its research methods.

The evolution of critical discourse analysis started several decades ago, and was driven by history. Witnessing the rise in political and war propaganda in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, intellectuals and linguists became interested in the connection of manipulative language use and ‘thought control’. Over the years, several linguists have denounced the traditional descriptive view of discourse, and formulated linguistic models which made the ‘unveiling of the text’ possible (e.g. Candlin, 1997; Fairclough 1989, 1995; Fowler, 1985, 1987, 1991; Fowler et al., 1979; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kessapidu, 1997; Kress, 1985, 1988; Kress & Hodge, 1979; van Dijk, 1993, 2006, van Leeuwen, 1995). Orwell (1949), and later on Fowler, Kress and Hodge, adopted a theoretical perspective that equated language and thought. The group of scholars who shared this view, and started to analyze texts looking for their underlying ideological purposes, were called Critical Linguists (Fowler, et al., 1979). They claimed that ideology is linguistically mediated because thought could be determined by substituting one word for another. Critical Linguists claim that the grammar of transitivity, the grammar of modality, transformations, classification and coherence, could be used for manipulation. Trew (1979) for example, argued that as a result of passivisation, the real agent of the action who was responsible for what had happened can be hidden or suppressed. As an illustration, he discussed the transformation of the sentence *The army destroyed the house* into the sentence *The house was destroyed*. In the second sentence the agent is left unmentioned. Therefore, according to Trew, it serves as a potential tool of manipulation. This view is not shared by Pateman (1987) and Chilton (2002), who claim that very often the syntactic transformation is not applied for ideological

purposes. Moreover, we cannot be sure that the reader/hearer is incapable of inferring the identity of the agent (Chilton, 2002, p. 5). Note that this criticism does not invalidate Trew's argument because Pateman and Chilton observe the issue from the hearer's point of view, whereas Trew only emphasizes the manipulative potential of the transformation that can be exploited by the speaker.

Critical Linguists base their arguments on the assumption that there are strong and pervasive connections between linguistic structure and social structure. Moreover Fowler, et al. (1979, p. 186) argue (in line with the traditional views of ancient rhetoric) that speakers manipulate hearers through the language they use:

X manipulates Y through language, and X pulls the wool over Y's eyes through language. But these processes tend to be unconscious for most speech community, for much of the time. If they were not, they would not work.

One difficulty with detailed linguistic analysis of political discourse, is that analysts are required to possess not only the knowledge of how a particular language works, and of the manipulative techniques particular to them, but they also have to be well-informed about the socio-historical situation in order to work out the relations between text and ideology (Fowler, 1991). This type of knowledge is essential to the ability to notice, for example, that in the news, certain issues are selected and others are left out in order to encourage preferred interpretations that are consistent with the interests of elite groups. Similarly, since readers and viewers are unaware of alternative perspectives on the issues, an illusion can be created by the communicator(s) that what they are receiving is a representation of objective reality, rather than the construction of a particular subjective reality (Etzioni & Halevy, 1989, cited in Robinson, 1996, pp. 184-185).

Imposing a preferred interpretation on the public can be achieved by simple falsification of facts as well. Having studied the historical charting of the activities of war correspondents, from the American Civil War to World War II, Knightly (1975) brings

examples of cases where battles that never took place were given graphic accounts, whereas others were not mentioned at all. Casualties disappeared, and winning was depicted as reality almost until the final defeat. Similar misinforming has been traced during the Gulf War, in connection with the number of Iraqi casualties (Robinson, 1996).

The late 1980s witnessed a fresh revival in critical analysis, which is now known as Critical Discourse Analysis, best represented by the work of Fairclough (e.g. 1989, 1992) and also Wodak (1996). CDA, as the founders, Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Ruth Wodak and Theun von Leeuwen agreed in 1991, can be seen less as a linguistic discipline than as a social movement. Consequently the emphasis of their analyses is placed less on linguistic mechanisms than on underlying frameworks of political analyses. Although the declaration establishes its direction, the aim of the present study requires a review of such linguistic mechanisms.

In a recent article entitled *Discourse and Manipulation* (2006), van Dijk presents a complex critical discourse analytic approach to manipulation. He claims that manipulative discourse should be studied by Critical Discourse Studies because manipulation always involves power abuse. In van Dijk's interpretation "manipulation is a communicative interactional practice, in which the manipulator exercises control over other people, usually against their will or against their best interests" (p. 361); "manipulation, socially speaking, is a discursive form of elite power reproduction that is against the best interests of dominated groups and (re)produces social inequality" (p. 366). Although van Dijk's definitions of manipulation follow the social-oriented tradition of CDA, his 'triangulation framework', designed for the study of manipulation,

goes beyond the usual scope of CDA and reaches out into the field of multidisciplinary research.

Besides the above quoted **social** aspect of manipulation, van Dijk advocates the need for examining the **cognitive** and the **discursive aspects** of manipulation as well. The cognitive account of manipulation can shed light on the processing of manipulation (Taillard, 2000, 2004 see in 2.9) and the formation of mental models, whereas the discursive analysis focuses on the typical properties of manipulative discourse, with a social-political orientation. Discussing **manipulation and cognition**, van Dijk emphasizes that the visual representation of a text (e.g. printing some words in a salient position and in bold types, use of colors) may also affect strategic understanding in short-term memory, so that readers pay more attention to certain items of information than to others, which results in more detailed processing and better recall. This fact has been known to social-psychologists for a long time and discussed in connection with the peripheral route of persuasion (cf. Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

As a critical discourse analyst, van Dijk devotes a section to the process of **manipulating social cognition**. He asserts that the stable and more permanent mental models of the readers/listeners, featuring personal experiences and also socially shared beliefs, can also be manipulated by discourse strategies such as generalization, hidden, limited or discursively de-emphasized information by euphemism, vague expressions, hyperbole, and emotive words. When attention is drawn to information A rather than B, in other words when an irrelevant detail of an issue is emphasized, understanding may be partial or biased. To sum up, van Dijk regards manipulation, in the cognitive sense, as the process of hampering understanding and restricting readers' freedom of interpretation (p. 380). As an alternative to van Dijk's interpretation, the ideology-free

cognitive approach to manipulation will be discussed in detail in Section 2.6.2, in the light of Relevance theory.

Discussing the third component of his ‘triangulation framework’, the **discursive aspects** of social-political manipulation, van Dijk notes that discourse structures, as such, are not manipulative. They only have such an effect in specific communicative situations. At this point we have to recognize that van Dijk is referring to an ongoing and exciting scientific debate about whether linguistic structures are inherently deceptive or manipulative. Evolutionary psychologists (e.g. Knight, 1998; Byrne & Whiten, 1988) claim that human communication is inherently Machiavellian, and thus manipulative, whereas critical linguists regard linguistic structures only as a potential tool for the deceiving of listeners with goal-directed intentions (Chilton, 2002). In the current study, the latter view is shared. To sum up, linguistic structures have the potential to influence people, but to label a discourse as manipulative requires the presence of a manipulative intention on the communicator’s side. For this reason, to indicate intentionality, the term *manipulative strategy* will be used throughout this study.

Van Dijk’s approach is admittedly social-political oriented, and all the manipulative strategies that he outlines in his article are subordinated to the overall manipulative strategy of **positive self-representation and negative other-representation**. This strategy (with the other strategies) resembles the well-known model of Hugh Rank (1976), although Rank labels the strategies as persuasive tactics and not as manipulation. This again illustrates the lack of agreement in the literature about what constitutes manipulation. Rank identified two groups of persuasive tactics, the first is to *intensify my good, other’s bad* by repetition, association, and composition, which corresponds to van Dijk’s strategy of positive self-representation; the second tactic of

Rank's is to *downplay my bad, other's good* by omission, diversion, and confusion, which corresponds to van Dijk's negative other-representation.

Another oft-cited researcher of ideology-related discourse, Ruth Wodak, also discusses manipulation. She claims in her publications (1989, 1996) that politicians use "manipulation strategies" of speech which deflect attention by the means of jargon, imprecise words, slogans and catchwords. Wodak (1989, p. 144) argues that when politicians employ highly abstract, indefinite or ambiguous expressions, they can make offensive facts less recognizable, and their ignorance of the issue at hand can be hidden.

At this point Bańcerowski's articles (1997a, 1997b) on manipulation should be mentioned, the views of which agree with those of Wodak's, in spite of the fact that he does not label himself as a Critical Discourse Analyst. According to Bańcerowski, the most general "manipulative trick" in propaganda is the dual nature of lexis. Furthermore, he calls attention to the hidden emotions, value judgments and evaluations encoded in verbal expressions (cf. Thouless' emotionally loaded words, 1930). Studying the language of propaganda, Bańcerowski has found examples of the manipulative use of presuppositions, hyperbole and also of the withholding of certain pieces of information (1997a, pp. 192-194).

Besides the above mentioned theoretical considerations, several corpus-based critical discourse analytical investigations have been published aiming at revealing the ideological bias of various genres. Mesfin (2006) analyzed five news articles in his study, in order to reveal the use of 'fair' and 'unfair' presuppositions in the texts. He argues that certain issues are obscured by journalists with the help of using unfair presuppositions. In other words, presuppositions are used to mystify events in order to



achieve ideological goals, and thus direct readers' understanding and interpretation in a certain direction.

Pinto (2004) selected Spanish Fascist elementary textbooks from the 1940s for his study. As a result of his textbook analysis, he identified several persuasive and manipulative strategies that had been used to transmit ideology to primary school pupils. He found that the ideology of the regime was often buried under presuppositions, twisted into pleasant allegorical examples, clichéd slogans, myths, and false analogies. Several cases were traced where the textbook writers manipulated their young readers simply by disguising false information or fiction as undeniable facts. In the meantime, Pinto found no mention of the real significant facts of the era.

A similar analysis was carried out by Stubbs (1996), who examined the language used in two contemporary school textbooks. His aim was to identify textual traces of ideological bias. Stubbs found ergativity (a grammatical device for encoding agentless actions) as a key indicator of ideological stance. Ergativity can be seen as a potential tool for the avoiding of reference to any specific cause.

The above mentioned analyses focused primarily on the **content** of the propositions of the discourse, and agreed that manipulation could impose a certain ideological message. Now, let us take a look at three analyses whose findings are potentially more relevant to the empirical study of print advertisements.

Thurlow and Jaworski (2006) put 46 different frequent-flyer programs under scrutiny. The critical discourse analysis of the corpus revealed that the airlines used a number of discourse strategies in order to manipulate their clients by creating the illusion of distinction, and by exploiting social anxieties about status. This observation has direct relevance to the study of advertising discourse, where many of the products are depicted

as exclusive or unique. The authors examined how the semantic macrostructures (content) are manipulated by lexical choices and the positioning of social actors (cf. thematic roles). They found that creating the illusion of the special individual is a typical discourse process in airline marketing in general.

Thurlow and Jaworski conclude that overemphasizing the unique benefits of being a frequent flyer, and creating an image of being elite result in the manifestation and experience of inequality. Consequently, the semiotic expression of super-elitism by the airline industry powerfully re-organizes anachronistic notions of class hierarchy. The authors define elitism as (pp. 102-103):

a person's orienting (or being oriented) to some ideological reality and/or its discursive representation in order to claim exclusivity and/or superiority on the grounds of knowledge, authenticity, taste, erudition, experience, insight, access to resources, wealth, group membership or any other quality which warrants the individual taking a higher moral, aesthetic, intellectual, material, etc. ground against 'the masses'.

The ideology inherent in these frequent-flyer programs is not apparent at first sight, so it has to be deconstructed with the help of careful and thorough analysis. However, in the case of political advertisements the strong ideological content is much more obvious. Bolívar (2001), after having analyzed 1496 such advertisements in electoral campaigns claims that political advertisements (in newspapers) as a type of discourse share a number of characteristics and strategies with advertisements in general, but remain different because they are part of a more complex social process (p. 42). Bolívar examines many aspects of the political ads, such as functions and text types, the frequency in occurrence of actors, and the complexity of the political dialogue through advertisements, but manipulative strategies as such have not been referred to directly. She mentions only that quantity of the frequency in occurrence of a candidate has been one of the main persuasive factors. In fact, the frequently observed "device of

discrediting opponents at personal, moral, intellectual and political levels” (p. 42) is also an influencing strategy, it has been labeled by rhetoricians as the fallacy of *ad hominem* (personal attack).

Another illuminating article applying an expanded framework of CDA was written by Erjavec (2004), who managed to uncover the elements of Slovenian promotional practice as drawn upon in journalism. Erjavec claims that promotional news discourse (which is illegal in Slovenia) is partial, it contains positive-only evaluation of the features or activities of the subject discussed, which is in the interest of those mentioned in the texts, and not those of the readers. With the help of ethnographic methods (participant observation and in-depth interviews) she was able to prove that advertisers often pay off or bribe newspapers not to publish pieces of information that portray them in a negative light, or even avoid covering delicate topics. This observation is a clear proof of news producers’ subordinate position in relation to the advertiser. Also, it leads us to the assumption that promotional news discourse has the capacity to mislead and thus manipulate the readers by not covering relevant information about certain issues.

Reviewing the research topics of CDA, it can be concluded that the works that touch upon the notion of manipulation bring examples primarily from political discourse, and only a minority of the studies extend their scope to other discourse types such as marketing or education. However, in one of the few critical studies on the language of print advertisements, Vestergaard & Schröder (1985) devote a separate chapter to the ideology of advertising. Although the authors established their claims more than two decades ago, they are still valid today. According to Vestergaard & Schröder, the most pervasive ideological mechanisms of advertising are the imposition of behavioral normalcy, and the semantic processes of problem reduction. Advertisements take a

certain behavioral normalcy for granted, as if it was incontestable, and instead of showing the real causes of a problem and solving them in the most obvious and most simple way, advertisements persuade the readers to solve the problem through the consumption of another commodity (pp. 141-142). Thus, advertisements spur unnecessary purchases, and promote products as the painless way to solve complex and difficult problems. As an example, a South-African advertisement for a curl remover hair cream has been analyzed. The logic of the advertisement implies that the solution to the underprivileged position of a Black woman is not the struggle for racial equality, rather to become similar to white people, i.e. to follow their fashion and straighten their hair.

Along with the above mentioned ideological aspects, Vestergaard & Schröder report on the day-dream character of many advertisements, which reinforces the illusion of a world totally absent of work (p. 146). Another striking feature of the advertisements is the propagation of individualism and the controversy that underlies this notion. Although advertisers aim to confirm their readers' precious uniqueness, at the same time they persuade them to express their particular uniqueness by the means of an identical mass-produced product (p. 149).

Regarding the ideology of advertising, Fairclough (1989) provides us with a more complex summary. He treats advertising as only one type of consumerism discourse that reflects power relations and constitutes models which are widely drawn upon. Fairclough, in his influential book entitled *Language and power*, argues that due to the sheer quantity of advertising, it has significant qualitative effects: "the constitution of cultural communities to replace (or rather displace) those which capitalism has destroyed, and which provide people with needs and values" (pp. 200-201).

Fairclough identifies the ideological ‘work’ of advertisements by discussing their three dimensions: building relations, building images, and building the consumer. Building relations refers to the conscious construction of a relationship between the producer/advertiser and the consumer. Both the producer and the audience need to be personalized, which can be achieved by directly addressing the audience members with the second singular personal pronoun *you*<sup>2</sup>, and imperative sentences (e.g. *Think of it! Just imagine!*). This technique is called synthetic personalization (p. 203).

Building an ‘image’ of the product works through the supplying of cues in the advertising text, both verbal and visual, evoking a frame for a modern lifestyle. With the analysis of a Miele advertisement, Fairclough argues that the so-called ‘modern’ lifestyle is an ideological construct which is both used as a vehicle for generating the product images, and is produced and reproduced in its own right in the process. Advertisements strongly suggest how one should live, or at least what one should acknowledge to be the best way to live (pp. 204-208).

Finally, Fairclough discusses the process of turning people into consumers. Since advertisements provide persistent models for consumer needs, values, tastes and behavior (like patterns of spending), and because people are exposed to a large number of these messages every day, there is a good chance that they will become consumers.

Before closing this section, let us summarize the above discussed CDA studies in a table which indicates the date and author of publication, the analyzed genre, and the mentioned manipulative strategies.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that the intensity of this synthetic personalisation can be reinforced in Hungarian by the informal address ‘*te*’ (you). It is becoming a more frequent practice, see for example IKEA, or T-mobile advertisements.

**Table 3.**  
*The summary of discursive manipulative strategies in CDA studies*

<b>Author, date of publication</b>	<b>Analyzed genre</b>	<b>Manipulative strategies (van Dijk)/ Manipulation strategies (Wodak)/ Manipulative devices (Chilton)</b>
Knightly (1975)	Newspaper articles	reporting on battles that never happened (= lying)
Etzioni & Halevy (1989)	Political texts	hindering the appearance of alternative perspectives on the issues
Fowler (1991)	Political texts	selecting issues to encourage preferred interpretations
Robinson (1996)	News	contradictory figures for casualties during the Gulf War
Stubbs (1996)	School textbooks	ergativity
Bańcerowski (1997a)	Political, news	dual nature of lexis, hidden emotions, value judgments and evaluations in verbal expressions, presuppositions, withholding information
Wodak (1998)	Political texts, news	using jargon, imprecise words, slogan, catchwords
Bolívar (2001)	Political advertisements	discrediting opponents by false information
Chilton (2002)	Political writing	manipulative devices e.g. alliteration, intonation, passivisation, nominalization, pronouns, metaphors, antonym, presupposition. pragmatic phenomena: interruption, back-channeling, body language, irony, rhetorical questions, evasive responses to question-answer pairs, defocusing by syntactic and semantic selections, as in presuppositions and accommodation etc.
Erjavec (2004)		lexical choice: over-lexicalization, partiality, positively-biased evaluation of the characteristics of the topic
Pinto (2004)	Fascist school textbooks	presuppositions, allegorical examples, clichéd slogans, myths, false analogies, false information
Mesfin (2006)	News articles	Presuppositions
Thurlow & Jaworski (2006)	Frequent-flyer programs	strategic lexicalization, hyperbole, ambiguity, illusion of the special individual, positioning of social actors
Van Dijk (2006)	Political speech	Overall strategy: positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. Other discourse strategies: discursively emphasize/de-emphasize certain information, not sharing relevant information, generalization, repeated message, vague expressions, hyperboles, emotion words, script-like structures, fallacies

Besides the above mentioned manipulative strategies that can be manifested by various linguistic tools the literature discusses other forms of manipulation, for example controlling the channel of communication (Chilton, 2003; Fairclough, 1989). In order to be able to manipulate a mass of people, the manipulator needs to have access to some medium of public discourse, such as news, advertising, parliamentary debates on TV or in press.

In sum, CDA offers both theoretical insights and empirical research findings regarding manipulative language use. Referring to the question that has been proposed at the beginning of this section, the approach of CDA is applicable to marketing discourse, since advertisements are not ideology-free, they are the manifestation of consumerism which strongly advocates certain patterns of a modern lifestyle (Fairclough, 1989; Vestergaard & Schroeder, 1985).

Let us note at this point that there is a line of research in social psychology whose focus overlaps with that of critical linguistics. However, despite the similarity, an important difference has to be mentioned: social psychological research primarily concentrates on the empirical evidence for the manipulative effect of the selected linguistic feature, while critical linguistic analyses rather make inferences about ideological intent on the evidence of linguistic features.

## **2.5. Rhetorical approach to persuasion and manipulation**

Rhetoric is the oldest study of the theory and practice of persuasion, and is traditionally said to have been founded by Gorgias in Sicily in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. The knowledge that has been accumulated on persuasion over the centuries of ancient rhetoric is worth reviewing briefly, since it provides the basis for both contemporary rhetoric and

argumentation theory. Moreover, many of the books on the practice of persuasion hark back to these ancient views, either with or without modifications. The present investigation also incorporates the relevant insights of ancient rhetoric regarding improper persuasion.

Although the word *manipulation* did not exist in today's sense in the times of the ancient rhetoricians, the notion was known to them and practiced under the label *eristic* ('eristike' in Greek) (Bańczerowski, 2006). Plato associated it with a mode of power through language (cf. Meno 75c-d), and this practice of power could be associated with the sophists. The word 'eristike' has different meanings in Plato's writings. It is understood as a virtuosic exercise of language; the practice of power through language by using empty and weak arguments. Eristic was a sophist method of contradiction, with the purpose of winning the argument and proving the other one wrong no matter what the truth is. Eristic method involved various debating tricks which exploited ambiguities or vagaries in an interlocutor's claims, typically unfairly, in order to confound him. The distinctions between sophistical eristic and Socratic dialectic are many, but none of them are as significant as their ethical intentions (Fortunoff, 1993). While dialectic is used to determine and pursue human excellence, sophistic eristic is used purely for self-seeking, agonistic purposes. (Kahn, 1996).

Apart from Plato, his own student Aristotle also put sophist methods under scrutiny. Aristotle regards sophistical refutation as an intentional deception, trick or tactic of argumentation that could be used to deceptively and unfairly refute an opponent in a dialogue (Walton, 1992, p.17). In contrast to this Aristotle, in his book Rhetoric, outlines the theory and practice of "fair" persuasion. According to Aristotle, persuasion should be based on proof. He distinguished two basic forms of proof – inartistic and



artistic – that provide support to a speaker. **Inartistic proof**, which pertains especially to forensic oratory, is based on existing material, such as laws, witnesses, contracts, documents, and oaths which the speaker can quote to support his claims. **Artistic proof**, on the other hand, is created by the speaker to suit the occasion. Artistic proofs or appeals can take on three major forms, in the hands of the persuader: **ethos**, **logos** and **pathos**. Let us discuss them in detail with the purpose of examining how they can be misused and become strategies of manipulation.

### 2.5.1. Ethos

Ethos refers to the reputation of the persuader as a trustworthy and knowledgeable man whose words are reliable regarding matters he or she can control. Ethos supports the strength of proof as well. According to Aristotle, there are three characteristics that can strengthen the speaker's reliability: wisdom (phronesis), virtue (areté) and good will (eunoia) (Aristotle 1378a). For example, a doctor who is an expert in curing allergies could rely on his reputation and experience when he tries to persuade others to follow his advice regarding health matters, and the audience can also rely on his advice. He might not be so persuasive when trying to advise people on political issues.

The concept of ethos has gone through various reinterpretations over the centuries. In Roman rhetoric, Cicero shifted the meaning of ethos towards pathos, the reliability of the speaker depended more on his dignity (dignitas), what he had achieved (res gestae), and his good progress (existimatio). Quintilian's ethos referred to the knowledgeable, good man with morals (vir bonus dicendi peritus). To postmodern rhetoric, ethos is the motivation of the speaker that originates from his needs, desires, frustration, and weakness (Aczél, 2004, pp. 271-274). Burke (1962) emphasizes that ethos is an ability to identify with the audience.

Ethos can be abused if the speaker is not a reliable source or expert in the matter at hand, and an impression of trustworthiness is created (see the fallacy of *ad verecundiam* in 4.3.5). The deliberate abuse of ethos can thus manipulate the audience.

### **2.5.2. Logos**

For Aristotle, the most important means of persuasion was logos. For Plato, it was the only legitimate one. Logos is the frame of argumentation. It appeals to the rational side of humans, and uses techniques such as offering statistics, examples, empirical evidence, and testimony in order to make the audience believe a certain view and arrive at the intended conclusion. Logos exists in the creation, content and organization of the argument. Aristotle made a structural distinction between inductive and deductive argumentation patterns.

#### **2.5.2.1. Inductive reasoning**

Inductive reasoning moves from the specific to the general. The argument is based on a limited number of examples, and from these examples, the speaker attempts to fashion a more general or universal rule. The major types of inductive reasoning are inductive generalization, statistical syllogism, and analogy. The manipulative potential of inductive reasoning lies in the fact that even logically weak inductive reasoning can be very convincing. Let us take the case of false analogy. If, for example, the basis of the analogy is common knowledge and clear, the audience will be willing to accept it easily, and often forgets to check whether a similarity is genuinely valid and actually exists between the basis and the compared object (Margitay, 2004, pp. 508-509). Inductive reasoning can also be fallacious if the examples are not truly representative of the whole. The more fallible is the example, the less probable is the conclusion. The more infallible the example or support, the greater the probability that truth will be

found. In addition, the use of actual, as opposed to hypothetical examples, increases the probability that something is true (Littlefield, 1999).

### 2.5.2.2. Deductive reasoning

Deductive reasoning or syllogistic reasoning, on the other hand, moves from the general to the specific. The argument is based on a general or universal rule that both the audience and the speaker agree on. The speaker brings forth a general or universal rule, and then tries to show how a specific example fits into that larger category. Aristotle and other ancient rhetoricians usually combined information syllogistically. Syllogisms are tri-partitive arguments. According to formal logic, the validity of a classic syllogistic argument depends on formal criteria: the presence of a universal premise (a general truth accepted by a universal audience), a minor premise (a specific application) and a conclusion which can be induced from the premises (Aczél, 2004, pp. 281-309).

Every man is mortal.	→ major premise
Socrates is a man.	→ minor premise
<hr/>	
Socrates is mortal.	→ conclusion

Problems regarding the validity of deductive reasoning occur (in ordinary language use) when the major premise is not an unquestionable general truth, merely probable and generally accepted, as the following example illustrates.

Every Athenian man likes to argue.	→ major premise
Socrates is from Athene.	→ minor premise
<hr/>	
Socrates likes to argue.	→ conclusion

### 2.5.2.3. Enthymemes

While example is the rhetoric's equivalent of induction, enthymeme is its deductive equivalent. Aristotle advocated using the shortened form of syllogism, so-called

**enthymemes**, which are syllogistic arguments in which one of the premises (usually the major premise) is supposed to be known by the audience and therefore not stated. Therefore, central to the enthymeme’s persuasive effect is the audience inferring the appropriate implicit premise. Note however, that using enthymemes can be manipulative if the premise is not received social approval, believed only by the speaker, or not known by the audience at all; or the premise is not true. The speaker can thereby conceal his opinion in the missing premise without taking responsibility for it (Aczél, 2004, p. 322).

Much of the contemporary marketing research attempts to identify those major premises that are believed by consumers, so that advertisers can shape their appeals accordingly. For example, the beer industry can make use of the generally accepted major premise of “being slim is good”, and can design appeals that emphasize that new low-alcohol beer has fewer calories than traditional beer. Let us reconstruct the argumentation:

Being slim is good.	→ unstated major premise
Low alcohol beer helps you keep slim.	→ minor premise
Low alcohol beers are good.	→ conclusion

The advantage of this tactic is that the listeners complete the thought process internally, so the conclusion will come from the audience and not from the advertiser (Larson, 1986, p. 30). In the interpretation of an enthymeme, listeners will become active participants in the meaning-making process, which can increase the possibility of the minor premise being accepted.

**2.5.2.4. Errors in reasoning – argumentation fallacies**

During the process of argumentation the speaker may make mistakes, either consciously or not, and thus the reasoning will be defective. In rhetoric, errors in reasoning are called argumentation fallacies. The word fallacy has two basic meanings: 1. it refers to a

false, erroneous statement, an untruth; 2. invalid or deceptive reasoning. The first has to do with the **matter** of an argument, whereas the second is connected to the **form** or mode of an argument (Corbet & Connors, 1999, p. 62).

To Aristotle, a fallacy is an intentional deception, unlike the modern interpretation of the concept whereby intentionality is not considered a necessary element of a fallacy (Walton; 1992, Eemeren, et al., 1998, 2002). It becomes clear that the difference between the interpretations of a fallacy's nature lies in the presence or absence of the intention to deceive the other party. This is precisely the core issue in the case of manipulation. Aristotle's 'intention to deceive' corresponds to the modern terminology of manipulative intention. It can be concluded that either intention is included in the definition of the fallacy or excluded. Both interpretations agree that fallacies constitute incorrect moves during the course of argumentation.

Aristotle was the first scholar who discussed argumentation fallacies. In his pioneering work, *Sophistical Refutations* (*Sophistici Elenchi*), he identified thirteen fallacies, which were each classified as being of two types: language-dependent and language independent. Language-dependent fallacies include: accent, ambiguity ('amhiboly'), equivocation, composition, division, and figure of speech. Non-linguistic fallacies are the following: accident, affirming the consequent, in a certain respect and simply, ignorance of refutation, begging the question, false cause, and many questions. Aristotle's list of fallacies has been complemented and refined over the centuries (for example by Locke, Whately, and Mill), since some of his fallacies proved to be less useful and very infrequently committed, but the theoretical discussions of fallacies have failed to produce a universally accepted taxonomy. It was not only the categorization of fallacies, but also the very definition of the term which caused problems. According to

its traditional definition, a fallacy is a pattern of poor reasoning which appears to be a pattern of good reasoning (Groarke, 2007). This traditional definition of a fallacy proves to be problematic, because it is difficult to identify when poor reasoning “appears” to be good. What “appears good” to one person may not appear so to another. In assessing ordinary arguments, most contemporary researchers avoid such issues by approaching fallacies more simply, as common patterns of poor reasoning which can be usefully identified in the evaluation of informal reasoning.

Argumentation fallacies are not valid rationally, but they are effective for psychological reasons. Due to the fact that the classic syllogistic argument has not been used in common discourse, only in formal logic and in scientific studies, there is a need to provide a framework which can serve as a basis for locating the fallacious arguments. In recent times, as an alternative to the classical logic of propositions and its extensions, it has been suggested that informal logic be used to analyze ordinary language. The theoretical interests that motivate informal logic are anticipated in Hamblin’s *Fallacies* (Hamblin, 1970), and Toulmin’s *The Uses of Argument* (Toulmin, 1964), but the discipline itself originated in North America in the 1970s. The development of informal logic is tied to educational goals: by the desire to develop ways of analyzing ordinary reasoning which can inform general education. To this extent, the goals of informal logic intersect with those of the Critical Thinking Movement, which aims to inform and improve public reasoning, discussion and debate, by promoting models of education which emphasize critical inquiry (Groarke, 2007).

Informal logic is the attempt to develop a logic which assesses, analyzes and improves everyday reasoning. It attempts to understand such reasoning from the point of view of philosophy, formal logic, cognitive psychology, and a range of other disciplines. Most

of the work in informal logic focuses on the reasoning and argument (in the premise-conclusion sense) that can be found in personal exchange, advertising, political debate, legal argument, and the social commentary that characterizes newspapers, television and other forms of the media.

Regarding the actual analysis of the fallacies within the frame of informal logic, the works of Woods and Walton (see, e.g., Walton, 1989; 1992; 1995; Woods & Walton, 1982; Woods, 1995) and the Dutch pragma-dialectical theory (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992, 2002) have to be mentioned. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst proposed a pragma-dialectical theory of fallacies in 1992, which analyses fallacies as violations of the rules of critical discussion (discussion which aims to critically resolve a difference of opinion). Their taxonomy of fallacies includes formal fallacies, like affirming the consequent and denying the antecedent; and informal fallacies as well, for example ad hominem (against the person), slippery slope, ad baculum (appeal to force), ad misericordiam (appeal to pity), and hasty generalization.

Argumentation fallacies can also be classified according to the types of reasoning (Corbet & Connor, 1999). Fallacies of **reasoning**, either in deduction or induction, can be classified as non sequiturs, which means that the conclusions or generalizations do not follow from the premises. The fallacy occurs because the chain of reasoning itself is defective. Errors in deductive argumentation include: 1. equivocation, 2. undistributed middle term 3. illicit process, 4. conclusion from two negative premises, 5. affirmative conclusion from a negative premise, 6. either/or fallacy, 7. fallacy of affirming the consequent, 8. fallacy of denying the antecedent. Fallacies of induction include: 1. faulty generalization, 2. faulty causal generalization (failing to take into account that there can be more than one cause for the same effect), 3. faulty analogy. The problem

with this type of categorization is that there is a need to create a third, “leftover” group in order to account for such fallacies as: begging the question, argument ad hominem, argument ad populum, the “Red herring”, and the complex question. Corbet & Connor discuss these under the label “miscellaneous fallacies”.

Finally, let us illustrate the connection (overlaps) between argumentation fallacies and influencing strategies. Thouless (1930, cited in Sıklaki, 1994, pp. 59-80), a professor of psychology, in his classic book entitled *Straight and crooked thinking*, identifies and names thirty-eight tricks that can be used to persuade people. It should be noted that the majority of this eclectic collection of tricks correspond to argumentation fallacies which go beyond the fair persuasion of hearers (as indicated in the title of the book). In the following table Thouless’ thirty-eight tricks is re-evaluated and categorized according to their manipulative potential.

**Table 4.**  
***Thouless’ (1930) thirty-eight tricks and their corresponding fallacies***

<b>The thirty-eight tricks</b>	<b>Corresponding argumentation fallacy (Eemeren et al., 2002)</b>	<b>How can the tricks be manipulative?</b>
The use of emotionally toned words (#1)	Appeal to the sentiments of the audience	Diverts the readers’ attention from the content and directs it toward the peripheral route of persuasion.
Making a statement in which “all” is implied but “some” is true (#2)	Hasty generalization	Endangers the truthfulness of the discourse.
Proof by selected instances (#3)	-	Biased sampling endangers the truthfulness of the discourse.
Extension of an opponent’s proposition by contradiction or by misrepresentation of it. (#4)	Straw man	Endangers the truthfulness of the discourse by intentionally misrepresenting the partner’s utterance.



Evasion of a sound refutation of an argument by the use of a sophistical formula (#5)	Evading the burden of proof	Saying commonplace instead of rational arguments.
Diversion to another question, to a side issue, or by irrelevant objection (#6)	Irrelevant argument	Diverts the readers' attention.
Proof by inconsequent argument (#7)	Incorrectly applying an argument scheme	Endangers the truthfulness of the discourse by intentionally misrepresenting reality (e.g. causal relationship).
The argument that we should not make efforts against X which is admittedly evil because there is a worse evil Y against which our efforts should be directed (#8)	Irrelevant argument	Diverts the readers' attention by offering a weak and irrelevant argument.
The recommendation of a position because it is a mean between two extremes (#9)	-	Influences the partner emotionally by offering a compromise.
Pointing out the logical correctness of the form of an argument whose premises contain doubtful or untrue statements of fact (#10)	-	Endangers the truthfulness of the discourse.
The use of an argument of logically unsound form (#11)	Incorrectly applying an argument scheme	Makes the drawing of the correct conclusion difficult for the partner.
Argument in a circle (#12)	= Circular reasoning	Makes the drawing of the correct conclusion difficult for the partner.
Begging the question (#13)	= Circular reasoning	Makes the drawing of the correct conclusion difficult for the partner.
Discussing a verbal proposition as if it were a factual one, or failing to disentangle the verbal and factual elements in a proposition that is partly both (#14)	Straw man	Diverts the readers' attention by offering a weak and irrelevant argument.
Putting forward a tautology (#15)	Unclarity	Confuses the partner and as a result makes her drawing of the correct conclusion difficult.
The use of a speculative argument (#16)	Irrelevant argument	Diverts the readers' attention by offering a weak and irrelevant argument.

Change in the meaning of a term during the course of an argument (#17)	Unclarity	Confuses the partner and as a result makes her drawing of the correct conclusion difficult.
The use of a dilemma which ignores a continuous series of possibilities between the two extremes presented (#18)	Black and white (either-or fallacy)	Makes the drawing of the correct conclusion difficult for the partner.
The use of the fact of continuity between them to throw doubt on a real difference between two things (the “argument of the beard”) (#19)	Slippery slope	Makes the drawing of the correct conclusion difficult for the partner by offering a logically invalid argument.
Illegitimate use of or demand for definition (#20)	Unclarity	Endangers the truthfulness of the discourse.
Suggestion by repeated affirmation (#21)	Evading the burden of proof	Diverts the readers’ attention from the main point and hinders the critical evaluation of the content of the argument.
Suggestion by use of a confident manner (#22)	-	Hinders the critical evaluation of the content of the argument.
Suggestion by prestige (#23)	(Ad verecundiam)	Only the unfairly applied appeal to authority is manipulative.
Prestige by false credentials (#24)	Ad verecundiam	Deceives the partner by forcing her to believe/rely on false credentials.
Prestige by the use of pseudo-technical jargon (#25)	Unclarity	Makes the drawing of the correct conclusion difficult for the partner.
Affectation of failure to understand backed by prestige (#26)	-	Deceives the partner (and a third party) by being dishonest.
The use of questions drawing out damaging admissions (#27)	Unfair use of presuppositions	Forces the partner to accept an untruth or unproved argument.
The appeal to mere authority (#28)	Ad verecundiam	Hinders the critical evaluation of the content of the argument.
Overcoming resistance to a doubtful proposition by a preliminary statement of a few easily accepted ones (#29)	-	Diverting the partners’ attention by structuring the discourse in a way that is advantageous to the communicator.

Statement of a doubtful proposition in such a way that it fits in with the thought- habits or the prejudices of the hearer (#30)		It increases the acceptability of a proposition by careful wording (style).
The use of generally accepted formulae of predigested though as premises in argument (#31)	-	It simplifies and thus often misrepresents reality.
“There is much to be said on both sides, so no decision can be made either way”, or any other formula leading to the attitude of academic detachment (#32)	-	The trick is manipulative only if the communicator is dishonest and wants to influence the partner.
Argument by mere analogy (#33)	False analogy	It diverts the readers’ attention and hinders the critical evaluation of the content of the argument.
Argument by forced analogy (#34)	False analogy	It diverts the readers’ attention and hinders the critical evaluation of the content of the argument.
Angering an opponent in order that he may argue badly (#35)	Appeal to emotions	The communicator has a hidden intention of angering his or her partner.
Special pleading (#36)	Irrelevant arguments	It diverts the readers’ attention from the main point and hinders the critical evaluation of the content of the argument.
Commending or condemning a proposition because of its practical consequences to the bearer (#37)	Argumentum ad consequentiam	It diverts the readers’ attention from the main point and hinders the critical evaluation of the content of the argument.
Argument by attributing prejudices or motives to one’s opponent (#38)	Ad hominem	It diverts the readers’ attention by offering a weak and irrelevant argument and hinders the critical evaluation of the content of the argument.

### 2.5.3. Pathos

Pathos relates to the emotions. Appealing to emotions as a support for argument has been a controversial issue since ancient times. Plato excluded it from the repertoire of tools that was acceptable in the process of persuasion. His student Aristotle took a

different stand, although he noted that playing on the audience's emotions could endanger the trustworthiness of the persuasive message (Aristotle, 1954, p. 57). Appeal to emotion is a type of argument which attempts to arouse the emotions of its audience in order to gain acceptance of its conclusion (Walton, 1992, p. 83).

Emotions are not always out of place in logical thinking. However, there is no doubt that strong emotions can subvert rational thought. Appealing to emotions (in other words, tugging on the audience's heartstrings) should be strongly justifiable, otherwise it is fallacious, and can thus be construed as a potential tool of manipulation. Douglas Walton, the contemporary researcher on the topic, notes in his book, entitled *The place of emotion in arguments* that the problem with certain types of emotional appeals is that they are very powerful as arguments in themselves, and they may have a much greater impact on an audience than is warranted by the case being argued. He mentions two factors that combine to enhance the trickiness of emotional appeals. One is that an appeal to emotion may **not be relevant**, meaning that it may not contribute to the goals of a dialogue. For example, no student would attempt to prove a mathematical theorem by playing upon the teacher's sympathy for the long hours of hard work put into it. Such an appeal would be obviously irrelevant, since either the proof of the theorem is correct or it is flawed, disregarding the student's efforts. In contrast, if the teacher attempts to motivate the student to work on proving the theorem by threatening a fail grade, this appeal to fear is not irrelevant (Curtis, 2001).

The other factor is that arguments based on emotional appeals tend to be **logically weak**, based on presumptions rather than hard evidence. Logically weak arguments do not support the conclusion strongly enough to take on the burden of proof. Emotional

appeals become fallacious when the speaker exploits the impact of the appeal to disguise the weakness and/or irrelevance of an argument (1992, p. 1-2).

Appealing to emotions is a powerful technique of argumentation, which is based on the speaker's capability to rouse and exploit the sentiments and prejudices of the target audience. Therefore emotional appeals can be called, in today's terms, "psychological appeals" as well (Larsen, 1986, p. 29).

#### **2.5.4. The problem of truth and falsity**

One of the core issues when discussing persuasion and manipulation is the notion of truth and falsity. The problem was already treated differently by ancient rhetoricians, and has remained a topic of debate ever since. Gorgias regarded persuasion as a transferable technique where the concept of truth and morality were irrelevant (Chilton, 2002). Isocrates, who further elaborated rhetoric (in the 4<sup>th</sup> c.), took a different approach to persuasion. For him morality (so-called "high-minded verbal ethics") was an important and indispensable aspect of persuasion. This approach was followed up by Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian.

The contemporary research on the role of truth and falsity in the process of argumentation focuses on the truthfulness of the premises in argumentation. The notion is also discussed under the topic of "concealing the truth" (Larson, 1986, p. 5), "misinforming" (Breton, 2000), lying, or doublespeak. This latter term refers to the deceptive communicative tactic of using a misleading term, or even inventing a new term for a known concept, in order to imply a meaning favorable to the communicator. There are several examples of this notion in the field of politics, where new terms are often introduced to prevent disagreement and soften the blow. To illustrate doublespeak in politics, Larson (1996, p. 6) mentions the term "income enhancement", which was

invented and used by the Reagan administration to take the place of the word “tax” in order to evade responsibility for raising taxes. There are numerous examples in the field of marketing as well, e.g. calling normal size pictures or food portions “small”, in order to urge customers to buy bigger ones.

## **2.6. Pragmatic approaches**

The basic aim of this section is to show how and to what extent pragmatics (understood here in a broad sense as the study of language use) can describe and explain manipulative language use. From the plethora of pragmatic theories, the **Gricean pragmatic theory** (1975) and the cognitive-oriented **Relevance theory** (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, 1995) have been selected. This decision is rooted primarily in the realization that the two theories have become widely accepted, influential and frequently applied theories in theoretical and empirical investigations that examine various phenomena of human language use. Furthermore, since the two theories partly differ in their views on human communication, the opportunity arises to approach manipulation from two angles, and thus gain a deeper understanding of the topic. The following two sub-sections attempt to illustrate how manipulation is interpreted in the light of cooperative communication, and in relevance theory.

### **2.6.1. Manipulation as non-cooperation**

The Gricean theory represents a normative approach to human communication. The Gricean Cooperative Principle (CP) and its conversational maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner (1975) consider cooperation to be a prerequisite of every communicative situation. The CP and the maxims are formulated as follows: “Make your contribution as required, at the stage at which it occurs, and according to the accepted purpose or direction of the verbal exchange in which you are engaged”.

**The maxim of Quantity:**

Make your contribution as informative as it is required (for the current purpose of the exchange).

Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

**The maxim of Quality:**

Don't say what you believe to be false.

Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

**The maxim of Relation:**

Be relevant.

**The maxim of Manner:**

Avoid obscurity of expression.

Avoid ambiguity.

Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

Be orderly.

(Grice, 1975, p. 45)

The Gricean theory, with its cooperative principle and conversational maxims, is listener-centered, it explains the mechanism of how the listener is able to infer conversational implicatures, and thus interpret what the speaker intends to communicate. Grice, in his theory (although often misinterpreted), simply notes that, on the whole, people observe certain regularities in interaction, but he does not regard the maxims as compulsory rules that have to be followed as a law.

In the Gricean sense, persuasion is cooperative, the communicator observes the maxims: spells out his or her arguments that are true, relevant and satisfactory in number. Let us see now how manipulation can be evaluated in the light of the theory. Since the definitions of manipulation all agree that it is mostly a deceptive and unequal means of communicating, it seems reasonable to assume that manipulation is a non-cooperative method of communication. Grice himself emphasizes the importance of the first maxim of the category, Quality (*don't say what you believe to be false*), saying that the remainder of the maxims function only if this first one is observed. In the CP, Grice suggests that people usually work on the assumption that the speakers behave cooperatively and observe the CP. Moreover, they also work on the assumption that certain rules are in operation during human interaction, unless indicated otherwise by

the interlocutor(s). Not fulfilling a maxim attracts the hearer's attention to infer a further meaning intended by the speaker. If, for example, the listener did not assume that the speaker wants to communicate according to the CP, he or she would not be able to interpret irony. In other words, in a given society speakers have expectations about each other, and they interact verbally according to a set of assumptions. Being non-cooperative is constituted by non-observance of conversational maxims which can happen in different ways. In the following, each case of non-observation is discussed in order to see whether any of them describe verbal manipulation.

Grice, in his first paper (1975, p. 49) discussed three ways in which failing to observe a maxim can occur: flouting, violating and opting out of a maxim. When the speaker **flouts** a maxim, he or she blatantly fails to observe a maxim, since he or she wants to prompt the hearer to look for a non-literal meaning by generating a conversational implicature. This type of non-observance was central to Grice's works. The **violation** of a maxim is defined by Grice as an unostentatious non-observance of a maxim; and the speaker who commits the violation "will be liable to mislead" (ibid.). When a speaker **opts out** of observing a maxim, he or she indicates unwillingness to cooperate according to the maxim's requirements. The major difference between violation and opting out of a maxim, lies in the fact that in the case of opting out the speaker does not want to appear uncooperative and generate a false implicature. Later on Grice created a fourth category of non-observance: **infringing**, which refers to those cases when the speaker's non-observance stems from imperfect linguistic performance, rather than an intention to deceive the hearer(s). Finally, some linguists argued for the need for a fifth category: **suspending** a maxim (Thomas, 1995, p. 72). When for example the maxim of Quantity is suspended by a given culture or speech community, there is no expectation on the part of the hearers that speakers will provide all information. Consequently, the



non-fulfillment will not generate any implicatures. Of the five types of non-observance, violating a maxim is the one that always describes manipulative language use, however, flouting a maxim can also realize manipulation in certain cases by generating a questionable or controversial conversational implicature. Since implicatures are not explicit, the speaker does not have to be responsible for them. The following utterance (in Example 1.) printed in huge letters appeared in a billboard advertisement which depicted a girl making a phone call. The mobile phone that she was using was wrapped in a paper-bag.

**Example 1.**

*Szégyelled a mobilod? Hozd vissza régi mobilod, és készülékes csomagban kapható, egyéni VitaMAX előfizetés vásárlása esetén bruttó 5000 forint kedvezményt adunk a kiválasztott mobil árából.*

[Are you ashamed of your mobile? Bring back your old mobile, and we will give you brutto 5000 HUF discount if you buy a private VitaMAX package including a phone.]

The first utterance (*Szégyelled a mobilod?*), by floating the maxim of Quantity, generates a conversational implicature, namely that using an older type of mobile phone is something to be ashamed of. This obvious interpretation of the billboard manipulates the audience (especially the young) by forcing them to regard mobile phones as a status symbol and arouse desire towards a newer model of phones that is in the interest of the mobile company.

Now, let us discuss in turn how each maxim can be violated and realize manipulation. Imagine that a family is playing the strategic and military game Risk, where the purpose is to either occupy territories or to exterminate all the soldiers of one player. Mark wants to make use of Jamie to exterminate Helen's troops stationed at Kamchatka. Therefore, he utters the following to Jamie:

**Example 2.**

*Mark: I think the best move for you would be to attack Kamchatka, so you can reach America quickly*

Mark's utterance can be interpreted as a violation of a Quantity maxim, since there is nothing in the formulation of the utterance that would allow Jamie to deduce that he was withholding information. Mark's unostentatious violation of the maxim generates the intentionally misleading implicature that the attack of Helen's troops is best for Mark, but not necessarily for Jamie (Árvay, 2004).

The next example (Example 3.) is also a fictional interaction. The situation goes as follows. Kate, a sixteen year old girl, started taking rock-climbing lessons a week ago in secret, but she does not want anyone to know about this, since she is afraid of potential criticism. She visits her grandmother and during their chat the following conversation takes place:

**Example 3.**

*Grandmother: Kate, is it true that you started rock-climbing?*

*Kate: Why, would you be angry if I had started?*

*Grandmother: No, just asking. Though, you know, I would be very surprised if you had started it. I think rock climbing is a really dangerous sport and you, as a talented ballet dancer, should take care of your bones and not take the risk of injuring yourself like your brother did a few years ago.*

In this short conversation the unostentatious violation of the first maxim of Quality (*Don't say what you believe to be false*) generates the intentionally misleading implicature that Kate has not started rock-climbing yet. In other words, Kate was non-cooperative because she manipulated her grandmother, who came to the wrong conclusion regarding Kate's climbing lessons. The linguistic tool that manifested manipulation was conditional mood. Kate intentionally used conditional mood instead of declarative mood, which implied that the action described (rock-climbing lesson)

hadn't happened yet. Kate's utterance violated the maxim of Quality, but at the same time it violated the maxim of Quantity as well, because she was withholding information regarding the truth about her climbing lessons.

The following two examples are taken from a popular film series entitled *Desperate Housewives* (Dornerus, 2005, p. 11). In Example 4., Bree, the mother, talks to her neighbor, Gabi, who offered to sponsor Bree's daughter's modeling career by helping to offer her a place at a modeling school in New York. In that way she will stay away from Gabi's lover John. When Bree learns about her daughter's plan to go to New York, she becomes furious; she wants her daughter to stay at home.

**Example 4.**

*Bree:* Yes. Gabrielle, did you or did you not offer to sponsor her?  
*Gabi:* I just wanted to help out.

Gabi violates the maxim of Relevance by making excuses and not answering the question she was asked in order to save face and her friendship with Bree. This makes her look helpless, and the viewers sympathize with her for trying to be a good friend, even though they know that she is only trying to get Danielle out of the way. She violates the maxim in order to deceive Bree into focusing on her goodness, instead of seeing what she did wrong. Here again, besides the violating of the maxim of Relevance, the maxim of Quantity is violated, since the real motivations of Gabi did not become clear to Bree.

Finally, Example 5. tries to illustrate how the maxim of Manner can be violated. The context of the situation is the same as above. Gabi offers to help sponsor Bree's daughter Danielle to get into modeling school, but without the permission of the mother. Bree gets angry and goes over to Gabi to confront her.

**Example 5.**

*Bree: Did you offer to help Danielle into modeling school?*

*Gabi: What? Yes, no, is that how she took it?*

Gabi violates the maxim of Manner when her answer is too confusing to clarify what she is trying to convey. She wants to distract Bree while figuring out a good excuse to avoid answering the question. She misleads Bree into thinking that she had nothing to do with it and it was a misunderstanding. Similarly to the previous example, the maxim of Quantity is violated because by giving a vague answer, Gabi hid her real motivations from Bree.

Having analyzed the four situations, it can be concluded that manipulation is a form of non-cooperative language use. The violation of a maxim characterizes manipulative language use for two reasons: firstly, the speaker commits the violation *intentionally*, which can correspond to the manipulative intention; and secondly, according to Grice's definition, the violation is *unostentatious*, which refers to its hidden nature. The intentional and unostentatious violation of a maxim always impairs the full understanding of a given utterance. The analyzed situations suggested that the maxim of quantity is always violated in verbal manipulation. In addition, the maxim of quality or relevance or manner can also be violated at the same time, depending on the situations. The only problem with applying the violation of a maxim as a criterion for separating persuasion from manipulation is the unclear and vague definitions of the maxims, especially of the maxim of Manner, as it is often mentioned as a criticism in the literature (Németh, T., 2004; Kasher, 1976; Kiefer, 1979; Thomas, 1996).

**2.6.2. Manipulation as non communication**

The majority of studies on language use and the description of the principles of language use have long been dominated by the Gricean Cooperative Principle, which

emphasizes the importance of cooperation in human communication, as mentioned above. However, there is a growing number of pragmaticians (mainly among cognitive scientists and relevance theorists) (Attardo, 1997; Sperber, 1986/1995, 2000; Taillard, 2000) who have questioned the view that human communication is only based on the principle of cooperation and the maxims. Relevance theorists accepted Grice's intuition that utterances raise expectations of relevance, but at the same time criticized several aspects of his account. The term *relevance* used by Sperber and Wilson differs from the Gricean relation maxim to a great extent. In Grice's works it is a feature of an utterance that is linked to the conversation in its content, whereas in Sperber and Wilson's theory it refers to very general economic principles which state that human cognition operates in a way that it could achieve the most cognitive effects with the less processing effort. Wilson and Sperber (2004, p. 608) also claim that "utterances raise expectations of relevance not because speakers are expected to obey a Cooperative Principle and maxims, or some other specifically communicative convention, but because the search for relevance is a basic feature of human cognition, which communicators may exploit". They go on to argue that the expectations of relevance raised by an utterance are precise and predictable enough to guide the hearer towards the speaker's meaning (ibid.).

Taillard (2000, p. 153), in her article on marketing discourse, claims that the theory of communication based on the necessity of cooperation is bound to fail. Nonetheless, she admits that in some non-cooperative forms of communication, such as marketing communication, it can assist analysis.

As a compromise between the two extremes, Attardo (1997) outlines a gradient of cooperation between "pure" cooperation and outright cooperation, ranging from mildly non-cooperative modes, partially cooperative modes, and partially non-cooperative

modes, such as “licensed lying” as he calls advertising. His theory of non-cooperation is based on research in the field of humor, and the goal-based approach to pragmatics. Note however, that this approach does not fully reject the notion of cooperation, rather it emphasizes the frequent occurrence of non-observance of the maxims during human communication.

Sperber and Wilson’s Relevance theory (1986/1995) has been offered as a cognitive model of human communication. As a useful alternative to the Gricean pragmatics model, which has received criticism from many scholars for its one-sided, hearer-oriented nature, Relevance theory proposes a model of ostensive-inferential communication. This model is comprehensive and dynamic because both parties participating in the flow of communication are considered of equal importance. Sperber and Wilson combined the existing code-models and inferential models, and thus solved the problem of inadequate description of verbal communication by complementing the decoding process, which is indispensable to the interpretation of an utterance, with an inferential process (Németh T., 1996, p. 12).

The definition of ostensive-inferential communication states that “the communicator produces a stimulus which makes it mutually manifest to the communicator and audience that the communicator intends, by means of this stimulus, to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions  $\{I\}$ ” (Sperber & Wilson, 1995, p. 63). According to the definition, when communication is successful, informative and communicative intentions are always present and fulfilled. The former refers to the intention to make manifest or more manifest a set of assumptions  $\{I\}$  to the audience, the latter means that the communicator has an informative intention and wants to make it mutually manifest to audience and communicator (Sperber & Wilson, 1995, pp. 58-

61). Let us now analyze and discuss manipulative language use in terms of the ostensive-inferential communication model, in order to see how and to what extent the model accounts for the mechanism of manipulation. Example 1 has already been discussed above in 2.6.1 to see how it violates the maxim of Quantity. This time the utterance is analyzed in Relevance theoretic terms.

**Example 2.**

*Mark: I think the best move for you would be to attack Kamchatka, so you can reach America quickly*

Jamie realized Mark's informative intention (he was informed with {I}: you get to America through Kamtchatka fast, so it is worth attacking), and his communicative intention: that this utterance was addressed to him. However, he did not understand Mark's ulterior motivations, whereby he did not recommend the utterance to make him more successful, but rather to cause him to exterminate Helen's troops. According to Sperber and Wilson's model, this communicative interaction should be considered as successful. However, it is obvious that the communicative partner did not understand everything, or possess all the relevant information. Since some information remained hidden and the real intention of the communicator (to use Jamie to attack Helen's troops) was camouflaged, this situation can be regarded as manipulation. Jamie, the addressee, was able to decode the linguistic stimulus, but he was unable to recognize the real intention of the speaker, and he therefore came to the wrong implication. He regarded the utterance as honest. Moreover, Jamie did not even understand that the attack would be primarily advantageous for Mark. The question now lies in the following: where is the hidden information (the attack on Helen's troops is best for Mark) and the manipulative intention (do the dirty job instead of me without knowing what you are doing) situated? In Sperber–Wilson's model this hidden information can only be in {I}. However, the answer is not satisfactory. In the example quoted, two

different actions took place on two different levels. On the first, surface level, there was a successful communication, the communicator uttered  $\{I_1\}$  (you can reach Alaska quickly through Kamchatka, therefore it is worth attacking), and this informative intention became obvious. On the second, hidden level, neither informative nor communicative intention was attached to  $\{I_2\}$  (the attack will be best for Mark; do the job instead of me). Mark did not make it mutually manifest that he intended to convey a particular piece of information, therefore Mark manipulated his partner.

The following example (Example 6.) was inspired by the insight that communication and information transmission are two separable modes of human language use (Németh T. 2006). The latter can be exploited for manipulating someone without taking the risk of being exposed. Let us imagine that Susan learns at a party that Tom is hesitating over whether to travel to Bangkok or to Rio de Janeiro. Susan worries for Tom, but she does not dare to admit it to him face to face. Therefore she wants to influence Tom by addressing a question to Kate, while knowing that Tom is nearby and can hear what she is asking. Susan asks Kate:

**Example 6.**

*Have you heard about the terrible epidemic in Bangkok?*

In situation (Example 6.) Susan only had informative intention towards Tom, since she wanted to inform Tom only about the epidemic, whereas she did not have a communicative intention towards Tom, i.e. she did not want Tom to know that the utterance was addressed to him as well. However, there is another level to the content of informative intention, because Susan also had an influencing intention regarding Tom, at the same time as not wanting to communicate it to him. Therefore, according to Sperber and Wilson's model, Example 6. cannot be regarded as communication in a twofold sense: Susan intended to inform Tom only about the epidemic in Bangkok, but



she had a communication intention neither with respect to the information about the epidemic, nor in connection with the information about her influencing intention. By informing Tom but not communicating with him, Susan manipulated Tom. The manipulative intention of Susan is so well-hidden that she can easily deny it if Tom somehow expressed the suspicion to her, that she was delicately forcing him to change his mind.

To sum up, the analyses of the situations in Example 2 and Example 6 have offered two insights. The first is that Relevance theory proved to be successful in describing manipulative language use in the light of intentions, and in describing manipulative mechanisms dynamically from the point of view of both the communicator and his or her communicative partner. Both in examples (Example 2.) and (Example 6.), the communicators had a manipulative intention towards their communicative partners, which they wanted to hide. In other words, manipulative intention can be understood as the intention to hide influencing intention (Németh T., 2007a, b). Secondly, according to the definition of ostensive-inferential communication, these situations, as examples of manipulation, cannot be regarded as communication.

### **2.6.3. Harder and Kock's theory of presuppositional failure**

Harder and Kock's (1976) theory of presupposition failure concurs with the above described ostensive-inferential communication model. Harder and Kock (1976) conceptualize manipulation as a lack of mutual knowledge (of either facts or feelings or intentions), which means in their theory that the communicator does not place all the information at the communicative partner's disposal, and something is hidden from the partner that would be indispensable to him or her to understand the utterance. As Sperber and Wilson (1995, p. 218) claim, the more information is left unexpressed, the greater mutual knowledge is presupposed between the communicator and the partners.

In the case of honest communication, the communicator knows that his or her partner knows that he or she is being influenced, so they share mutual knowledge about the process of persuasion. When manipulation occurs, communication is asymmetric; the communicator doesn't want the partner to know that he or she is being manipulated. If the communicator does not believe what he or she states (e.g. Susan knows that there is no epidemic in Bangkok), the situation is labeled by Harder and Kock as treacherous manipulation.

Let us suppose that the above discussed (Example 2) manipulative situation is successful, and look at how it can be represented visually (Table 5.) within the theory of presupposition failure.

**Table 5.**  
*Graphical representation of mutual knowledge in manipulation*

<b>S+</b>	<b>H-</b>
<b>HS</b>	<b>SH-</b>
<b>SHS+</b>	<b>HSH</b>
<b>HSHS</b>	<b>SHSH+</b>

**H**= Hearer; **S**= Speaker

**S+** indicates that Mark's utterance had a hidden presupposition (Jamie will exterminate Helen's troops instead of me) that Jamie was not conscious of (**H-**). At the same time, Mark believes that Jamie did not understand his hidden presupposition (**SH-**) and also thinks that Jamie takes his words to be true and serious (**SHS+**). Finally, Mark is not honest, in the sense that he supposes that he was successful in deceiving Jamie (**SHSH+**). In other words, **SHSH+** refers to Marks's belief. The speaker believes that the hearer accepts his or her propositions, and does not assume any negative intentions or insincerity on the speaker's side. The criterion of manipulation in Harder and Kock's theory of presupposition failure is **SH-** and **SHSH+**, which is indicated by grey shadow in Table 5. (Siklaki, 1994, p. 125).

## 2.7. Reconsidering manipulation

The previous sections aimed at reviewing the various interpretations and approaches to the notion of manipulation and manipulative intention, and also collect empirical proof of the effectiveness of verbal manipulation. In the introduction to the present chapter, three questions were formulated which can now be answered on the basis of the preceding sections. These questions were the following: (1) Does the discipline separate persuasion from manipulation?; (2), What are the major insights that are relevant to the study of manipulation?; (3) What does the discipline have to say regarding manipulative language use? Table 6. summarizes to what extent the various disciplines proved to be successful in answering the proposed questions.

As far as the first question is concerned, it becomes obvious that Gricean pragmatics and Relevance theory have provided solid frameworks, which make the explicit separation of persuasion and manipulation possible. Critical Discourse analytic studies have not separated the two notions precisely, although van Dijk's recently published article (2006) will certainly reshape the treatment of manipulation in future publications. Research articles in social psychology have offered empirical proof of the effect of language use, and as such they become an indispensable asset in the study of manipulation, but the term itself is often avoided and referred to as persuasion. Finally, since rhetoric, as the study of persuasion, became a separate discipline long before the term manipulation was coined, the explicit separation of persuasion and manipulation cannot be expected. However, terms used in connection with manipulation, such as 'deceptive' and 'unfair', were mentioned in association with eristic method and sophistical refutation, which can be considered as the 'ancient version' of the notion of manipulation.

**Table 6.**  
*A multidisciplinary summary of the insights into manipulation*

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Does the given discipline separate persuasion from manipulation? (question 1)</b>	<b>Major insights that are relevant to manipulation (question 2)</b>	<b>Manipulative language use can be manifested by (question 3):</b>
<b>Social psychology</b>	Implicitly, on the basis of empirical research.	The effect of consciously selected linguistic elements has been proved.	certain verbs, nouns, the definite article, discourse structure, thematic roles.
<b>Critical Discourse Analysis</b>	Not precisely.	Underlying ideological and political attitudes are manifested in content and in language use.	lexis, style, presuppositions, content of the arguments, structuring information.
<b>Rhetoric</b>	Not explicitly. Eristic method and sophistical refutation roughly correspond to manipulation.	Argumentation fallacies and abusing enthymemes can manifest manipulation.	style, content of the arguments.
<b>Gricean Pragmatics</b>	By spelling out the types of non-observance of the maxims separation is possible.	Manipulation is non-cooperation. Violation of a maxim results in the generation of false implicatures. Flouting a maxim can also generate controversial implicatures.	-
<b>Relevance theory</b>	Separation is possible along the lines of intentions.	Manipulation is non-communication. Informing without ostensive communicative intention to the intended addressee can be manipulative.	-

The second question inquires into the major insights of each discipline. It can be concluded that studies in social psychology have managed to show the effect of consciously selected linguistic elements on respondents in a carefully controlled and designed research context. Studies in CDA were able to uncover the underlying ideological and political attitudes that were manifested in content and in language use. Rhetoric provided important insights into the types of argumentation fallacies, and their related problems, and the abuse of enthymeme, ethos and pathos. Within the confines of Gricean pragmatics, manipulation was defined as a form of non-communication, which can be manifested by the floating and the violation of any of the conversational maxims. Finally, the notion of ostensive-inferential communication within Relevance theory helped to realize that informing without ostensive communicative intention to the intended addressee can be a manipulation strategy.

The third column in Table 6. summarizes what the disciplines suggested regarding manipulative language use. Social psychology delineated a wide selection of linguistic tools that are potentially manipulative, such as certain verbs, nouns, the definite article, discourse structure, and thematic roles. Similarly, CDA studies emphasized the manipulative potential of lexis, style, presuppositions, content of the arguments, and structuring of information, while rhetoric called attention to the role of style and the content of the arguments. The table doesn't refer to Gricean pragmatics and Relevance theory because the focus of these approaches is the description and characterization of verbal interaction *in general*, and not the detailed study of the effect of specific words or structures.

While reviewing research from different disciplines which yielded important insights and significant results concerning the notion of manipulation, it was revealed that

different disciplines refer to very similar (or identical) phenomena using different labels. These observed overlaps are the following.

- What Grice understands by violating a maxim of Quantity (1975) corresponds to the strategy of withholding information as described by Critical Discourse analysts (Fowler, 1991; Erjavec, 2004; Etzioni & Halevy, 1989; van Dijk, 2006).
- Harder & Kock's theory of presupposition failure (1976) also corresponds to the strategy of withholding information described by Critical Discourse analysts.
- The ancient rhetoricians' concept of enthymeme, more specifically, its missing part is similar to the conversational implicature from the pragmatic point of view (Aczél, 2004, p. 323).
- The ancient notion of the argumentation fallacy of the loaded question corresponds to the notion of presupposition as identified by linguists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- The role of the argumentation fallacy of ad baculum, which was identified first by Aristotle, was later on revived and its effect was proved empirically (Leventhal, et al., 1970) under the name of fear appeal.
- The minimum group paradigm (Tajfel, 1981) is similar to the notion of synthetic personalization (Fairclough, 1989, p. 210) used by CDA studies.

My intention with the aforementioned list was to shed light on the importance of multidisciplinary in research topics that aim to examine human language use, and also to avoid the trap of rediscovery in future research on the topic of manipulation.

### 2.7.1. Defining manipulation and the strategies of manipulation

In this section I intend to formulate a working definition of verbal manipulation, in order to provide a solid basis for the subsequent chapters. Having explicated the definition, the manipulative strategies will be listed and discussed. The reason for using the term ‘strategy’ is that it refers to the conscious, goal-directed intention of the speaker in achieving his or her planned aim. Let us formulate the working definition of manipulation.

From the communicator’s point of view, manipulation can be defined as the process of making the receiver(s) accept a piece of information in a non-cooperative way.

The aim of the communicator is to make the receiver(s) accept a piece of information: an opinion or fact which can be true or false. However, the strategy applied in order to force acceptance does not observe the principles of cooperative communication (cf. Árvay, 2003, p. 19). There are two consequences of the outlined definition:

1. Manipulative intention is the necessary element of manipulation.
2. Manipulative information transmission or communication can force the hearer(s) to draw an unfounded or fallacious implication.

Let us now discuss the notion of **intention**, which plays the pivotal role in separating persuasion from manipulation, and in characterizing manipulation. In verbal manipulation, the communicator has a manipulative intention and uses a manipulative strategy in order to achieve his or her goal, which is to influence his or her audience without their noticing that they are being influenced. The term ‘manipulative intention’ refers to the intention of hiding the influencing intention. It is exactly the distinctive feature (*differencia specifica*) of manipulation. In the case of persuasion, the influencing intention is not hidden, it is mutually manifest both to the communicator and the

communicative partner. One problem remains to be resolved, namely how to treat real life influencing discourse where potentially persuasive and manipulative strategies are both present. The solution might be that each utterance should be interpreted and analyzed on its own merits or flaws, and the context in which the utterance is embedded should not be excluded.

So far, manipulation has been discussed from the point of view of the communicator. Now, let us examine the other side. An important distinction should be made here concerning intended and unintended verbal effect. In verbal interactions, human beings form assumptions about notions on the basis of the utterances of their communicative partners. Very often the same utterance can be used in a manipulative and in a non-manipulative way. Consider the following example.

**Example 7.**

*Would you like to have spinach or cabbage for lunch, my darling?*

Let us imagine two different situations in which the utterance can be heard. In the first situation, let us suppose that the communicator (a grandmother) knows that there are pizza slices in the fridge, but she wants to give the grandchildren vegetables, so with the help of this question, she creates the illusion that there are only two options for lunch. The grandmother influenced and misled the children by imposing a false dilemma. The situation can be summarized and evaluated with respect to intentions.

- Manipulative intention: present. The speaker wants to hide her influencing intention by simply asking a question.
- Manipulative strategy: false dilemma (type of argumentation fallacy).



- Linguistic element that manifests the manipulative strategy: ‘*or*’ (either in the meaning of exclusive or inclusive) which is a presuppositional tool. The presupposition is that there are two options to choose from.

In the second situation, let us suppose that the same question is asked by someone who does not know that there are pizza slices in the fridge. The utterance is just a simple inquiry, the speaker does not have any influencing intention. However, the utterance forces the children to come to the conclusion that they have two options. What is interesting though, is that the perlocutionary effect is the same in both situations (the children will interpret the question meaning that there are only two options for lunch), but the first one is a type of verbal manipulation.

Manipulation can be regarded as successful if the receiver comes to a conclusion or produces a response that is desired by the speaker, and if it is in the interest of the communicator and not necessarily of the reader/listener.

Based on the insights that have been reviewed in the previous sections, the following conclusions can be drawn. Manipulation can occur in two ways. First, when it is embedded **in a persuasive discourse**. As Taillard (2000, p. 158) put it, the more persuasion is covert, the more it becomes manipulation. The communicator does not hide his or her influencing intention only his or her manipulative intention regarding the whole discourse. However, besides applying persuasive strategies, he or she applies strategies aimed at deceiving the audience. These manipulative utterances violate the Gricean maxims.

Second, manipulation can occur **in a non-persuasive discourse**, in questions, and in statements, for example, where the influencing intention cannot be traced. Social-psychological experiments have proved that certain linguistic elements, such as the

choice of verb in question formulation, presuppositional structures, and the rendering of thematic roles, influence respondent's answers and interpretation without their being conscious of the presence of influencing intent. These tools, used with a manipulative intention, can convey manipulation. In sum, it can be concluded that manipulation has two types: (1) information transmission with a manipulative intention and without a communicative intention; (2) communication with a manipulative intention (cf. Németh T., 2007a).

### **2.7.2. Information transmission with a manipulative intention and without communicative intention**

The communicator has an informative intention and a manipulative intention towards the intended addressee, but has no intention to reveal them. This strategy can be described precisely only in terms of Relevance Theory (as discussed above in 2.6.2). The communicator utters {I} to his or her partner. However, at the same time the information is also directed at another addressee, who does not know that the speaker intended him or her to recognize the informative intention in {I}. In everyday terms: I am talking to you but directing my talk primarily to a third party who is within hearing distance. In the terms of Relevance theory this is not communication, only informing. This first type of manipulation can be manifested by the manipulative strategy of informing without an ostensive communicative intention to the intended addressee. (Example 6.)

### **2.7.3. Communication with a manipulative intention**

The communicator has a manipulative intention which means that he or she creates a two-level communication. On the surface level, the communicator applies an informative and a communicative intention to the utterance(s), whereas on the hidden level, neither an informative nor communicative intention was attached to the utterance.

It means that the communicator is not cooperative, and hinders mutual knowledge by not allowing access to relevant information that would be indispensable to the comprehension of the discourse. The communicator can either entirely impair the availability of mutual knowledge, or only partially hinder it. The former will be referred to as *strong manipulation*, the latter as *weak manipulation* (see Figure 1). This type of manipulation can be manifested by the following strategies (cf. Árvay, 2003, 2004):

1. withholding certain proposition(s);
2. using linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance;
3. using fallacious argumentation and,
4. using false proposition(s)

The strategies listed are not mutually exclusive; in a particular discourse, all of them can be applied, and can strengthen the manipulative effect. Let us look in detail at how these manipulative strategies work.

### **2.7.3.1. The strategy of withholding**

The communicator can withhold or omit some of the information. The hidden content (information: facts, data) would be indispensable to the correct interpretation of the meaning of the discourse, as in example (Example 2) where the speaker hid his real motivations (of using his communicative partner to attack Helen's troops) from his partner. The following fictional example also illustrates this manipulative strategy.

Imagine an advertisement for an expensive diet pill that promises weight loss in two weeks. The manufacturer may withhold information concerning potential health hazards, side effects and the fact that the pill is not that efficient without daily physical exercise. These genuinely useful pieces of information would be essential to the

audience, in order not to be misled. There is little doubt that this kind of manipulation will never be admitted to by the manufacturer.

**2.7.3.2. The strategy of using linguistically and logically correct elements that force on unconditional acceptance**

In section 2.3 social psychological empirical studies proved that certain linguistic elements, such as thematic roles, the type of verb used in question formulation, and nouns with the definite article, i.e. definite noun phrases also influence the readers subconsciously, and can therefore have a manipulative effect. The processing of these elements takes place during decoding, which is an automatic process. Therefore these elements have a subconscious effect, independent of the context. This is the reason why even native speakers fail to notice them, especially if these elements occur in non-persuasive contexts. These elements can be manipulative because they force agreement on the receivers without the receivers knowing about it.

The most important and most thoroughly researched elements are **semantic presuppositions**, which can be manipulative if they are false (Kiefer, 1983, p. 52), and thus force the acceptance of a false statement. In semantics, a presupposition is special kind of information associated or induced by certain lexical items and syntactic structures (Burton-Roberts, 1989). The notion of presupposition is encoded in natural language and it refers to the process by which the listeners make assumptions, or in other words, how they take some pieces of information for granted, since the meaning of a sentence comes not only from the explicit meaning, but it also includes all the semantic or logical inferences that are drawn from the explicit meaning (Kiefer, 1983, p. 9). This certainly does not mean that presuppositions include all the thoughts that can be associated with a sentence on the basis of the background knowledge of the listeners.

According to Kiefer (1983, pp. 9-10), there are four major characteristics of presuppositions. First, they are always associated with a specific linguistic item which induces them; second, these linguistic items are either lexemes or syntactic structures; third, the occurrence of presuppositions in simple sentences is independent of the context, i.e. predictable; and finally, a presupposition will generally remain a necessary assumption, independently of whether the utterance is placed in the form of an assertion, denial, imperative, optative mood or question. Crucially, negation of an expression does not change its presuppositions, it leaves its truth-content untouched (this is often referred to as the ‘negation test’). The sentences *I want to do it again* and *I don't want to do it again* both mean that the subject has done it already one or more times. In this respect, presupposition is distinguished from entailment and implication. For example, *The president was assassinated* entails that *The president is dead*, but if the expression is negated (*The president was not assassinated*), the entailment is not necessarily true.

Semantic presuppositions can be triggered not only by nouns with the definite article (as mentioned earlier), but also by, e.g., inchoative verbs (i.e. change of state predicates, for example *begin*, *continue*, *stop*, *play on*), factive verbs (e.g. *know*, *regret*, *forgive*) whose dependent clause is judged to be true, because inner negations and yes/no questions leave presuppositions untouched. This can be illustrated by the following Hungarian (Example 8.) advertisements.

**Example 8.**

*Ő [az anyukád] tudja, hogy az Ariel a legmakacsabb ételfoltokat is kieszdi a ruhácskádából.*

[She (your mother) knows that Ariel removes even the most stubborn food stains from your clothes.]

Adjectives in the comparative form in contrastive structures also induce presuppositions (with the intensifying word *még* ‘even’). So, ad (Example 9.) presupposes that your hair was originally shiny and healthy.

**Example 9.**

*Haja még ragyogóbb és egészségesebb, mint valaha.*  
[Your hair is even shinier and healthier than ever.]

Unconditional acceptance can also be accomplished by *structural manipulation*. The order of rhetorical questions and arguments, and the conscious selection of news issues encourage preferred interpretations that are consistent with the interests of certain elite groups in society.

Note however, that if the tools listed are used by the communicator unconsciously, without a manipulative intention, they cannot be regarded as manipulative strategies. The more empirical research proves the manipulative potential of certain linguistic elements, the more precisely we shall be able to construct and dissect manipulative discourse.

**2.7.3.3. The strategy of using argumentation fallacies**

Fallacious argumentation has been found to be a potentially manipulative tool, since it impairs full understanding, steers critical attention away from the content of the message, and thus forces the audience to come to a logically invalid or incorrect conclusion. (Breton, 2000; Eemeren, et al., 2002; Margitay, 2004; van Dijk, 2006). This very often appears in the guise of emotional appeals (Walton, 1989, 1992) that easily circumvent our rationality. Van Dijk (2006) treats argumentation fallacies as discursive strategies that can be applied manipulatively. Some of Breton’s fourteen manipulative techniques (2000) coincide with classical argumentation fallacies (for example, appeal to threat, seduction with personal allurements, false causal relation). Although

argumentation fallacies are not persuasive rationally, they are often accepted by the audience as valid arguments, and what is more, they can motivate them. The explanation lies in the fact that argumentation fallacies activate psychological mechanisms (see 2.3).

Although the literature offers examples of some argumentation fallacies that can be used to manipulate the audience, the question of whether all, or only some fallacies are manipulative, has not yet been answered in the literature. In the present study, according to the definition of manipulation, only those fallacies are regarded as manipulative arguments that flout or violate any of the Gricean maxims. In addition, the results of several social psychological empirical investigations are regarded as proofs of the manipulative effect (see 2.3). Thus, the fallacy of *ad baculum* (fear appeal), appeal to vanity, appeal to rareness, *ad populum* (minimum group paradigm), and appeal to false authority have been proved to be manipulative so far. Fallacies that violate the maxim of quality (i.e. violate the truthfulness of the discourse), are also regarded as manipulative arguments, such as *post hoc propter hoc* (false cause reason), and loaded question (cf. unfair use of presupposition).

Fallacious arguments can be detected if they are read into thoroughly and critically, which means that they are processed via the central route of persuasion. However, if the audience does not apply sufficient cognitive effort to discourse processing, i.e. processing takes the peripheral route (as in the case of advertisements), or fallacies are embedded in visual or auditory messages, detection is unlikely.

#### **2.7.3.4. The strategy of using false proposition(s)**

Communicating false proposition(s) in influencing with the intention of misleading the other party can be regarded as a manipulative strategy. This strategy can also be defined

as deceit (Robinson, 1996) and it coincides with the Augustinian concept of lying (cf. Kecskés, 1998, p. 406). Similarly, misinformation or misrepresentation of reality (Breton, 2000) also violate truthfulness by distorting, falsifying or regrouping facts or data.

#### **2.7.4. The role of style**

The various elements of style have a crucial role in reinforcing the persuasive and/or manipulative effect of any strategic discourse, such as advertisements or political speeches. Unusual vocabulary and stylistic elements are primarily effective among readers who follow the peripheral route of persuasion.

In the case of advertisements, the creators of the texts (the copywriters) choose from the lexicon and syntactic rules, and decide if they want to deviate from the accepted norm in order to create an effect on the audience. Style always reveals what the communicator thinks about the cognitive capacity of the reader: the discourse can be reader-friendly or complicated; several propositions can be left implicit or implied. This latter situation can open the doors to manipulation (cf. the manipulative potential of withholding)

According to several researchers (Bańcerowski, 1997b, p. 192; Chilton, 2002; Wodak, 1989), evaluations that are coded in words, obscurity (homonyms, polysemes, imprecise words), catchwords (labeling), and often tropes (alliteration, metaphor, repetition etc.) are not simply persuasive, but rather manipulative tools. If these stylistic tools violate any of the Gricean maxims, they will be evaluated in the present study as manipulative tools, but not as separate manipulative strategies. Elements of style fail to observe the first two maxims of Manner most frequently (avoid obscurity of expression; avoid ambiguity). However, due to the vagueness of the maxims, it is not always obvious



when violation happens. In certain cases, emotionally loaded words<sup>3</sup>, catchwords, or newly invented terms violate the maxim of Quality, therefore manifesting the manipulative strategy of communicating false proposition(s).

If we take a closer look at a frequently applied trope, hyperbole (exaggeration) (e.g. *brehtaking collection, unbelievable offer, fit and energetic like never before*), it seems at first sight to violate the first maxim of Quality by making untrue statements. However, the readers can usually restore the truth-content of a false proposition, forming in the meantime some hypothesis about the implicit message of the hyperbole (Nemesi, 2003, p. 209). Therefore, tropes usually function as a manipulative device only in a wider sense because communicators may divert the readers' attention from the content, and direct it towards the peripheral route of persuasion. Let us examine the hyperbole in the following advertisement.

**Example 10.**

*A Világ Repülőgépei” sorozat nem hasonlítható össze egyetlen repüléssel foglalkozó könyvvel sem.*

[“The World’s Airplanes” series is incomparable to any other books on aircraft.]

This utterance (Example 10.) is a typical example of how hyperbole is presented in ads. It suggests that this is the best book on the topic and it is completely different from other books. However, these kinds of statement are so conventionalized that they have become an integral part of the mutual knowledge between the communicators and the readers, leading them to accept that the exaggerating expressions of advertisements should not be understood verbatim. Consequently, the hyperbole here (*nem hasonlítható össze* ‘incomparable’) does not violate the first maxim of Quality and therefore cannot be evaluated as manipulative.

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3 A word or phrase is “loaded” when it has a secondary, evaluative meaning in addition to its primary, descriptive meaning.

The analysis of Example 10 does not want to suggest that hyperbole can never be manipulative. Statements that evaluate product quality in advertisements can be manipulative because they assert untruth, and violate the maxim of quality and thus realize the strategy of communicating false propositions.

**Example 11.**

*Az Ariel Automat a legjobb a feltöltávolításban.*

[Ariel Automat is the best at removing stains.]

This advertisement was scientifically proved to be false by a group of chemists, and the manufacturer was fined three million Forints for misleading consumers (see later in 3.7). Certainly, the testing of advertisements' truthfulness is still uncommon on the market.

Finally, the notion of catchwords (or buzzwords) has to be discussed. In every age and culture there are concepts that are highly valued, in our times examples include *natural*, *quality*, *clean*, *fast*, *multifunctional*. The use of these words can be manipulative, for example, in marketing contexts, such as the words *lean* and *fat* (see the notion of positive framing in 2.3). These words were proved to be manipulative, not because they are inherently so, but because they set in motion underlying psychological mechanisms that readers were not conscious of, and motivated them to carry out certain actions (i.e. shopping). Due to the limited quantity of empirical evidence on the effect of single words on consumers, there is no set list of these words that could be applied to critical analysis of manipulation.

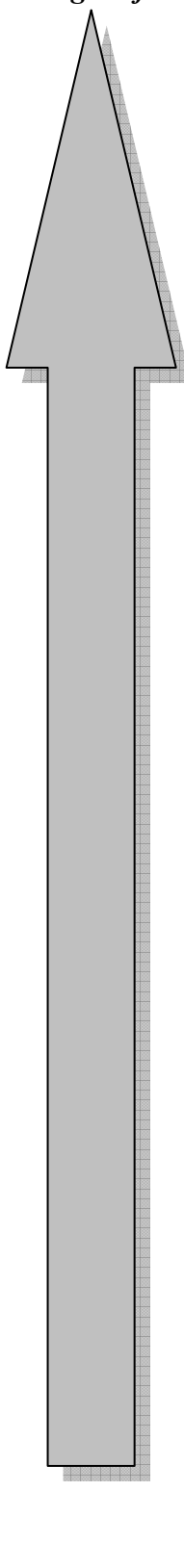
In the light of the above mentioned arguments, it can be assumed that elements of style can become manipulative tools when used with a manipulative intention, and manifest either argumentation fallacies or the violation of truthfulness. The question of whether a

given trope is a manipulative or a persuasive tool can be answered only by analyzing the context in which the utterance is embedded.

## **2.8. Manipulative potential/ Strength of manipulative strategies**

From the readers'/listeners' point of view, manipulative strategies can be ranked according to their strength, i.e. effectiveness. The following table depicts manipulative strategies on a scale, from weak to strong manipulation. Strong manipulation refers to verbal situations where the manipulee has no chance of detecting manipulation at all. Conversely, in the case of weak manipulation, there is a chance of detection provided the reader is a good critical thinker, and processes the messages through the central route.

**Figure 1.**  
**Strength of verbal manipulative strategies**



<b>Strong manipulation</b>	Linguistically and logically correct verbal utterance in non-persuasive discourse used with a manipulative intention E.g. <i>Have you seen the broken headlights?</i> (Loftus, 1979) Manipulative effect was manifested by a linguistic tool: “ <i>the</i> ”, the definite article. Type of tool: presupposition
	Communicating false proposition with a manipulative intention E.g. <i>Laboratory tests have shown that Retinol-A reduces skin wrinkles</i> (Crossen, 1994). Manipulative effect was realized by the content.
	Information transmission with a manipulative intention and without a communicative intention E.g. <i>Have you heard about the terrible epidemic in Bangkok?</i> (Árvay, 2003) Manipulative effect was manifested by non-communication.
	Withholding propositions with a manipulative intention E.g. <i>I think the best move for you would be to attack Kamchatka, so you can reach America quickly.</i> (Árvay, 2003) Manipulative effect was manifested by the lack of content.
	Presuppositions or implications used in persuasive discourse E.g. <i>Did you know that Ariel takes out even the most stubborn stains?</i>
<b>Weak manipulation</b>	Argumentation fallacy used with manipulative intention E.g. <i>A tudomány felfedezte azt az anyagot, amely energiát termel a testben. Sőt előállítás is sikerült, és amennyiben étrend-kiegészítő formájában veszi be, ezzel visszaállíthatja fiatalságát és életerejét.</i> [Science has discovered the substance that creates energy in the body, and has managed to manufacture it. If you take it as a food-supplement, you can restore your youth and vitality.] Manipulative effect was manifested by the content (fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc).

## **2.9. Processing persuasion and manipulation, detecting manipulation from the communicative partners' point of view**

The previous sections primarily focused on the manipulative strategies of the communicator but little attention has been paid to the comprehension process of influencing discourses. Let us now summarize from the reader's point of view, how the five outlined manipulative strategies can be processed.

Studying persuasion in marketing communication Taillard (2000) offered an integrated model of persuasive communication recovery. Her unified model of persuasive communication is based on Relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1995), and it incorporates the elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), the heuristic systematic model (Chaiken, Liberman & Eagly, 1989), attribution theory (Kelley, 1967; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993) and the persuasion knowledge model (Friestad & Wright 1994). One of the core elements of the model is persuasion knowledge (PK), which enables the target (reader or listener) to identify the persuasion attempt and the communicator's goal. Despite the fact that the model does not mention manipulation proper, some of the comprehension routes outlined describe manipulation and help to understand the complexity of influencing.

The following figure (Figure 2.) uses different colors for each manipulative strategy. The strategy of using information transition with a manipulative intention and without communicating intention (2.7.2) is marked with green. As it was discussed in detail in connection with Example 6. Bangkok, the communication is covert, no communicative intention is attached to {I}. Manipulation occurs if the second addressee of the utterance does not recognize the speaker's influencing intention. If there is neither informative

nor communicative intention attached to the informative intention, then inferential processing takes place and no relevance can be guaranteed. However, this verbal interaction can take place in a different way as well which is indicated in blue color. In this case, the second addressee recognizes the influencing intention which results in the allocation of cognitive resources and the processing goes either systematic or heuristic way. Even if processing is systematic, optimal relevance cannot be assumed, and therefore the result is some or no persuasion or unintended effects. If heuristic processing occurs, the result is either some or no persuasion.

In the case of the second manipulative strategy, namely withholding (see 2.7.3.1) the interaction takes place in two layers. On the surface layer (indicated in violet) an ostensive communication takes place, the informative intention is recognized along with the persuasive intention of the communicator. The communicative partner's persuasive knowledge allocates cognitive resources and the processing goes either systematic (comprehensive, analytic, cf. central) or heuristic (cf. peripheral) way. On the hidden layer, since the communicator withholds certain information, neither informative nor communicative intention is attached to  $\{I_2\}$ , which contains the manipulative intention. The processing of this layer corresponds to the second and the third steps of the yellow route.

The third manipulative strategy of using linguistically and logically correct elements that force on unconditional acceptance (2.7.3.2) can be applied in persuasive or non-persuasive discourse. If it is used in the latter, strong manipulation occurs (marked in yellow), for example, when the speaker deceptively asks the question of *Have you seen the broken headlights?* from an eyewitness when there were no headlights at all. The communication seems ostensive, standard ostensive-inferential processing takes place:

the eyewitness recognizes the informative intention, however, does not recognize the manipulative intention and will interpret the sentence as if there had been headlights. If the strategy is applied in a persuasive discourse (see Example 8. where a factive verb was used with false presupposition in advertising discourse), the communication seems ostensive, the informative intention and the persuasive intention are recognized, the communicative partner's persuasive knowledge allocates cognitive resources and the processing goes either systematic or heuristic way. However, the possibility of the manipulative intention being fulfilled is much greater due to the effect of the presupposition. This case is indicated in violet color.

In the case of the fourth manipulative strategy of using argumentation fallacies, manipulation is successful only if heuristic processing takes place, because systematic processing can uncover the incorrect way of argumentation. The processing of this strategy is illustrated by the violet route. Similarly to the third strategy, the recovery of the fifth manipulative strategy of using false proposition(s) (2.7.3.4) depends on the type of the discourse it is embedded. In persuasive discourse the processing takes the violet route, whereas in non-persuasive discourse it takes the yellow route.

The question of what the chances are of detecting manipulation is also discussed by Sperber (2000). He claims that evolution has given humans a so-called 'consistency-checking' module, which enables people to check the internal logical consistency of what people say, and to check the consistency of its content with their existing beliefs about what is true or real.

**Figure 2.**  
*The integrated model of persuasive and manipulative communication recovery (cf. Taillard, 2000, p. 166)*



PK = persuasion knowledge



This optimistic view is not supported by social psychological empirical evidence (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992), and also, as critical discourse analysts claim, well-trained and skillful communicators can use language in such a way that the critical consistency-checking modules of the hearers will not function perfectly (Chilton, 2002).

Another point to be considered is that, due to the speed of message transmission, oral manipulation (as in TV advertisements or political speeches) can easily hinder the understanding and detection of the deceptive nature of the discourse, whereas in the case of written discourse, partial detection is possible. A critical reader can return to the text and/or can conduct background research to confirm his or her doubts (see later in Chapter 7).

## **2.10. Summary**

The aim of this chapter was to provide a critical review of the theory of manipulation and offer some new insights. It was argued that the treatment of persuasion and manipulation requires a multidisciplinary approach, in this case consisting of four disciplines. Social psychology, critical discourse analysis, rhetoric and pragmatics have been called upon to ensure the widest possible overview of the topic.

The social-psychological studies quoted focused primarily on the effect of some verbal utterances in well-designed research situations. Critical Discourse Analysis offered insight into the theory and practice of ideology-related social-political manipulation. The focus of rhetoric is on persuasion, but relevant information was gathered concerning fallacious argumentation. Finally, two major theories of pragmatics, Gricean pragmatics and Relevance theory, provided a general approach to the understanding and description of manipulative language use. All of the afore-mentioned disciplines

contributed to the creation of a working definition of manipulation, and the outlining of five types of manipulative strategies which will serve as a basis for the building of an analytical tool that can be applied to the analysis of advertising discourse.

## **Chapter 3. Advertising discourse**

### **3.1. Setting the scene**

Advertisements have already been analyzed for various purposes: for their profitability by marketing research, for their effectiveness by social-psychology, and for their visuals and language use by discourse analysis, media studies, sociology and semiotics since the 1960s (for example, Barthes, 1964; Berger, 2000; Cook, 1992; Davis & Walton, 1983; Fairclough, 1989; Fowles, 1996; Goffman, 1976; Graydon, 2003; Lears, 1994; Leech, 1966; Steel, 1998; Vestergaard & Schroeder, 1985, Williamson, 1978). While the focus of these studies varies, they all agree that advertising is an increasingly international and cross-cultural genre, and its impact on people, especially on children and teenagers, is huge. In this chapter the most important features of the advertising genre will be discussed, including its definition, categorization, unintended negative effects, and the legal treatment of deceptive advertisements. Based on semi-structured interviews with copywriters (Appendix A), the process of the creation of advertisements will be described as well.

### **3.2. Definition and categorization**

The major goal of advertisements is to influence people; to form, or change (or sometimes maintain) a certain opinion or attitude to a given subject, according to the communicator's interest. If we view advertisements as discourse advocating a change of behavior, not only product advertisements can be included, but also non-product advertisements. Product advertisements can be understood as referring to the "promotion of goods or services for the sale or promotion of the image of a company

through impersonal media” (cf. Cook, 1992, p. xiv), whereas non-product (or non-profit) advertisements encourage such changes of behavior as not drinking, voting Green, releasing a hostage, going to a concert, sending money for famine relief, or even, paradoxically (in ads for advertising control), reporting ads that are untruthful (see for example the recently released advertisements of ‘Mediatudor’). In the present study, advertisements will be understood in this broad sense.

Apart from the product/non-product distinction, advertisements can also be categorized according to the technique they use. *Hard selling* advertisements make a direct appeal on behalf of the product, while *soft selling* does not. It relies more on mood than exhortation, and works on the implication that life will be better with the recommended product. An example of soft selling can be a Bacardi rum movie advertisement, in which slim and athletic young men and women in revealing swim-wear dive from a yacht into blue water, and bask happily on a tropical beach. Obviously, there is no real connection between the rum and the scene depicted. However, the advertiser linked the two in order to foster the association of luxury and happiness with Bacardi rum (Cook, 1992, pp. 10-11).

Another distinction in technique is that between reason and tickle (Bernstein, 1974, p. 118 cited in Cook, 1992). *Reason advertisements* suggest motives for purchase, for example Ilesci suntan lotion is said to be a better suntan lotion than the other lotions because it selectively screens damaging UV C rays. *Tickle ads*, on the other hand, appeal to emotion, humor and mood. The problem with this distinction is that there are hardly any examples that would fall into one of these categories, as most of them combine the two.

Advertisements are created in order to reach a specific target audience. This way, global, local, political, and public advertisements can be classified. Advertisements can also be grouped according to the medium where they appear. We can distinguish visual (print), audiovisual (TV), and audio (radio) advertisements.

It should be noted here that the analysis of the influencing strategies of print advertisements and TV advertisements should require differing approaches. The role of music, visual images and the way in which they are constructed in TV advertisements surpasses the importance of language use from the point of view of effectiveness. The repository of visual manipulative practices (for example using a softening filter with the camera, to make the landscape appear more attractive) offers endless possibilities for the construction of a desirable message. In the case of print advertisements, the role of images is varied. Many print advertisements consist only of a huge picture (or a montage of several pictures) accompanied by a slogan, whereas other types of print advertisement have longer texts. The longer the text, the less space is devoted to pictures, and consequently the focus is shifted to the sentences. One-page or half-page advertisements that have a longer and more coherent body of text create the image of being a quasi-argumentative discourse, which may result in the expectation of more information on the advertised product.

### **3.3. The creation of advertisements**

The creation of product advertisements has become a separate branch of business and a long process in which account managers, account planners, creatives and media managers are employed by professional advertising agencies. Account managers keep contact with the customers (i.e. the manufacturer or the retailer) who sometimes have detailed expectations or ideas about how their products should be advertised. Account

planners work as market researchers who determine consumer-groups in society in order to successfully target their products to the audience. Creatives are responsible for the creation of the advertisements. They work in pairs, one person is the copywriter, who actually decides on the words and sentences of the advertisement, the other is the designer, who draws or creates the pictures. The copywriter and the designer have to work in close collaboration in order to inspire each other and match their ideas. The creation of an advertisement starts out from a so-called *brief*, which is a two or three-page long guideline that is given to the creative team. It contains all the background information needed during the creation, including what is being advertised, who else is in the market with similar products, who should be talked to (i.e. who is the target audience), what kind of promise or prize can be offered, and finally, what kind of style can the target audience be addressed (personal communication with Csaba Bohus, copywriter, 2001). Following the thorough studying of the brief, the copywriter and the designer (i.e. the creative pair) carefully create several versions of advertisements, which are modified according to the customer's taste. A final modification might be accomplished in the case the advertisement is tested on the target-audience. Finally, the media managers find the best medium, channel, magazine time and frequency of broadcasting of the advertisement. Due to the careful and conscious creation process, advertisements can be labeled as strategic discourse (Habermas, 1984).

### **3.4. Written advertisements**

Written persuasion lacks the dynamism and flexibility of oral communication. It is not a spontaneous means of language use, since the copywriters are not present to adapt the discourse to the actual communicative situation, and modify the advertisement according to the readership. On the other hand, for readers, the reception is not time-

limited, and the possibility to re-read and re-interpret is always there. Thus, in order to be effective and fulfill the communicator's goals, written advertisements have to be constructed very carefully.

Written advertising includes magazine advertisements, brochures, leaflets and direct mails. Marketers tailor their advertisements according to the type of newspaper or magazine in which they appear, in order to maximize influencing potential. Each of the magazines has its own readership, and by identifying the target audience, copywriters can consciously choose the style and layout of their advertisements. An advertisement that is built on the heavy use of emotional appeals will be suitable for popular women's magazines (Nők Lapja or US Weekly). However, for a more serious economics magazine (for example, HVG or Figyelő), it would be rather odd, and less effective (Móricz & Téglássy, 1997, p. 120).

The structure of print advertisements consists of five parts: headline, illustration, body copy, signature line, and standing details (Gieszinger, 2001). The role of the headline (just as in the case of news) is to attract the attention of the readers and form a relationship. To motivate the audience to read on, advertisement headlines often emphasize that the message is extremely important, by highlighting it in eye-catching colors or fonts. Regarding illustration, the colors of the product are usually reflected in the colors of the advertisement. This strategy is likely to bring about a higher degree of product recollection.

The body copy introduces the product, spells out its features, its advantages, and anything which may motivate the readers to buy it. Longer body copy with well-founded arguments seems to have a greater effect on readers than shorter body copy with superficial arguments. According to social psychologists, this holds true not only

for readers who follow the central route and evaluate the validity of arguments, but also for those readers who follow the peripheral route. In the latter case, the explanation lies in the fact that longer texts create an impression of credibility (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992, p. 96).

The role of the signature line is to identify the brand, the manufacturer or the seller. The preferred placing of the signature line is at the bottom, or on the right side of the page, because these are the places where we finish reading. What is seen last is said to be more easily recalled, which raises the probability of that particular product being chosen. The verbal component of the signature, like the visual image, tends to be very concise, typically consisting of the corporate name and a brief slogan, meant to be closely associated both with that name and with the image. One of the most widely known logos of our time, the “Nike swoosh” illustrates this well. It consists of the single word “Nike”, the visual “swoosh” itself, and the slogan “*Just do it.*” The combination of these three elements is meant to convey a combination of characteristics that, taken together, create the brand.

Standing details act like non-verbal tools do in conversations. Bold types, subtitles, and bigger font sizes all serve the purpose of emphasizing words, and thus orient the readers’ attention towards pre-selected content.

As far as the language use of written advertising is concerned, Sandell (1977) showed in a detailed study on persuasive discourse that advertisements contain significantly more adjectives and exaggerating expressions (e.g. superlatives, and words such as *always*, *never*) compared to non-persuasive discourse. Words are usually shorter, and ellipses are often used. Sandell only studied Swedish language advertisements, but his



observations seem to hold true for advertisements written in German, Danish and English (pp. 128–135) as well.

### **3.5. The side-effects of advertisements**

One of the important roles of advertisements is to help recognize and differentiate products on the market (Ogilvy, 1997, p. 19). However, researchers of advertisements from various fields have noted that advertising brings about several unintended consequences. Besides successfully or unsuccessfully persuading or manipulating potential consumers to choose a particular product, advertisements have an impact on our culture and society. Advertising is said to construct consumption communities indirectly (Fairclough, 1989, p. 201), shape and reinforce social stereotypes, for example by portraying minorities and women in traditional roles and occupations, and idealize the “good life” by creating unrealistic feelings of confidence and power (Simons, 2001, p. 276). Advertisements are also blamed for reducing perceptions of responsibility for long-term consequences (*ibid.*), and developing a dependence on store-bought commodities. Finally, due to insufficient information, half truths and careful deception in advertisements, people are becoming cynical or skeptical, a phenomenon manifested by distrust of authority, and disbelief in cultural wisdom and norms (Breton, 2000). These claims are far-reaching, and are without doubt critical not only of advertising proper, but also consumerism and capitalist societies per se.

### **3.6. Advertising and deception**

Advertisements are often accused of encouraging materialism and consumption, of stereotyping, of causing us to purchase items for which we have no need, of taking advantage of children, of manipulating our behavior, using sex to sell, and generally

contributing to the downfall of our social system. The strongest criticism is that advertising is deceptive and manipulative (Breton, 2000; Dawkins, 1976, Vestergaard & Schroeder). Deception can be manifested by false statements, and by false promises, also referred to as raising unfounded hope.

In studying deceit and lying, Robinson notes that a clear discrepancy between advertisement and reality will mislead consumers (1996, p. 222). In the case of marketing discourse, deception is practiced in the pursuit of profit. Very often, a false impression is created by the supposedly desirable properties of products, even when such characteristics are not real, or simply absent. Deceptive appearance is certainly the easiest to create through visual illusions, for example, by using too much air at the top of granular detergent packets or cereal boxes. While these kinds of deception can easily be detected (mostly after having consumed the product), the validity of apparently credible scientific reports on the effectiveness of food, cosmetic products or new medicines, cannot be checked by the average man in the street. Crossen (1994) highlights the problem of concealed and biased experimental designs, loaded and inadequate sampling, and selective presentation of results, as practices that enable scientists to misrepresent their data, and to generate qualitatively incorrect interpretations. As an example, Crossen (1994, cited in Robinson, 1996, p. 199) mentions the case of Retinol-A cream. The manufacturer ordered a laboratory test of the efficacy of the skin wrinkle cream. The reliability of the study was questioned by Crossen, who detected seven design flaws in the critical study, and also revealed that the laboratory received more than a quarter of a million dollars in grants before testing from the manufacturer, subsequently receiving a further \$689,000. Also, the journalist who wrote a favorable editorial comment on the first positive publication, received \$3,500 prior to the editorial, and \$9,000 afterwards.

In order to see clearly in these kinds of cases, Ekman (1992) and Robinson (1996) suggested certain rules for the checking of credibility claims about research with commercial consequences. When estimating the likelihood of a statement being a lie, the following questions should be proposed. “Who paid for the work to be done? Did they have a vested interest in the outcome? Who carried out the work? And finally, did the researchers have an interest in particular outcomes?” (Robinson, 1992, p. 198). These questions are crucial, since the results of scientific research are generally trusted by the public, and often employed as a persuasive strategy.

### **3.7. Legal consequences of deceptive advertising**

Since in the present study both Hungarian and American advertisements are analyzed, a short summary has to be provided concerning the legal consequences and legal process of the interpretation of deceptive advertising. In Hungary, the Competition Council of the Hungarian Competition Authority (Gazdasági Versenyhivatal Versenytanácsa) is in charge of fining marketers committing the offense of unfairly influencing consumer choice (“fogyasztói döntések tisztességtelen befolyásolása”). In order to regulate business advertising activity, the Hungarian Parliament passed the Act LVIII. in 1997. The Act protects consumers’ interests by requiring fair communication between marketers and consumers, moreover it safeguards the interests of undertakings complying with the requirements of business fairness and facilitates the the sale of goods and services. The Act prohibits misleading advertising, which is defined as:

any advertising which in any way, including its presentation, deceives or is likely to deceive the persons to whom it is addressed or whom it reaches and which, by reasons of its deceptive nature, is likely to affect their economic behavior or which, for those reasons, injures or may injure the rights of other undertakings which are engaged in the same or a similar activity as that of the advertiser.

(Act LVIII/1997, Article 2, Clause o.))

According to Article 8., misleading involves misleading or false statements on the price, origin or any major features of the goods for example its components, effect on health or on the environment. Not mentioning (cf. withholding) quality deficiencies or the need for special circumstances in which the product can be used is also regarded as misleading. Moreover, if the advertisement creates the illusion of a special and advantageous buy, the information on the condition of payments, promotional gifts, discounts or chances of winning is not precise enough, the advertiser can be accused for violating the Act. The reason behind these regulations is to provide the consumers' right to free choice in the market, therefore the advertiser is not allowed to limit the consumers' possibility to form a correct product evaluation or comparison to other products.

The Hungarian legal practice pays special attention to health-marketing whose target audience is most often consists of ill and vulnerable people who are obviously more sensitive and motivated to buy anything that promises improvements in their health. Many of these advertisements generate needs by emphasizing the importance of prevention. The other type of advertisements that is in the focus of the attention of the Hungarian Competition Authority is the financial ads that often provide insufficient and imprecise information on the terms and the conditions (personal communication with Dr. Andrea Zenisek, 2007).

In the US the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is the primary regulator of deceptive advertising. The Commission has the power to regulate "unfair means of competition" and "unfair or deceptive acts or practices". Commissioners of the FTC act as judges, hearing cases in which marketers are charged with violating the FTC Act. According to

its 1993 Policy Statement on Deception, the FTC considers a marketing attempt to be deceptive if (Richards, 2000):

(1) there is a representation, omission, act or practice, that (2) is likely to prevent consumers from acting reasonably under the circumstances, and (3) that representation, omission, or practice is “material.” The term “material” refers to the fact that some deceptive claims are trivial, and that the FTC will only rule on deceptions that are important to consumers, i.e., those that affect consumers’ “choice of, or conduct regarding a product.”

The document states that in order to prove that a claim is deceptive, FTC is not generally concerned with what the claim says, but what it conveys to consumers. If that conveyed message differs from the reality of the product attribute being advertised, the claim is considered deceptive. This requires the commission to look at two types of evidence: (1) evidence concerning what message is conveyed to consumers, and (2) evidence concerning the product attribute’s true qualities. The former requires looking into consumer attitudes, which can be accomplished with the help of surveys. The question of how best to explore the inner thoughts of consumers has been the topic of significant research efforts and theoretical discussion (Preston & Richards, 1993; Richards, 2000). The second form of evidence can require a variety of different methods in assessing a product’s attributes. If, for example, the claim refers to the cleaning effectiveness of a detergent, laboratory testing of the efficiency of the cleaning power would normally be required. However, the FTC requires that advertisers conduct such testing before the advertisement is released to the public. If a claim is made without evidence it will be considered deceptive. If this happens, the advertiser is forced to either stop making the claim, or provide consumers with more information.

One last problem in connection with deceptive advertising is the evaluation of exaggeration. Promotional statements that are “mere exaggerations” are known in legal terminology as simple *puffery*. It is usually not sanctioned by the law in the US, since

puffery is supposed not to be taken literally by reasonable people, moreover the use of terms like “the best” or “the greatest” is considered to be subjective sales talk, and not objective statements, as the advertisers claim. After all, everyone knows that a “Magic roller” is not really magic, and “The Greatest Show on Earth” is not what everyone considers the greatest. According to Boudreaux (1995), puffery is pivotal to the marketing of new products, because consumers are more familiar with established products than with new products, and their attention has to be gained. However, there might be borderline cases when the “puffery defense” can function as a loophole through which many deceptive claims can escape, especially when the relevant quality of the product is exaggerated (see Example 11.), or the advertisement undermines the competitors. As discussed in Section 2.7.4 hyperbole can sometimes endanger the truthfulness of the discourse, and thus functions as a manipulative strategy. The evaluation of exaggeration in practice is contradictory, advocates of marketing strategy regard it as a harmless game involving terms which “no one out of diapers takes literally” (Boudreaux, 1995), while critics often consider it as misleading or manipulative saying that the wording of ads cannot be based on the assumption that consumers would check the validity of the claims (Breton, 2000; Robinson, 1996). Undeniably, there is a conflict between marketing profession and competition law.

There is one further concern worth bearing in mind regarding the effect of puffery. In recent decades, children have become the target of advertisements as well. This fact has raised important issues concerning their vulnerability. Assumptions about adults’ rational abilities to act in their own self-interest in the economic marketplace cannot be assumed to be valid for children (Haefner, 1991, p. 83). Small kids are incapable of distinguishing literal meaning and reality from fiction, and although this argument has been swiftly neutralized by Boudreaux above, saying that children are not customers,

marketers can easily affect adults by arousing desires in children towards certain products. Children will most certainly do the job. They will keep repeating their wish for a particular toy, and thus try to force their parents to buy the product.

### **3.8. Summary**

This chapter offered a brief summary of the genre of advertising and served two important insights. One concerns with the creation of advertisements. The interviews with the copywriters demonstrated that the birth of an advertisement was a carefully prepared and thoroughly designed process from background research to testing. The interviews proved that the use of the influencing strategies was conscious and intentional, moreover, the creative teams were often informed about the effectiveness of a campaign by market researchers. The other important insight of the chapter touches upon the difficulty of evaluating puffery (promotional statement), which both linguists and the legal profession have to face when dealing with deceptive advertising.

## **Chapter 4. The analytical tool, the Manipulation Screener**

### **4.1. Setting the scene**

One of the major undertakings of this study is to design an analytical tool, the so-called Manipulation Screener, which can be applied to the detecting of manipulative strategies in print advertising discourse. The type of tool is critical, in the sense that any analysis which is carried out applying the proposed tool will result in a critical evaluation of written advertisements.

This chapter will open by explaining the developing of the analytical tool, and will be followed by a detailed discussion of each category, with a special emphasis on Eemeren, Grootendorst & Henkemans' (2002) taxonomy of argumentation fallacies, which was incorporated into the Manipulation Screener.

### **4.2. Procedures of the developing of the analytical tool**

The creation of the framework consisted of five steps: (a) reading the relevant literature on manipulation in general; (b) reinterpreting the theory of manipulation by outlining five manipulative strategies (see RQ1, RQ2 in 1.2); (c) creating the analytical tool on the basis of the identified strategies; (d) checking the applicability of the analytical tool in a pilot analysis; (e) delineating the strategies in the format of a flowchart.

### **4.3. Manipulative strategies to be investigated**

Based on the theoretical considerations and findings of social psychology, critical discourse analysis, rhetoric and pragmatics, as discussed in details in Chapter 2, let us



examine at what extent the five outlined strategies can be investigated in written advertisements.

#### **4.3.1. Informing the intended addressee without a communicative intention**

This strategy is usually applied in everyday spoken discourse (see Example 6), and it is exploited in TV advertisements which speak to children (for example on cartoon channels) but also address their parents (see 3.7). In written advertising, this strategy can be exploited when a particular group of readers is addressed but at the same time the advertisement is exposed to a much wider audience (for example in a billboard or poster).

#### **4.3.2. Withholding information**

In the analysis, omitted information (facts or data that would be relevant and indispensable to the correct and precise interpretation of the advertisements) will be looked for. The analyst can rely only on his or her own background knowledge during the detection phase.

#### **4.3.3. Applying linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance**

Social psychological empirical studies demonstrated that certain linguistic elements have manipulative effect in certain situations. However, the findings of these studies cannot be generalized, since the identified metasemantic features are context-dependent. One exception is Loftus' experiment (1975) that managed to prove the manipulative effect of definite article in questions. This finding highlighted the importance of a context-free linguistic tool, such as presuppositions in manipulation.

Most of the work on presuppositions (Ducrot 1972; Gazdar, 1979; Kempson, 1975, 1979; Levinson, 1983; Reis, 1977; Wilson, 1975) only theorize on the nature and the

definitions of the term (Kiefer, 1983, pp. 17-59) but do not discuss their types in detail, unlike Kiefer (1983), who collects the major lexical elements and syntactic structures that could induce presuppositions. In the present study, Kiefer's categorization will be applied, and the following types of presuppositions will be examined:

- Definite noun phrases (NP) with existential presupposition

A definite NP presupposes the existence of an entity that is referred to by the noun in the noun phrase. The group includes: nouns with definite articles, proper nouns, and some quantifiers, such as *all*, *every*.

**Example 12.**

*Gearing up for the holidays is stressful enough without **the** additional stress and pain of finding, setting up and ultimately taking down seasonal decoration. (Christmas Decor, AL/17)*

The quote presupposes that there is additional stress and pain when one starts to decorate the house for Christmas.

- Factive verbs

Factives with sentential complements presuppose the truth of their subordinated clauses, or in other words presuppose a fact which is an abstract object. For example: realize, regret, be aware, comprehend, grasp, learn, mind, take into consideration, know, it's a pity that, deny.

**Example 8.**

*Ő **tudja**, hogy az Ariel a legmakacsabb ételfoltokat is kizedi a ruhácskából.*  
[She knows that Ariel takes out even the most stubborn stains.]

The subordinate clause of the factive verb *tudja* ('knows') presupposes that Ariel takes out the most stubborn stains.

- Inchoative verbs

Inchoative verbs express a change in the state of a person or object, which can be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively.

For example: get big, get ill, recover, wake up, come out, speed up, begin, continue.

**Example 13.**

*The Guaranty National Bank Debt Consolidation Loan is a smart plan to help you **regain** control of your finances. (Guaranty Bank, ADM/5)*

The verb *regain* presupposes that the reader did not have control over his or her finances.

- Adjectives in comparative structures.

**Example 14.**

*bárcsak minden **ilyen** kiszámítható lenne. (Domino, HM/12)*

[... if only everything was so predictable]

The comparative structure presupposes that the telephone package advertised is predictable.

- Only, too/as well, already, yet, anymore

**Example 15.**

*Dry, red, uncomfortable skin doesn't have to be **anymore**. (Avenoo, AM/15)*

*Anymore* presupposes that before the introduction of a new cream, the skin was dry, red, and uncomfortable.

- Third conditional

**Example 16.**

*If you had ordered the magazine, you could have won a new Audi.*

The third conditional presupposes that the person addressed by the speaker did not order the newspaper.

#### **4.3.4. The strategy of using falsity**

This strategy involves communicating false statements (as discussed in 2.7.3), half-truths, misrepresentations of reality, and false promises, and also the unfair use of presuppositions. The latter two can also be taken as instances of argumentation fallacies, since false promises (also known as ‘raising unfounded hope’) can be interpreted as false causal relations (see below in 4.3.5). Similarly, presuppositional structures which manifest falsity can also be regarded as types of argumentation fallacy, or as strategies of linguistically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance (as discussed above). These issues are a matter of categorization. To circumvent confusion, false promises will be categorized in this study as the argumentation fallacy of post hoc propter hoc (false causal relation), whereas the unfair use of presuppositions is also treated separately, and will be categorized as an instance of the strategy of linguistically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance.

A good example for the strategy of using falsity was discussed earlier in 2.7.4. The advertisement violates the maxim of Quality by a false statement. Falsity here is expressed by a hyperbole.

#### **.Example 11.**

*Az Ariel Automat a legjobb a feltávolításban.*

[Ariel Automat is the best at removing stains.]

#### **4.3.5. Argumentation fallacies as manipulative strategies**

As discussed in section 2.7.3.3, there is no final list in the literature which would unambiguously tell us which argumentation fallacies are manipulative. This means that an analytical tool has to include all the fallacies in order not to miss any of the potential

fallacies. The actual analysis of a discourse will enable the researcher to identify manipulative arguments by examining whether or not the fallacies violate any of the Gricean maxims.

The next step in creating an analytical tool is to select a list of argumentation fallacies from the abundance of categorizations (e.g. Corbet & Connors, 1999; Curtis, 2000; Hamblin, 1970; Hansen & Pinto, 1995; Pirie, 1985; Woods & Walton, 1982) that is theoretically well-established and user-friendly at the same time. To meet these criteria, Eemeren and Grootendorst's pragma-dialectical rules for critical discussion and fallacies (2002), has been applied to the analysis of written advertisements in the present study's Hungarian and American Corpus. Their system of fallacies is a theoretically and empirically developed tool, which has been widely employed in the literature since it was first published in 1992.

The word 'pragma', in Eemeren, et al.'s pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation, refers to the pragmatic approach they take when looking at argumentation. The purely formal logical approach concentrates on patterns of reasoning, and examines whether the conclusion derives from the premises. As opposed to this, the pragmatic approach to argumentation is concerned with a number of verbal, contextual, situational, and other pragmatic factors that affect the conduct and outcome of an argument exchange. In argumentation theory, the argumentation in actual practice takes the centre of attention (2002, p. xii).

Eemeren, et al.'s pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation incorporates the classical fallacies known since Aristotle. However, it follows from their theory that they interpret argumentation fallacies as violations of the rules for an ideal critical discussion. The authors distinguish ten rules for an ideal discussion, which are organized according to

the stage of the dispute (Table 7). Let us take, for example, Rule 2., the *Burden of proof* rule. There are two kinds of potential violation: (1) charging the burden of proof to the other party; (2) escaping from the burden of proof (see Example 17 below).

**Example 17.**

*Minden idők legsikeresebb önfejlesztő sikerkönyve. Mert működik. (Dianetika, HL/10)*  
[The No. 1 best-selling self-help book of all time. Because it works.]

In example (Example 17.) the communicator does not provide further arguments to prove the greatness of the book and arrive at a sound and plausible conclusion. The advertisement simply leaves the readers with this short and strong assertion.

Eemeren et al. offered their model primarily for the critical analysis of argument discussions. In the meantime, the authors claim that the model is applicable to written argumentation or monologue as well. Any discourse in which a standpoint is defended should be viewed as a one-way dialogue (p. 29). Eemeren and Grootendorst regard written argumentation as a kind of discussion with another party (the intended audience) that is implicitly present. In the case of written discourse, the communicator's task is to provide an ample quantity of arguments which convince the readers by removing their potential doubts, or by responding adequately to their potential criticisms (p. 157).

As far as the applicability of their model to the advertising genre is concerned, Eemeren and Grootendorst cite and analyze several advertisements as examples of fallacious argumentation (for example, p. 42., pp. 77-78.).

Finally, their model is applicable to the purpose of detecting non-cooperative language use, i.e. manipulation, because the authors have created the rules for critical discussion in accordance with the Gricean Cooperative Principle. This implies that their approach has a normative dimension, because they outline a model of good (in the sense of ideal)

persuasion dialogue against which particular cases of argumentation can be judged. Using different words and without references though, they refer to the four Gricean maxims (p. 52). Moreover, they presuppose that listeners normally assume that the rules of communication are being followed. They go on to argue that, in the case of any of the communication rules being violated, the charitable listener does not immediately assume that the speaker has disrupted the communication without good reason. Instead, the listener attempts to interpret the communicator's words in such a way that the apparent non-observance acquires a plausible meaning (p. 54). This interpretation of the comprehension of fallacies suggests that Eemeren et al. assume good will, and no suspicion of intentional deception on the part of the listener. This claim seems to support the potential effectiveness of deliberate misleading, i.e. manipulation.

The validity of Eemeren et al.'s normative model has been proved in an empirical study (Eemeren, Meuffels & Verburg, 2000) According to the authors, laymen with no prior training in rhetoric or communication at all, inherently regard the fallacies as wrong (i.e. unacceptable) moves of argumentation.

There are a few remarks they made in their book which should be borne in mind during the procedure of the analysis. First, the analysis must state exactly what standpoint is being defended or attacked (p. 160). In the case of advertisements, the author usually has a positive standpoint with regard to the advertised product, while the reader might presumably doubt this. Second, the analyst has to follow the strategy of maximally argumentative interpretation. This means that any utterance that, for instance, might also be just a remark or an explanation, is interpreted as argumentation (pp. 43-44).

**Table 7.****Overview of rules for critical discussion and fallacies (Eemeren et al., 2002)**

TYPE OF RULE	TYPE OF VIOLATION	TYPE OF FALLACY	
1. Freedom rule	Placing limits on standpoints or doubts	Fallacy of declaring standpoints sacrosanct	
		Fallacy of declaring standpoints taboo	
	Restricting the other party's freedom of action	Fallacy of the stick (Argumentum ad baculum)	
		Fallacy of appeal to pity (Argumentum ad misericordiam)	
		Ad hominem	Fallacy of depicting the other party as stupid, bad, unreliable, etc. (= direct personal attack)
			Fallacy of casting suspicion on the other party's motives (=indirect personal attack)
Fallacy of pointing out a contradiction in the other party's words or deeds (= "tu quoque" /you too)			
2. Burden of proof rule	Charging the burden of proof to the other party	Fallacy of shifting the burden of proof	
	Escaping from the burden of proof	Fallacy of evading the burden of proof	
3. Standpoint rule	Attributing a fictitious standpoint to the other party	Fallacy of the straw man	
	Misrepresenting the other party's standpoint	Fallacy of the straw man	
4. Relevance rule	The argumentation has no relation to the standpoint under discussion	Fallacy of irrelevant argumentation (ignorance of refutation) (= ignoratio elenchi)	
	The standpoint is defended by means other than argumentation	Fallacy of playing on the sentiments of the audience (= pathetic fallacy)	
		Fallacy of parading one's own qualities (=ethical fallacy/abuse of authority)	
5. Unexpressed premise rule	Adding an unexpressed premise that goes beyond what is warranted	Fallacy of magnifying an unexpressed premise	
	Refusing to accept commitment to an unexpressed premise implied by one's defense	Fallacy of denying an unexpressed premise	
6. Starting point rule	Meddling with the starting points by the protagonist by falsely denying that something is an accepted starting point	Fallacy of denying an accepted starting point	
	Meddling with the starting points by the antagonist by falsely presenting something as an accepted starting point	Fallacy of making unfair use of presuppositions in making assertions	
		Fallacy of making unfair use of presuppositions in making questions (= fallacy of many questions)	
		fallacy of circular reasoning (=petitio principii/begging the question)	
7. Argument scheme rule	Using an inappropriate argument scheme	Populist fallacy (symptomatic relation) (=argumentum ad populum)	
		fallacy of confusing facts with value judgements (= argumentum ad consequentiam)	
		fallacy of abuse of authority (= argumentum ad verecundiam)	



	Incorrectly applying an argument scheme	fallacy of hasty generalization (=secundum quid) fallacy of false analogy (relation of analogy) fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc (casual relation) fallacy of slippery slope (casual relation)
8. Validity rule	Reasoning that treats a sufficient condition as a necessary condition (in deductive argumentation)	fallacy of denying the antecedent fallacy of affirming the consequent
	Reasoning that confuses the properties of parts and wholes	fallacy of division fallacy of composition
9. Closure rule	Meddling with the conclusion by the protagonist	Fallacy of refusing to retract a standpoint that has not been successfully defended Fallacy of concluding that a standpoint is true because it has been defended successfully
	Meddling with the conclusion by the antagonist	Fallacy of refusing to retract criticism of standpoint that has been successfully defended Fallacy of concluding that a standpoint is true because the opposite has not been successfully defended (= argumentum ad ignorantiam)
10. Usage rule	Misusing unclarity	Fallacy of unclarity (implicitness, indefiniteness, unfamiliarity, vagueness)
	Misusing ambiguity	Fallacy of ambiguity

The following section will discuss each fallacy of Eemeren & Grootendorst's taxonomy. For the purpose of gaining a deeper understanding of the taxonomy, examples from advertising discourse will be preferred in illustrating the fallacies. In some cases, clarifying questions will also be included in order to help recognize the fallacies.

### **Fallacy of declaring standpoints sacrosanct**

- Limiting the expression of standpoints and doubts by not allowing the other party to put questions.
- By restricting the other party's freedom of action, the speaker attempts to dismiss the listener's right to be a credible party in the discussion.

#### **Example 18.**

*I'm going to have the kitchen remodeled. We can discuss style and layout or anything you want, but not whether it will be done.*

(Eemeren, et al., 2002, p. 111)

### **Fallacy of declaring standpoints taboo**

- It limits the expression of standpoints and doubts by referring to a social norm or custom.

**Example 19.**

*I don't think you should say that Grandmother shouldn't have remarried. One should not speak ill of the dead.*

(Eemeren, et al., 2002, p. 111)

**Fallacy of the stick (Argumentum ad baculum)**

- It is a technique of distraction.
- Force, or the threat of force is used to influence the other party.
- Direct or indirect reference to unpleasant consequences for the other party.
- The aim of a threat, typically, is to change behavior, not belief.

**Example 20.**

*Bad Breath: Why you're always the last to know.*

*A simple question: when someone you know or work with has bad breath, do you tell them? If you are like most people, the answer is probably "No." Which means that nobody is going to tell you when you have bad breath. So be sure you don't, use ReterDEX products. [...] So don't wait for someone to tell you. Because they won't.*

**Fallacy of appeal to pity (Argumentum ad misericordiam)**

- Puts the other party under pressure by arousing the emotions of its audience.
- The problem with appealing to pity is that the arguments are usually irrelevant.

**Example 21.**

*Oh, Officer, there's no reason to give me a traffic ticket for going too fast because I was just on my way to the hospital to see my wife, who is in a serious condition, to tell her I just lost my job and the car will be repossessed.*

**Ad hominem fallacy**

- Attacking the character or circumstances of the other party, who is advancing a statement or an argument, instead of trying to disprove the truth of the statement or the soundness of the argument.
- Irrelevant personal qualities of the other party – such as appearance – are offered as evidence against the opponent's position. The assumption is that what the speaker is saying is entirely or partially dictated by his character or particular circumstances, and should therefore be disregarded.
- It may successfully distract the opponent or the audience from the topic of the debate.

**Example 22.**

*Prof. Connor says to Prof. Russell: "You are much too hard on your students," and Prof. Russell replies: "But certainly you are not the one to say so. Just last week I heard several of your students complaining."*

### **Fallacy of shifting the burden of proof**

- Forcing the opponent to prove his or her standpoint instead of proving our standpoint first.

#### **Example 23.**

*Let's suppose that David is one of the few persons who do not have a TV. One day David got a letter from the Dutch TV tax office saying that his "name and address is not in their database" and since "these days nearly every home has a television" he is asked to pay his TV tax. David is the one who is forced to prove that he does not have a TV by filling out and sending an attached form.*

(Eemeren et al., 2002, p. 114)

### **Fallacy of evading the burden of proof**

- Presenting the standpoint as self-evident.
- Giving a personal guarantee of the rightness of the standpoint.
- Immunizing the standpoint from criticism.

#### **Example 17**

*Minden idők legsikeresebb önfejlesztő sikerkönyve. Mert működik.*

[The No. 1 best-selling self-help book of all time. Because it works.]

### **Fallacy of the straw man**

- Oversimplified or exaggerated (i.e. weak) arguments are put forth in order to be knocked down.
- Emphatically putting forward the opposite standpoint.
- Creating a fictitious opponent.
- Taking utterances out of context and thus distorting their meaning.
- Attacking a position – the “straw man” – not held by the opponent.
- The opposing position attacked in a Straw Man argument is typically weaker than the opponent's actual position.

#### **Example 24.**

*Senator Jones says that we should not fund the attack submarine program. I disagree entirely. I can't understand why he wants to leave us defenseless like that.*

### **Fallacy of irrelevant argumentation (ignorance of refutation) (= ignoratio elenchi)**

- The argumentation has no relation to the standpoint under discussion

**Example 25.**

*It can pout. It can blow big bubbles. It can let them eat cake  
A MOUTH. Everyone has one, and they are all good and bad at different things. When  
you open it, you are telling the world who you are. (...). It is the only body part that can  
speak for itself.*

*Rembrandt – Oral Health and Beauty*

**Fallacy of playing on the sentiments of the audience (= pathetic fallacy)**

- It is non-argumentation.
- Coincides with Aristotle's classical category of pathos.
- Arousing positive feelings, like security or loyalty.
- Arousing negative feelings of fear, greed, shame etc.

**Example 26.**

*Olyan egyedülálló érzés ez, amelyben James Bondhoz hasonlóan csak Ön részesülhet.*

[A unique feeling. Only for James Bond and you.]

**Fallacy of parading one's own qualities (=abuse of authority, ad verecundiam)**

- Misusing the Aristotelian notion of ethos.
- Ad verecundiam arguments can be used non-fallaciously when genuine experts and authorities express valuable opinions in their fields. These should be believed when we are unable to come to a conclusion on more secure grounds.
- Ad verecundiam arguments are used fallaciously when a proposition is presented as acceptable because some person or written source that is inappropriately presented as an authority says so.
- Anyone can give opinions or advice, but the fallacy occurs when the reason for assenting to the conclusion is based on following the improper authority.
- Clarifying question to be asked: is the person (actor, sporting personality, person known from the media etc.) really an expert in the topic, or are they just endorsing a product?

**Example 27.**

*“Gondolkodott már a jó megoldáson?” (– kérdezi Vágó István)*

*Amikor kihagy az agy, sőt cserbenhagy, az már nem feledékenység, az bizony memóriazavar! (...)*

*Bilobil kapszula. Az agy karbantartója.*

[Have you thought of the correct solution, yet? (a picture of István Vágó, the popular quizmaster, is shown meanwhile)]

When your brain cuts out or worse, when your memory fails you, that is no longer simply forgetfulness.....that is memory deficiency.

Bilobil capsule, which maintains the mind ]

### **Fallacy of magnifying an unexpressed premise**

- One party exaggerates what the other leaves unexpressed.
- Rephrasing and falsely exaggerating the other party's words to make them stronger than the original words were.
- Exaggerating the unexpressed premise makes the standpoint easier to attack.

#### **Example 28.**

*Jerome: It could be that he doesn't like dogs very much, because he has a cat.*

*Heather: So you think that everyone who has a cat by definition hates dogs?*

*Jerome: No, I didn't say that. I only mean that there are a lot of cat owners who don't like dogs much.*

(Eemeren et al., 2002, p. 122)

### **Fallacy of denying an unexpressed premise**

- The speaker leaves something unexpressed, which is correctly made explicit by the other party. However, if the speaker refuses to take responsibility for elements that are indeed implied by his or her defense (for example, by claiming “*I never said that*”), he or she commits the fallacy of *denying an unexpressed premise*.
- The inclination to deny an unexpressed premise is strongest when it contains weak or controversial elements.
- This type of fallacy coincides with the notion of enthymeme discussed earlier (see 2.5.2.3).

#### **Example 29.**

*I have nothing against dogs in the park. I just think that little children who play or swing here would be easily get pushed or frightened by dogs.*

### **Fallacy of making unfair use of presuppositions in making assertions**

- Falsely giving the impression that the proposition in the assertion is an established fact.

#### **Example 8.**

*Ő [az anyukád] tudja, hogy az Ariel a legmakacsabb ételfoltokat is kiszedi a ruhácskádából.*

[She (your mother) knows that Ariel takes out even the most stubborn food stains from your clothes.]

### **Fallacy of making unfair use of presuppositions in making questions (= fallacy of many questions/loaded questions/complex questions)**

- The formulation of the question is misleading because it creates the impression that a statement that is embedded in the question is a fact.

- The question would need to be spilt in two.

**Example 30.**

*Miért ücsörögsz mindig otthon? Pattanj be barátaiddal az új Ford Fiestába!*

[Why are you always slouching at home? Hop into the new Ford Fiesta with your friends!]

The presupposition in the example is that (*mindig otthon ücsörögök*) I'm always slouching at home.

**Fallacy of circular reasoning (=petitio principii/begging the question)**

- In defending the standpoint, the speaker uses an argument that amounts to the same thing as the standpoint.

**Example 31.**

*Racial discrimination is a punishable offense because it's against the law.*  
(Eemeren et al., 2002, p. 130)

**Populist fallacy (symptomatic relation) (=argumentum ad populum)**

- The opinion of a certain number of people is used in arguing for the acceptance of the standpoint.
- Ad populum fallacy arouses the feelings and enthusiasm of the multitude.
- The basis of the *ad populum* appeal is the assumption that a large number of people is more likely to be right than you are.
- In the light of peer pressure, many people feel it is better to be normal than to go against the crowd.
- The main problem with this fallacy is the fact that many people agreeing on something does not imply that what they agree on is true; nevertheless, the fact that many people agree can be relevant evidence for the truth in some instances. The trick is to understand the nature of the relevance of the premises to the conclusion.

**Example 32.**

*“Ők már döntöttek” (megrendelték a repülős kártyákat) (...) “idézet Kővári úr, Piroska és Zsolt leveléből”*

[“They have already decided...” (they have ordered the flight cards) (...) “Quote from the letters of Mr. Kővári, Piroska and Zsolt”]

**Fallacy of confusing facts with value judgments (= argumentum ad consequentiam)**

- Arguing that a proposition is true because belief in it has good consequences, or that it is false because belief in it has bad consequences is often an irrelevancy.

**Example 33.**

*It can't be raining, because that would mean we'd have to cancel our picnic.*  
(Eemeren et al., 2002, p. 130)

**Fallacy of hasty generalization (=secundum quid)**

- Generalization is based on insufficient observations.
- S is a p and S is a q. Therefore, all p's are q's.
- Questions to check whether the argument commits this fallacy:  
Is the sample big enough to be representative?  
(In the case of a mass product, one item would be satisfactory to make a generalization, in other cases the sample size could be as large as a thousand.)  
Is the sampling procedure biased? Can stereotypes and prejudices be traced?

**Example 34.**

*After having spent our 1991 vacation in Cuba, we went there again in 1992, which shows that it's a great place for tourists.*  
(Eemeren et al., 2002, p. 131)

**Fallacy of false analogy (relation of analogy)**

- It is a fallacy applying to inductive arguments.
- The label "false analogy" is very misleading, because analogies are neither true nor false. Instead, they can be graded in degrees from 'almost identical' to 'extreme dissimilarity'.
- X has property Y. Z is like X. Z therefore has property Y.
- The speaker puts forward an analogy in support of a case, but the analogy bears only superficial similarities to the case in question.
- Analogy has to be a sound one.
- Questions to evaluate analogies:  
How many common features do the two things have?  
To what extent are the similarities relevant?  
To what extent are the dissimilarities relevant?  
How important are the differences?

**Example 35.**

*People are like dogs. They respond best to clear discipline.*

**Fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc (casual relation)**

- Wrongly establishing a cause-and-effect relation based on the fact that the one thing preceded the other.
- Wrongly suggesting that adopting a certain course of action will inevitably cause changes, when in fact there is no evidence that such an effect will occur.

**Example 36.**

*Ha a Vodafont használsz, nem maradsz le semmiről.*

[If you use Vodafone, you won't miss out on anything.]

**Fallacy of slippery slope (casual relation)**

- In the slippery slope fallacy the speaker asserts that some event must inevitably follow from another without any argument for the inevitability of the event in question.
- In most cases, there are a series of steps or gradations between the first event and the one in question, and no reason is given as to why the intervening steps or gradations will simply be bypassed. This fallacy takes the following form: If **A** happens, then by a gradual series of small steps through **B**, **C**,..., **X**, **Y**, eventually **Z** will happen, too.

**Z** should not happen.

Therefore, **A** should not happen, either.

**Example 37.**

*We have to stop the increase in tuition fees! The next thing you know, they'll be charging 40,000 HUF a semester!*

**Fallacy of denying the antecedent**

- It occurs in deductive argumentation.
- A sufficient condition treated as a necessary condition.
- The invalid counterpart of the modus ponens type of reasoning.

**Example 38.**

*If you eat poisoned berries (antecedent) you get sick (consequent).*

*Anna hasn't eaten poisoned berries. (denial of the antecedent)*

*Therefore Ann is not sick.*

**Fallacy of affirming the consequent**

- Sufficient condition treated as a necessary condition.
- The invalid counterpart of modus tollens.

**Example 39.**

*If you eat poisoned berries (antecedent) you get sick (consequent).*

*Anna is sick. (affirming the consequent)*

*Therefore Ann has eaten poisoned berries.*

**Fallacy of division**

- Incorrectly attributing a property of the whole to the component.



**Example 40.**

*The Cabinet is indecisive.  
Therefore the ministers are indecisive.*  
(Eemeren et al., 2002, p. 134)

**Fallacy of composition**

- Incorrectly attributing a property of the component to the whole.
- What is true for the parts is not necessarily true for the whole.

**Example 41.**

*A gyerekek uzsonnatáskájából nem hiányozhat a Kinder tejszelet, amely összetételénél fogva ideális tízórai számukra. A benne található esszenciális aminosavak, zsírok, szénhidrátok elengedhetetlenek növekedésükhöz.*

[Kinder milkbar is an essential part of childrens' lunchbox, the ingredients of which make it an ideal snack for them. Its essential amino acids, fats and carbohydrates are indispensable to their growth.]

**Fallacy of refusing to retract a standpoint that has not been successfully defended**

- If the protagonist has not managed to successfully defend a standpoint, he or she must give it up.

**Example 42.**

*Well, I know I wasn't able to bring enough examples and you managed to offer a few good counterarguments, but I still think that my standpoint is true.*

**Fallacy of concluding that a standpoint is true because it has been defended successfully**

- A successful protagonist is entitled to expect the other party to retract their doubts about the standpoint, but no more than that.
- The acceptability of the starting points outside the context of the discussion has not been established.

**Example 43.**

*I've given you five good reasons why NutraSweet cannot be a dangerous sweetener, and you were not able to refute any of them. So, believe me, there is no problem with NutraSweet, you can use it as often as you want to.*

**Fallacy of refusing to retract criticism of standpoint that has been successfully defended**

- The antagonist does not want to retract criticism, even though the protagonist has succeeded in defending his or her standpoint.

**Example 44.**

*Well, if that's the case, then I can't think of any more objections. But I still don't agree with it.*

(Eemeren et al., 2002, p. 135)

**Fallacy of concluding that a standpoint is true because the opposite has not been successfully defended (= argumentum ad ignorantiam)**

- A is not known (proved) to be true (false), therefore A is false (true).
- A lack of evidence by itself is no evidence.
- The roles of the protagonist and the antagonist are confused.

**Example 45.**

*Mother: You must never hit children because then they lose trust in society and ten years later they'll be hitting everybody.*

*Father: It has not in any way been proved that hitting children leads to violence later. So a slap once in a while for a good reason can't do any harm.*

(Eemeren et al., 2002, p. 135)

**Fallacy of unclarity**

- It can occur during any stage of a discussion.
- It often occurs not by itself but in combination with other fallacies and enhances their effect.
- It can occur either at the level of lexis, or at the textual level (structural unclarity resulting from lack of coherence, obscure structure etc.).
- It has four main types:
  - implicitness: the communicative function of the speech act is not clear
  - indefiniteness: the reference of the word is unclear
  - unfamiliarity: the word itself is not known to the listener
  - vagueness: there is not enough information about a word, what is meant by it

**Example 46.**

*Braun Sensotech. Intelligens borotválkozási élmény.*

[Braun Sensotech. An intelligent shaving experience.]

**Fallacy of ambiguity**

- It can occur during any stage of a discussion.
- A word or expression is used in more than one sense.
- Fallacy of ambiguity occurs only when ambiguity causes an argument's form to appear validating when it is not.

**Example 47.**

*(in the envelope) FREE MILES – Earn 2,500 Mileage Plus Miles*

(in the letter) Open your Ameritrade Account and get 2,500 Mileage Plus Miles and 10 Commission-free trades.

#### 4.4. The analytical tool

As discussed in the previous sections, the advertisements have been analyzed according to the following categories (Table 8.): argumentation fallacies; falsity including unfair use of presupposition and false statement; and withholding relevant information. The last column shows the type of the Gricean maxim that has been not observed. This serves as a final screener for selecting manipulative strategies since, as noted earlier, argumentation fallacies cannot automatically be evaluated as manipulative strategies.

In the outlining of manipulative strategies in 2.7.1, the unfair use of presuppositions was regarded as a separate type of manipulative strategy, and not as an instance of fallacious argumentation. The reason for treating the intentional unfair use of presuppositions as a separate manipulative strategy is that it is an instance of strong manipulation if it occurs in non-influencing discourse. Although argumentation fallacies are cases of weak manipulation from the listeners' point of view, the unfair use of presuppositions used in advertisements is usually more difficult to detect than argumentation fallacies due to the automatic process of comprehension. Therefore, during the analysis of advertisements, the unfair use of presuppositions will be treated separately from argumentation fallacies.

**Table 8.**  
*The categories of the analytical tool*

Identified utterance	Type of Argumentation fallacy	Unfair use of presupposition	False statement, misrepresentation of reality	Withholding (too few arguments)	Non-observance of Gricean maxims

## **4.5. Pilot analysis**

### **4.5.1. The aim of the pilot analysis**

The major aims of the pilot analysis were (a) to try to find examples of the outlined manipulative strategies, (b) to explore potential theoretical problems of the analytical tool, and finally (c) to highlight practical difficulties that might occur during the contrastive analysis of two parallel corpora. In order to achieve these goals, a sample corpus consisting of four leaflets, four magazine ads and four direct mail letters from both Hungary and the United States was created and analyzed in the spring of 2003.

### **4.5.2. Insights of the pilot analysis**

The pilot study offered many lessons for the main analysis. Having analyzed the Hungarian and the American pilot corpora, a few problem areas have been identified and a few insights have been gained.

1. Examples have been found for four manipulative strategies.
2. The difficulty of detecting the strategy of withholding.
3. The difficulty of checking falsity.
4. The merits and limitations of Eemeren's taxonomy
5. Questions about the treatment of emotional appeals
6. Treatment of pictures

#### **4.5.2.1. The presence of the manipulative strategies outlined**

The analysis showed that, apart from the manipulative strategy of informing the intended addressee without ostensive communicative intention, the other four strategies are represented in the advertisements. This type of manipulation could possibly be revealed in other types of advertisements, such as TV ads or billboards. However, one of the Hungarian advertisements displayed an interesting strategy, which seems to manifest the strategy of "informing the intended addressee without ostensive communicative intention".

**Example 48.**

*A Mamád ugyanúgy megóv majd mindentől, ami Neked ártalmas lehet. [...] Ruháidat Ariellel mossa majd patyolattisztára, hiszen tudja és érzi, hogy ez jó Neked, addig is, amíg Te ezt nem tudod Neki elmondani.*

[Your mom will protect you from everything that can be harmful to you. [...] She will wash your clothes white as snow with Ariel, because she knows and senses that it is for your good, even while you cannot tell her.]

The communicator does not address the target audience (parents) directly, but on the surface level talks to the babies instead. Thus, a tri-participant discourse is created where the eavesdropper role is assigned to or rather forced on the adult readers. However, considering the real context of the situation, it is only a stylistic device, since a baby cannot comprehend an advertisement and the readers know this. This artificial communicative situation (the advertiser recommends a product to a baby) has a great advantage, namely that it allows a patronizing tone to be used. The narrator takes the role of a nanny, uses informal verb forms in Hungarian, and as a result creates an unequal power-relation. In this unusual communicative situation with three participants (communicator, mock-addressee, real addressee), the narrator's role and position creates a friendly, informal situation, which might draw positive feelings from readers towards the advertised product.

**4.5.2.2. The difficulty of detecting withholding**

Detecting withholding proved to be a difficult task. The analyst has to rely on his or her background knowledge and intuition. Once withholding is suspected, the analyst should collect background information, or compare the advertised product with similar ones. For example, one of the magazine advertisements promotes the Kinder milkbar by emphasizing how healthy it is (Appendix C). The advertisement is built up by praising the benefits of several components, such as essential amino-acids, fats, carbohydrates, calcium, and vitamin B. However, it withholds information about its additives, such as

ammonium-carbonat (E 503), mono- and diglycerids of fatty acid (E 472c) and pyrophosphate (E 450a) which are hardly healthy components in children's food. Detecting such withholding is easily manageable by looking at the product wrapping in a shop, but in the case of several other advertisements, the suspicion of withholding cannot easily be verified.

#### **4.5.2.3. The difficulty of checking falsity**

While carrying out the analysis, several questions and problems have emerged concerning the truthfulness of the propositions and the validity of the conclusion. The detection of falsehood is sometimes problematic, unless the analyst possesses the necessary background information about the advertised product. Lacking that, it is hard to prove that a proposition is true or false. For example, in the case of a suntan lotion it is hard to check for a layman whether the lotion really fulfils the promise the advertisement articulates, namely that it *“selectively filters the damaging UV ‘C’ [...] and it also filters some of the soft X-rays”*.

#### **4.5.2.4. The merits and limitations of Eemeren et al.'s taxonomy**

The pilot analysis has revealed several advantages of Eemeren et al.'s categorization of argumentation fallacies. It has proved to be comprehensive and at the same time user-friendly (compared to other taxonomies that create a great number of subfallacies), and it is also content-based. This means that the taxonomy does not focus on single words, instead taking the role and context of an utterance into consideration.

As to the limitations of the taxonomy, two major points have to be discussed. One is the applicability of the taxonomy to written monologues. Although the authors claim that discourses like that should be viewed as one-way dialogues, since they defend a standpoint (2002, p. 29), some of their fallacies (for example, the fallacy of refusing to

retract a standpoint that has not been successfully defended) seem to make sense only if two parties are present in a dialogue. Nevertheless, these fallacies will not be disregarded because there might be an advertisement which takes the form of a dialogue, or the communicator might create mock-refutations.

The second point is the inconsistency of the treatment of fallacies appealing to emotions. Eemeren et al.'s taxonomy treats *ad baculum*, *ad misericordiam*, *ad populum* separately from the fallacy of "playing on the sentiments of the audience". It is not clear why the other types of emotional appeals that have been found in the sample, such as appeal to rarity, vanity, group solidarity, and envy are not afforded such attention. The fallacy of playing on the sentiments of the audience thus seems to be an 'umbrella' category. This inconsistency might stem from the rhetorical tradition.

#### **4.5.2.5. Questions about the treatment of emotional appeals**

The major problem with the use of emotion in argument is that it often disguises a lack of solid evidence for content (Walton, 1989, p. 20). To decide whether an emotional appeal is manipulative, i.e. violates any of the Gricean maxims, requires a thorough study of the context. Emotional appeals are often used fallaciously but there are cases when they are relevant, legitimate and reasonable.

One of the direct mails (Appendix I) wanted to persuade the readers to practice charity to homebound and lonely elderly people living in the same town as the addressee. The letter relied heavily on a familiar type of emotional appeal, the appeal to pity (*ad misericordiam*), which is used by many charities. It was not only the wording of the letter that aroused sympathy, but also the attached pictures and quotes of thanks written in shaky handwriting.

**Example 49.**

*Imagine being old and alone in our city. [...] Just imagine living on the fourth floor of a walk-up with dark, narrow stairs. Imagine your fear of falling if you have poor eyesight and osteoporosis. [...] We hope you will sign the enclosed placemat, so that a frail neighbor will know that someone is thinking of them.*

Upon first reading, the style of the letter appears excessive and suspicious to the analyst. However, following careful study of the context, this overt appeal to pity or compassion was judged to be reasonable and justifiable, and thus not manipulative (Árvey, 2004). Of course, this positive evaluation is based on the belief that the donated money will help those poor people, and not go into further fundraising efforts, and into the pockets of the people who work for the charity. If that were the case, the mail would commit the manipulative strategy of violation of truthfulness.

Emotional appeals were often manifested by hyperbole. For example, one of the advertisements that promotes lipstick, uses an abundance of emotional appeals, manifested by such expressions as: *hidratálttá varázsolja az ajkakat* ('it magically hydrates your lips'), *légiesen könnyű érzés* ('an airy, light feeling'), *pihekönnyű árnyalat* ('a shadow, as light as a feather'), *lenyűgözően drámai tekintet érhetsz el* ('you can have a dramatically fascinating look'). However, while the first three quotes can be interpreted as conventionalized exaggerations regarding product quality, the last one raises an unfounded promise to the consumers, and was thus interpreted by the coders as a manipulative utterance.

**4.5.2.6. Treatment of pictures**

In recent years there has been growing interest in assessing non-verbal arguments (visual arguments and "coalescent arguments") such as tears, a hug, or a hopeless look (Gilbert, 1997). This realm of argument exists outside verbal argument, but cannot be



neglected in analysis, since visual arguments also support the conclusion of the message. Indeed, they play a crucial role in constructing the meaning of the advertisements.

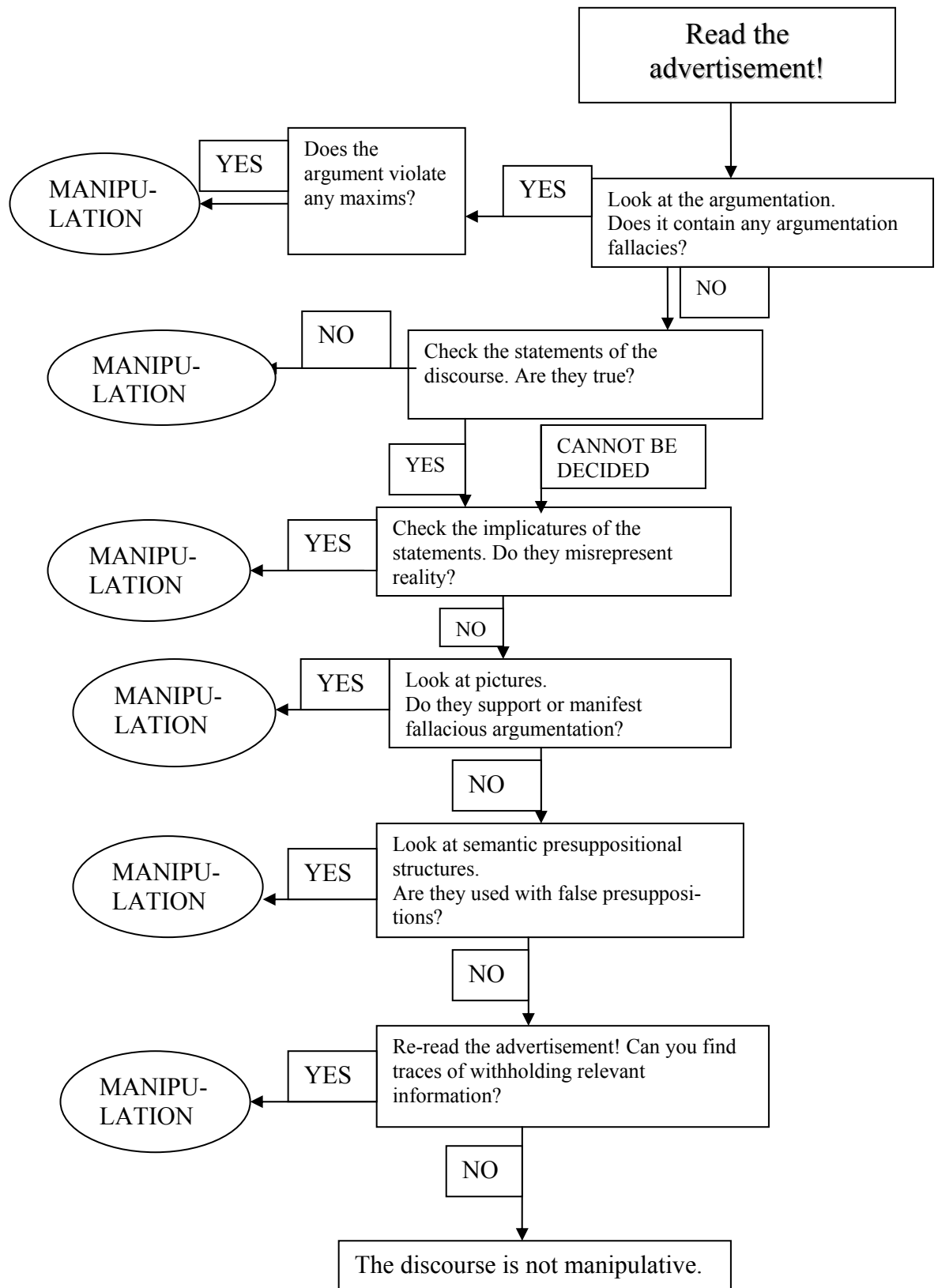
Every body copy of the pilot analysis was accompanied by a picture. However, these pictures differed in terms of their location and importance. Some of them were only marginal illustrations, while others had an important role in shaping the message by adding an extra level of interpretation. For example, the text on a leaflet promoting Voltaren cream (Appendix D) has been evaluated as well-structured, informative advertising, but the accompanying picture showing an energetic and happy grandfather implies carefree movement, and as such was interpreted by the coders as implying unfounded hope. It was therefore categorized as a fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc.

In the case of a few advertisements, the picture did not bear any relevance to the advertised product (for example, the Phillips razor and a woman in lingerie), and consequently these pictures were coded as irrelevant (visual) arguments. To sum up, pictures are treated as visual arguments, and evaluated in the same way as verbal arguments.

#### **4.6. The Manipulation Screener**

The construction and application of the analytical tool can best be delineated in a flowchart format (see Figure 3.) which clearly indicates how the four manipulative strategies can be filtered.

**Figure 3.**  
**The Manipulation Screener**



The creation of the analytical tool was primarily based on theoretical considerations, but not exclusively on that because the insights on manipulation that were referred to by social psychology and CDA were partly based on empirical investigations. Moreover, to a lesser extent the pilot analysis influenced the creation of the flowchart as well. Therefore, the type of the proposed tool is theory-based (deductive) and data-based (inductive) at the same time.

#### **4.7. The universality of manipulative strategies**

The categories of the analytical tool have to be applicable both to the Hungarian and the English language in order to be able to capture the manipulative strategies of the two corpora. The strategies of ‘information transmission with manipulative intention and without communicative intention’, and ‘withholding certain proposition(s)’ are universal, since manipulation was manifested by malfunctioning in communicative situations, and not by semantic elements or syntactic structures. By the same token, the strategy of ‘using false proposition(s)’ is a universal strategy.

The third strategy of ‘using linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance’ was determined on the grounds of social psychological research results that were carried out in English. Therefore, in the case of this strategy, the applicability to Hungarian language has to be verified. Content based research results Farquhar et al., 1987; Howard & Kerin, 1994; Leventhal et al. 1970; Stubbs, 1994; Tajfel, 1981; Trew, 1979) and the one that proves the effect of the definite article (Loftus & Zanni, 1975) are universal. However, those that are based on the effect of a single word (Levin & Gaeth, 1988; Loftus & Palmer, 1974) should be replicated in Hungarian language in a Hungarian context, to see if these words have the same effect on respondents. But because, for the present investigation, only presuppositions are

selected from the tools that manifest this strategy, their universality has to be examined. According to Kiefer (1983, pp. 78-82) non-universal, idiosyncratic presuppositions certainly exist, since languages differ in their lexical and syntactic structures, but the phenomenon (that if a given presuppositional unit or structure is present in a language it necessarily causes a specific presupposition) itself is universal. The types of presuppositions Kiefer determined in his book were found to exist in the English language.

The strategy of using argumentation fallacies can be regarded as universal. Argumentation fallacies characterize the logical structure of a discourse, and therefore must exist both in the Hungarian and English languages, where Western logic, which is based on Hellen tradition, is accepted and constitutes the basic norm.

#### **4.8. Summary**

This chapter discussed the development and refinement of the analytical tool, the Manipulation Screener, which offers an ideal language-independent tool to capture the richness of manipulative strategies in written advertising discourse. However, the deficiency of the Screener is inherent in its merit: the coders have to be well-trained in using the tool and solve the analytical problems which the pilot analysis revealed. To avoid unreliable coding a number of analytical decisions has to be outlined regarding overlap problems of argumentation fallacies, the treatment of emotional appeals and pictures. Also, judging the truthfulness of the propositions and detecting the strategy of withholding require caution and thoroughness. The identification of presuppositions on the other hand, seems to present a more objective task, due to the availability of a set of formal linguistic markers.

## **Chapter 5. Method of analysis**

### **5.1. Setting the scene**

As noted in the first chapter, the present investigation takes a threefold perspective on manipulation. Leaving behind the general and more theoretical discussion of manipulation in advertising, Chapters 5 and 6 embrace the empirical perspective and describe the conduct of a corpus-based analysis of 120 written advertisements. The present chapter offers a detailed account of the method of analysis, including the description of the building of the two corpora, the procedures of the analysis from coder training to the outlining of the analytical decisions, and finally the measures that have been taken to ensure the reliability of the analysis. The sample analysis of a Hungarian direct mail letter is provided with the purpose of showing how utterances are coded and how the identified manipulative strategies are summarized in a table.

### **5.2. Procedures of analysis**

The analysis of the 120 advertisements has proceeded according to the steps described in Table 9., in chronological order. Each step will be discussed in detail, in the present (steps 1-10) and subsequent chapters (step 11).

**Table 9.**  
*Procedures of analysis*

<b>Order</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
1.	Collecting Hungarian and American advertisements
2.	Building a parallel corpus
3.	Training the co-coder
4.	Pre-coding harmonization session
5.	Outlining the analytical decisions
6.	Analysis of the 60 Hungarian advertisements
7.	Comparing and finalizing the results of the analysis of the coders (post-coding)
8.	Analyzing the 60 American advertisements
9.	Comparing and finalizing the results of the analysis of the coders (post-coding)
10	Checking inter- and intra-coder reliability
11.	Comparing the results of the Hungarian and the American Corpus

### **5.3. The building of two parallel corpora**

Both the Hungarian and the American corpus contain sixty written advertisements. The selection of the advertisements for the purpose of the present study was carried out according to three main selection criteria: source, length, and topic. The reason behind the creation of such mixed corpora as the present ones, including many different kinds of advertisements, was to elicit a wide variety of manipulative strategies.

#### **5.3.1. Source of the advertisements**

The analyzed texts come from three sources: (a) leaflets (on display in pharmacies, department stores or simply found in the mailbox), (b) advertisements that appeared in Hungarian (Nők Lapja, Baba Patika, Hamu és Gyémánt) and American magazines (Elle, US Weekly, Newsweek), and (c) direct mail that takes the form of a letter, arrives in an envelope, is addressed to a real person's name, opens with a salutation and says goodbye in the end.

### **5.3.2. Length**

Both the Hungarian and the American corpora compiled for the present study consist of longer (minimum of 60 words) written advertisements that are not simply unscattered slogans, but rather coherent discourses.

### **5.3.3. Topic**

A wide variety of topics are represented such as beauty and health products, food, detergents, vehicles, books, and banking services, as the following table indicates. In order to make the results more comparable, the same product range was ensured in the case of the corpora.

**Table 10.**  
**Commodity profile of the Hungarian Corpus (n = 60)**

	<b>Brand name</b>	<b>What's advertised?</b>		<b>Brand name</b>	<b>What's advertised?</b>
L/1.	Huggies	diapers	M/11.	Postamat	service
L/2.	Maybelline	make-up	M/12.	Domino	mobile phone package
L/3.	Fonte	restaurant	M/13.	Caola	shower gel
L/4.	Garnier	face cream	M/14.	Braun	thermometer
L/5.	Visa	bank card	M/15.	Maggie	soup cube
L/6.	Money Maxx	bond	M/16.	Balfi	mineral water
L/7.	Klimapur	medicine	M/17.	Ford	car
L/8.	Aloe Vera	food supplement	M/18.	Bosh	kitchen equipment
L/9.	Kontúr gel	anti-cellulite cream	M/19.	Bio-Króm	food supplement
L/10.	Nestlé	baby food	M/20.	Everyone	vitamin
L/11.	Dianetics	book	DM//1.	Verlag	book
L/12.	Sudocream	baby cream	DM/2.	Fantázia	cards for decoration
L/13.	Canesten	ointment	DM/3.	Dashöfer	book
L/14.	Voltaren	ointment	DM/4.	Reader's Digest 1	magazine
L/15.	Babamosoly	tea	DM/5.	Állatvilág	cards on animals
L/16.	Ariel	detergent	DM/6.	Figyelő	magazine
L/17.	Picadilly	language school	DM/7.	Budapest Bank	credit offer
L/18.	Vodafone	mobile phone	DM/8.	ABN Ambro	credit offer
L/19.	Panadol	medicine	DM/9.	Libero	diaper
L/20.	Provident	credit offer	DM/10.	Reader's Digest 2	magazine
M/1.	Nicobrevin	tablets	DM/11.	Repülők	cards on airplane
M/2.	Bonolact	food-supplement	DM/12.	UPC	TV channels
M/3.	Meteospasm yl	medicine	DM/13.	CA-IB bank	bonds
M/4.	Philishave	razor	DM/14.	Kismama	magazine
M/5.	Bilobil	medicine	DM/15.	Schiesser	underwear
M/6.	Flora	margarine	DM/16.	Libero	diaper
M/7.	Kinder	milkbar	DM/17.	Cora-Pampers	products for baby
M/8.	Univer	babyfood	DM/18.	CA-IB bank	investment
M/9.	Ilcsi	suntan lotion	DM/19.	Q10 Beauty pack	make-up
M/10.	Glaxo	firm image	DM/20.	English in 20 minutes	language learning

L = leaflet; M = magazine advertisement; DM = direct mail



**Table 11.**  
**Commodity profile of the American Corpus (n = 60)**

	<b>Brand name</b>	<b>What's advertised?</b>		<b>Brand name</b>	<b>What's advertised?</b>
L/1.	Eye Care	shop	M/11.	Hypnosis	service
L/2.	Fitness Together	franchise ownership	M/12.	Delta	business class
L/3.	California Closets	furniture	M/13.	Rembrandt	oral health
L/4	Room store	furniture	M/14.	Clinique	eye wrinkle cream
L/5.	Unicare	health insurance	M/15.	Avenoo	moisturizer
L/6.	Wine cellar	wine	M/16.	Organize it!	book
L/7.	Travel	vacation	M/17.	Arden	cream
L/8.	Country Italian	restaurant	M/18.	Cartier	rings
L/9	Comcast	cable channels	M/19.	-	milk
L/10.	Lazboy	furniture	M/20.	Nivea	cream
L/11.	FRCC	college	DM//1.	Newsweek	magazine
L/12.	Merlin	garage	DM/2.	United	bank account
L/13.	Frisco's dentistry	dentistry	DM/3.	Meels	charity
L/14.	Container store	furniture	DM/4.	Tweeter	installation service
L/15.	Evans fruit	apple	DM/5.	Guaranty	bank account
L/16.	Proactive	cream, lotion	DM/6.	Spiritual	self-help tapes
L/17.	Xmas decor	lightning	DM/7.	Ran Dentistry	dentistry
L/18.	Shell	gasoline	DM/8.	John Eagle	car dealer
L/19.	Lazy paw	veterinary surgery	DM/9.	Platinum	credit card
L/20.	Dolpin telecom	mobile network	DM/10.	Visa Fleet	credit card
M/1.	Crypto	security service	DM/11.	Allstate	car insurance
M/2.	Rolex	watch	DM/12.	Nissan	car liquidation
M/3.	Duke MBA	school	DM/13.	AIG	insurance
M/4.	Shell	image	DM/14.	Newsweek	magazine
M/5.	Smart defrost	refrigerator	DM/15.	Capital One	credit card
M/6.	Vector air	air conditioner	DM/16.	First Nat. Bank	credit card
M/7.	HVAC	digital catalog	DM/17.	Disting. leader	award
M/8.	Greenheck	image	DM/18.	Lens crafters	eye care
M/9.	IRC treatment	medical treatment	DM/19.	Sears	shopping card
M/10	Alarm	security service	DM/20	Talk	magazine

#### **5.3.4. Sampling procedure**

The 120 advertisements that were used for the study were randomly selected, using dice, from 270 advertisements in order to eliminate analyst's bias. In the case of every single advertisement, a dice was rolled. If the dice showed a six, the advertisement was added to the 'corpus pile'. The procedure was repeated until the number of advertisements in each subpile (leaflet, magazine ad, direct mail) reached twenty.

#### **5.4. Training the co-coder**

The co-coder, who teaches a course on Argumentation analysis at a Hungarian university, was familiarized with the analytical tool. Special attention was paid during her training to the discussion of each of the fallacies in Eemeren's et al.'s (2002) taxonomy. To make the analysis more manageable, a table was created that contained every fallacy and an example for it, similarly to Table 7 in 4.3.5.

#### **5.5. Pre-coding harmonization session and the analytical decisions**

During the harmonization session, novel problems emerged that required the formulation of analytical decisions, in order to handle the problems and prevent future mistakes. The pilot analysis did not manage to filter out all the potential problems, due to the small sample size and the fact that it was carried out by only one researcher. The thorough analysis of three Hungarian and three American advertisements during the harmonization session has revealed further problems, as discussed below. Each problem was tackled, and the analytical decisions agreed on were effected afterwards as guidelines for the analysis of all the 120 advertisements.

### 5.5.1. Insufficient arguments

When analyzing and evaluating the advertisements regarding their complexity, it was noticed by the two coders that sometimes the author of the advertisement provides an insufficient number of arguments to support the conclusion. However, Eemeren et al.'s taxonomy does not address this problem. This phenomenon cannot be categorized as evading the burden of proof, because some arguments are provided. It was agreed that the lack of important and relevant pieces of information which would be indispensable to the understanding of the issue at hand and the supporting of the conclusion, will be categorized as the first manipulative strategy, namely withholding. "Insufficient arguments" violates the Gricean maxim of Quantity.

#### Example 50.

*Kevesebb mint napi 200 forintjába kerül, azaz havi 5000 forintba,(...) a futamidő végére félretett pénze akár 3 millió forintra is gyarapodhat. (Money Maxx, HL/6)*

[It will cost less than 200 HUF a day, that is 5000 HUF a month, (...) by the time your savings reach maturity, they can be worth as much as 3 million Forints.]

In this Hungarian magazine ad, the communicator wanted to persuade the reader to invest money in bonds for his or her newborn baby. However, in order to be able to decide if the financial offer is profitable enough, more information should have been provided, for example, on the amount of interest, and the date of maturity, not just the imprecisely calculated sum of three million.

### 5.5.2. Contradictory propositions

When analyzing an advertisement for a type of herb tea especially recommended for babies, the coders identified a contradiction in the content (Example 51.).

#### Example 51.

*Az élet első 2-3 hónapjában a legtöbb baba hasfájással, puffadással küszködik, mert (...) ↔ A tea használatát a baba négyhónapos korától javasoljuk... (Babamosoly, HL/15)*

[Most babies suffer from stomach pains and feeling bloated in their first three months because (...)↔ Tea is recommended from the age of four months...]

In the original taxonomy of Eemeren et al. (2002) there were guidelines concerning the treatment of contradictory propositions. However, the two coders agreed that this notion had to be categorized somehow, because it could play an important role in discourse comprehension. Contradictory propositions confuse readers, and it was therefore decided to categorize them as a variant of the fallacy of unclarity. Contradictory propositions can be a sign of the writer's uncertainty, ignorance or manipulative intention as well.

### **5.5.3. Utterances manifesting more than one manipulative strategy**

In some cases an utterance or a sequence of utterances manifests more than one manipulative strategy (Example 52.). Appealing to the sentiments of the audience (in other words, emotional appeal) has been found here to be an accompanying element of the fallacy of post hoc propter hoc.

#### **Example 52.**

*Lenyűgözően drámai tekintetet érhetsz el.* (Maybelline, HL/2)  
[You can achieve a dramatically fascinating look.]

The following utterance is taken from a Hungarian magazine advertisement. It manifests both the fallacy of appeal to the pathos of the audience, and the fallacy of irrelevant argument as well. The two coders agreed that where two strategies are present, each will be given a score of one.

#### **Example 53.**

*Mindig különleges élmény a szépen terített reggelizőasztal ropogós zsömlével, gőzölgő teával, és legfőképp az, ahogy a kapkodó és magányos falatozás nyugodt családi szertartássá gazdagodik.* (Flóra M/6)

[A table that is laid beautifully, with crispy rolls and steaming tea, is always a unique experience, especially when a lonely, rushed breakfast becomes a relaxed family ceremony.]

These kinds of overlap suggest that the categories of Eemeren's taxonomy are not perfectly disjunct, which can cause problems only in quantitative analysis. The analysis of the 120 advertisements is expected to reveal not only the variants of each manipulative strategy, but also potential overlaps as well.

#### 5.5.4. Categorizing urging

One of the direct mail letters analyzed contained urging utterances that were repeated throughout the letter (Example 54.). In everyday language, people use urging when something is important and they want the other party not to miss out on it. The repeated urging in the advertisement analyzed is not justifiable, because one can order the magazine any time. Since quick ordering is in the sole interest of the publisher, it was categorized as an instance of misrepresentation of reality.

#### Example 54.

*Még ma rendelje meg!* (Állatvilág, HDM/5)

[Order it today!]

### 5.6. Sample analysis

This section aims to show the analysis of a Hungarian advertisement from utterance detection to categorization. The type of the analyzed advertisement is direct mail, which is a much less frequently used type of advertisement in Hungary than in the United States. Advertising agencies that send these letters to home addresses rely heavily on foreign (primarily British or American) persuasive and manipulative strategies<sup>4</sup>. In fact, if the advertised product is not Hungarian, the letter is often an adaptation of the original advertisement which is sometimes reflected in non-Hungarian sentence structure or vocabulary use. Since an average reader is not a linguist, she will not

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<sup>4</sup> For example the letters that promote the magazine Readers' Digest. As one of the referees of my former article on this topic let me know, this prize nearly-won type of advertisement was forbidden by law in Switzerland many years ago.

contemplate on the quality of the translation and at most will find the letter difficult to read.

The sample advertisement entitled *Fantázia és Forma* ('Fantasy and Form') promotes cards that contain ideas and patterns for home decoration. The communicator intends to persuade the readers to subscribe to the package of cards that will arrive every three or four weeks. Four sample cards and a pattern sheet are enclosed as an illustration, as well as a small silver bag containing a 'stamp of luck' (szerencsebélyeg). The advertiser suggests a good deal by offering the first package (containing a folder, three patterns and separating cards) for only 490 HUF. Once the reader orders the introductory package for the reasonable price of 490 HUF, the publisher will start sending the packages unless one cancels it by a telephone call or by a letter. Although the letter notes that only the luckiest readers can find a silver stamp which is worth twenty-four cards (compared to the white stamp worth eight cards), it is reasonable to suppose that every letter contains a silver stamp, since "lucky" readers would be more motivated to subscribe. In contrast, not finding the silver stamp could evoke disappointment in the readers and dissuade them from further business. As logical this may sound, one can claim that it is only sheer speculation, since the coders have no evidence for this. As a result, the 'stamp-game' has not been evaluated as a manipulative strategy (misrepresentation of reality).

The letter contains several utterances that have been evaluated by the coders as manipulative (see the summary of the strategies in the order of appearance in Table 12.). First, it has been noted that the communicator strongly urges the readers (five times) to send her order as soon as possible. Urging is evaluated as a manipulative strategy because it creates the illusion that the order is limited in time and the offer is unique. In reality, it is neither. Consequently, urging violates the Gricean maxim of

Quality. As mentioned before, in the case of the direct mail the manufacturer does not sell its products in stores but directly to the addressee, so it is not surprising that he uses stronger and more direct language (such as directives in urging). If the letter is not effective enough to motivate the readers to order, there is no other possibility to sell the product.

The second example for the manipulative strategy of false fact and misrepresentation of reality was found in the following utterance (Example 55.).

**Example 55.**

*A bemutatócsomag – kifizetése után – **mindenképpen** az Öné marad, **akkor is, ha nem tart igényt további kártyáinkra.***

[After paying, you can keep the introductory package even if you do not wish to order more cards.]

The communicator misrepresents reality by showing an everyday, common practice as a privilege. Possessing a purchased product is not an additional bonus offer but belongs to the norms of every civilized society.

The third misrepresentation of reality is connected with the number of cards (Example 56.).

**Example 56.**

***Szerencsés esetben akár 93 csomagból álló kiadványa is lehet.***

[If you are really lucky, you can even have ninety-three packs of cards.]

It is definitely not a matter of luck but rather of money whether someone can have ninety-three packs of cards. This would mean paying 92.070 HUF for them, which is an extraordinarily huge sum for a book like that.

Figure 4.  
Sample direct mail

**Ötletkártyák otthonszépítéshez, dekorációhoz, ajándékkészítéshez.**



**Fantázia és forma**

103704110972596 36060  
Dringóné Árvay Anett Zsófia  
Budapest  
Moha Köz B.3.3.A/6  
1119

Tiszelt Dringóné Árvay Anett Zsófia!

☒ Szeretné otthonát szebbé, barátságosabbá tenni?

☒ Másból nem látható egyedi kiegészítőre, függőlucra, kevés pénzben újítványokat biztosanra várunk?

☒ Saját kezűleg készített ajándékokkal, díszítőkártyákkal szeretné meglepni szeretőit?

Ha igen, akkor semmiképp ne hagyja ki Önnek szóló, remek bemutatkozó ajánlatunkat! Még fogja kedvelni a *Fantázia és forma* kártyát, amelyek sok kreatív ötletet adnak, szép képekkel és egyszerű lépésről lépésre haladó útmutatóval segítik Önt az alkotásban. A kártyákon nemcsak ötleteket, tanácsokat talál, hogyan csináltsa otthonát, hogyan készítsen értékes ajándékokat vagy meglepetést szeretőinek, hanem ezekkel a színes fotókkal illusztrált kártyákból olyan ötleteket meríthet, amelyek megragadják a fantáziáját.

Borítsa ki gyorsan a mellékelt ezüstszínű tasakot, hogy meg tudja, milyen színt az Ön szerencsésbélyege.

Ha rózsaszín bélyeget talál, *8 Fantázia és forma* kártyára jogosult. Ha pedig Őn egyike azon szerencsésbélyegek, akik ezüstszínű bélyeget találnak, akkor bemutatkozó-magánban 84 darab ötletkártya lesz. És ez nem minden! A kártyák mellé kap még egy dekoratív leírólapot, 9 értékesítőkártyát a kártyák környri és áttelkinthető rendszerezéséhez, valamint 3 szádelmínát. Sőt, ha gyorsan választ, Öné lehet külön ajándékunk, egy praktikus hobbitóló.

Hogy szonnan egy kis izulit nyugisunk Önnek, e levélhez négy mintakártyát és egy szádelmínát mellékelünk, mivel egy kép gyakran sokkal többet árul el a szavaknál. Látni fogja, hogy a leggyorsabból anyagokból és eszközökkel is a legsebb dolgokat készítheti el családjának, barátainak vagy saját magának.

Tul szép ahhoz, hogy igaz legyen? Győződjön meg róla! Ragasza fel szerencsésbélyegét a megrendelési levélre, és küldje vissza hozzánk. Így a lehető leg hamarabb postázzuk Önnek bemutatkozómagát, amelyről rendkívül kedvezményes áron kap még, 490 Ft-ért, az eredeti ár tíz százalékáért.

**4 mintakártya + 1 Szabásminta ingyen az Öné!**



P/2

Adatok forrása: Központi Adatnyilvántartó Hivatal

FOU-0901-NC

**Fantázia és forma – Fantáziák, új ötletek, új ötletek!**

Talán azt kérdezi, miért keressük Önnek ilyen remek ajánlatot? Azért, hogy otthon, saját meglátott környezetben ismerhesse meg *Fantázia és forma* kártyáink remek ötleteit, amelyeket még Önmagának, szeretői családjának és önmagának.

Fedezze fel az ismeretlen lehetőségeket, amelyekkel lakását még otthonosabbá, zebbi, szeretőit pedig meglepheti az Ön által készített ajándékokkal!

Mi a következőket garantáljuk Önnek:

Meg kell minden csomagot megvásárolnia Önnek anyai kártyája lehet, amennyit szeretne. Ha a bemutatkozómag meggyőzi Önt, és 8 munkanapon belül nem jutná fel a hozzánk lemondását, 3-4 hetente további 8 kedvelés ötletkártyát postázunk Önnek vásárlási kötelezettség nélkül, megfizetésre. Amennyiben megírná az esetet, csupán 990 Ft betöltésével meg is tarthatja őket (az ár a csomagolási és a postaköltséget, valamint az áfát is tartalmazza).

A bemutatkozómag – kifizetése után – mindenképpen az Öné marad, akkor is, ha nem tart igényt további kártyáinkra. Ötvessze el ezzel kapcsolatban a megrendelési levélben található tájékoztatót.

**Kötelezettség nélkül!**

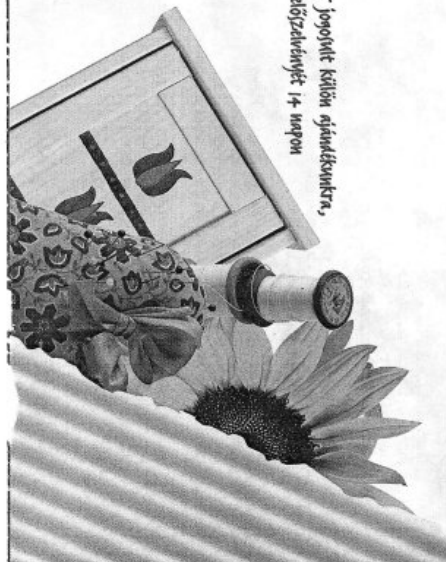
Ezért most cselekedjen gyorsan! Még ma küldje vissza megrendelési levélét a mellékelt válaszborítékban a fénycsatornába vagy ezüstszínű szerencsésbélyeggel. Nem csak azért, hogy a bemutatkozómagot elköldhessék Önnek, hanem azért is, mert ha 14 napon belül választ, külön ajándékunk is megillet Önt!

Küldje el megrendelési levélét még ma! Előre is örülünk válaszával!

Sok kitűnő ötletet és jó szórakozást kívánunk!

Üdvözléssel  
Knyh Eszter  
Kortyú Eszter  
termékmenedzser

**U.I. Ne felejtse! Van akkor jogogit külön ajándékunkra, a hobbitóló, ha megrendelési levélét 14 napon belül postára adja!**





# Megrendelőszelvény

A *Fantázia és forma* bemutatócsomaghoz és további különálló küldeményekhez

Ezen szelvény jogosultja:

Dringóné Árvay Anett Zsófia  
Budapest  
Mohai Köz 5.3.3.Ajtó  
1119  
36080  
103704110972596

**IGEN**, küldjék el nekem a *Fantázia és forma* bemutatócsomagot. Ha a tasak rózsaszín szerencsébélyeget rejt, akkor 8, ha ezüstsínű, akkor 24 kártyát kapok, valamint egy lefűzőmappát, 9 elválasztókártyát és 3 szabásmintát, mindössze 490 Ft-ért. Ha 14 napon belül válaszolok, ajándékba kapok egy praktikus hobbiollót. Ezt követően minden harmadik-negyedik héten nyolc új ötletkártyát és egy szabásmintát küldenek nekem, csupán 990 Ft-ért (posta és csomagolási költséggel együtt). Semmire nem kötelezem magam, mert a kártyákat bármikor lemondhatom.

A Mester Kiadó Kft. az Ön adatait saját rendszerében nyilvántartja és kezeli, annak érdekében, hogy a megrendelt termékeket és más megbízható cégek ajánlatait el tudja Önnek juttatni. Tájékoztatjuk továbbá, hogy az adatai megőrzésének célja az adatkezelés, az adatait addig tartjuk nyilván, amíg Ön kezelésük megszüntetését írásban vagy telefonon nem kéri meg.

Aláírás

Kérjük, olvassa el

Ezüstsínű szerencsébélyeget talált? Akkor nem kevesebb mint 24 kártyát kap a *Fantázia és forma* kiadványból, valamint egy elegáns lefűzőmappát, 9 praktikus elválasztókártyát és 3 kreatív szabásmintát, mindössze 490 Ft-ért.  
**A csomag tényleges értéke: 4900 Ft.**

Mit tegyen, hogy megkapja a bemutatócsomagot?

1. Ragassa fel szerencsébélyeget.
2. Adja postára megrendelőszelvényét a mellékelt válaszborítékban.

## FONTOS TUDNIVALÓK

✓ Ragassa fel szerencsébélyeget a túldoldalt szelvényre, és lehetőleg még ma adja postára a mellékelt válaszborítékban. Ebben az esetben hamarosan megkapja a *Fantázia és forma* bemutatócsomagját. A csomag – a belyeg színétől függően – 8 vagy 24 darab ötletkártyát tartalmaz, és ráadásul egy dekoratív lefűzőmappát, egy praktikus elválasztókártya-csomagot és 3 szabásmintát is küldünk Önnek.

✓ Ha Ön a bemutatócsomag átvételéről számított 8 munkanapon belül nem juttatja el hozzánk lemondását, akkor három-négy hetente újabb 8 darab, otthonképzéstől, ajándékdíszítésről szóló kártyát kap megtekintésre. Amennyiben megretsznek Önnek, mindössze 990 Ft befizetése után megtarthatja őket. (Ez az ár ugyancsak tartalmazza a csomagolási és postaköltséget, valamint az árt.) Tudja Ön, hogy szerencsés esetben akár 93 csomagból álló kiadványa is lehet!

✓ Tízennégy éven aluli gyermekek csak szülei hozzájárulásával rendelhetnek.

✓ A bemutatócsomagot rendkívül kedvezményes áron kapja meg, a bolti ár tizedrészeért, azaz a csomagolási és postaköltséggel együtt mindössze 490 Ft-ért. (Kérjük, ne küldjön előre pénzt, a bemutatócsomaghoz mellékeljük a postai utalványt.)

✓ Evés a megtekintésre megrendelt, különálló küldemények sem kötelezik Önt vásárlásra, ha az utoljára átvett küldeményt a kézhezvételt követő 8 munkanapon belül, megtelelően bérmentesítve visszatuldi nekünk. A határidő megállapításánál a postabélyegző dátuma számít.

✓ A további kártyacsomagokat természetesen bármikor lemondhatja, ehhez elegendő egy levelezőlap vagy egy telefonhívás.

✓ A bemutatócsomagot annak kifizetése után minden esetben megtarthatja. Ismerkedjék meg ajánlatunkkal minden kötelezettség nélkül!

✓ Garantáljuk, hogy amennyiben a kártyák a postán elvesznek vagy károsodnak, mi díjtalanul pótoljuk őket. Kiadványunkkal kapcsolatos kérdéseivel forduljon ügyfélszolgálatunkhoz.

Jó szórakozást kívánunk!

FOU-0901-NC

• Mester Kiadó Kft. 1063 Budapest, Bajnok utca 13. • Mintabolt: ugyanitt  
Megrendelés: ☎ (06-1) 374-3827, Információ: ☎ (06-1) 374-3826, adószám: 12283381-2-44,  
nyilvántartási szám: 01/0008/0036/1999, adatkezelési szám: 00235-0001, 0002

The manipulative use of presuppositions has been identified in two utterances in this advertisement. Utterance (Example 57.) not only manifests the strategy of unfair use of presuppositions (by presupposing that the offer is *great*) but it also manifests the

strategy of magnifying an unexpressed premise by speaking, i.e. proposing a question on behalf of the readers.

**Example 57.**

*Talán azt kérdezi, miért teszünk Önnek ilyen **remek** ajánlatot?*

[You might ask why we make such a great offer.]

Two further thought-provoking presuppositional structures have been found in the advertisement. One presupposes the greatness of the introductory offer (*'remek bemutatkozó ajánlat'*), and the other the greatness of the resource pool (*'remek ötlettár'*). The question whether the adjective is exaggerating or not is up to personal taste, therefore its application is not evaluated as unfair.

Four utterances have been found to contain argumentation fallacies. The first of these utterances appealed to emotions (Example 58.) by applying the adjective *'meghitt'* (intimate) and referring to the general possibility of delighting the family members. These emotional appeals are weak and irrelevant from the point of view of the conclusion, they violate the maxim of Relation, therefore they are evaluated as manipulative.

**Example 58.**

*Otthon, saját meghitt környezetében (...) nagy örömet szerezhet családjának és önmagának.*

[At home, in your own intimate surroundings (...) you can please yourself and your family.]

The letter offers a promotional gift (a pair of hobby scissors) in case of ordering within fourteen days. In fact, the gift can be interpreted more like a reward for the ones who order quickly. This strategy is manipulative because it hinders the readers' in their rational decision making process by emphasizing this irrelevant aspect of the purchase. The utterance violated the maxim of Relation.

Finally, the advertisement contains an utterance that is confusing and misleading. The paired coordinating conjunctions “nemcsak – hanem” (not only – but also) expressing intensifying addition imply that the product has further advantage in addition to previously-mentioned advantages. However, a thorough reading reveals that the second part of the utterance does not really introduce a new merit of the promoted product but it is only a very general claim that is true to anything. The utterance has been categorized as an instance of the fallacy of unclarity, and as such, it violates the maxim of Manner.

**Example 59.**

*A kártyákon **nemcsak ötleteket**, tanácsokat talál (...), **hanem** ezekből a kártyákból olyan **ötleteket** meríthet, amelyek megindítják a fantáziáját.*

[In the cards you'll find not only ideas and advice (...) but also from these cards you can take ideas that can inspire your imagination.]

Let us summarize the identified utterances of the sample analysis in a form of a table which was used during the analysis of the remaining 119 advertisements.

**Table 12.**  
**Summary of the sample analysis of a Hungarian direct mail letter**

Utterance	Argumentation fallacy	Unfair use of presupp	False fact, misrepresentation of reality	With-holding	Non-observance of a Gricean maxim
<i>Sőt, ha gyorsan válaszol, ... Bontsa ki gyorsan ... Még ma küldje vissza Ezért most cselekedjen gyorsan! Még ma küldje vissza megrendelőszelvényét</i>			+ (urging)		Quality
<i>Othon saját meghitt környezetében; nagy örömet szerezhet családjának és önmagának</i>	Appeal to emotions				Relation
<i>Talán azt kérdezi, miért teszünk Önnek ilyen <b>remek</b> ajánlatot?</i>	Magnifying an unexpressed premise	+			Quality
<i><b>Túl szép</b> ahhoz, hogy igaz legyen?</i>		+			Quality
<i>Öné lehet egy praktikus hobbilóló.</i>	Irrelevant argument				Relation
<i>A kártyákon <b>nemcsak</b> <b>ötleteket</b>, tanácsokat talál (...), <b>hanem</b> ezekből a kártyákból olyan <b>ötleteket</b> meríthet, amelyek megindítják a fantáziáját.</i>	Fallacy of unclarity				Manner
<i>A bemutatócsomag – kifizetése után – <b>mindenképpen</b> az Öné marad, <b>akkor is, ha nem</b> tart igényt további kártyáinkra.</i>			+		Manner
<i><b>Szerencsés esetben</b> akár 93 csomagból álló kiadványa is lehet.</i>			+		Quality
<i>Semmiképpen ne hagyja ki Önnek szóló, <b>remek</b> bemutatózó ajánlatunkat!</i>		(+ remek?)			-
<i>... hogy megismerhesse a Fantázia és Forma <b>remek</b> ötletárát</i>		(+ remek?)			-

### 5.7. Post coding harmonization session

In the case of a mismatch in rating, the two coders analyzed the cause of the discrepancy and then tried to come to an agreement. Many of the mismatches were due

to not noticing a strategy, while other mismatches were caused by disagreement in categorization, as in the case of the treatment of dubious promise.

As expected by the coders, dubious promises were frequently identified in the advertisements during the analysis. The questionable promises always raised an unfounded hope, as in Example 60.

**Example 60.**

*Ha a Vodafont használod, nem maradsz le semmiről* (Vodafone, HM/19)

[If you use Vodafone, you won't miss out on anything.]

The naturally emerging question at this point is whether these kinds of utterances belong to the category of the fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc, or should be regarded as an instance of false statement? The two coders agreed that the form of the utterance should be examined carefully in every case, in order to answer the question. If the utterance takes the form of a false promise i.e. refers to the occurrence of a future action or result by misleadingly stating or implying that “if you use/try X, then Y will happen”, the utterance is regarded as a fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc. As for the form, the if-clause can be implicit, moreover the false promise can take the form of an imperative, as in Example 61., unlike false statements which are always embedded in a declarative sentence.

**Example 61.**

*Experience more joy, harmony, and love in your life! (Order the tapes today!)* (Spiritual tapes, ADM/6)

## **5.8. Reliability of the analysis**

Several attempts have been made to improve and monitor the reliability of the interpretative procedures. In accordance with the research tradition of discourse analysis and studies on reliability matters (Bachman, 2004; Baker, 1997; Magnutzné Godó,

2003; Tankó, 2005), two kinds of reliability measures, inter-coder reliability, and intra-coder reliability have been tested in the present study.

The inter-coder reliability of the analysis was ensured by the means of training the co-coder, a pre-coding harmonization session (including a common analysis of three advertisements) and a post-coding session. In the course of the training of the co-coder, she was familiarized with the task, the corpora and the coding guidelines. The aims and the method of the research were introduced to her with a special emphasis on the analytical tool. A table of definitions was drafted for every manipulative strategy (including each fallacy), and examples were also collected for each of them. During the harmonization session, three Hungarian advertisements (a leaflet, a magazine ad and a piece of direct mail) were analyzed together in order to check for emerging problems (see 5.5). The two researchers identified and discussed the instances which seemed to be problematic, further refined the definitions of certain fallacies, prepared a list of analytical decisions and proceeded to independently code all the advertisements in the corpora.

Following the independent analysis, the results were compared during a post-coding session. The two coders discussed the instances where their coding differed, and came to an agreement. In the case of the Hungarian corpus, a total of 159 manipulative strategies were identified, out of which the two researchers coded 26 differently. The discrepancies originate primarily from overlooking strategies, secondly from not noticing withholding, and thirdly from the differing categorization of emotional appeals.

Intra-coder reliability has been measured by the author re-analyzing fifteen advertisements from both corpora, with a period of 4 months between the two procedures. From the 30 identified manipulative strategies, 28 were coded as the same,

one was coded differently and one was overlooked. This positive result is probably due to the fact that the author spent a considerable amount of time re-reading and closely studying the ads from the first analysis.

The American corpus was analyzed independently by the two coders, and the results were compared during a post-coding session. Out of the 105 manipulative strategies detected, 22 were coded differently.

## **5.9. Summary**

This chapter has outlined the methodological procedures underlying the empirical investigation. In order to ensure the reliability of the analysis, efforts have been taken to train a co-coder, discuss potential analytical problems and agree on their handling. Four novel problems have emerged in connection with the coding of manipulative strategies that have not been uncovered in the pilot analysis in 4.5.2. These include the treatment of insufficient number of arguments, the treatment of contradictory propositions, and of urging, moreover the coding of utterances that manifest more than one manipulative strategy. It is hoped that coding errors have been eliminated due to the detailed discussion of these problems and the formulation of analytical decisions by the two coders.

In order to make the Hungarian and the American corpora comparable the source, the length and the topic of the advertisements are controlled for. Both corpora contain three types of advertisements: twenty leaflets, magazine advertisements and direct mail.

## **Chapter 6. Results and discussion**

### **6.1. Setting the scene**

The present chapter discusses the results of the analysis and offers answers to following three research questions (RQ) that were proposed in 1.2.

RQ 3. What kind of manipulative strategies are presented in the Hungarian advertisements?

RQ 4. What kind of manipulative strategies are presented in the American advertisements?

RQ 5. What kind of similarities and differences are displayed between the Hungarian and the American corpora regarding manipulative strategy use?

RQs 3 and 4 focus on the variants of each manipulative strategy and their frequency.

RQ 5 highlights the contrastive aspect of the present study. According to the proposed questions, this chapter will open with the detailed discussion of results of the Hungarian corpus, subsequently, the results of the analysis of the American corpus will follow.

Finally, the two results will be compared and possible explanations will be offered as to the causes of the similarities and differences.

### **6.2. Manipulative strategies in the Hungarian Corpus**

Although the present study is primarily qualitative in nature (since it attempts to map out the different variants of each manipulative strategy in the two corpora), it is still worth examining the frequency of occurrence of all the identified manipulative strategies. The following table shows the rank order according to their proportional representation from the total number of manipulative strategies in the corpus.



**Table 13.**  
**Rank order of manipulative strategies in the Hungarian Corpus (n=60)**

<b>Manipulative strategy</b>	<b>Leaflet (n= 20)</b>	<b>Mgz. ad. (n= 20)</b>	<b>Direct mail (n= 20)</b>	<b>Σ</b>
1. Informing the intended addressee without a communicative intention	0	0	0	0
2. Withholding information	5	3	3	11 (7 %)
3. Unfair use of presupposition	4	4	8	16 (10 %)
4. Using false fact/ misrepresentation of reality	-	6	15	21 (13.2 %)
5. Using argumentation fallacies	40	28	43	111 (69.8%)
	49	41	69	159

Mgz.ad. = magazine advertisements

The table indicates that the overwhelming majority of the manipulative strategies in the Hungarian corpus constitutes the using of argumentation fallacies with its 111 cases (69.8 %). This strategy is labeled as a manifestation of weak manipulation (see Figure 1.). The second most frequent strategy is the using of false fact or misrepresentation of reality with 21 identified cases (13.2 %), which is followed by the strategy of unfair use of presupposition (16 cases, 10 %). The strategy of withholding information from the readers has been detected 11 cases (7 %), and as such it seems to be the least frequently applied strategy. However, as noted earlier, the detection of this strategy is usually difficult.

As Table 13. indicates, the use of argumentation fallacy has been proved to be the most frequent strategy. Since this strategy incorporates a set of argumentation fallacies, a separate table (Table 14) has been created to offer a more valid and meaningful picture by illustrating how the fallacies are distributed in the Hungarian corpus.

**Table 14.**  
*Detailed rank order of manipulative strategies in the Hungarian Corpus (n=60)*

Manipulative strategy	Leaflet (n= 20)	Mgz. ad. (n= 20)	Direct mail (n= 20)	Σ
Appeal to sentiments	12	8	15	35 (22 %)
False cause reason	13	7	6	26 (16.3 %)
Using false fact/ misrepres. of reality	-	6	15	21 (13.2 %)
Fallacy of unclarity	8	5	7	20 (12.5 %)
Unfair use of presupposition	4	4	8	16 (10 %)
Irrelevant argument	4	2	7	13 (8 %)
Withholding information	5	3	3	11 (6.9 %)
Ad populum	1	1	3	5 (3.1 %)
Ad baculum (threat)	1	-	3	4 (2.5 %)
Evading the burden of proof	1	1	-	2 (1.2 %)
Ad verecundiam (authority)	-	2	-	2 (1.2 %)
Ad misericordiam (pity)	-	1	-	1 (0.6 %)
Fallacy of ambiguity	-	1	-	1 (0.6 %)
Magnifying an unexpressed premise	-	-	1	1 (0.6 %)
Declaring a standpoint sacrosanct	-	-	1	1 (0.6 %)
	49	41	69	159

Mgz.ad. = magazine advertisements; misrep.= misrepresentation

In Table 14. the various types of argumentation fallacies are treated as separate manipulative strategies, thus the results of the analysis can be studied from a new perspective. Twelve different fallacies have been detected in the Hungarian Corpus. The results show that the most frequent manipulative strategy is the appeal to the sentiments of the audience (35 cases, 22 %), which is followed by the expression of false cause reason (26 cases, 16.3 %). The use of the fallacy of unclarity (20 cases, 12.5 %), and the irrelevant argument (13 cases, 8 %) have been found to be quite frequent as well. Moreover, the fallacy of ad populum (5 cases, 3.1 %), ad baculum (4 cases, 2.5 %), evading the burden of proof (2 cases, 1.2 %), appeal to authority (2 cases, 1.2 %), appeal to pity (1 case, 0.6 %), the fallacy of ambiguity (1 case, 0.6 %), magnifying an unexpressed premise (1 case, 0.6 %), and declaring a standpoint sacrosanct (1 case, 0.6 %) have also been detected. In the subsequent section a detailed discussion will follow to spell out each variant of every strategy.

### 6.2.1. Non-manipulative fallacious arguments

All the argumentation fallacies of Eemeren et al.'s (2002) taxonomy were looked for in the 60 Hungarian advertisements. However, only those were evaluated as manipulative and included in Table 14. which did not observe any of the four Gricean maxims. From the identified fallacies, only two types of fallacy have been found to be fallacious but not manipulative in some cases. The first is the fallacy of appeal to the sentiments of the audience. Stylistic elements, such as emotionally loaded words (see Example 62.) and, in most cases, hyperboles which manifested an emotional appeal, were often judged to be non-violation of the maxim of Quality, because they have become conventionalized in advertising language.

#### Example 62.

*Hidratálttá varázsolja az ajkakat, (...) légiesen könnyű érzés, pihekönnyű árnyalat* (Maybelline, HL/2)

[It magically hydrates your lips, (...) it gives you an airy, light feeling, and a subtle lightness of shade, as light as a feather.]

The verb 'varázsol' (to use charm) cannot even be evaluated as hyperbole because it is not only associated with miracles and magicians in everyday language use, but also refers to quick or skillful action. The adjectives in the latter two noun phrases are exaggerations, but do not violate any maxims because they do not refer to product qualities objectively.

The next example illustrates an emotional appeal which can be labeled as seductive, but not manipulative.

#### Example 63.

*Ön is értékeli a puhán a bőrére simuló, testét gyengéden átölelő fehérnemű lágy érintését?* (Schiesser, HDM/15)

[Do you also enjoy the silky touch of lingerie gently wrapped around your body and softly caressing your skin?]

By the same token, visual arguments e.g. pictures of babies and smiling mothers, have been found to evoke feelings, and are thus instances of emotional appeals. However, only those cases were rated manipulative where they either proved to be irrelevant, or reinforced a manipulative verbal argument. For example, one of the advertisements (Voltaren, HL/14) for ointment raised unfounded hope (see Appendix D).

The second type of fallacy coded as fallacious but not manipulative in two cases (HL/10, HM/14) is the fallacy of unclarity.

**Example 64.**

*A vállalat 136 éves csecsemőtáplálási tapasztalatai... ↔ on the other side of the leaflet: A Nestlé 137 éves tapasztalattal rendelkezik a csecsemőtáplálás terén (Nestlé, HL/10)*

[136 years of experience in the field of baby nutrition. ↔ Nestlé has 137 years of experience in the field of baby nutrition.]

It can be hypothesized that this kind of unclarity is only an unintentional error, and as such can be interpreted as advertiser negligence. Inserting contradictory statements into an advertisement can hide manipulative intention, but not in the case of this kind of factual contradiction.

In the next example, the advertiser committed a logical mistake. In the first sentence the communicator states that one second is not enough to take a temperature. Meanwhile, in the next sentence, he states that it is actually too much time. This case was also judged as an unintentional error, because no rational explanation could be found for intentionally inserting such nonsense.

**Example 65.**

*Vagy talán úgy gondolja, ennyi idő (meaning = one second) nem elég egy pontos lázmérésre? Végül is igaza van: a Braun ThermoScan nyolcszor mér lázat egy másodperc alatt... (HM/14)*

[Or do you think that such a short time (one second) is not enough to accurately take a temperature? Ultimately you are right, the Braun ThermoScan takes your temperature eight times a second... ]

### 6.2.2. Variants of the fallacy of appealing to the sentiments of the audience

The fallacy of appealing to the sentiments of the audience has clearly emerged as the most prevalent type of manipulative strategy in all the three subcorpora (35 identified cases; 22 %). If we add the other three types of fallacy (ad baculum, ad populum, ad misericordiam) that also appeal to emotions, but are treated separately by Eemeren's taxonomy and by the rhetorical tradition, the figure is even higher (28.3 %). These results are in line with the literature (Cook, 1992; Hallward, 2005; Salánki, 2001; Vestergaard & Schröder, 1985) which claims that successful advertising seems, for the most part, to consist of appeals to emotions. The role of the emotional appeal is to build an emotional relationship with the audience, and to establish a personal link between the communicator and the receiver of the message. The successful building of this emotional relationship invites the person to trust the communicator, to show him loyalty and to suspend questions and potential criticisms. The emotional appeal is directed more to the instincts of the audience, rather than to their calculative reason, and targets the person's unthinking reactions. As such, they are powerful distractions that can be used to cover potential shortcomings in argumentation (Walton, 1989, pp. 82-83). As noted earlier (in 2.5.3), the major problem with emotional appeals is that they are irrelevant and/or weak arguments, thus violating the Gricean maxim of Relation, as Example 53. illustrates.

#### Example 53.

*Mindig különleges élmény a szépen terített reggelizőasztal ropogós zsömlével, gőzölgő teával, és legfőképpen az, ahogy a kapkodó és magányos falatozás nyugodt családi szertartássá gazdagodik. (Flóra, HM/9)*

[A table that is laid beautifully, with crispy rolls and steaming tea, is always a unique experience, especially when a lonely, rushed breakfast becomes a relaxed family ceremony.]

The analysis has yielded some variations of emotional appeal that prove the complexity of this strategy. Several advertisements have been found to appeal **to vanity**, mostly those selling cosmetic products to women, and target the appearance (Example 66.).

**Example 66.**

*a hófehér bőrűek leégés nélkül süllhetnek aranybarnára* (Ilcsi, HM/9)

[Those with snow-white skin can achieve a beautiful sun-tanned look, without suffering from sunburn.]

Appeal to emotion is often accompanied by the fallacy of post hoc propter hoc as Example 66 illustrates. The advertisement falsely promises a dark tan, and therefore violates the maxim of Quality.

The next example (Example 67.) is interesting, because the appeal to the vanity of the reader does not appear in a promotion of cosmetic products, but through appealing to the respect you can gain from being well-informed<sup>5</sup>, in an advertisement for a publication. Irrespective of the quality of the articles in the magazine, appealing to vanity is a weak argument in this context, and violates the maxim of Relation.

**Example 67.**

*Élvezheti a tájékozottságából és a tények ismeretéből fakadó jó érzést, amely tiszteletet ébreszt környezetében...* (Reader's Digest, HDM/10)

[You can enjoy the great feeling of being well-informed and familiar with the facts, and you will gain respect among your circles.]

Two examples have been found for **appealing to freedom**. One advertised cars, the other (Example 68) promoted a particular brand of bank card (Appendix E). Again, emotional appeal is accompanied by the fallacy of post hoc propter hoc.

**Example 68. .**

*A VISA szabaddá tesz, hogy az év 365 napján azt tedd, amit csak akarsz!* (Visa, HL/5)

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<sup>5</sup> The conjunction ('amely') is used grammatically incorrectly in the utterance. It is obviously the knowledge that evokes respect and not the good feeling.

[VISA frees you, so you can do whatever you want with the 365 days in the year.]

In the Hungarian corpus, only one example has been found to **appeal to sex** (Appendix F). The advertisement contains a picture of a seductive woman in lingerie, photographed from the back, who is holding the promoted Philishave, and approaching a half-naked man (a James Bond like figure) who is lying in bed. The visual argument, with its implication (i.e. if you use Philishave, you will be like James Bond, and you will be loved by women) is a weak and irrelevant argument, and as such violates the maxim of Relation.

Being different and special is highly valued in Western societies. Some of the advertisements (Example 69 and Example 70) abused this, and applied the strategy of emphasizing a type of emotional appeal that can be called **appeal to uniqueness**. Example 69. is quoted from a mobile phone advertisement that is especially designed for the young, who are generally not in favor of uniformity and appreciate nonconformity.

**Example 69.**

*Tűnj ki a tömegből!* (Vodafone, HL/18)

[Stand out from the crowd.]

The following advertisement does not limit its target audience, it addresses everybody by calling the readers lucky, and potential winners. This emotional appeal is used by the copywriters to influence and delicately induce the readers to believe the proceeding false argument, namely that there have already been two rounds.

**Example 70.**

*Amíg szomszédai közül többen is hiába nézegetik postaládájukat, Ön máris szerencsésnek mondhatja magát, mert túljutott a 21. nyereményjáték első két szakaszán.* (Reader's Digest, HDM/4)

[While your neighbors are still flicking through their mail with disappointment, you can already consider yourself as the lucky one, who has got through the first two rounds of the 21st prize-winning game.]

The next excerpt **appeals to the past** and evokes nostalgia in the readers. Furthermore, the Hungarian term '*tisztaság*' is ambiguous (thus committing the fallacy of ambiguity) because it can mean both cleanliness and purity. The latter meaning is implied by the subsequent word *harmony*, and as such this emotional appeal becomes irrelevant as to the quality of the mineral water.

**Example 71.**

*Őrzi a hajdanvolt idők tisztaságát és harmóniáját.* (Balfi, HM/16)

[It preserves the cleanliness and harmony of bygone times.]

The fallacy of **ad populum** has been manifested in the Hungarian corpus four times, in examples which all occurred in direct mail letters. The advertiser wants to popularize the product by quoting the words of satisfied and smiling people, who have allegedly been using the product (Example 72). However, these arguments are irrelevant and logically weak, due to the limited number and biased nature by which interviewees were selected by the advertiser (cf. Perelman, 1982 quoted in Walton, 1992, p. 72).

**Example 72.**

*azóta másként nézek az égre; Nyugodtan mondhatom, nem bántuk meg; [Apa és fia] elválaszthatatlanok ezektől a kártyáktól; Nem tudtam ellenállni a nagyszerű ajánlatnak.* (A világ repülőgépei, HDM/11)

[Since then I look at the sky differently; I can say with certainty we did not regret it; father and son are inseparable from these cards; I couldn't resist the great offer]

One example (Example 17) has been found of a different type of ad populum fallacy, in a leaflet where the advertiser claims that his product is the most popular, even though



this is irrelevant to the product's merits. As quoted earlier (in 4.3.5), this excerpt also manifests the fallacy of evading the burden of proof.

**Example 17**

*Minden idők legsikeresebb önfejlesztő sikerkönyve. Mert működik.* (Dianetika, HL/11)  
[The No. 1 best-selling self-help book of all time. Because it works.]

The fallacy of argumentum **ad baculum** was identified four times in the Hungarian Corpus.

**Example 73.**

*Míg a boldog szerencsések szeretteikkel és barátaikkal (...) együtt örülnének a hirtelen jött nyereménynek, addig Ön (...) kimaradna mindebből.* (Readers' Digest, HM/9)

[While the happy and lucky ones celebrated together with their family and friends, (...) you would miss out on all this.]

This argumentation is built on fear appeal. Here, readers are frightened not by a potentially negative consequence, but by a fear of losing something, which seems to be an even stronger motivating factor (cf. Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992). But what can be lost here? The *chance* of winning some money or gifts. The strategy works subtly, and is able to divert attention from the key issue of whether one really needs the magazine or not. Subscription to it becomes a secondary issue, a prerequisite for participation in the grand draw.

**6.2.3. The presence of post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy**

This fallacy has been detected 26 times in the Hungarian corpus. As noted among the analytical decisions, not only explicitly false causal relations (Example 74), but also implicit ones, such as raising unfounded hope (Example 75), are categorized as the fallacy of post hoc ergo hoc. The post hoc fallacy always violates the maxim of Quality (*Don't say what you believe to be false and Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence*) by promising or falsely implying positive correlations between events.

**Example 74.**

*A mai napon 139.000 ember hal meg betegségben idő előtt. Közülük több mint 25.000 öt év alatti gyerek. Ugyanakkor a mai napon a Glaxo Wellcome és a SmithKline Beecham cég egyesül. Ez azt jelenti, hogy most először több mint 100.000 kollegánk egyesíti a tehetségét világszerte azért, hogy megkeresse a betegségek okait, megtalálja az ellenszerüket, és segítsen a gyógyításukban. (Glaxo, HM/10)*

[Today 139.000 people die of illness prematurely. More than 25.000 of them are children under 5.....and today Glaxo Wellcome and SmithKline Beecham are merging. This means that now, for the first time, our colleagues, more than 100.000 of them, are uniting their talent worldwide to identify the causes of many illnesses, find the remedy, and help cure patients.]

This advertisement implies a false cause-reason, and thus commits the fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc. The merging of the two companies is depicted as if it were planned for the sake of the patients. In addition, in order to strengthen the manipulative effect, the copywriters appealed to emotion in committing the ad misericordiam fallacy, which is utterly irrelevant.

It has been found that raising unfounded hope is very frequently applied in the advertisements. Advertisers promise for example, energy for the whole day (HM/13), the smile of a baby (HL/10), healthy skin (HL/4), and a lot of fun (HDM/17). The following advertisement implies that by taking the food-supplement advertised, we will be healthy (Appendix G).

**Example 75.**

*Őrizze meg egészségét Bonolact Pro+biotikummal, hogy amikor a szokásos évi vizsgálatra jön hozzám, azt mondhassam minden rendben! (Bonolact, HM/2)*

[Maintain your health by taking Bonolact Pro+biotics, so that when you come for your annual health check, I can say, everything is fine.]

**6.2.4. The strategy of communicating false fact or misrepresenting reality**

The detection of the strategy of communicating false facts, or misrepresenting reality, has proved to be a challenging task. The advertisements were read carefully many times in order to confirm the manifestation of falsity. Very often experts or internet sources

were consulted to ensure that an utterance was not true. Due to the difficulty in justifying this strategy, there might be some undetected cases in the corpus. Example 76 illustrates the communication of a false fact.

**Example 76.**

*Döbbenetes, hogy a paradicsomos napozó még a lány röntgensugarak egy részét is kiszűri és védi a bőrt a radioaktív sugarak fekélyesítő hatásától is. (Ileszi, HM/9)*

[It is startling that tomato-suntan lotion filters even soft X-rays, and protects the skin from radioactive waves which can cause warts.]

To justify the suspicion regarding the falsity of the advertisement, a physicist and a chemist have been consulted. The second statement is evaluated as false by the experts and thus violated the maxim of Quality but the first utterance is also read with reservation.

The misrepresentation of reality has often been manifested by **urging** in the Hungarian Corpus. Urging was found six times, and only in direct mail letters, which can be explained by the fact that the manufacturer sells its product not in stores, but directly to the addressee. The act of urging is a very powerful and effective tool, because it creates the illusion of reading about a very important issue. Moreover, it creates an unequal power-relation between the communicator and the reader, in which the former claims the right to urge. The aim of the urging is to force the reader to act quickly, i.e. to subscribe to the magazine without considering carefully whether he or she really needs it.

**Example 77.**

*Sőt, ha gyorsan válaszol,...Még ma küldje vissza... Ezért most cselekedjen gyorsan! (Fantázia és Forma, HDM/2)*

[In fact, if you respond quickly,... Reply today, Therefore, act quickly! ]

Misrepresenting reality can also be manifested by the minimum group paradigm (Tajfel, 1981). It has been detected in two Hungarian advertisements. In Example 78 the

communicator takes the role of a mother, and by using the first person plural, she creates the illusion of belonging to the target audience (cf. Bárházi, 2007). Since the advertisement was published in the popular mothers' magazine (Kismama), this is a perfect choice. This strategy seems to strengthen the writer's credibility (cf. ethos), which can increase the readers' willingness to identify with the writer's point of view, and accept the promoted baby food as good and healthy.

**Example 78.**

*Szerencsére jól tettem, amikor az ismert, megbízható UNIVER Bébiétel mellett döntöttem. (...) Ez minden gondos anya álma, hiszen mi mind egyre gondolunk. (Univer, HM/2)*

[Fortunately, I have chosen the well-known and reliable UNIVER baby food. This is every mother's dream, since we all think as one.]

**6.2.5. The manipulative potential of the fallacy of unclarity**

As mentioned in section 5.5.2 the fallacy of unclarity is sometimes only an unintentional mistake, not a manipulative strategy, because no manipulative intention can be presupposed behind the utterance. However, in other cases, unclarity camouflages manipulation, and therefore violates the maxim of Manner, as the following example shows.

**Example 79.**

*az első hat hónapban a legideálisabb táplálék az anyatej, amely mind mennyiségileg mind minőségileg biztosítja a tápanyagellátást ↔ 1. korszak: 4 hónapos kortól (Nestlé, HM/9)*

[in the first six months the most ideal food is mother's milk, which provides a sufficient nutrition supply both in quantity and in quality ↔ first phase: from the age of four months]

This advertisement clearly exemplifies the underlying conflict between the interests of the manufacturers, and those of the babies. According to the latest research (Chantry et al., 2006), and as the advertisement states, babies are recommended to be fed by human milk in the first six months. However, the caption to the diagram suggests that the

advertised baby food can be given from the age of four months. This subtle recommendation for the consumption of Nestlé food is in opposition to the previous statement, and to medical advice, but it is certainly in line with the interest of the manufacturer.

In the case of a face cream (Example 80), the manufacturer should have provided a precise list of the ingredients (i.e. active agents) and herbs, because these pieces of information would be essential to a considered purchase.

**Example 80.**

*Az alkotóanyagokat gondosan válogatjuk és szigorúan ügyelünk, hogy a természetben fellelhető **összes jóval** hozzájárulhassanak bőrünk és lelkünk mindennapi szépségéhez, kiegyensúlyozottságához. Tökéletes hidratálás a nap 24 órájában, természetes **aktív hatóanyagokkal** (Garnier, HL/4).*

[We carefully select the ingredients and strictly supervise the manufacturing process to ensure that all the good things in Nature contribute to the everyday harmony and beauty of your skin and soul. Perfect hydrating over 24 hours, with active and natural hydrating agents.]

**6.2.6. Unfair use of presuppositions**

To investigate the unfair use of presuppositions, 17 cases have been detected. In two of them, the factive verb ‘*tud*’ (know) induced false presuppositions. Since the truth of the subordinated clause has been presupposed unfairly (see Example 48.), the utterance violates the maxim of Quality, and manipulates the readers by forcing an interpretation that is in the interest of the manufacturer.

**Example 48.**

*Ruháidat Ariellel mossa majd patyolattisztára, hiszen tudja és érzi, hogy ez jó Neked (Ariel, HL/16)*

[She will wash your clothes with Ariel, as she knows and feels it is good for you.]

As a result of the analytical decisions, the unfair use of presuppositions is treated separately from the other two strategies that can also manifest falsity, namely the

strategy of communicating false facts or misrepresenting reality, and the fallacy of post hoc propter hoc. If we add up the figures, the total is 63 (39.6 %), which suggests that communicating falsity constitutes an important manipulative strategy in the Hungarian Corpus.

### 6.2.7. The role of irrelevant arguments in manipulation

By applying irrelevant arguments, the advertiser is able to steer the critical attention of the readers from the content of the advertisements, and as a result hamper the full understanding of the text. Irrelevant arguments violate the maxim of Relation, just like the fallacy of playing on the sentiments of the audience. In spite of this, according to Eemeren et al.'s taxonomy (see Table 7. in 4.3.5) the two are treated separately. Irrelevant arguments are those which have no rational relation to the standpoint under discussion.

During the analysis a recurring form of irrelevant argument has been identified (for example, Example 81). Advertisers often promoted their products by **promising a gift upon purchase**. Although this strategy is fallacious from a logical point of view, and is indeed clearly detectable by the readers, it is regarded as a successful strategy by marketers. No wonder they use it so frequently.

#### Example 81.

*Sőt, ezúton szerződést kötő és díjfizető ügyfeleink még egy elefántos, kapucnis fűrdőlepedőt is kapnak ajándékba. (Money Maxx, HM/9)*

[Moreover, from now on fee-paying, contracted clients will be sent a gift of a hooded baby towel, decorated with an elephant.]

### 6.2.8. The strategy of withholding

The strategy of withholding has proved to be the most difficult strategy to detect. Two cases have been identified, however, there is a possibility that the corpus contains more examples. One of the detected examples of withholding is applied in a medicine

advertisement (Panadol, HL/19). The leaflet promotes the popular Panadol fairly, as no manipulative strategy has been detected apart from withholding. Based on the coders' background knowledge, obtained earlier from two doctors, it is concluded that the leaflet withholds information on the dangerous effect of overdosing on paracetamol, which is a main ingredient of Panadol and many other "everyday" medicines (such as Neocitran, Coldrex) that can be bought without prescription in any pharmacy.

The other example of withholding has been detected in a magazine advertisement that promotes Kinder milkbars (Kinder, HL/7) (see 4.5.2.2). The text praises the positive effect and indispensability of milk, fat and carbohydrate, which the milkbar contains, but in the meantime omitted information on the additives.

#### **6.2.9. Other cases of manipulative arguments**

Besides the more frequently used manipulative strategies discussed above, examples have been found for four types of argumentation fallacy that violated one of the Gricean maxims. The **fallacy of ad verecundiam** (appeal to authority) has been identified in two medicine advertisements. In Example 75 (Bonolact, HM/2) (cited above in 6.2.3 as illustrating the post hoc fallacy), the usage of the ad verecundiam argument was evaluated as manipulative, because due to the lack of any reliable reference (for example, name or signature) the communicator was not accepted as a real doctor. The man in the picture (Bonolact, HM/2, Appendix G) creates the illusion of being a doctor by putting on a white coat and a stethoscope, with the intention of appearing persuasive and trustworthy.

The other advertisement that illustrates the manipulative usage of the ad verecundiam argument (Bilobil, HM/2) is built on the abuse of the respect that a well-known and popular celebrity can command. The advertisement implies that István Vágó, who is

associated with intelligence and education, recommends the product as the solution for memory problems (Appendix H). No matter how educated he is in general, he is not an expert on pharmacy and medicine, and cannot be regarded as a reliable source on the topic. The fallacy of *ad verecundiam* was evaluated as an instance of violation of the fallacy of Quality, because the communicators falsely implied expertise.

The **fallacy of evading the burden of proof** has been identified in two advertisements (see the analysis in section 4.3.5) where the advertisers do not provide arguments to support their conclusion. In general, the conclusions in the advertisements analyzed, communicated either implicitly or explicitly, can be formulated as the following: “our product/company is good, you need it, so trust it/try it/buy it/order it”.

Finally, let us discuss three fallacies that appeared only once in the Hungarian Corpus. An interesting example (**Hiba! A hivatkozási forrás nem található.**) of the **fallacy of magnifying an unexpressed premise** has been detected in one of the direct mail letters. The utterance takes the form of a fictional dialogue between the advertiser and the reader, but for critical readers the manipulative strategy can become apparent.

Articulating a counter-argument regarding the advertised product, or questioning the point of it, would be a fair and consumer-friendly gesture on the part of the marketers. However, it would easily damage the efficiency of the advertisement by inviting criticism and rational questioning. No wonder only the form of the question is kept, and indeed abused. By creating a question on behalf of the reader, the writer can easily answer it in a way that is advantageous to him. Moreover, the utterance forces the readers to accept the presupposition (*the offer is great*) embedded in the subordinate clause.



**Example 82**

*Talán azt kérdezi, miért teszünk Önnek ilyen remek ajánlatot? (Fantázia és Forma, HDM/2)*

[You might ask why we make such a great offer to you.]

The following example displays the manipulative usage of the **fallacy of declaring a standpoint sacrosanct**, which restricts the readers' freedom to refute the argument. By declaring the statement (of being 'a real expectation of women') as unquestionable, the advertiser forces the readers to accept it as true and valid.

**Example 63**

*Ön is értékeli a puhán a bőrére simuló, testét gyengéden átölelő fehérnemű lágy érintését? Tulajdonképpen ez nem is kérdés, hanem valós női elvárás. (Schiesser, HDM/15)*

[Do you also enjoy the silky touch of lingerie gently wrapped around your body and softly caressing your skin? In fact, this is not even a question, rather a real expectation of women.]

The third fallacy, which appeared only one time in the Hungarian corpus, is the **fallacy of ambiguity**. Since it also displays emotional appeal, it has already been discussed earlier in 6.2.2.

**Example 71**

*Őrzi a hajdanvolt idők tisztaságát és harmóniáját. (Balfi, HM/16)*

[It preserves the cleanliness and harmony of bygone times.]

### **6.3. Manipulative strategies in the American Corpora**

Let us see now which manipulative strategies have been detected in the American Corpus. The results of the analysis have revealed, similarly to the Hungarian corpus, that the most frequently applied manipulative strategy is the use of argumentation fallacies with 56 cases (53.3 %). This means that the copywriters of American advertisements analyzed most often apply weak manipulation.

**Table 15.****Rank order of manipulative strategies in the American Corpus (n=60)**

Manipulative strategy	Leaflet (n= 20)	Mgz. ad. (n= 20)	Direct mail (n= 20)	Σ
1. Informing the intended addressee without a communicative intention	0	0	0	0
2. Withholding information	1	5	3	9 (8.5 %)
3. Unfair use of presupposition	4	2	3	9 (8.5 %)
4. Using false fact/ misrepresentation of reality	7	2	22	31 (29.5 %)
5. Using argumentation fallacies	11	25	20	56 (53.3 %)
	23	34	48	105

The second most frequent strategy was the using of false fact or misrepresentation of reality with 31 identified cases (29.5 %), which is followed by the strategy of unfair use of presupposition and of withholding (9-9 cases, 8.5 %). The following table offers a different summary of the results where the detected fallacies are treated separately.

**Table 16.****Detailed rank order of manipulative strategies in the American Corpus (n=60)**

Manipulative strategy	Leaflet (n= 20)	Mgz. ad. (n= 20)	Direct mail (n= 20)	Σ
Using false fact/ misrepres. of reality	7	2	22	31 (29.5 %)
Appeal to sentiments	3	7	6	16 (15.2 %)
False cause reason	1	7	4	12 (11.4 %)
Withholding information	1	5	3	9 (8.5 %)
Unfair use of presupposition	4	2	3	9 (8.5 %)
Irrelevant argument	2	4	1	7 (6.6 %)
Fallacy of unclarity	-	1	5	6 (5.7 %)
Ad populum	2	1	2	5 (4.7 %)
Ad verecundiam (authority)	1	3	-	4 (3.8 %)
Ad baculum (threat)	-	2	1	3 (2.8 %)
Evading the burden of proof	2	-	-	2 (1.9 %)
Straw man fallacy	-	-	1	1 (0.95%)
	23	34	48	105

Mgz.ad. = magazine advertisements; misrep.= misrepresentation

When each argumentation fallacy is treated as a separate manipulative strategy, the results reveal a different distribution of fallacies. With its 31 detected cases (29.5 %),

using false facts or misrepresentation of reality has been proved to be the most frequent manipulative strategy among the twelve manipulative strategies. It is followed by the appeal to the sentiments of the audience (16 cases, 15.2 %). The strategy of using the fallacy of false cause reason has been coded 12 times (11.4 %), which is still a considerable number compared to the occurrence of other strategies. Withholding information and the unfair use of presupposition (9 cases, 8.5 % each) precede the irrelevant argument (7 cases, 6.6 %), the fallacy of unclarity (6 cases, 5.7 %) and the fallacy of ad populum (5 cases, 4.7 %). A few cases have been found for the ad verecundiam fallacy (4 cases, 3.8 %), ad baculum (3 cases, 2.8 %), and for the fallacy of evading the burden of proof (2 cases, 1.9 %). The straw man fallacy has been identified only once in the American corpus.

### **6.3.1. Non-manipulative fallacious arguments**

The argumentation fallacies identified were analyzed, with respect to whether they observe any of the Gricean maxims. Similarly to the Hungarian Corpus, several examples have been found for the non-manipulative usage of the emotional appeal. However, other non-manipulative fallacies have not been identified. This finding seems to support the opinion (held by the literature, and also shared by the author) that argumentation fallacies are manipulative tools, excepting emotional appeals that are not manipulative in certain cases, due to the fact that some emotional appeals have been conventionalized. Examples include the use of adjectives, superlatives, metaphors and emotionally toned words (see Example 82 and Example 83).

#### **Example 82.**

*Our solutions will have your new home running like a top in no time!* (Container store, AL/14)

**Example 83.**

*Discover nature's secret for calming sensitive skin. (Aveeno, AM/15)*

The noun 'secret' has become conventionalized in advertising language, so that no one really thinks there is something hidden from the reader with respect to the moisturizing cream.

Visual arguments were treated as for the ones in the Hungarian Corpus, and thus only those cases were rated manipulative which either proved to be irrelevant or reinforced a manipulative verbal argument. For example, the shining white teeth of a young girl were not identified as manipulative in the advertisement that offered tooth-whitening treatment, whereas a picture of a Rembrandt painting of a woman was judged as a fallacious usage of emotional appeal (since it is irrelevant) in suggesting a connection between the famous painter and oral health.

**6.3.2. The strategy of communicating false facts or misrepresenting reality**

Various examples have been found for this manipulative strategy, out of which the frequent usage of unjustified **urging** has proved a dominant type. Urging is evaluated as manipulative if the communicator does not offer plausible reasons for buying the product quickly, when no expiry date is mentioned, or the argument provided is very weak (for example, participation in a draw). While it was identified only five times in the Hungarian Corpus and only in direct mail letters, the American Corpus contained eleven cases. This kind of misrepresentation of reality appeared in all the three types of advertisement.

Non-manipulative usage of urging has been identified in eleven advertisements, which proves that this is one of the most widely-used persuasive strategies in American advertising. The explanation for it might be that American advertisements very often

promote not only one particular product in general, but rather promote a wider selection of products, and/or a shop that tries to entice consumers with some kind of time-limited sale or discount. These advertisements prompt the readers to take action: visit the shop, check out the website or start thinking about acquiring the promoted product or service.

The majority of the false facts and misrepresentations of reality detected occurred in direct mail letters. In one of them, for example, the communicator tries to persuade the readers to buy self-help tapes. However, the discourse goes beyond fair persuasion, and manipulates the readers, as in Example 84, which was evaluated by the coders not simply as a fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc, but as a false statement, because regardless of whether someone is able to overcome (with or without the help of the advertised tapes) mental or spiritual hardships, problems originating from physical illness will remain problems.

**Example 84.**

*You don't really have problems; you only think you do.* (Spiritual Tapes, ADM/6)

Unfairly blaming competitors in the market is also considered to be a variant of this manipulative strategy. It should be analyzed with care, to ensure it is not mistaken for the fallacy of ad hominem, in which the communicator mentions irrelevant personal qualities of the other party (i.e. manufacturer). Example 85 tries to discredit the opponent by attacking it. The ad creates a contrast between the Allstate insurance company, and 'the others' by accusing them of offering a lower quality service. However, this example raises a crucial analytical question. On the one hand, if the utterance is true, and the other companies are worse in their offers, it is not a manipulative strategy and does not even count as an ad hominem fallacy, as the difference mentioned is relevant - it is merely a persuasive strategy, emphasizing one's good points and another's bad points (Rank, 1976; van Dijk, 2006). On the other hand,

if the utterance can be considered to be a false accusation (as in this case), the utterance constitutes a false fact.

**Example 85.**

*Other insurance companies cut rates by cutting service. Not Allstate.* (Allstate, ADM/11)

An interesting type of misrepresentation of reality has been detected in another direct mail (ADM/15). While promoting a credit card, the communicator speaks on behalf of the reader in the Question and Answer section, as if the reader had really asked that question. This is powerful since formulating a possible future action in the first person singular causes the readers to identify with the content of the question, and raises the possibility of further elaboration.

**Example 86.**

*Why would I want to transfer my balance?* (Capital One, ADM/15)

Furthermore, by the marketer both raising and answering the question, he or she creates a great opportunity to highlight the points advantageous to them (i.e. transferring my balance is a very advantageous move for me). Asking the same question using a stylistically neutral, impersonal question format (*why is it advantageous to transfer?*) would have no special persuasive power.

Misrepresentation of reality can best be illustrated by the direct mail of the Distinguished Leadership award, which was sent to the author's home address in order to offer inclusion into a book called, the International Directory of Distinguished Leadership. The fact that I had published only one international paper (in fact, only as a third author, Foote, Tóth & Árvay, 2000) before the letter was sent proves that (Example 87) and (Example 88) are not true, and misrepresent reality.

**Example 87.**

... we are *incredibly selective* about our choices (*Distinguished Leadership, ADM/17*)

**Example 88.**

*As a respected leader of authority, you have been nominated for inclusion in this our flagship publication (Distinguished Leadership ADM/17)*

The discourse elaborates further in proving the prestige of the book, and praising those who have been nominated for inclusion. Knowing that nobody nominated my name, and by learning that this company regularly buys the list of authors from the journal in which our publication appeared, it becomes clear that the publisher is by no means ‘*incredibly selective*’, and nomination only means getting access to any name that appears in any scientific journal. Finally, utterance (in Example 89) has been proved false, since the letter sells this inclusion for \$199.00, which can be supplemented with a Gold Distinguished Leader Medal, and a Distinguished Leader Award Testimonial for \$199.00 each.

**Example 89.**

*inclusion being determined by merit alone and not financial consideration (Distinguished Leadership, ADM/17)*

**6.3.3. Variants of the fallacy of appealing to the sentiments of the audience**

Appealing to the sentiments of the audience has been proved to be an important manipulative strategy in the American Corpus as well. Examples have been found of the **appeal to vanity**, and the **appeal to uniqueness**. As example (Example 90) illustrates, appeal to vanity often co-occurs with the fallacy of post hoc propter hoc.

**Example 90.**

*Show off a confident new you! (Nivea, AM/20)*

Similarly to one of the Hungarian advertisements (Example 67), the following example abuses the desire to be respected for one’s intelligence.

**Example 91.**

*The ability to lead and be recognized as a leader is an asset to all who come under your umbrella of influence. (Distinguished Leadership, ADM/17)*

Example 92. demonstrates a subtle manifestation of argumentum **ad baculum**. The argumentation seems to be an inquiry. However, the communicator puts emotional pressure on the readers.

**Example 92.**

*I wonder though, if you have yet appreciated the extent to which you may be missing out on important background material and information. Just think back to some of the events that have occurred since you received your last copy of Newsweek. Are you satisfied with your knowledge of the facts behind these and their full implications? (Newsweek, ADM/1)*

In this piece of direct mail the communicator uses the argument of negative consequences, and threatens the ex-subscriber that unless she continues to subscribe to the magazine, she will become ignorant, and will miss the chance to have access to important information. Moreover, the letter wants to suggest that only Newsweek can provide reliable information on current issues.

It should be noted that a legitimate and reasonable threat is not counted as an ad baculum fallacy (Walton, 1992, pp. 170-174). These arguments can be used positively in health prevention. Example 93 explains to readers why regular eye checkups are important. Reality can feel like a threatening argument but in this context it is reasonable. These kinds of argument help to motivate people to take part in health-prevention programs.

**Example 93.**

Even if you see 20/20, underlying ocular problems can still exist. Early signs of diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and elevated cholesterol levels can often be detected in an eye examination. (Eye Care, AL/1)



The fallacy of **ad populum** has been manifested five times in the American Corpus by testimonies. As discussed above in 6.2.2 these arguments are irrelevant and logically weak (Example 94), due to the limited number and biased nature of the interviewee selection process, on the part of the advertiser.

**Example 94.**

*I began using your program after attending your lecture in Denver. I couldn't believe how easy I started manifesting things into my life. If you hadn't fed me with such wonderful spiritual food, I would still be at the bottom of my financial hole (Spiritual Tapes, ADM/6)*

**6.3.4. The presence of post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy**

A typical example of the post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy has been detected in an eye wrinkle cream advertisement (Example 95.). The products of the fashion industry, including clothes, underwear and cosmetics like the following one, lend themselves to the analysis of the post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy.

**Example 95.**

*Send dark circles and puffs packing (Clinique, AM/14)*

Besides appealing to the vanity of women, the advertisement promises an end to dark circles and swellings. However, according to the latest research (Csák, 2007), the effect of skin wrinkles creams is minimal, being only a few hundredths of a millimeter, which is not noticeable to the human eye.

**Example 96.**

*puts a pause on aging signs, to help keep skin at its peak (Arden, AM/17)*

Example 96 (Appendix J) displays the same type of manipulation. However the first part of the quote highlights the implicit premise of many fashion ads, namely that aging is bad, and is something that every woman has to prevent and/or slow down. This implicit premise serves as a basis for the creating and magnifying of a fear of wrinkles,

which can then be abused by advertisers offering their solution (their product) to the artificially created problem.

Besides the promising of beauty, the guarantee of great savings also proved quite frequent. The fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc has been detected in twelve direct mail letters promoting financial products. One of the American advertisements is built on emphasizing a dubiously calculated and large sum as a saving, if one transfers to Guaranty Bank (Example 97). To support the false promise, a realistic voucher certificate of \$56,850 (manipulative strategy of misrepresenting reality) is attached to the letter, which happens to be filled in with the name of the addressee. However, it becomes clear only from the tiny footnote that, due to the restrictions, the real chances of obtaining that sum are very little.

**Example 97.**

*Think what you could do with \$ 56,850 or more right now! (Guaranty National Bank, ADM/5)*

**6.3.5. The strategy of withholding**

This strategy has been detected nine times in the American Corpus. Utterances such as Example 98 and Example 99 leave many questions unanswered, concerning the rate and the sample size, which would be indispensable to a considered decision on the buying of a product, or trial of the promoted service.

**Example 98.**

*Our success rate sets new standards for group hypnosis. (Hypnosos, AM/11)*

**Example 99.**

*90% of participants experienced reductions in redness, irritation or skin roughness, in as little as one week. (Aveeno, AM/15)*

### 6.3.6. Unfair use of presuppositions

The unfair use of presupposition has been manifested in nine advertisements by various kinds of presuppositional tools, such as an inchoative verb (for example, in Example 100), definite noun phrases (in Example 101.), the word *anymore*, and factive verbs.

#### Example 100.

*Help you **regain** control of your finances* (Guaranty Bank, ADM/5)

A presuppositional structure manifests manipulation in Example 100. The inchoative verb *regain* (*regain control of your finances*) presupposes that the reader did not have control over his/her finances.

#### Example 101.

*No reason to deal with **the hassles** of traditional banks and mortgage brokers.* (Guaranty Bank, ADM/5)

The utterance unfairly presupposes that dealing with traditional banks and mortgage brokers is not easily manageable, and is a hassle.

### 6.3.7. Irrelevant arguments in American advertisements

Unlike the Hungarian corpus, the American corpus has not strongly reflected the frequent usage of the strategy of offering gifts upon purchase, as it was identified only three times. Instead, the American advertisements offered relevant savings.

Having analyzed the variations of the fallacy of irrelevant arguments, an interesting case has been identified, where the advertiser tried to create a relation between two seemingly unrelated concepts, and indeed, build a whole campaign on it<sup>6</sup>. One of the American magazine advertisements (Example 102), (Appendix L) promoted drinking milk (interestingly enough, without any direct or indirect reference to a brand name)

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<sup>6</sup> There is a series of advertisements in the American press in which drinking milk is promoted by famous people, sporting “milk-moustaches”.

and linked it to diet. This is a new idea, since so far only the nutritional advantages of milk consumption have been emphasized by listing the vitamins and useful constituents, but not a word has been mentioned on how drinking milk contributes to losing weight. On the surface level, the advertisement appears to be a positive health campaign, but underlying considerations (for example, suppression of cola consumption or the ‘rehabilitation’ milk) must have initiated the creation of such a campaign, especially due to the fact that in recent years many concerns have been expressed by doctors in connection with the need for drinking milk, especially for children and suckling women.

**Example 102.**

*Think about your drink. Milk your diet. Lose weight!* (Milk, AM/19)

**6.3.8. The manipulative potential of the fallacy of unclarity**

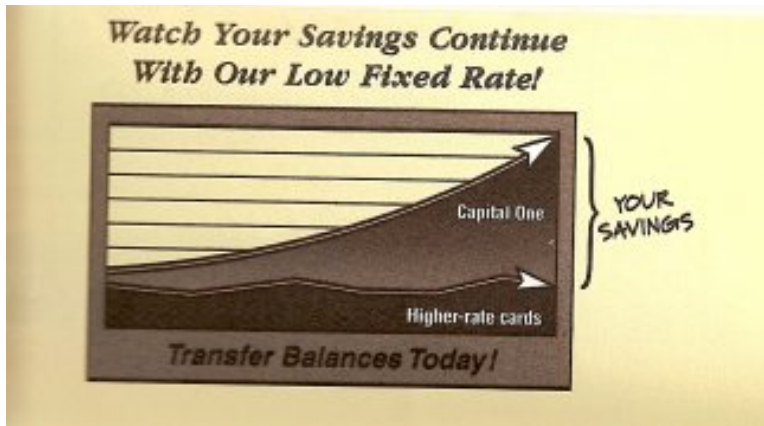
As in the Hungarian Corpus, unclarity usually conceals the real meaning of the discourse and thus becomes a manipulative strategy, as the following advertisement illustrates (Appendix K). Readers are invited to attend a hypnosis seminar which promises that you can quit smoking and lose weight. Let us not judge the truthfulness of the promise, because it is beyond the scope of this study, but one critical question has to be asked. How can one make sure that he or she will not put on weight, or go on smoking during the following weeks? The long term effect of the hypnosis seminar cannot be determined immediately after the psychological treatment. However, the money can be refunded only at that time.

**Example 103.**

*You will walk out of this seminar successful or we will refund 100% of your money back on the spot!* (Hypnosis, AM/11)

The fallacy of unclarity has been manifested not only by verbal utterances, but by visual arguments as well, as the following figure illustrates.

**Figure 5.**  
*An example for the fallacy of unclarity realized by a diagram*



(Capital One, ADM/15)

This diagram is unclear, and thus misleads the readers, since no exact numbers or time span are mentioned. Therefore, the above visual argument violates both the maxim of Manner and Quality.

### 6.3.9. Other cases of manipulative arguments

The **fallacy of ad verecundiam** (appeal to authority) has been identified in four advertisements. For example, in the case of (Example 104.), a popular singer gave her name, and promotes a skincare product. Further examples have been found for the promotions of a watch, cream and milk by popular celebrities.

#### Example 104.

*I'm passionate about Proactive Solution because it works!* (says Jessica Simpson)  
 (Proactive, AL/16)

Ad verecundiam is on occasion used non-fallaciously, for example in an American leaflet (AL/1), in which four ophthalmologists recommend their practice, and give advice to people on eye care.

An example of the **fallacy of straw man** has been found in one of the direct mail letters (ADM/15) advertising a new credit card. The advertiser not only mentions the alleged advantages of his card, but also applies the strategy of using the fallacy of straw man by creating a biased comparison of credit cards (Figure 6.). The comparison cannot be accepted as reliable, because it mentions only the worst possible options from all of the competitors, thus ignoring their good features and at the same time emphasizing the merits of the Platinum Card (cf. “intensify my good, other’s bad” Rank, 1976; van Dijk, 2006).

**Figure 6.**  
*Platinum card advertisement*



	OUR CARD	Other Issuers
APRs	<b>START LOW, STAY LOW</b> 3.9% introductory APR 8.9% fixed thereafter	VARIABLE RATES As high as 15.9%
Balance Transfer Fee	<b>NONE!</b>	As high as 3% of transfer amount
Cash Advance Fee	<b>NONE!</b>	As high as 5% of advance amount
Additional Foreign Exchange Fee	<b>NONE!</b>	As high as 2% of transaction amount
Other Features	<b>NO TELEMARKETING!</b> Capital One will not call you to promote its products/services	The possibility of inconvenient sales calls throughout your busy day

(Capital One, ADM/15)

Finally, the **fallacy of evading the burden of proof** has been identified in two American advertisements. Example X is quoted from a leaflet which advertises a family dentistry.

**Example 105.**

*We give your family the dental care they deserve!* (Family dentistry, AL/13)

The advertiser does not provide any information regarding the type, price, quality of their services, instead he promises “absolutely incredible, gorgeous smile”, and emphasizes the importance of white teeth.

#### 6.4. Comparing the results of the analysis of the Hungarian and the American corpora

The following table compares which manipulative strategies have been applied in the Hungarian and the American corpus. Overall, the findings suggest similar preferences in the use of manipulative strategies in both corpora.

**Table 17.**  
*Summary of results in the two corpora*

Manipulative strategies	Hung. ads	Rank order	US ads	Rank order
Appeal to the sentiments of the aud.	35	1.	16	2.
False cause reason (post hoc)	26	2.	12	3.
Using false propos./misrep. of reality	21	3.	31	1.
Fallacy of unclarity	20	4.	6	6.
Unfair use of presupposition	16	5.	9	4.
Irrelevant argument	13	6.	7	5.
Withholding information	11	7.	9	4.
Ad populum	5	8.	5	7.
Ad baculum (threat)	4	9.	3	9.
Evading the burden of proof	2	10.	2	10.
Ad verecundiam (authority)	2	11.	4	8.
Ad misericordiam (pity)	1	12.	-	
Fallacy of ambiguity	1	13.	-	
Magnifying an unexpressed premise	1	14.	-	
Declaring a standpoint sacrosanct	1	15.	-	
Straw man fallacy	-		1	11.
	159		105	

Aud.= audience; misrep = misrepresentation

The first column of the table enumerates the types of manipulative strategies according to their frequency of occurrence in the Hungarian corpus. The rank order of the manipulative strategies detected in the American corpus is indicated in the last column of the table. Table 17. shows that the top three most frequently applied manipulative

strategies in both corpora, are the appeal to the sentiments of the audience, false causal relation and false facts and misrepresentation of reality. If we regroup the strategies identified according to their content, two dominant categories emerge. One is the manipulative strategy of appealing to emotions, the other is the strategy of communicating falsity (see Table 18.). The former was created by merging the appeal to the sentiments of the audience with the other types of fallacies occurring that also appeal to emotions, namely, *ad baculum*, *ad populum*, and *ad misericordiam*. The latter was created by merging *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, unfair use of presuppositions, false statements and misrepresentation of reality. These figures suggest that the most dominant features of the advertisements analyzed, in both corpora, are the appeal to emotions and the communication of falsity.

**Table 18.**  
*The most frequent cumulative strategies of the two corpora*

<b>Features of comparison</b>	<b>Hungarian advertisements</b>	<b>American advertisements</b>
Appeal to emotions	45 (28%)	24 (23%)
Communicating falsity	63 (39.6%)	52 (49.5%)

Another similarity between the two corpora is the application of a wide variety of manipulative strategies. However, the Hungarian corpus has revealed four types of manipulative strategy not found in the American corpus; the fallacy of *ad misericordiam* (appeal to pity), the fallacy of ambiguity, the fallacy of magnifying an unexpressed premise, and the fallacy of declaring a standpoint sacrosanct. The fallacy of the straw man was only identified in the American corpus.

Both corpora displayed variants of the strategies analyzed. The most variants have been detected for the appeal to the sentiments of the audience, namely appeal to vanity, to freedom, to sex, to uniqueness (or exclusivity), and to the past. A recurring variant of the strategy of misrepresentation of reality has often been manifested by urging,



whereas irrelevant arguments have frequently been manifested by promising a gift upon purchase. As to the role of visual arguments, it has been found that pictures, diagrams and charts can be manipulative if they are irrelevant or imply an unfounded hope.

It should be noted that the similarities that have been found in the variants and usage of manipulative strategies might be attributed to the fact that advertising is becoming an international genre. The marketing strategies of the American advertising agencies are often treated as examples to be followed, and Hungarian copywriters often use books that were written by overseas experts. Another cause of the similarities is that many of the advertisements are adapted or translated from a foreign language. This fact certainly limits the validity of comparison. However, the author of the study opted for random sampling to be able to get a general picture of the manipulative strategies that an average Hungarian reader is exposed to. Concentrate solely on the cultural differences in advertising, only those advertisements should be selected for contrastive analysis that promote a Hungarian product and are written by a Hungarian advertising agency. Still, the copywriter's professional knowledge (his or her training history which is supposedly influenced by Anglo-American copywriting practice) cannot be eliminated.

As discussed earlier, each corpus is composed of three sub-corpora that are distinguished by formal features. The results indicate that copywriters apply a wide variety of manipulative strategies in all of the three types of advertisements. The figures in Table 14. and Table 16 show that direct mail contains the highest number of strategies in both corpora. However, no conclusion can be drawn as to the correlation between the number of strategies and the subtypes of the advertisements, since only the minimum, and not the maximum number of words in the advertisements has been controlled for. Moreover, direct mail letters have displayed considerable diversity

regarding topic and length, ranging from one page long letters, to ‘packages’ including a two- to four-page letter to which small leaflets, stickers, sample cards or even a mock ignition key are attached.

Regarding the linguistic manifestation of the manipulative strategies, no differences have been traced between the Hungarian and English language, since the strategies themselves are based on the content of an utterance and do not depend on single lexical items, except for the presuppositions. However, the types of presuppositional tools (definite noun phrases, factive verbs, inchoative verbs, comparative structures, words such as *only*, *already*, *anymore*) outlined in Chapter 4 have been found in both corpora. The results tend to suggest that there are no apparent language specific differences between Hungarian and American English manipulative strategies. In contrast, the analysis has revealed smaller differences regarding the number of strategies and strategy preferences which might be attributed partly to cultural differences and partly to individual style of advertising agencies. A similar analysis on larger corpora would be able to confirm or refute these observations.

### **6.5. Cultural aspects of the analysis**

Apart from the similarities, the analysis has revealed some differences between the two corpora. First of all, a cultural difference can be noted in connection with the types of advertisement. In the United States leaflets are often put into mailboxes, or sometimes sent to homes with the name of the addressee and an address in it. The explanation lies in the presumption that there are higher chances of the advertisements being read if they arrive at home mailboxes, than if they were displayed in stores. Despite being formally similar to direct mail, in that they are sent to a home address, direct mail adverts differ in that they always take the form of a letter, and use salutation and greetings at the end.

As opposed to direct mail, leaflets that are sent to home addresses show no sign of personal relationship.

Another difference that attracted the coders' attention was the heavy use of references to money and savings in the American corpus. In many cases, the discounts or savings offered were restricted; valid only with certain conditions, and limited to a certain time. These relevant pieces of information were always written in very small print at the bottom of the page or at the end of the advertisements, but at least they were there. Reference to money or savings was judged as manipulative only if it was used in a misleading way. For example, the expression of '*free miles*' was repeated many times in big print on the envelope and in the heading section of an advertisement, and it was not easy to learn that those miles were not automatically free (United, ADM/2).

Placing the emphasis on saving instead of buying seems to be a good persuasive strategy which motivates the customers to buy the advertised product, not primarily because it is of good quality, but because one can save. This strategy can lead to the paradox of saying that the more one buys the more one can save money. Compared to the American corpus, the Hungarian advertisements did not display a frequent use of reference to discounts or saving.

In order to judge if an utterance manifests a manipulative strategy, a certain level of cultural knowledge is required on the part of the coders. In the case of an American magazine advertisement promoting jewellery (Cartier, AM/18) it is important to know that the diamond ring carries a special meaning for Americans. It is not simply a beautiful ring, it is the symbol of love and an essential element of the marriage proposal. Therefore, the emphasis on the diamond, and the adjectives of love, such as *true*,

*eternal* and *extraordinary* was judged to be relevant from the point of view of the conclusion.

A further cultural difference was detected in one of the American magazine advertisements that advocated a new kind of surgery for hemorrhoids. The fact that the advertisement repeated four times that the treatment does not “*require prolonged time off from work*” (once in bold type) proves that it is an important and strong argument for American people.

**Example 106**

*IRC produces no disruption to your work schedule or lifestyle* (printed originally in bold type) (...)

*You can leave our office and go back to work* (Hemorrhoid, AM/9)

As far as the content of the American advertisements is concerned, the American corpus contains more service advertisements than the Hungarian one. Leaflets and direct mail offering family dentistry (ADM/7), eye care (AL/1), car repair (ADM/8), alarm monitoring, or TV installation (ADM/4) are not common in Hungary as yet. The language use in these ‘service advertisements’ reflects a considerable degree of politeness and the importance of developing personal connections with customers, as the word *friendship* indicates in the following quote.

**Example 107**

*we believe that our patients are our friends* (Eye care, AL/1)

While pleasing customers has been found to be a common persuasive strategy in the American advertisements, very powerful requests (directives) (cf. face-threatening acts, Árvay, 2004) are also present, which suggests that American copywriters tend to form a more direct and active relationship with the readers. The most typical example is urging, which was found in six Hungarian and in seventeen American advertisements, of which

eleven were judged as manipulative because no strong reason (such as date of expiry) was offered to support the urging. As mentioned earlier, urging is generally (but not exclusively) applied by those companies that sell their product directly to people, and consequently they have no other channel of persuasion.

The analysis has revealed that more than the half of the American advertisements (thirty-three) provides the readers with the website of the promoted product or service, in contrast to the Hungarian advertisements in which reference to website address is marginal (seven cases). In a few American advertisements, reference to the website was used by copywriters as an excuse for not providing a satisfactory amount of information, and they relied heavily on the readers doing background research. In these cases the role of the advertisement shifted from giving information, to attracting the attention of the readers. It is a typical feature of billboard ads, but has not proved characteristic of print ads so far. This finding suggests that advertising is also a changing genre, where changes are initiated by the widespread usage of the internet in homes (especially in the United States). People are able to search the website of the advertised product or company, and gather further or more detailed information on the product or service promoted.

Finally, I shall close this section with an interesting and culture-specific (at least at the moment) argument that was found in one of the American direct mails, one which intended to persuade readers to apply for a credit card.

**Example 108**

*You will not receive any telemarketing calls from Capital one! (..) (Capital One, ADM/15)*

The utterance implies that telemarketing is annoying (probably because it is so frequent and widespread), and also implies that those who do not apply for the card will get calls.

To sum up, advertising with the promise of not-advertising has now become a separate persuasive strategy.

### **6.6. The connection between Gricean maxims and manipulative strategies**

The results have not only revealed variants of manipulative strategies in the two corpora, but also provide new theoretical insights into the manifestation of the non-observation of the Gricean maxims by highlighting their connection with the manipulative strategies identified. Table 19 shows what kind of manipulative strategies and linguistic tools can manifest violation of the maxims. In addition to it, the table offers examples of their verbal manifestation, taken from the advertisements analyzed.

The maxim of Quality can be violated by the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, *ad verecundiam*, the fallacy of straw man, magnifying an unexpressed premise. Quality has been also violated by the strategy of using false propositions, misrepresenting reality, linguistically and using logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance. The maxim of Quantity has been violated by the strategy of withholding information, by the fallacy of unclarity, by evading the burden of proof and by declaring the standpoint sacrosanct. The fallacy of irrelevant argument, *ad baculum*, *ad misericordiam*, *ad populum* and appeal to the sentiments of the audience violate the maxim of Relation. Finally, the fallacy of unclarity has been found to violate the maxim of Manner.

**Table 19.**  
*The connection between Gricean maxims and manipulative strategies*

<b>Maxim</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Verbal realization</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Quality</b>  <i>1. Don't say what you believe to be false.</i>  <i>2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence</i>	Using false propositions	Declarative mood, present tense, hyperbole	78, 88, 91, 92, 93
	Misrepresentation of reality	E.g. <i>hurry, call today; we mothers</i>	79
	Fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc / raising unfounded hope = false promise	Sentence structure: if you use/try X, then Y <i>will</i> happen. Reference to future	68, 76, 77, 99
	Linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance	Presuppositional tools	50, 104, 105
	Ad verecundiam	Name of a famous man	108
	Magnifying an unexpressed premise	Content based	85
	Straw man fallacy	Content based	89
<b>Quantity</b>  <i>1. Make your contribution as informative as it is required (for the current purpose of the exchange).</i>  <i>2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.</i>	Withholding information	Omission	102
	Fallacy of unclarity	Vague expressions	82
	Evading the burden of proof	Omission of arguments	18
	Declaring a standpoint sacrosanct	E.g. <i>it is not a question</i>	65
<b>Relation</b>  <i>Be relevant</i>	Fallacy of irrelevant argument	Content based	84, 106
	Fallacy of ad baculum	Sentence structure: if you don't do X, Y will happen.	75
	Fallacy of ad misericordiam	E.g. <i>poor, weak, ill</i>	76
	Fallacy of ad populum	E.g. <i>everybody, popular</i>	73, 74
	Fallacy of appeal to the sentiments of the audience	E.g. <i>we'd hate to lose you</i>	55, 69, 72, 94, 96
<b>Manner</b>  <i>1. Avoid obscurity of expression.</i> <i>2. Avoid ambiguity.</i> <i>3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).</i> <i>4. Be orderly</i>	Fallacy of unclarity	Unusual vocabulary, technical words, e.g. <i>intelligent shaving, optimal, guaranteed chance</i>	81, 82, Figure 5.

## 6.7. Limitations of the study

As the present exploratory study is based on a relatively small-scale empirical investigation, the aim of which is to generate questions to be further researched, it necessarily has its limitations and shortcomings. Two types of limitation will be discussed here, one that originates from the analytical tool and the analysis, the other deriving from the sampling procedure.

Although the Manipulation Screener has proved to be a productive tool for revealing variants of the manipulative strategies in the present investigation, it has its limitations as well. Some of the categories of the analytical tool are not perfectly disjunct, which means that overlaps between the categories can occur. First, the application of the taxonomy of fallacies (Eemeren et al., 2002) in the analysis raises some questions. Typically, uncertainty has arisen due to the potentially multiple interpretations of utterances that appeal to emotions. As noted among the analytical decisions (5.5.3), an utterance that appeals to the sentiments of the audience could be interpreted as a fallacy of irrelevance. By the same token, the fallacy of *ad misericordiam* (appeal to pity) is also irrelevant from the point of view of the conclusion. Appealing to the sentiments of the audience often co-occurs with the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Finally, the evading of the burden of proof can overlap with the fallacy of *ad populum*, because the communicator might support his conclusion only by claiming that the product advertised is well-known and popular (6.2.2).

A further limitation of the analytical tool is related to the category of falsity. Without outlining clear analytical decisions and refined definitions of the fallacies, the coding of this category is not entirely reliable because the fallacies of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, and of the unfair use of presuppositions, can also be judged as instances of falsity. The



cause of this overlap is due to the fact that the analytical tool, the Manipulation Screener, is originally a theory-driven tool, and its categories i.e. the manipulative strategies outlined have been established on the basis of theoretical considerations, out of which detectability has been chosen as the governing principle. In theory, and in context-free, fabricated sentences that have been offered by the literature, the above mentioned categories are clearly disjunct and separable. However, the analysis of the 120 advertisements has proved that the separation of the fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc, and the misrepresentation of reality are not always unambiguous. In order to minimize mismatching of coding, and increase the reliability of the analysis, the difference between the two categories was determined by the presence of linguistic features (see Table 19.). A collection of a large number of linguistic markings for each manipulative strategy, including lexical signaling or syntactic features, would be of great help to eliminate coding difficulties. Unfortunately, this task is beyond the scope of the present investigation, but would be a fascinating and challenging project for research groups.

Since the present analysis examined only the unfair use of presuppositions of the manipulative strategy of ‘using linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance’ that can be otherwise manifested by many other ways, as suggested by the literature, it would be reasonable to treat the unfair use of presuppositions not as a separate strategy, but as a manifestation of falsity. This would make a future analysis more manageable.

Finally, the difficulty of detecting withholding and false proposition(s) has to be mentioned. However, with the help of some background research, and incorporating expert opinions, many of the suspicious utterances can be clarified.

As mentioned above, the limited selection of linguistic marking for each manipulative strategy (except for presuppositions) was counterbalanced by the outlining of a precise list of analytical decisions to avoid incorrect coding and increase the reliability of the analysis. Still, there is the possibility of plausibility judgments and multiple interpretations as well. The analyst works from the product, and as in the case of human language use, one utterance can manifest more than one type of speech act, and can provoke more than one interpretation. Introducing more than one co-coder would certainly contribute to increasing the reliability of the analysis.

One might claim that the present study is based on a paradox, since it aims to detect the undetectable. However, this claim can be partly refuted by the fact that the researcher has a different attitude to advertisements than average readers. Moreover, the analyst possesses time and a method which enables her to examine every single utterance thoroughly and critically.

In future, research on the manipulative strategies of the advertising genre, and think-aloud protocols from copywriters, could provide the researchers with useful information on the process of the creation of the body copy, and thus may increase the validity of such investigations.

The second type of limitation originates from the sampling. No matter how carefully the Hungarian corpus was built, the sampling can still be criticized for being biased, because the majority of the advertisements was collected by the researcher who, being a woman and a mother, obviously came by more “feminine” advertisements, such as cosmetic or baby products. In this respect, the American corpus represents the other side, since the leaflets and direct mail were collected by two men.

## 6.8. Summary

This chapter has presented the discussion of the results of the analysis of 120 advertisements selected especially for the purpose of detecting the variants of manipulative strategies. Out of the five types of manipulative strategies outlined in Chapter 4, four have been detected, no example has been found for the strategy of informing the intended addressee without communicative intention. Argumentation fallacies (weak manipulation) have been proved to be the most frequently applied manipulative strategy in both corpora, nevertheless, this finding must be modified and reinterpreted if every fallacy listed in Eemeren's (2002) taxonomy is treated as a separate strategy. In this sense, the results are as follows. Both in the Hungarian and in the American corpus the top three most frequently applied manipulative strategies are the appeal to the sentiments of the audience, false causal relation and false facts/misrepresentation of reality. Both corpora contain a large number (159 in the Hungarian vs. 105 in the American corpus) and variety (15 vs. 12 kinds) of manipulative strategies, out of which a few display variants as well. For example, the fallacy of appeal to the sentiments of the audience has been manifested by appealing to vanity, freedom, sex, past, and uniqueness. This type of fallacy often co-occurred with the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. The number of similarities between the two corpora regarding manipulative strategy use is explained by the fact that advertising is becoming an international genre, moreover the Anglo-American advertising industry serves as a role model for Hungarian advertising agencies. Besides the similarities, the chapter has presented several cultural differences, for example, the heavy use of urging applied by American marketers, their emphasis on saving and discounts, and their (over)polite tone used to promote services.

Finally, the chapter has raised a novel insight regarding the connection between Gricean maxims and manipulative strategies. It has been argued that the four maxims of Quality, Quantity, Relation and Manner can be violated by using different manipulative strategies. Several examples have been offered as the verbal realization for each type of violation, with and without the context in which they occur.

## **Chapter 7. Pedagogical implications**

### **7.1. Setting the scene**

In this chapter let us move from description to practice, and discuss the pedagogical implications of the present study. First, it is argued that the proposed analytical tool and the analysis itself can be used first and foremost as a teaching aid to develop students' critical thinking (CT) and critical reading (CR) skills, which are practically missing assets of Hungarian education. Second, the results of the investigation can be exploited in teaching argumentation skills (both in native and in foreign language) by pointing out the differences between fallacious and non-fallacious arguments. The examples that were brought to illustrate each fallacy and their variants can also be used as a resource of real-life examples. Finally, the analysis of advertisements can contribute to media pedagogy (i.e. critical literacy), which is becoming an important new asset in education.

Furthermore, the chapter argues that one of the most realizable possibilities of introducing this critical approach to advertising discourse is the context of foreign language teaching especially in tertiary education. The task for instructors is challenging and important at the same time because students in the twenty-first century have to be empowered with the ability to reason skillfully and to detect undesirable discursive practices, such as manipulation wherever it occurs in the society.

## **7.2. Contributing to developing critical thinking and critical reading skills**

Since manipulation is not a desirable communicative/discursive practice in modern democratic societies, students, should be helped as early as possible to be able to develop the skills that are indispensable for becoming critical thinkers. As one of the most noted critical discourse analyst, Paul Chilton claims one way to acquire the techniques of critical introspection is through education (2002, p. 14). Since there is no such class as ‘critical thinking’ or ‘critical reading’ in the Hungarian education system, ways have to be found for implementing the concept into the classroom. Before offering three ways for implementation, the notion of CT and CR will be reviewed in short.

### **7.2.1. Defining and discussing critical thinking**

Critical thinking is a pervasive and purposeful phenomenon, and it is considered to be one of the major goals of education in a democratic society. Its definitions vary in breadth and inclusiveness. Patric (1986) offers a good summary of the abundance of definitions:

Broad definitions equate critical thinking with the cognitive processes and strategies involved in decision making, problem solving, or inquiry. Limited definitions focus on evaluation or appraisal; critical thinking is formulation and use of criteria to make warranted judgments about knowledge claims, normative statements, methods of inquiry, policy decisions, alternative positions on public issues, or any other object of concern. Critical thinking, defined narrowly, is an essential element of general cognitive processes, such as problem solving or decision making, but is not synonymous with them.

All the definitions available in literature agree that critical thinking implies reflection, skepticism, and rationality. Reflection in this context refers to the metacognitive nature of the critical thinking process; where a person is aware of his or her own thinking as specific tasks are performed and then uses this awareness to control what he or she is

doing (Jones & Ratcliff, 1993). In other words, critical thinking is thinking that assesses itself.

### **7.2.2. Defining and discussing critical reading**

Both linguistics and education have addressed the problem of how to reach the highest level of discourse comprehension. Within the confines of linguistics it was Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which started to focus on the detection of underlying contents with the aim of revealing hidden intentions of the communicator and thus proving social injustice. With similar objectives like CDA, the concepts of critical reading and critical thinking were introduced within education (first in the Anglo-American culture) to identify the communicator's perspective, recognize the author's purpose, his/her bias and to understand the tone and persuasive elements by analyzing evidence of the argumentation. Although the aim of accomplishing the highest level of discourse comprehension is the same both for CDA and critical reading and writing, the methods of reaching their goals are different.

Critical reading and critical thinking are closely linked phenomena: critical thinking is always based upon critical reading. The process of critical reading involves two major phases: 1. analysis (of content, language and structure); and 2. inference (drawn from the analysis) (Kurland, 1995). Inference in the reading process is the recognition by critical readers of not only *what* the given discourse says but also what it implies as well as *how* it discusses the subject matter. A similar approach has been proposed by Alderson (2000), who distinguishes three levels of understanding: understanding the literal meaning; the implied or inferred meaning; and the critical evaluation of the text. The first and the second levels in Alderson's model correspond to the concept of critical reading, whereas the third requires critical thinking. This model is similar to Gray's (1960 cited in Loch, 2006, p. 48) well-known categories of 'reading the lines', 'reading

between the lines’, and ‘reading beyond the lines’. Reading the lines refers to understanding pieces of information and information about relationships (such as cause and effect) that are explicitly stated in a text (literal meaning). Reading between the lines refers to information that is not directly stated, but can be easily inferred by using textual, contextual, and shared background cues.

The tripartite approaches have been complemented with a fourth asset by A. Jászó (2004, p. 474), who regards ‘creative reading’ as the highest level of reading comprehension when reading literature. It involves the readers’ active reflection or ‘answer to the discourse’ i.e. continue the story. The developing of creative reading is the primary aim of literature classes. In order to see the similarities and the differences of the above discussed four models, a table was created.

**Table 20.**  
*Three models of reading and comprehension*

<b>Types of reading</b> (Gray, 1960)	<b>Levels of understanding</b> (Alderson, 2000)	<b>Types of reading</b> (A. Jászó, 2004)	<b>Readers at this level:</b>
reading the lines	Understanding the literal meaning	Literal reading	identify the explicit information (facts, data).
reading between the lines	Understanding the implied or inferred meaning	Interpretative reading	understand e.g. implicatures, presuppositions, metaphors.
reading beyond the lines	The critical evaluation of the text	Critical reading	draw conclusions, evaluate the communicator’s intention(s), raise questions/suspicion.
		Creative reading	‘respond’ to the text.

It becomes clear from the previous table that critical reading is preceded by the understanding of the implied or inferred meaning. This requires practice from students



and carefully designed reading comprehension tests. While novice readers tend to take the text at face value, essentially read for content and naively accept that what they are reading is some kind of unmediated truth. On the other hand, experienced readers are very conscious of the author, of his or her purpose in writing the text, his or her ideological perspective, what the author has included and excluded from the text. The experienced readers bring their own agenda consciously to the reading; by being aware of their purpose in reading the text. Critical readers bring their own knowledge (or lack of it), and their own experiences to the reading (Greenwald, et al., 1992, pp. 31-33).

There has been a long tradition of incorporating the developing of critical thinking and critical reading skill into the educational curriculum in the United States. As mentioned above, there are even free test available on Internet to measure one's CT and CR skills (for example, [www.us.oup.com/us/companion.websites/0195161424/studentresources/test/?view=usa](http://www.us.oup.com/us/companion.websites/0195161424/studentresources/test/?view=usa)). CT and CR are mainly developed by teaching reasoning skills in primary (Knudson, 1992, 1994), secondary (Yeh, 1998), and tertiary (Varghese & Abraham, 1998) education (Tankó, 2005). In contrast with this practice, the concept of CT and CR are relatively unknown in Hungary despite the fact that CT has recently become an obligatory component of the Hungarian National Curriculum, indeed the creation of an advertisement as a task was given to student in the Hungarian School-leaving Exam. In sum, it is clear that while in theory the importance of CT has been discussed in the Hungarian pedagogical literature, in practice it has not been incorporated systematically into teaching, yet (Hunya, 2002).<sup>7</sup> The discrepancy is attributable in part to the lack of reading classes in Hungarian after the fourth grade; by

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<sup>7</sup> One of the few successful attempts was the adoption of the American 'Debate contests' (called 'Disputa' in Hungary) in 1994, which is practiced as an afternoon elective in some schools. The practice of debating in the classroom used to be a common element in the Reform era in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. Hungary.

giving mostly stylistic analyses of various literary texts in Hungarian classes, critical reading cannot be properly developed. In higher grades reading activities, as such, are used only in foreign language teaching.

In order to familiarize Hungarian educators with the practice of implementing CT, seven teacher trainers were trained in the RWCT (Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking) project between 1998-2000. One of the major goals of the project was to help educators reshape classroom instruction with a coherent set of teaching methods that promote critical thinking and independent learning (Meredith, et al., 1997, p. 2). Although, the first steps have been taken, there is still a long way until the concepts become the part of everyday teaching practice. Until then, it is the task of the language teachers to include activities in their reading classes that could develop their students' critical reading.

Critical thinking and reading is desirable not only as a value in itself, but because there is a strong need for both, especially in tertiary education. Universities place new demands on student reading, demands for which students are often not prepared. Many students approach their reading in a way that was appropriate for the purposes emphasized in secondary school, and is still promoted in many university courses: read-to-write-exams. This conception of the reading process leads students to see the objective of their reading as being to remember everything they read, so that each idea, indeed each sentence, is seen as having equal value. Therefore, they do not or cannot differentiate among evidence, argument, claims, purpose, illustration and explanation, let alone the establishment of a hierarchical relationship among these various elements in the texts they read. Thus, students should be taught to read for argument not only for content and to make them understand that the key comprehension objective in most of

their reading is not to memorize every piece of information, but to find the major thesis of the text, and to identify the main supporting evidence given for that argument. (Greenwald, et al., 1992, pp. 31-33) Instructors of reading skills either in native or in foreign language should provide students with techniques which help them to learn how to react critically to texts. Critical reading can and should be done on all text types, from advertisements to political essays.

Such techniques can involve, for example (Vaughn, 2004):

- Distinguishing between statements and nonstatements.
- Understanding the basic concepts of reasons, argument, inference, premises, and conclusion.
- Distinguishing between passages that do and do not contain an argument.
- Identifying arguments in various contexts and distinguish between arguments and superfluous material, arguments and explanations, and premises and conclusion.
- Knowing how to uncover implicit premises.
- Memorizing and being able to recognize the argument patterns
- Identifying irrelevant (e.g. appeal to emotion, ad populum) and unacceptable premises (e.g. hasty generalization, circular reasoning)

It becomes clear from this list that the development of CT and CR are strongly built on rhetoric and logic. In a similar vein, concerning the notion of manipulation, Chilton (2002, p. 14) arrives at the same conclusion. He notes that manipulation will not be successful if receivers evolve and hone their checking devices. He goes on to argue that the problem is that currently the development of innate abilities, including critical abilities, is thrust into the background in education. The only subject where there is a possibility to call attention to the operations of verbal manipulation is teaching of rhetoric. One might interpret the above written claims as a proclamation for ‘rehabilitating’ rhetoric and logic (here I primarily mean informal logic).

Let us summarize by means of the following table to what extent students can be taught to detect the manipulative strategies that were outlined in the present study.

**Table 21.**  
*Likelihood of detecting manipulative strategies*

Type of manipulative strategy	Likelihood of detection
Withholding certain proposition(s)	- Low, thorough background knowledge is required. - Raising critical questions can be taught.
Information transmission with manipulative intention and without communicative intention	- Low. - The notion itself can be explained.
Using linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance	- Low in non-persuasive discourse. - Possible in persuasive discourse. Examples can be shown to presuppositions.
Using fallacious argumentation	- Possible. - Argumentation fallacies can be taught and practiced.
Using false proposition(s)	- Low or possible depending on genres. - Raising critical questions can be taught.

It is clearly apparent that the most promising strategy from the point of view of detection is the use of fallacious argumentation. That could serve as a starting point for mapping strategies that are not acceptable in fair conviction. In the case of the other strategies, the major aim is to raise awareness of students concerning the need for checking (and doubting) the truthfulness of the discourse.

### **7.3. Implementing the critical analysis of advertisements in foreign language classrooms**

Advertisements have already been widely used in education, mostly in the foreign language teaching context (in course books, in reading classes) because they are authentic materials, up-to-date, easily accessible, and the genre is well-known both for teachers and students. However, the ad-based exercises focus only on the linguistic, visual and sometimes cultural aspects of the advertisements (Picken, 1999) and the full potential offered by the genre itself, i.e. to analyze the influencing mechanisms and strategies systematically and critically, has not been exploited yet. Cook (1992) in his

book on advertising notes that using advertisements in the classroom has proved to be very motivating but at the same time contradictory for students.

I have invariably found, while teaching, that the words and details of ads come to students' minds more readily than those of novels and poems and plays, and that they are often recalled with more laughter and enthusiasm. Yet enjoyment frequently causes unease, and it is often denied. With other discourses we usually know where our loyalties lie; with ads we are just confused.

(Cook, 1992, p. xv)

As a teacher of English and Hungarian as a foreign language, I have often employed advertisements in my classes and have experienced similar reactions of the students as Cook wrote about. The explanation for their motivation I have found was that advertising can tell students a good deal about a foreign society and moreover, about their own psychology as well. Developing CT and CR with the help of the analysis of advertisements can be implemented primarily in reading classes but TV advertisements, on the other hand, offer excellent occasion for critical analysis in listening skill classes. Written ads can also be used as a clue for writing tasks and can be applied in pre-writing activities to evaluate and comment on the quality and soundness of the arguments.

#### **7.4. Contributing to media pedagogy**

Media pedagogy is a novel asset and a new direction in Hungarian education. Its content and methods are mostly implemented from Anglo-American culture. The basic objective of media literacy education is to enable students to control the influence that various media have on them. It includes knowledge of different media services, the ability to appraise critically, and assess the relative value of information from different sources, and gain competencies in understanding the construction, forms, strengths and limitations of screen based content.

Besides the aforementioned advantages of analyzing print advertisements for the purpose of developing critical reading skills, TV advertisements offer perfect opportunities to develop critical viewing skills. Admittedly, working with TV advertisements in the classroom is a more complex task than working with printed materials, since it not only requires technical equipment but also the careful design of task sheets that should focus on the verbal and the visual elements/effects as well. According to the Media Literacy Statement (2001) developing critical viewing skills will become more important as new technology (digital TV) allows viewers to skip advertisements, forcing advertisers to respond with new ways of placing and advertising their products within and between a wider variety of media. With an increased awareness of the importance of media, the British Government has taken steps towards the promotion of structured learning programs and free information packages and teaching materials.

In Hungary it is the so called “*mediatudor*” (mediasmart) program ([www.mediatudor.hu](http://www.mediatudor.hu)), released in 2007, which aims to foster the development of media literacy and help pupils to understand and interpret advertising, so that they are able to make informed choices. The program, which was designed for primary school children aged 6-11 years old, offers free in-school teaching pack and video materials for teachers and parents leaflets ([http://www.mediasmart.org.uk/media\\_smart/what\\_it\\_will\\_achieve.html](http://www.mediasmart.org.uk/media_smart/what_it_will_achieve.html)).

### **7.5. Summary**

This chapter discussed the pedagogical implication of the analysis of written advertisements with the help of the proposed analytical tool. It was argued that the analysis can contribute to the training of students to think critically within the context of primarily foreign language reading and writing classes, however, the recently

implemented program of media literacy pays special attention to teaching young pupils and students to interpret advertisements critically. It is crucial, since advertisements are much more than mere mechanisms for selling products they are cultural artifacts. They strongly form tastes, consciousness and as a result culture.

The most important educational merits of the systematic analysis of influencing (persuasive and manipulative) discourses can be summarized as follows:

- The systematic analysis of such discourses can raise the awareness of students and sensitize them to incorrect discursive practices such as manipulation.
- The explicit teaching of persuasive and manipulative strategies can empower students to detect the manipulative strategies of the communicator.
- The analysis focuses students' attention on the difference between fallacious and non-fallacious argumentation and thus can improve their quality of argumentation skills both in speaking and writing.
- Becoming conscious of the underlying psychological content (such as hidden needs) of persuasive and manipulative discourse fosters individuals' autognosis.
- Focusing attention on the linguistic tools that realize the communicator's strategies can help identify structural and stylistic differences between English and Hungarian language.
- In sum, the analysis promotes the development of the highest level of discourse comprehension, i.e. critical reading and critical thinking.

## **Chapter 8. Conclusion**

In this concluding chapter, I will summarize the main points of the study, and offer suggestions which are hoped to generate further thinking and research. It is apparent that this study on Hungarian and American manipulative advertisements has raised more questions than it has been able to propose answers to. This is, however, exactly what we would expect of an investigation which takes on a relatively unworked area, and which insists that real life examples, with all their idiosyncracies, should form the basis of the description of manipulation wherever possible.

### **8.1. The summary of the dissertation**

The major aim of this study was to examine verbal manipulation in theory and practice. Prior to the investigation, six research questions were formulated and distributed into three groups in order to reflect the threefold perspective — theoretical, empirical and pedagogical — of the study.

First, the theoretical perspective focused on the description of manipulative interactions and mapped out five types of manipulative strategies on the basis of the theoretical insights and empirical research results of social psychology, critical discourse analysis, rhetoric, and pragmatics. The strategies are as follows: (1) using information transition with a manipulative intention and without communicative intention; (2) withholding certain propositions; (3) using linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance; (4) using fallacious argumentation and, (5) using false proposition(s).



Within the confines of pragmatics, it was the Gricean Cooperation Principle with its maxims and Relevance theory, which provided solid frameworks for the explicit separation of persuasion and manipulation. In Gricean sense, manipulation is non-cooperation, which can be manifested by the violation and occasionally by the flouting of the conversational maxims. In Relevance theory, manipulative interactions can be evaluated as forms of non-communication.

The working definition of manipulation used in the present study treats manipulative intention as an obligatory element of manipulation, which also suggests that linguistic elements are never inherently manipulative.

It was also concluded that manipulation can be embedded in a persuasive and in non-persuasive discourse as well. In the former case, persuasive and manipulative strategies are both present, thus make the audience activate their persuasion knowledge, which raises the likelihood of the detection of manipulation. This was labeled by the author as weak manipulation. As opposed to this, in the latter case, no influencing intention can be found. Consequently, the audience has no chance of detecting manipulation. This was called strong manipulation.

As regard to manipulative language use, certain verbs, nouns, presuppositional structures with false presuppositions, thematic roles, and structuring information were found to be able to trigger manipulation.

The study introduced the development and refinement of the analytical tool, the so-called Manipulation Screener, which offers a language-independent tool to capture the richness of manipulative strategies in written advertising discourse. Besides the advantages of the analytical tool, its deficiencies were discussed in detail, including the

difficulty of detecting withholding and checking falsity and the overlap problems of argumentation fallacies.

The second perspective of the study involved the empirical investigation of sixty Hungarian and sixty American written advertisements. The analysis aimed at revealing variants of the manipulative strategies outlined. Chapter 5 offered a detailed description of the steps that had been taken during the procedure of analysis from random sampling and corpora building to co-coder training. In order to ensure the intercoder reliability of the analysis, several measures were taken including training a co-coder, task-familiarization, refining the definitions for each manipulative strategy, conducting a pre-coding harmonization session, and preparing a list of analytical decisions. Intra-coder reliability was ensured by re-analyzing fifteen advertisements from both corpora, with a period of four months between the two procedures.

The results of the analysis revealed several similarities between the two corpora. Both in the Hungarian and in the American corpus the top three most frequently applied manipulative strategies were the appeal to the sentiments of the audience, false causal relation and false facts/misrepresentation of reality. Both corpora contained a large number (159 in the Hungarian vs. 105 in the American corpus) and similar variety of manipulative strategies, out of which appealing to the sentiments of the audience, displayed variants (i.e. subtype of a fallacy), such as appealing to vanity, freedom, sex, past, and uniqueness in both corpora. This type of fallacy often co-occurred with the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. A recurring variant of the strategy of misrepresentation of reality was often manifested by urging, whereas irrelevant arguments were manifested in several advertisements by promising a gift upon purchase. Visual arguments (pictures, diagrams, charts) of the advertisements were also

analyzed and were evaluated manipulative if they were irrelevant or implied an unfounded hope.

Besides the above mentioned similarities, the comparison of the two corpora revealed a few cultural differences as well. Direct reference to money and savings was found more often in the American corpus than in the Hungarian. This influencing strategy was judged manipulative only if it was used in a misleading way. Similarly, American advertisements employed the strategy of urging more often than the Hungarians, sometimes in a manipulative way, meaning that no reason (such as date of expiry) was offered to support the urging. Reference to website was very common in the American corpus and rare in the Hungarian.

The analysis also revealed novel theoretical insights regarding the connection between Gricean maxims and manipulative strategies. The maxim of Quality was violated by the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, *ad verecundiam*, the fallacy of straw man, magnifying an unexpressed premise. Quality was also violated by the strategy of using false propositions, misrepresenting reality, linguistically and using logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance. The maxim of Quantity was violated by the strategy of withholding information, by the fallacy of unclarity, by evading the burden of proof and by declaring the standpoint sacrosanct. The fallacy of irrelevant argument, *ad baculum*, *ad misericordiam*, *ad populum* and appeal to the sentiments of the audience violated the maxim of Relation. Finally, the fallacy of unclarity was found to violate the maxim of Manner.

The third perspective of the present study focused on the pedagogical implications. It was argued that the Manipulation Screener and the analysis itself can be used first and foremost as a teaching aid to develop students' critical thinking (CT) and critical reading

(CR) skills, which are practically missing assets in Hungarian education. Moreover, the results of the investigation can be exploited in teaching argumentation skills (both in native and in foreign language) by pointing out the differences between fallacious and non-fallacious arguments. The examples that were brought to illustrate each fallacy and their variants can also be used as a resource for real-life examples. Finally, the analysis of advertisements can contribute to media pedagogy (i.e. critical literacy), which is becoming an important new asset in education. The systematic critical analysis of advertising discourse can raise awareness of students and sensitize them to incorrect discursive practices such as manipulation. It is argued that the explicit teaching of persuasive and manipulative strategies can empower students to detect the (weak) manipulative strategies of the communicator.

Finally, let us summarize, in chronological order, what kind of steps were involved during the research process.

**Table 22.**  
*Procedures of analysis*

<b>Order</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
1.	Reviewing the literature on manipulation and persuasion
2.	Defining manipulation
3.	Outlining five manipulative strategies
4.	Creating an analytical tool for the detection of manipulation in advertisements
5.	Collecting Hungarian and American advertisements
6.	Building a parallel corpus
7.	Conducting a pilot analysis
8.	Refining the analytical tool
9.	Training a co-coder
10.	Conducting a harmonization session
11.	Outlining analytical decisions
12.	Analyzing the 120 advertisements
13.	Comparing the results of the analysis of the coders
14.	Finalizing the results
15.	Comparing the results of the Hungarian and the American Corpus
16.	Reanalyzing thirty advertisements to ensure intra-coder reliability
17.	Articulating pedagogical implications

This study has offered important contributions to (a) pragmatics in general, by providing a deeper understanding of how manipulation works, (b) Relevance theory, by highlighting that information transmission and communication can be used for manipulation, (c) Argumentation theory, by revealing problems with the classification of argumentation fallacies, (d) Gricean pragmatics, by exploring ways of violating the maxims, (e) discourse analysis, by developing an analytical tool for the specific purpose of investigating manipulation in advertisements; (f) genre studies, by revealing the manipulative strategies of Hungarian and American advertisements, and (g) language pedagogy, by proposing ways to apply the analysis of advertisements for developing critical reading and critical thinking skills.

## **8.2. Call for further research**

This study has tackled the broad topic of manipulation which is a fruitful area of language study and language pedagogy with considerable potential for further work. To conclude, then, a few suggestions are hereby presented for further investigation. The first major area for further investigation is the exploration of the connection between the type of manipulative strategies and product/service type, or the length of the advertisements. The manipulative strategies of other types of advertisements, such as TV, radio, and billboard could be also analyzed and compared to the results of the present study.

The second area touches upon the violation of maxims in advertisements, specifically the violation of politeness (Leech, 1983), to complement the research described here on the four Gricean maxims. It would be interesting to examine whether the violation of any of the politeness maxims manifest manipulation. The inclusion of this new aspect

could offer a more precise explanation of why certain psychological mechanisms are successful in advertising.

The third area of investigation could be corpus linguistics. A computerized corpus might help in identifying the quantifiable variables of manipulative strategies such as presuppositions. Further research might identify which linguistic elements accompany each manipulative strategy. However, it should be remembered that the analysis is highly context-dependent, and as such the role of the analyst will always remain important.

Finally, further research is needed regarding the manipulative strategy of using linguistically and logically correct elements that force an unconditional acceptance. Within this strategy there are linguistic tools and structuring strategies that the present study has not dealt with, many that occur in politics or mass media, such as selecting issues for the news in order to encourage preferred interpretations and that are consistent with the interests of elite groups (Fowler, 1991).

It is hoped that the dissertation can become a source of inspiration for further research, and thus, can contribute to our understanding of how manipulation works in advertisements and how students can be trained to read them critically.

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## **Appendices**

- Appendix A Interview schedule with the copywriters
- Appendix B Odorono advertisement
- Appendix C Kinder milkbar advertisement (HM/7)
- Appendix D Voltaren advertisement (HL/14)
- Appendix E Visa card advertisement (HL/5)
- Appendix F Philishave advertisement (HM/5)
- Appendix G Bonolact advertisement (HM/2)
- Appendix H Bilobil advertisement (HM/4)
- Appendix I Meels on wheels charity advertisement (ADM/3)
- Appendix J Elizabeth Arden advertisement (AM/17)
- Appendix K Hypnosos advertisement (AM/11)
- Appendix L Milk advertisement (AM/19)