



ISSN: 1817-6798 (Print)

Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

available online at: <http://www.jtuh.tu.edu.iq>
**JTUH**  
 مجلة جامعة تكريت للعلوم الانسانية  
 Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

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**Keywords:**
 deception  
 propaganda  
 rhetorical pragmatics  
 deceptive strategies and interviews
**ARTICLE INFO****Article history:**
 Received 4 Oct. 2020  
 Accepted 28 Oct 2020  
 Available online 26 Nov 2020
**E-mail**
[journal.of.tikrit.university.of.humanities@tu.edu.iq](mailto:journal.of.tikrit.university.of.humanities@tu.edu.iq)

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**Deception in American Propaganda:  
A Pragma-Rhetorical Perspective**  
**A B S T R A C T**

This paper is intended to explore deception in American Propaganda. Seemingly, this concept, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, has not received enough conceptualization as far as rhetorical pragmatics is concerned. This study tackles the problem of the lack of one-to-one correspondence between the speaker's underlying deceptive intention and the utterance offered.

The present research has the task of giving an overall insight of the theoretical background with regard to the notions of deception, propaganda and rhetorical pragmatics. It aims to manifest the highly exploited pragma-rhetorical strategies in American propaganda.

This work is based on the hypotheses: (1) certain argumentative appeals are more exploited than others in American propaganda, (2) certain pragma-rhetorical tropes are more frequently utilized than others to achieve specific deceptive ends, (3) there are significant differences between American propagandists in employing pragma-rhetorical strategies and (4) all the pragma-rhetorical strategies are exploited by both propagandists.

The data of analysis include two American propagandistic political interviews. These are qualitatively (pragma-rhetorical) and quantitatively (statistical) analysed. The findings prove the validity of the hypotheses: (1), (2) and (3) while (4) is rejected.

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 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.25130/jtuh.27.10.2020.25>
**الخداع في الدعاية الامريكية: منظور تداولي بلاغي**

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**الخلاصة:**

يهدف هذا البحث الى استكشاف الجوانب الخداع في الدعاية الامريكية. وعلى ما يبدو ، فإن هذا المفهوم ، كما يعتقد الباحث ، لم يتلق تصوراً كافياً من ناحية التداولية البلاغية. وتتناول هذه الدراسة مشكلة عدم وجود تطابق كامل بين نية الخداع الحقيقية للمتكلم وقوله. ويرمي البحث الحالي الى إعطاء نظرة شاملة للخلفية النظرية فيما يتعلق الامر بمفاهيم الخداع والدعاية والتداولية البلاغية. ويهدف هذا البحث الى تحديد الاستراتيجيات التداولية البلاغية التي يستغلها المخادعون.

ويعتمد هذا العمل على الفرضيات التالية: (1) يتم استغلال بعض الادوات الجدلية أكثر من

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غيرها في الدعاية الأمريكية ، (2) يتم استخدام بعض المجازات التداولية البلاغية بشكل متكرر أكثر من غيرها لتحقيق غايات خادعة محددة ، (3) هناك اختلافات كبيرة بين قادة الدعاية الأمريكية في استخدام استراتيجيات تداولية بلاغية و (4) يتم استغلال جميع الاستراتيجيات التداولية البلاغية من قبل كلا السياسيين.

تتضمن بيانات التحليل مقابلتين سياسيتين دعائيتين أمريكيتين. يتم تحليلها نوعياً (تداولية بلاغية) وكمياً (إحصائي). تثبت النتائج صحة الفرضيات: (1) ، (2) و (3) بينما (4) تم رفضها.

## 1. Introduction

Despite the widespread prohibitions against perpetrating deception, it is believed that this concept is an everyday occurrence in social and political interactions. In fact, deception plays a key role in propagandistic discourse because the propagandist saves no effort to influence the audience and thereby altering their beliefs and attitudes.

### 1.1 Deception: An Overview

Although communication is basically constituted on truthfulness, insincerity is present in most aspects of our daily lives. Exploring it from a discourse analytic perspective, Galasiński (2000: 20) views deception as manipulation of information defining it as "a communicative act that is intended to induce in the addressee a particular belief, by manipulating the truth and falsity of information". This definition emphasizes the distinction between deception and persuasion. Though both are two forms of manipulation, deception refers to the domain of truth and fact.

On the other hand, Oswald (2014: 99) holds a descriptive view of deception believing that "an utterance is deceptive if it is intentionally used as a means to attain a perlocutionary goal the speaker is covertly pursuing." The researcher adopts Oswald's (2014) conceptualisation as the operational definition since it exhibits deception as having three intrinsic features which are covertness, intentionality, and purposefulness. Besides, it does not restrict deception in fostering a false belief in the target.

### 1.2 Deception and Propaganda

Propaganda is a key concept in political sphere. According to Jowett and O'Donnell (2014: 7), it is defined as "the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist." In this view, propaganda is presented as a form of communicative discourse aimed to convince and influence the audience to have a belief, opinion or attitude advantageous to the propagandist. Hence, it is believed to be a rich genre for deception which is, as

Masip et al. (2004: 148) observe, intended to foster a belief in the target the speaker himself or herself believes to be untrue.

It should be mentioned that scholars are rather ambivalent about the ethical nature of propaganda. Walton (1997: 384) believes that it implies deliberate deceptiveness and manipulation of masses without any rational evidence; instead, it is mostly emotional. This deceptive view is supported by Corner (2007: 673) who claims that the "sense of deceitfulness" lies at the core of propaganda. Originally, it was not negatively treated but this negative meaning is attributed to the opinion-shaping activities of the enemy associated with the word 'propaganda' (Walton, 2013: 4155). Besides, it is one-sided type of discourse intended to alter the beliefs and attitudes of the mass audience (ibid.: 4158). All in all, Miller and Robinson (2019: 974) state that propaganda reflects the significance of deception as a powerful political tool because the truth probably represents a threat to political stability.

In an earlier work, Rubin (1971:83) points out that propaganda is not wholly negative; it has both good and bad directions. Like persuasion, this neutral view hinges on the degree of veracity of evidence and reasoning used (Freeley and Steinberg, 2009: 14). Additionally, it is not itself necessarily evil (Cull, 2003: xv) nor it requires deceptiveness as a prerequisite (Dimaggio, 2008: 23; Robinson, 2017: 50). It follows, in the light of the discussion above, that propaganda is not necessarily negative or dishonest. More precisely, deception is not the only means exploited in propaganda; other devices include misdirection, incentivization and the like (Robinson, 2018: 58).

In short, both deception and propaganda are deliberately persuasive attempts intended to influence the audience to achieve some goals. The former may or may not be used in the latter, i.e. propaganda is not necessarily negative or deceptive activity.

### **1.2.1 Political Interviews as a Facet of Propaganda**

Practically speaking, the political interview is believed to be a good genre for the analyst to better uncover deceptive messages. More specifically, such an encounter can exhibit more deceptive features than the one direction communication because the analyst can judge more effectively to what extent the propagandist has deviated from the truth. Harris (1991: 76) refers that a political interview is considered one of the key sources of propaganda because it represents the medium in which the propagandists can overlook answering some questions, say what they like to say, repeat things that are impertinent to the course of conversation and prolong their answers in such a way that the specific question is downplayed. Absolutely, this political context cannot be taken as a neutral environment for exchanging and transmitting ideas (ibid.).

Propaganda is type of communicative discourse used for communicating certain ideas, beliefs or values for political ends (Macdonald, 2007: 32). Accordingly, it is a form of political discourse (Aydın, 2016: 707) which, as Van Dijk (1997: 23) comments, functions "as a form of political action in the

political process". Additionally, this political discourse is actualized in such communicative contexts such as debates, political interviews, parliamentary sessions, political press conferences and so on (ibid.: 14). More specific, these communicative events are found to be common platforms for propaganda which can be transmitted via mass media such as television, press, radio, internet and social media (Sumanat and Dispanya, 2016: 138).

Although the propagandist tries to convince both the interviewer and the audience (Furo, 2001: 40), the latter does not have any active role in this propagandistic interaction (Clayman and Heritage (2004: 7). However, the propagandist considers the audience rather than the interviewer as the primary addressee (Andone, 2010: 3). Hence, he/she constantly attempts to shape a positive image of him/herself and his/her political institution (ibid.: 7). On the other hand, interviewers attempt to prove their professionalism via raising critical questions (Fetzer and Bull, 2013: 85). Evidently, in political interviews, the politician plays the role of the propagandist since he/she, Furko and Abuzki (2014: 46) assert, aims to "gain favor with the audience, influence their views, beliefs, decisions, and actions" for the benefit of his/her organization.

To summarize, the political interview is considered ideal for deceptive propagandistic analysis because it represents a formally confrontational encounter involving two somehow conflictive extremes: the interviewer and the politician. The latter acts as the propagandist that exploits this event to spread his/her ideas and, thereby, influence the perceptions, cognitions, behaviours and attitudes of the public. Hence, the term 'propagandistic political interview' will be adopted in this study.

### **1.3 Pragma-Rhetorical Deception**

The propagandist strives to affect the audience and thus to persuade them to have some belief or attitude beneficial to him/her. As Martin (2014: 1) confirms, "it is difficult to imagine politics without persuasion". Hence, rhetorical pragmatics forms an integral part to the current study in order to better grasp the propagandist's deceptive intention and to explore his/her persuasive means. The notion of rhetorical pragmatics as an analytical framework results from marrying an ancient discipline with a modern one, namely rhetoric with pragmatics.

The idea of combining two disciplines into one analytic approach has been further demonstrated by Leech (1983). For him (ibid.: 11), certain phenomena are better grasped by means of combining disciplines into one integrative analytical framework. In this way, he identifies sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics as two significant subdivisions of general pragmatics. Pragmatics, he (ibid.: x) states, is "the study of how utterances have meanings in situations"; his conceptualization of pragmatics is based on the premise that communicative practice is typically a problem-solving process. The point to be made here is that he follows a rhetorical approach to the study of pragmatics in

which the speaker tries to attain his goals "within constraints imposed by principles and maxims of 'good communicative behaviour' " (ibid.).

According to Larrazabal and Korta ( 2002: 1), rhetorical pragmatics is devoted to interpret "the intentional phenomena that occur in most communicative uses of language". Here, intentionality is the main pillar upon which Larrazabal and Korta build their approach with the goal of reflecting both the rhetorical and pragmatic perspective behind any communicative practices. Roughly speaking, the intention for persuasion works as a crucial link which combines rhetoric with pragmatics and at the same time distinguishes and combines the speaker's "communicative intention and persuasive intention" (ibid: 7). Viewed from a different angle, Walton (2004: 21) claims that rhetorical pragmatics aims to make a very effective use of language through the employment of rhetorical figures.

John Locke has emphasized the deceptive aspect in rhetorical strategies stating that rhetoric is "that powerful instrument of error and deceit" [cited in Burke, 2016: 2]. Additionally, Aristotle's notion of persuasion to some extent seems to advocate deception (Corner, 2007: 672). Moreover, Finlayson and Martin (2014: 1) comment that, in Plato's conception, rhetoric is considered deceptive because it is almost restricted to the use of those words and expressions that sound pleasing and comply with the desires of the fickle audience. Admittedly, the concept of propaganda has been dealt with under the umbrella of Aristotle's rhetoric " the art of persuading people by the use of symbols" (Hawhee, 2013: 336).

According to Crowley and Hawhee (2004: 278), ancient rhetoricians show careful attention to the unusual use of word arrangements under the notion of style which constitutes a key element of rhetoric embracing the "persuasive or extraordinary uses of language" ;in order to produce stylistically effective speech, students are urged to practice various figures or schemes. In this way, ancient rhetoricians adhere that persuasive style is characterized to manifest four qualities: appropriateness, correctness, clearness and ornament (ibid.: 280). It should be emphasized that the non-literal use of language such as figures of speech is traditionally associated with rhetoric (Danesi, 2016: 142). Here, the goal is to polish speech and provide the audience with attractive, effective and convincing text.

In (1996: 511), Enos reports that Propaganda is institutionally directed to persuade the masses or audience with the help of media. In this line, Rocci (2005: 96 ) points out that persuasion can be achieved by foregrounding the accepted belief first; then, one can bring what is thought to be unacceptable. In sum, pragma-rhetorical strategies can be deceptively exploited.

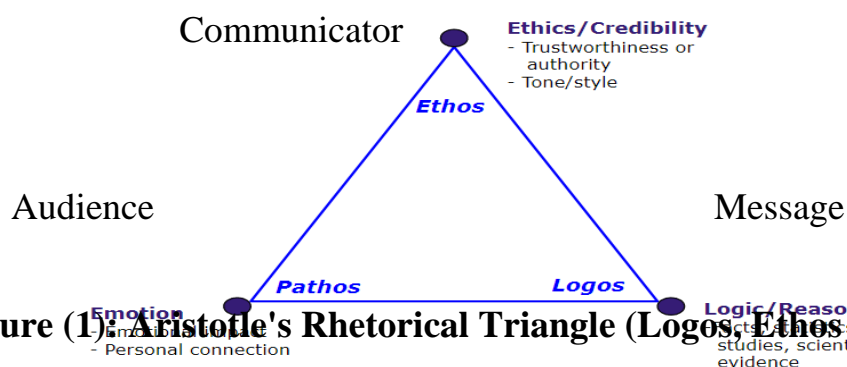
### **1.3.1 Pragma-Rhetorical Strategies of Deception**

Pragma-rhetorical strategies (henceforth, PR strategies) are said to be vital to the analysis of deceptive discourse because the deceptive speaker spares no effort to persuade the target audience and influence their beliefs, opinions and

attitudes to the best of his own personal interest. These strategies are identified by O'keefe (1990: 30) as comprising two categories: argumentative appeals (Aristotle's persuasive strategies) and pragma-rhetorical tropes (henceforth, PR Tropes):

### 1.3.1.1 Argumentative Appeals

Argumentative appeals resemble the three strategies or means of persuasion proposed by Aristotle. In this light, Aristotle believes that in order to achieve persuasion in the audience, speakers have to consider three persuasive strategies, namely logos (appeal to reason), ethos (appeal to character or personality) and pathos (appeal to emotions) (Corbett, 1990: 39). These means may be used individually or totally; this depends on the nature of the particular thesis under discussion, the present circumstances and the type of audience being addressed (ibid.). These three persuasive appeals are represented by Figure (1) called the Aristotle's rhetorical triangle. The propagandist is advised to use whatever available means that support his/her purpose of persuading the masses (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2014: 323). In what follows, a deeper insight to each of these means is provided.



**Figure (1): Aristotle's Rhetorical Triangle (Logos, Ethos and Pathos)**

#### 1.3.1.1.1 Logos

What is referred to as 'logos' constitutes a fundamental strategy of persuasion based on the content of the message. In this regard, Gill and whedbee (1997: 159) state that the audience can be convinced more readily when the speaker supports his/her presented proposition with "evidence and reasoning". In specific, this category of persuasion demonstrates appeals to truth, figures and logical facts (Delaney, 2015: 49). In addition, this rational strategy, Poggi (2005: 315) reports, strengthens the credibility and trust of the speaker. Needless to say, persuasion can be achieved by combining non-emotional appeals with emotional ones.

To put it short, Ilie (2018: 103) elucidates that appeals to logos such as evidence and reason are utilized as a means for driving the audience towards accepting or refusing some ideas, beliefs or actions. Here, deception occurs when the speaker presents false facts, statistical figures and evidence as a means to deceive the target. Hence, this persuasive strategy triggers falsification.

#### 1.3.1.1.2 Ethos

The second strategy of persuasion is referred to as 'ethos'. In Aristotle's terms, ethos is intended to indicate credibility of the speaker (Delaney, 2015: 49). In an earlier work, Walton (2004: 171) points out that credibility is based on the perception of the audience concerning someone's trustworthiness and sincerity; it is rooted in the addressee's mind. According to Poggi (2005: 313), attributing credibility to some person means to characterize him/her by two features, namely "benevolence and competence". In deceptive discourse, the notion of ethos occupies a prominent position because convincing the audience requires the speaker to be deemed competent, worthy of trust and benevolent (Oswald et al., 2016: 520).

Most rhetoricians, Alcorn (1994: 3) comments, agree that what changes people is the speaker's character rather than his/her ideas. In this respect, Jorgensen and Isaksson (2010: 515) elaborates that the speaker uses ethos as a successful strategy to show the audience his/her character, intelligence and good will. Hence, they (ibid) present the persuasive mode of ethos as comprising three qualities: (a) expertise (expressed by exhibiting a collectively institutional insight, demonstrating skills and competences of others or highlighting particular past achievements), (b) trustworthiness (truthfulness and integrity) and empathy (by demonstrating selflessness and requiring self-sacrifice). As for Burke (2016: 3), ethos incorporates two aspects: the speaker's reputation and what he/she does and says in addressing the audience, i.e. posture and manner.

In short, exploiting the strategy of ethos, the propagandist attempts to be crafty in creating a positive personal impression in the audience and thus convincing them of his/her values, beliefs and ideas.

### **1.3.1.1.3 Pathos**

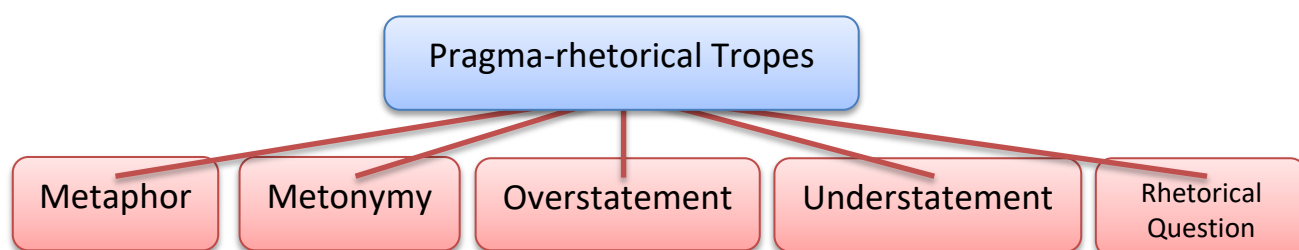
The third Aristotle's persuasive proof is pathos. Gill and Whedbee (1997: 159) say that pathos addresses the emotional factor in the audience constituting a salient strategy of persuasion since, in Aristotle's conception, people do not react in the same way when they are pleased as it is the case when they are annoyed. Accordingly, appeals to pathos go in harmony with the language of propaganda for the propagandist often spares no effort in addressing the emotional impact of his/her speech on listeners (Marlin, 2013: 40). According to Walton (2004: 171), such emotional appeals are exploited to make the audience feel motivated, happy, proud, compassionate, afraid, angry and so on.

It should be noted that when appealing to emotions, logic is sometimes blurred or concealed; a practice which is deemed negative in structuring pathos (Spielperger, 2002: 50). However, Poggi (2005: 315) assures that both logical and emotional appeals can co-occur for persuading the audience which are, according to (Burke, 2016: 3), powerful for the success of this persuasive appeal. In this line, the propagandist keeps motivating and arousing the audience's emotions in an endeavor to drive them to accept or refuse what is said (Ilie, 2018: 104).

### 1.3.1.2 Pragma-Rhetorical Tropes

Speakers and writers, as Tindale (2009: 43) remarks, exploit rhetorical figures to give their ideas a sort of presence in the mind; that is, to capture the audience's attention by emphasizing specific ideas in their minds. More specifically, such rhetorical figures or tropes can be used to achieve deceptive ends (Oswald et al, 2016: 520). As far as figures of speech are concerned, Cockcroft and Cockcroft (1992: 125) make a distinction between two terms: 'figurative language' and 'figures of rhetoric'; the former embraces tropes only while the later comprises tropes and schemes. They (ibid.) report that persuaders make use of tropes in selecting, combining and maximising the effects of persuasion in their speech. In Quintilian's terms, a trope which decorates speech with "force and charm" is perceived as any case in which an expression (word or phrase) is substituted for another (Fahnestock, 1999: 196).

Concerning the present study, the pragma-rhetorical tropes are exploited as strategies to deceive the audience. These are metaphor, metonymy, overstatement understatement and rhetorical question as schematized in figure (2) below:



**Figure (2): Pragma-rhetorical Tropes as Deceptive Strategies**

#### 1.3.1.2.1 Metaphor

Metaphor is a salient trope denoting "permanent mental mappings between source domain and target domain" (Lakoff, 1993: 229). Phrased differently, this process involves perceiving some concept in terms of attributes of another one. Following Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Powers (2019: 173) confirms that metaphor is used to demonstrate the similarity of features between a source and target concept. Thus, one can say that x is like y by having certain shared features (ibid.).

In order to present the two concepts (the target and the source) as fully similar, he (ibid.: 173) elaborates, speakers can deceptively exploit the process of metaphor by highlighting the similarities, hiding the dissimilarities and distorting some shared features between these concepts. For example, if one says "the students are the customers of university", he/she tries to show the student-teacher relationship just like that of the buyer and seller (ibid.). When students interpret this metaphor that the teacher-student relationship is just like that of seller-buyer, they can make a conclusion that they are paying for the tuition and, thus, they can pass tests easily or even redo the failed ones.

In an interactive exchange, metaphors are utilized to soften the contact between interlocutors. In political discourse, a metaphor is exploited to handle

threatening acts and to decrease the speaker's accountability (Chilton and Schaffner, 2002: 221). More importantly, propagandists use metaphors in order to produce effective language that will be useful in enlisting public backing for their position (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2014: 296). Thus, in wartime, they attempt to visualize the enemy as animal-like or subhuman in order to alleviate the effect of killing (ibid: 328).

### **1.3.1.2.2 Metonymy**

Metonymies are identified as those devices used to name an entity with a phrase or word which has a close bearing on it e.g. "the White House" represents the president of America (Crowley and Hawhee, 2004: 307). These tropes can occur as names of things denoting concepts, e.g. "The pen is mightier than the sword" where 'pen' represents diplomatic language while '*sword*' represents war (ibid.). Personal names can be used to denote their works or contributions e.g. "Shakespeare" stands for a play written by William Shakespeare (ibid).

Powers (2019: 173) asserts that metonymy is a practice in which the target is given a temporary name that is associated with a certain person, object or a process. Normally, this rhetorical device is used to demonstrate a particular characteristic of the object being named which conforms to a particular situation.

As far as deception is concerned, there are two types of misguided metonymy: mistaken metonymy and metonymic exaggeration (ibid.). The former occurs when the category used as a metonymy lacks a natural association with the object being named e.g. calling a tall person as 'shorty' while the latter involves intensifying a weak feature of a category and presenting it as salient opposed to reality (ibid.).

### **1.3.1.2.3 Overstatement**

Overstatement is a major trope which "refers to a case where the speaker's description is stronger than is warranted by the state of affairs described" (Leech, 1983: 45). He admits that although overstatement and understatement express politeness, they can also be "used to deceive the audience". In an earlier work, Turner et al. (1975: 73) identify overstatement as a device used to give more information than needed in a totally sincere situation. Here, the speaker intends to deceive the hearer through exaggerating certain aspect of proposition (Gupta et al., 2013: 22). Taken from a different angle, Claridge (2011: 18) confirms that in truthful discourse, this trope is intended to show the speaker's attitude towards certain facts without distorting or misrepresenting these facts. This means that deceptive overstatement arises when the speaker misrepresents facts intending to affect the addressee's opinion.

This deceptive device occurs due to violating the maxim of quality because deceptive speakers trigger intentionally deceptive implicatures regardless of the utterance being truthful or false (Hardin, 2019: 61). According

to Claridge (2011: 51- 68), overstatement can take various forms: a single word (all, every, always, never, ever, nothing, anything), phrase (the whole world) clause ("Nobody ever learns anything"), number (the 15,000 roundabouts, millions, hundreds ), superlatives (the most expensive present) , comparison ("different as chalk and cheese") and repetition ( She is really really really cunning). In general, politicians are found to exploit overstatement for deceptive purposes such as criticizing the political adversary or praising their particular accomplishments (ibid.: 231).

#### **1.3.1.2.4 Understatement**

Leech (1983: 145) briefly describes understatement (litotes) as contrary to overstatement, i.e. it refers to a situation whereby the speaker's evaluation is weaker "than is warranted by the state of affairs described"; it violates the quantity maxim, e.g. "I was born yesterday". Though this rhetorical figure normally indicates polite practice, it can be employed to deceive others (ibid.).

More specifically, this figure is deliberately intended to exhibit something or someone as being less significant than this thing or person actually is (Harris, 2005: 5). Here, the description of the seriousness, quantity or intensity of some entity is obviously less than what is actually the case (Cruse, 2006: 186). By this device, the speaker underspecifies some aspect of the proposition intending to deceive the hearer (Gupta et al., 2013: 23). All in all, minimization and underspecification of the message seem to be characteristic features of this pragma-rhetorical trope. Distortion and equivocation can be triggered by this pragma-rhetorical trope.

#### **1.3.1.2.5 Rhetorical Question**

A rhetorical question, as van Eemeren (2010: 121) asserts, is a context-bound device whose structure is based on formal-informal combination, i.e. it has the grammatical configuration of a question functioning as a statement. Technically speaking, this rhetorical device has "the illocutionary force of a question and the perlocutionary effect of a statement" (Ilie, 2018: 111).

In Galasiński's (2000: 92) view, a rhetorical question can be a deceptive strategy when it carries a misrepresentation of facts, i.e. the speaker implicates or presupposes a false proposition. In the same line, this figure may help the speaker to insinuate an idea or opinion which is thought to be challenged if expressed directly (Abioye, 2011: 291).

### **1.4 Methodology**

#### **1.4.1 Data Collection**

The data to be analysed in the present work includes (10) deceptive propagandistic situations. They are exhibited from two American propagandistic political interviews: each comprises (5) situations. The former is represented by the American President Donald Trump on Fox News Channel on January 10, 2020. The latter is represented by the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on CBS

News Channel on January 5, 2020. The site of the date is mentioned in the references.

## 1.4.2 Analysis

### 1.4.2.1 Pragma-Rhetorical Analysis

Now the time is ripe to analyse the two American interviews from the pragma-rhetorical perspective. The argumentative appeals will be analysed first. Then, the pragma-rhetorical tropes will be discussed.

#### 1.4.2.1.1 The Argumentative Appeals:

##### (i) Logos:

(1) Trump: *"The Iran nuclear deal signed by President Obama gave them \$150 , and that's when the real terror started."*

(2) Trump: *"I want to say they gave \$1.8 billion in cash -- \$1.7 billion, \$1.8 billion in cash."*

Pompeo has not employed this strategy.

In (1) and (2) above , the argumentative appeals of logos are used by Donald Trump to misrepresents truth via appealing to false figures, e.g. "\$150 billion" and "\$1.8 billion in cash -- \$1.7 billion, \$1.8 billion". In fact, this is not the case. First, the United States and European nations did **release** - not **give**- about \$100 billion - not \$150 billion – the Iranian – not American- previously frozen assets. Second, the amount of cash money handed to Iran was specifically \$1.7 billion - not \$1.8 billion.

##### (ii) Ethos:

(3) Trump: *"In my first year, I raised \$130 billion from them, not from us, and now he just announced \$530 billion all because of me."* .

(4) Pompeo: *"As for specific pieces of intelligence, you and I both know I was the director of the CIA. There are things you simply cannot share."*

In (3), Donald Trump exploits the argumentative appeal of ethos to express his competence and intelligence. In (4), this strategy is used by Pompeo to express his expertise by talking his previous post as the director of CIA .

##### (iii) Pathos:

(5) Trump: *"Yes. She [Ilham Omar] hates Israel. She hates Jewish people."*

(6) Pompeo: *"The threats remain and we'll continue to take action to respond to them"*.

In (5) the argumentative appeal of pathos is appealing to hatred, e.g. 'hates Israel' and 'hates Jewish people'. Trump addresses the emotions of the audience

in order to make them support his view against his political rival, Ilham Omar. In (6), this strategy is more effective because it involves threatening information to the audience, e.g. "the threats remain " and, at the same time, offers some useful action for eliminating or at least reducing these threats, e.g. "we'll continue to take action to respond to them" .

#### 1.4.2.1.2 The Pragma-Rhetorical Tropes:

##### (i) Metaphor:

(7) Trump: "*Here we are, split-second timing, executed -- like nobody's seen in many, many years -- on Soleimani?*"

Pompeo has not used this strategy.

In (7), Trump uses the metaphoric clause "*we are, split-second timing, executed*" in order to evoke emotional response in the audience thereby influencing their cognitions and attitudes for the best of his personal interest.

##### (ii) Metonymy:

(8) Pompeo: "*We've been-- we've been under threat from the Islamic Republic of Iran, since at least 2015, when the previous administration made the mistake of entering that horrific nuclear deal and gave money and resources to this regime.*"

In (8), Mike Pompeo tries to deceive the audience by using the metonymy '*the regime*' which pejoratively describes the Iranian government as illegitimate. He intends to make the audience acquire this false message so as to conceal the illegitimacy of their acts, e.g. killing Suleimani.

##### (iii) Overstatement:

(9) Trump: "*John Kerry, who may be the worst negotiator I've ever seen*".

(10) Pompeo: "*He not only caused enormous death and destruction throughout the region, killed hundreds of Americans over the years, but had done so in the past couple of days, killed an American on December twenty-seventh.*"

In (9), the pragma-rhetorical trope of overstatement is contained in the superlative and the adverb '*worst*' and '*ever*' respectively. Trump exploits this trope to exaggerate the bad actions of his opponent, Kerry. In (10), overstatement is triggered by the adjective '*enormous*' and the number '*hundreds of Americans*'. Here, the propagandist distorts facts through exaggerating certain aspects of proposition and presenting them as true. In so doing, the audience are made acquire the conclusion that Suleimani killed a huge number of people, caused a big destruction all over the region and killed hundreds of American citizens. In fact, these exceed the limits of truth.

##### (iv) Understatement:

(11) Trump: "*I don't know. Maybe we should take it*".

(12) Pompeo: "*But we're more importantly going to get it[the strategy] right over the days and weeks and months ahead.*"

In (11), Trump exploits understatement (by single negation) to exhibit the issue of taking or protecting the oil as being less significant. In (12), Pompeo uses understatement in order to avoid giving a specific time. Thus, he decreases responsibility leaving a room for more interpretations, e.g. "over the days and weeks and months ahead".

**(v) Rhetorical Question:**

(13) Trump: *"But when Kerry was out there and making the deal, and they have people screaming, "Death to America. Death to America," I say, **who signs a deal while they're screaming death to America?**"*

Pompeo has not used this strategy.

In (13), pragma-rhetorical trope of rhetorical question is employed to insinuate that as Kerry was signing the deal with the Iranians, they shouted "death to America". His intention is to foster this false implicature in the public in order to influence their beliefs and opinions. This rhetorical question is deceptively utilized because it carries misrepresentation of facts.

**1.4.2.2 Results and Discussion**

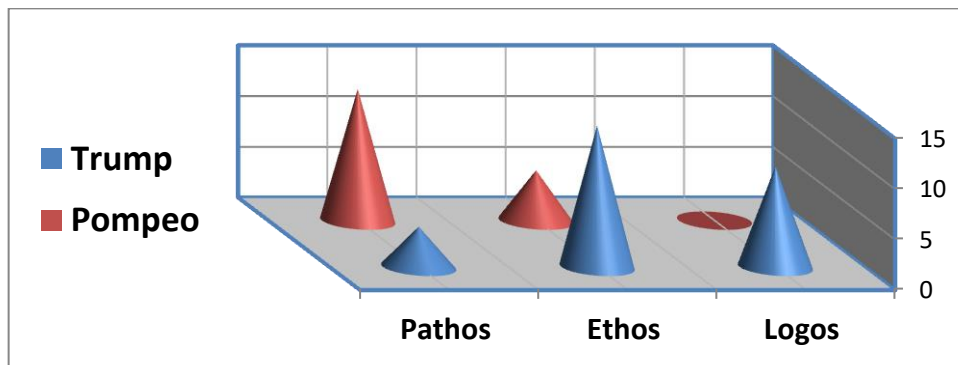
This section sets itself the task of showing the statistical results of the two American propagandistic political interviews. The focus on the pragma-rhetorical strategies as used deceptively by the propagandists: Trump and Pompeo.

The statistics below reveal that the American propagandists are significantly ambivalent in the employment of PR strategies. For Trump, the frequencies of argumentative appeals and pragma-rhetorical tropes are (28) and (41) respectively against (18) and (13) for Pompeo. As Table (1) and Figure (3) below show, ethos dominates here scoring the percentage (41.3%) against (21.7%) and (36.9%) for logos and pathos respectively. This leads to the verification of hypothesis (1) which states: *"certain argumentative appeals are more exploited than others in American propaganda."* There are significant intra-differences between American interviewees in the use of logos, ethos and pathos which score (35.7%), (50%) and (14.2%) respectively in Trump's speech against (0%), (27.7%) and (72.2%) in Pompeo's.

**Table (1) Statistics of the Argumentative Appeals in American Interviews**

Propagandists		Trump		Pompeo		Total no.	
No.	Argumentative Appeals	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1.	Logos	10	35.7	0	0	10	21.7

2.	Ethos	14	50	5	27.7	19	41.3
3.	Pathos	4	14.2	13	72.2	17	36.9
<b>Total number</b>		28	100	18	100	46	100

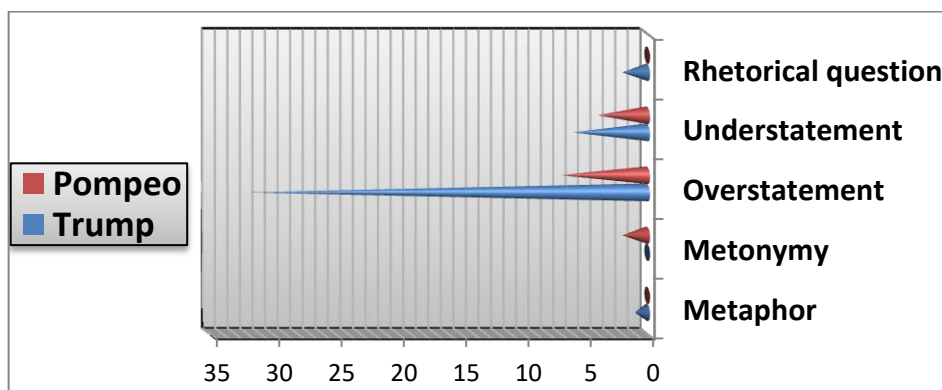


**Figure (3) Rates of PR Argumentative Appeals in American Interviews**

Overstatement occupies the highest employment in the American interviews scoring the percentage (72.2%) against (1.8%), (3.7%), (18.5%) and (3.7%) for metaphor, metonymy, understatement and rhetorical question respectively. This results in confirming hypothesis (2) which states: "*certain pragma-rhetorical tropes are more frequently utilized than others to achieve specific deceptive ends.*" These results are supported by Table (2) and Figure (4) below.

**Table (2) Statistics of the PR Tropes in American Interviews**

Propagandists		Trump		Pompeo		Total no.	
No.	PR Tropes	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1.	Metaphor	1	2.4	0	0	1	1.8
2.	Metonymy	0	0	2	15.3	2	3.7
3.	Overstatement	32	78	7	53.8	39	72.2
4.	Understatement	6	14.6	4	30.7	10	18.5
5.	Rhetorical question	2	4.8	0	0	2	3.7
<b>Total number</b>		41	100	13	100	54	100



**Figure (4) Rates of PR Tropes in American Interviews**

Evidently, the significant intra-difference between the American propagandists lies in the occurrence of overstatement which reaches (78%) in Trump's speech against (53.8%) in Pompeo's.

#### **1.4 Conclusions**

This paper has come up with the following conclusions:

1. Deception is essentially constituted to comprise three intrinsic features: covertness, intentionality, and purposefulness. Hence, the deceiver aims deliberately to mislead the target keeping him/her in the shadow.
2. Propaganda has proved to be a rich area for the investigation of deception because the propagandist uses whatever means available at his disposal to influence the beliefs, desires and attitudes of the target.
3. Propagandistic political interviews prove to be a good area for studying deception because they are considered conflictive communicative encounters.
4. Rhetorical pragmatics is vital to the analysis of deceptive discourse because it places a special focus on persuasion. This is because the deceptive speaker aims to persuade the audience with his false message in order to gain their support.
5. The argumentative appeal has the highest employment in the American propaganda with the percentage (41.3%) while logos and pathos score the percentages (21.7%) and (36.9) respectively. This leads to the ratification of hypothesis (1).
6. Overstatement occupies the highest employment in the American interviews scoring the percentage (72.2%) against (1.8%), (3.7%), (18.5%) and (3.7%) for metaphor, metonymy, understatement and rhetorical question respectively. This results in confirming hypothesis (2).
7. There are significant intra-differences between American interviewees in the use of logos, ethos and pathos which score (35.7%), (50%) and (14.2%) respectively in Trump's speech against (0%), (27.7%) and (72.2%) in Pompeo's. This validates hypothesis (3).
8. Not all the pragma-rhetorical strategies are used by both American propagandists. Hence, logos, metaphor and rhetorical question are missing in Pompeo's speech while metonymy is nonexistent in Trump's. This leads to the rejection of hypothesis (4).

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