

# Interpretations of Speech Influence in Modern Linguistics

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**Received:** 31 March 2025; **Accepted:** 29 April 2025; **Published:** 31 May 2025

**Abstract:** This article explores the multifaceted concept of speech influence within the framework of modern linguistics, highlighting its increasing relevance in contemporary society due to the growing use of persuasive language in media, politics, and digital communication. The study outlines the linguistic and psychological mechanisms that underpin effective persuasive speech, drawing on theories and findings from both Western and Russian linguistic traditions. Key contributions by scholars such as D. Carnegie, R. Lakoff, T. Ulloa, I. Sternin, and O. Issers are discussed to differentiate between forms of influence such as convincing versus persuading. The paper emphasizes the importance of lexical choice, emotional appeal, message clarity, and speaker credibility in the process of speech influence, and concludes by identifying the interdisciplinary nature of this phenomenon, integrating insights from psycholinguistics, rhetoric, communication theory, and sociolinguistics.

**Keywords:** Speech influence, persuasive discourse, convincing vs persuading, linguistic means, psychological impact, rhetoric, communicative linguistics, psycholinguistics, mass communication, manipulation in language.

**Introduction:** In contemporary society, speech has evolved into a potent instrument for influencing and guiding public behavior. The advent of mass media and social networking platforms has facilitated the proliferation of eloquent individuals who position themselves as leaders, motivators, and influencers, significantly impacting public consciousness. Consequently, the analysis of speech influence and its underlying mechanisms has become increasingly pertinent. This paper addresses both linguistic and psychological dimensions of persuasive speech, exploring how these elements collectively determine its effectiveness in public discourse.

## Literature review

The phenomenon of speech influence has garnered extensive attention across linguistic and psychological research. Carnegie (1936) was among the earliest to elucidate practical aspects of persuasive communication, emphasizing clarity and relatability. Linguistically, persuasive discourse—described by Lakoff (1982) as communicative attempts designed to alter another individual's behavior or attitudes—has become essential in fields like marketing and

advertising. Research identifies credibility, simplicity, relevance, memorability, novelty, and subtlety as pivotal factors enhancing persuasive effectiveness (O'Keefe, 2002; Perloff, 2003; Valerias-Jurado et al., 2018).

F. Ulloa (2019) distinguishes between "convincing," a logic-driven approach, and "persuading," an emotionally charged influence, thereby underscoring the role of lexical choice, avoidance of negative connotations, and strategic intimidation. Russian linguists Sternin (1993, 2010, 2012) and Issers (2009) conceptualize speech influence broadly and narrowly, highlighting its multidisciplinary nature, integrating linguistics, psychology, rhetoric, pragmatics, and communication theory. Parshin (2000) and Shelestyuk (2009) expand on this, examining how linguistic and paralinguistic cues reshape collective and individual consciousness, while Kovaleva (2023) notes the interplay between verbal, emotional, and mental components in speech acts.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a comprehensive analytical approach, synthesizing theoretical insights from

linguistic pragmatics, psycholinguistics, and rhetoric. Qualitative content analysis was applied to primary linguistic texts and secondary literature sources to identify and interpret key mechanisms of persuasive speech. The research methodology involved:

- A systematic review of classical and contemporary literature on persuasive linguistics;
- Comparative analysis of persuasive techniques identified in practical examples from political discourse, advertising, and mass media;
- Psycholinguistic analysis focusing on cognitive and emotional responses elicited by different persuasive strategies;
- Examination of linguistic data for evidence of lexical choice, rhetorical devices, and argumentation structures, emphasizing their psychological impact on the audience.

In the modern world, using speech to control people and influence the public has become widespread. People who can create effective speeches and are eloquent are using the media and social networks to introduce themselves as leaders, influencers, and motivators, and are engaged in influencing the minds of the general public. Such a wide application of various methods and means of speech influence in everyday life determines the relevance of this issue.

### The main part

The implementation of speech influence is related to both linguistic and psychological factors. In this case, linguistically, speech must be structured clearly, correctly, and polished, and it must contain means of expression that can influence the listener. Psychologically, speech must be structured in such a way that it can influence the listener's consciousness and contain certain means of psychological influence. For this reason, the issue of speech influence has attracted the attention of both linguists and psychologists.

One of the first scientists to pay attention to the issue of influence through speech was D. Carnegie. D. Carnegie, who explained to the public in a way that is understandable to the public how to carry out effective communication through his books, shed light on the practical aspects of the issue of speech influence.

In English linguistics, speech that aims to influence and achieve a certain result by using linguistic means is called "persuasive language", "persuasive speech", or "persuasive discourse". In most cases, persuasive speech is used in marketing and advertising texts, aiming to attract a potential buyer to buy a product. The famous linguist Lakoff compares persuasive discourse and ordinary discourse, the scientist

determines that persuasive discourse differs from ordinary communication based on advertising materials and defines persuasive speech as "the act or desire of one party to try to change the behavior, feelings, intentions, or point of view of another party by means of communicative means" (Lakoff, 1982).

According to research, the effectiveness of persuasive speech depends on several factors:

1. The speaker must be credible and the listener must trust the speaker.
  2. The message must be simple and easy to understand. If the message is complex, the listener will not try to understand it.
  3. The message must be relevant and interesting to the listener.
  4. The message must be memorable. A message that listeners can remember without much effort is more effective.
  5. The message must be new and unexpected. If listeners have prior knowledge of the message or know in advance what the conclusion will be, the message will be less effective.
  6. The message should not be forced into the listener, the listener should have the impression that they have come to this conclusion themselves, even if it is directed at making a decision (O'Keefe 2002, Perloff 2003, Valerias-Jurado et.al. 2018).
- F. Ulloa analyzes the forms of influence "convincing" and "persuading", "while "convincing" someone means bringing a person to a certain conclusion with the help of logical arguments, "persuading" is based on emotional aspects. Therefore, to convince we appeal to the "head" of another person, to persuade to his "heart". This implies manipulation; if (manipulative influence) is done well, the recipients will never know that they have been manipulated" (Ulloa, 2019). Therefore, convincing is the process of assuring the recipient of the correctness of an idea or view, while persuading is the process of influencing the recipient to perform an action.

The author cites several tools that help in persuasion using persuasive speech:

1. Lexical choice is the main tool of persuasive speech. Politicians and product marketers achieve persuasion by choosing the right words, using them in the desired meaning, and also by embedding words in the human mind through repetition.
2. "Avoidance" techniques. This refers to the lack of clarity in the speaker's speech; avoiding lexical units that have a negative meaning and evoke negative emotions.

### 3. Influence based on intimidation (Ulloa, 2019).

In Russian linguistics, the term “речевое воздействие” (speech influence) began to be used in the 1990s (Sternin, 1993; Sternin, 1994). I. Sternin calls speech influence the science of effective communication and evaluates this science as a separate field that combines traditional systematic linguistics, communicative linguistics, psycholinguistics, pragmalinguistics, rhetoric, discourse linguistics, stylistics, speech culture, psychology, theory of mass communication, advertising, personnel management, sociology, public relations, cultural studies, ethnography, conflictology and various other scientific fields (Sternin, 2010; Sternin, 2012).

O. Issers, however, states that this concept can be understood in two different senses - in a broad and narrow sense, and in a broad sense, speech influence is any speech communication aimed at achieving a certain goal. When used in a narrow sense, “in speech influence, communicants are not connected by relations of subordination (formal or informal), but by relations of equal cooperation. This type of speech influence implies that its subject regulates the activities of another person, who is to a certain extent free to choose his actions and act in accordance with his needs” (Issers, 2009).

P. Parshin defines speech influence as “influence on individual and / or collective consciousness and behavior, carried out using various speech means, in other words, messages in natural language” (Parshin, 2000). According to Y. Shelestyuk, speech influence is the influence on the recipient using linguistic, paralinguistic and non-linguistic symbolic means, which is associated with changing the recipient’s personal views on a particular object, restructuring its categorical constructions, and influencing emotional or psychophysiological processes, taking into account the speaker’s specific objective goals in the process of speech (Shelestyuk, 2009).

Speech influence is carried out in the form of a three-part structure – verbal: speech, mental, emotional; it involves the activation of all elements of the speech act and is associated with the levels of human consciousness. Different speech genres, determined by the individual characteristics of the speech act, require a specific approach to the implementation of speech influence (Kovaleva, 2023). As noted, speech influence is intended to encourage the recipient to take an action or stop him from doing something by influencing his mind and psyche. In this case, it is difficult to achieve the intended goal only by speaking and listening. A good knowledge and understanding of the human mind and psyche, and thereby strengthening the

mechanisms of influence, is also considered a specific issue of speech influence. Mental influence on the human mind involves forcing the listener to think by presenting certain facts and arguments, and thereby changing his views. Such an influence is somewhat complex and requires thorough preparation and argumentation from the speaker. Influencing the listener’s emotions is carried out through the use of emotional linguistic means, the emergence of certain memories, and positive or negative emotions in the recipient. Such an influence is considered stronger and more effective than mental influence. Because under the influence of emotions, a person’s mental abilities become dull, the level of thinking decreases, and the likelihood of accepting information without critical evaluation increases. “Indeed, increasing emotionality reduces the likelihood of mental resistance, and therefore emotional linguistic information has a great potential for influence” (Tolkunova, 1998).

### CONCLUSION

In sum, effective speech influence integrates linguistic precision and psychological astuteness. Its efficacy is significantly enhanced by strategically employing credibility, simplicity, emotional resonance, and subtle persuasive tactics. This interplay of linguistic structures and psychological insights underscores the critical importance of understanding persuasive mechanisms in contemporary communication. Future research should further explore interdisciplinary methods, considering the dynamic evolution of language use within digital and globalized contexts, to better grasp and leverage the potential of speech as a tool for positive social influence. In modern linguistics, speech influence is considered a unity consisting of the triad of addresser, addressee, and influence, attention should be paid to the stylistic and psycholinguistic features of the emergence of speech act.

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