# Investigation Report on the Language of Propaganda

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## The Use of the Language of Propaganda in Political Posturing

## Introduction

Language is a very powerful tool for communicating ideas with other people or presenting one’s argument. Generally, language is used for different kinds of reasons, but to express one’s ideas effectively requires a close look at the intended message or the motive behind the message. Language can be used both with an honest intention, but also to deceive or mislead. Propaganda is a form of language techniques used in various platforms including political posturing, manipulation of advertisements, bias of war propaganda, and the propaganda of fear. Politicians use language in a variety of ways; to not only argue with their opponents, but also convince their audience. Political speech, slogans, articles and videos often try to convince and or even persuade an audience to believe in the message, mainly characterized by a propaganda involved, because politicians formulate their argumentative messages with a real motive behind their articles, slogans of speech.

## Question 1: To what extent do language techniques manipulate the reader/viewer into believing a political message?

Language is used as a mind control device that influences the action of the audience through the use of some specific vocabulary and appeal to emotions. The purpose of George Orwell’s "1984" is demonstrate to the London people about their loss of privacy. The manipulation of the language and historical records shows the people that there is no freedom in London as the low class people are not open to expressing themselves due to the control of the upper class. Similarly, Moore and Khan (1998) article in the Washington post quoted the Iranian Foreign Minister’s speech where he used the language technique of propaganda with intentions of playing off the belief that people tend to identify more with people who share the same idea, values and beliefs. The fact that the quote "From all over the world, Muslims are happy that Pakistan has this capability," was used at the beginning of the article demonstrates the presence of propagandist intentions. Moreover, in his speech, Tony Blair uses strong words to demonstrate the need for urgent and important continuation of the war. Words such ‘revelation’ and phrases such as “this is a declaration of war,” Blair convinces the Britons to defend the Iraq war by getting them to accept his propagandist ideology.

## Question 2: How to politicians shape the language of their message in political speeches, slogans, and articles?

Politicians shape their message in a way that it derives the most effective emotional appeal to the people. Even when it is impossible to communicate complex emotions, they would resort to using tele-screens to revise a message with an already established connection with the people as in George Orwell’s "1984" novel. The same case is noted in Donald Trump’s campaign slogan “Let’s Make America Great Again. The message printed on the caps he and his supporters wore during the campaign was a propagandist message meant to emphasize his campaign agenda of returning jobs from China to America. The use of a video of where the caps were made in South California shows how much he supports ‘made in America,’ thereby convincing people that he has the capability of returning the jobs back to America. Moreover, “Citizens Against Government Waste Ad” is an effective propagandist message that aims at persuading the Americans to stop the government from excessive spending that results in bankrupting of America. The professor in the video remarks to his students using an emotional appeal, "Why do great nations fail?... turning their back on the principles that made them great." This message is very strong to the Americans to imagine that the American nation could fall due to excessive government spending during the recovery from recession.

## Question 3: How does the purpose of the text shape the medium and structure used?

In politics, the speeches, slogans, articles and even videos used have an explicit purpose, hence the message of primarily well formulated with the medium, structure and words used being carefully selected specifically to suit certain situations. The use of different media in Trump’s campaign such as videos, social media and caps was geared towards ensuring that the American people were emotionally appealed to return to the days when America was a super power with many jobs available for all and achieving the American dream was a great possibility. For instance, the video of the factory in South California making the caps sends positive responses as there is clear evidence of what his administration is capable of doing upon getting to office. The dominating telescreens in George Orwell's “1984” also show the important of media and structure selection for effective dissemination of the message. Given that the people of Oceania know that they are being watched (due to lack of privacy), they are forced to show a happy, contented face lest they be labelled troublemakers. As such, the use of telescreens and videos in “1984” and Trump’s campaign demonstrate how media is selected for purposes of evoking propagandist intentions of inciting fear and prejudice.

### Conclusion

One conclusion that can be drawn from "1984"” by George Orwell, Moore and Khan’ article, Citizens Against Government Waste Ad, Tony Blair’s political speech and Trump’s slogan of “Make America Great Again” is that all of them have an element of propaganda involved in the describing their message to their audience. Moreover, they demonstrate that the choice of the language, media and structure of conveying the message are mainly determined by the propagandist intentions of persuading the audience to agree to their ideologies of make arguments against their political opponents. The reviewed texts, and videos demonstrate that politicians are aware of the various expressions and choices of words that they can use to influence people the most. It is also worth noting that it is challenging to separate persuasion from propaganda as both are closely tied together in political posturing.

Reference List

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