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**Master's thesis**

**“MANIPULATION IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE”**  
**(on the basis of the campaign speeches given by Donald Trump**  
**and Joe Biden within the framework of the 2020 US presidential election)**

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## INTRODUCTION

Political discourse is a phenomenon we experience on a daily basis since it has become an indispensable element of mass culture as well as an instrument of consolidating the public and governing people's social behavior. The main theme and driving force of this area of communication is struggle for power. One of its most important functions is persuasion of the citizens of a particular state to make electoral choices beneficial to this or that presidential candidate. As a means of claiming their superiority over opponents and demonstrating their competence to hold a desirable position, nominees resort to numerous techniques of manipulation, which can be implemented by means of strategies and tactics of pragmatic impact and operate on a subtle, conceptual level of human cognition.

The **relevance** of the research is attributed to the central role of political discourse in the formation of public consciousness, its growing significance as a weapon of mass manipulation and establishing domination. The identification and classification of the language mechanisms of exerting such an influence are of paramount importance to scientists in the field of linguistics. The results of their surveys can, on the one hand, raise awareness among the general public of the manipulative methods deployed by politicians to subjugate people's will and, on the other hand, help political strategists enhance their performance.

The **object** of the study is political discourse and the techniques of manipulative influence it exhibits.

The **subject** of the study encompasses the pre-election rhetoric as a cultural and linguistic phenomenon emerging within the framework of political discourse, the manipulative strategies and tactics as well as the basic value concepts deployed by the politicians to ensure the fulfillment of the global (persuading the audience to vote for them) and local (depends on the communicative situation in which the political communication occurs) goals of campaign speeches.

The **aim** of the survey is to analyze, systematize and compare the strategies and tactics of manipulation deployed in the pre-election discourses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden (the presidential nominees participating in the 2020 US electoral race), to

distinguish the main syntactic, lexical and stylistic means of their implementation and to discover the manipulative potential of the basic value concepts of the American political rhetoric.

The achievement of this aim involves accomplishing the following **objectives**:

- 1) defining the theoretical and methodological framework of the study;
- 2) identifying the distinctive features of political discourse, its pragmatic significance, the principles of manipulation that govern the communicative behavior of politicians and the mechanisms of affecting human cognition necessary to achieve the purpose of manipulators;
- 3) determining and comparing the strategies and tactics of manipulative influence deployed by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in their campaign speeches;
- 4) analyzing the verbal means of their actualization in the discourses of the presidential nominees and their contribution to the achievement of the politicians' pragmatic intentions;
- 5) selecting the universal value concepts that are important for the US political rhetoric and, as a result, most of often become the tools of exerting hidden impact on the American electorate;
- 6) distinguishing the core of the nominative fields of those concepts, developed in the public addresses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, and, using that data, analyzing the significance of their cognitive features for the purpose of manipulation.

In order to accomplish the aim and the objectives of the thesis we have used:

- a random sampling method (to select the material for analysis);
- a descriptive research method (necessary for observation, interpretation, generalization and classification of the linguistic facts);
- discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis and communicative-pragmatic analysis;
- conceptual analysis, content analysis and qualitative analysis;
- comparative analysis, etc.

The **theoretical** and **methodological basis** of the thesis consists of the papers of such linguists as L. R. Bezugla [9]; E. S. Kubryakova [26]; E. I. Sheigal [61];

V. I. Karasyk [25]; T. V. Yudina [62]; V. Z. Demyankov [16]; O. S. Fomenko [52]; Y. M. Chanturidze [58]; A. D. Belova [10]; P. S. Akinina [1]; G. V Kuznetsova [28]; S. K. Romanyuk [42]; O. S. Issers [22]; O. V. Dmytruk [19]; Z. Harris [79]; Teun A. van Dijk [71-74]; M. Foucault [75]; J. Habermas [78]; W. L. Chafe [69]; R. Wodak [94]; R. Jakobson [81]; D. Graber [76]; Weiss G. [92]; J. Thomas [90]; S. M. Balogun [66]; H. P. Grice [77]; A. Bodos [68]; M. Parenti [87]; R. J Heuer [80]; B. Barber [67]; F. Myers [86]; N. Kirby [82] and so on.

The **material** of the survey comprises 80 campaign speeches (40 for each presidential nominee) given by Donald Trump and Joe Biden at their rallies, which were held within the context of the 2020 US presidential election. All the transcripts were selected from the website called “Rev: Speech-to-Text Services [88].”

The **scientific novelty** of the research lies the developed classification of the strategies and tactics deployed for the manipulation of mass and individual consciousness in the modern pre-election discourse; the conducted comparison of the manipulative techniques used by the representatives of one sociocultural community who deliver their addresses at approximately the same time and to the same people and yet resort to different means of affecting the electorate; and the performed linguistic investigation of the most subtle way of manipulation, which is influencing the mechanisms of human cognition with the help of concepts.

The **theoretical significance** of the survey is determined by its contribution to such branches of linguistics as pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, linguocultural studies, etc. as well as other disciplines, namely sociology, journalism and political science. The obtained results may be of use for further research on the interrelationships between discourse, its pragmatic potential and manipulative inclinations.

The **practical significance** of the thesis lies in the possibility of its usage during the seminars on lexicology, stylistics, communicative strategies as well as the practical courses on learning a foreign language.

The **structure** of the thesis is motivated by its aim and objectives. It comprises the introduction, three parts with summaries, conclusions, bibliography and three appendices.

## **PART 1. POLITICAL DISCOURSE AS AN OBJECT OF LINGUISTIC RESEARCH**

### **1.1. Political Discourse Within Discourse Theory**

Taking into account the rapid development of communicative technologies, the increasing awareness of their importance and the tendency towards globalization of communicative space, typical for the end of the twentieth century, we believe that nowadays the necessity to investigate the nature and the mechanisms of a communicative impact on mass and individual consciousness comes to the forefront.

Spheres where a pre-planned, targeted communicative influence is exercised most often encompass the media, advertising and politics. Regarding the political field, researchers can trace the effect of the communicative impact on mass consciousness by studying political discourse, that in recent decades has become one of the most popular objects of analysis not only in such areas of knowledge as psychology, sociology, cultural studies, political science, etc. but also in linguistics.

Political discourse is the phenomenon that people tend to experience on a daily basis. A struggle for power is the prevailing theme and driving force of this sphere of communication. Given that such a struggle is realized through language, which remains an intermediate link between a human and the outside world, the existence of linguistic research within the political science becomes of top importance.

However, before analyzing the distinctive features of political discourse, a general definition and a brief characteristic of the very concept of “discourse” as an object of study of modern linguistics should be provided.

It is worth mentioning that the notion itself is extremely multifaceted. No clear and generally accepted interpretation of discourse, which would cover all the aspects of its use, has been suggested so far. Every science that investigates this phenomenon offers its own definition.

In political science, for instance, discourse is understood as “one of the characteristics of a communicative interaction happening between subjects of power and demonstrating internally differential processes of forming public opinions and shaping the political will of society [57, p. 34].”

From the point of view of classical philosophy, discourse is used “to characterize a gradual transition from one discrete step to another as well as the deployment of thinking skills, expressed through concepts and judgments, as opposed to intuitive grasping of the whole prior to its parts.” At the same time, in modern French philosophy of postmodernism it is regarded as “a characteristic of a special mentality and ideology that are expressed in a coherent and integral text, which is immersed in life, that is, in sociocultural, socio-psychological and other types of contexts [47, pp. 668-670].”

One of the first uses of the term in linguistics can be found in the article called “Discourse analysis,” which was written by Zellig S. Harris in 1952. The American linguist understands discourse as “the sentences spoken or written in succession by one or more persons in a single situation.” In addition, he notes that “language does not occur in stray words or sentences, but in connected discourse – from one-word utterance to a ten-volume work, from a monolog to a Union Square argument [79, p. 3].” Harris’ aim was, therefore, to discover a method of analysis that would overcome the limitations of popular at that time descriptive linguistics, which was not concerned with the speech activity in general but with the regularity of distribution of language units in the process of speech. The new approach, discourse analysis, could help the researchers to investigate the hidden meaning of every element of a text as a complete whole and to trace the social and psychological factors that influenced its creation.

Teun A. van Dijk, a Dutch linguist, one of the pioneers in the fields of text linguistics, speech act theory and discourse analysis, notes that discourse “is about objects or people, about their properties and relations, about events or actions, or about complex episodes of these, that is, about some fragment of the world which we call a situation [72, p. 161].” That statement is of great importance to the cognitive theory since in order to comprehend the fragments of reality and narrate their experiences with the help of language means, people create specific constructs called frames or idealized cognitive models.

Discourse then is defined by the researcher in the broad sense as a communicative event between a speaker and a listener (or an observer), which occurs

in a certain temporal, spatial or other types of context. It can be either oral or written, have verbal and non-verbal components. In the narrow sense, discourse includes only the verbal component and designates a final product of a communicative action that is interpreted by the receivers. Despite the provided interpretations, Teun A. van Dijk acknowledges the fact that the concept of discourse is as vague as the concept of language, society and ideology [73, p. 121].

According to M. Foucault, discourse is created through a set of signs and a proper wording as well as involves statements (“discursive formations”) that describe certain events tied to historical context and capable of repetition. It can produce power, which in its turn defines “discursive practices,” or bodies of knowledge and behavior that governs what is acceptable or conventional in this or that situation. A more detailed definition of the concept states that it consists of “anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area [75, p. 117].” All things considered, we assume that Foucault’s goal is to explore the interrelation between a linguistic layer of culture and a social one, using a new conceptual apparatus, consisting of discursive practices, which contribute to establishing discursive formations.

Moreover, such linguists as M. Foucault, P. Sériot, A. Greimas, J. Derrida, made an attempt to interconnect two seemingly different concepts, such as discourse and style, claiming that discourse refers to the individual language features of communicants [54, p. 317]. Thus, when analyzing it one should take into account such things as style, themes, ways of argumentation, etc.

Another interpretation of the discourse, first suggested by the German scholar J. Habermas, states that it is an ideal form of communication, distanced from social reality, traditions, authorities, etc. and aimed at critical discussion and justification of views, standpoints and actions of communicants. Discourse is oriented towards mutual understanding between individuals and based on persuasion, not coercion. This idea is also reflected in Habermas’ definition of a communicative action, which, according to the scientist, is aimed at gaining knowledge during the process of developing consensus. Thus, its final goals are solidarity and social integration. In contrast to the

communicative one, an instrumental action is goal oriented: interlocutors influence the decisions of each other in order to achieve communicative success [78, p. 286].

It should also be mentioned that one of the distinctive features of the modern paradigm, which treats communication as a fundamental element of human behavior, rather than as a normal exchange process between processors of information, is that discourse is understood as a construct, a practical implementation of theories of social constructivism, according to which language not only represents or, to put it another way, “mirrors” our social and mental realities but facilitates building those realities. This approach emphasizes the equal importance of an addressee and an addresser for the process of communication and justifies the necessity for their active participation in the construction of meaning.

Taking into consideration what was stated previously, in this thesis we have decided to use the definition of discourse as a mental communicative activity that is a sum of process and result, and includes both extralinguistic and linguistic aspects [9, p. 24]. The linguistic aspect of discourse includes a speech activity, which happens between communicants, and a produced text (the result of the speech interaction). The extralinguistic aspect covers cognition and a discursive context.

The peculiarity of discourse is that language is not considered out of its use because words do not have any pragmatic potential without context and acquire it only when people in authority regularly deploy them for certain purposes. At the basic level, discourse is defined as “speech immersed in life [4, p. 136].” Consequently, it presupposes the expression of people's opinions and the revelation of their value systems as well as reflects political beliefs, social and cultural circumstances in which communicants live.

When analyzed according to the channel of information transmission, discourse can be oral or written. Oral discourse consists of intonation segments of different length, separated from each other by pauses. It presupposes the ability to immediately receive a response from the addressee and adapt the content of the utterance based on the peculiarities of the communicative situation. When it comes to speech, discourse includes not only words but also prosodic elements, such as intonation, accent, tempo,

timbre, etc., and components from non-verbal communication, for instance, gestures or facial expressions. Written discourse, on the other hand, allows people to organize their ideas into more complex units (clauses) by means of punctuation as well as to edit or prepare them in advance [69, p. 37]. At the same time, it excludes the possibility of feedback. Concerning printed texts, attention should be paid to the design of the pages, font, color, etc.

It is important to make a distinction between discourse and the text due to several reasons. Firstly, any text is supposed to be interpreted as a verbal reproduction of a certain communicative act. Discourse in that regard is a much broader concept: when referring to it, it is also necessary to pay attention to such extralinguistic data as historical and cultural conditions in which the communication occurs as well as the social status of its participants, etc. Secondly, according to E. S. Kubryakova and O. V. Aleksandrova, discourse primarily means “a cognitive process focused on real speech production; the text is the result of the process of speech activity, a certain fixed form [26, p. 16].” In other words, the text represents a complete unity, while discourse refers to an unfinished series of communicative actions, revealing the course of communication. Thirdly, as was stated, discourse reflects a real speech event, and the text is detached from reality and has a greater degree of abstractness [61, p. 20].

If we are to analyze discourse based on the spheres of its usage, V. I. Karasyk differentiates between personal and institutional types of it:

- Personal discourse is individual-oriented and can be divided into everyday and existential subtypes. Daily communication implies that communicants are well acquainted. Their discourse, therefore, is reduced to maintaining contact with each other and making decisions aimed at solving minor problems. It occurs dialogically: parties may interrupt each other, and the topic of conversation may be changed, which happens, in most cases, spontaneously. Verbal communication is complemented by non-verbal elements, such as facial expressions and gestures. In existential discourse, much attention is given to the inner world of the initiator of the communication. Most often, it is of a monological character, full of literary words and expressions, extended and detailed.

- Institutional discourse is “a specialized clichéd kind of communication which occurs between people who may not know each other but should act according to the norms of society.” The researcher then identifies the following types of institutional discourse: political, diplomatic, administrative, legal, military, pedagogical, religious, medical, business, advertising, sports, scientific, media, etc. He classifies it on the basis of the goal of the discourse and its participants. For example, the aim of diplomatic discourse is to facilitate talks and confidence-building at an international level, when the task of religious discourse is to spread a particular religion and strengthen people’s faith. Regarding the communicants, Karasyk divides them into representatives (agents of a certain social institute) and people who consult them (clients) [25, p. 5].

However, what interests us in this typology is the concept of political discourse, which deals with the formation, manifestation and reproduction of power relations in society. The term “political discourse” has different interpretations. A. N. Baranov, for instance, suggests understanding it as a set of all speech acts deployed in political discussions, as well as the rules of public policy, developed in accordance with existing traditions and proven by experience [8, p. 6].

On the other hand, such scholars as Teun A. van Dijk [74], R. Wodak [94], E. I. Sheigal [61], T. V. Yudina [62] believe that political discourse comprises a set of discursive practices that characterize the participants of political discourse and determine a subject of political communication. From a linguistic point of view, discursive practices are basically tendencies to deploy similar in function, alternative language means in order to express a certain meaning. They are reflected in the frequency of use of certain phonetic, morphological, syntactic and semantic patterns, the selection of which depends not only on the ideological position of an author or initiator of political discourse but also on their individual style [7, pp. 245-246].

Most researchers who study political discourse agree that its main purpose is a struggle for control and domination. As V. Z. Demyankov notes, its task is to convince the addressees, the citizens of a particular state, that they are responsible for their future

and, therefore, have to act in a “politically correct” way in order to make the state prosperous [16, p. 38].

Consequently, in this thesis we understand political discourse as a special type of discourse based on the views and beliefs of a politician, whose goal is to create a certain vision of the world and influence the subconsciousness of his audience with the help of special language tools, to manipulate people’s minds and to make them take decisions that are in his best interest.

Political discourse, just like any other kind of discourse, can be oral or written. Its oral forms comprise public speeches, interviews, press conferences of the politicians as well as parliamentary debates, TV and radio news. The written forms of political discourse encompass various treaties, protocols, articles on political issues, posters and leaflets that reflect certain political ideas [52, p. 7].

Such a type of discourse is hierarchical in nature. Hierarchy in this case is a crucial factor that leads to dominance, which may be of two types: interactional and rhetorical. *Interactional dominance* is manifested at the level of a structural organization of an interaction. During political debates, for instance, it is actualized through the use of specific strategies that are aimed at controlling an opponent’s next move. Those could be turn-taking techniques or moves that impact the distribution of speech time. *Rhetorical dominance* lies in the appropriate use of language means which serve to construct an image of the politician in the minds of his audience. In fact, in political discourse the audience do not deal directly with the politician but with his image, created by a team of imagemakers and the media. The perception of information then depends on conceptual models of ontological, axiological and pragmatic character embodied in the subconsciousness of the people [51, p. 5].

Modern linguistics is focused on a number of things indirectly related to political discourse: these are the political views of the author, other discourses that can be implicitly or explicitly introduced into a certain sample of discourse, and the political situation that determines its content. This type of discourse is also influenced by extralinguistic factors of ideological nature, macrosocial and microsocial events (for

instance, the feminist movement or the struggle of ethnic minorities for their rights) [52, p. 8].

Regarding the functions of political discourse, we find it rather useful to analyze them according to R. Jakobson's typology [81, pp. 51-53]:

- The main function of the political communication is a conative one. It lies in influencing the addressees with the purpose of acquiring and retaining power, which presupposes that the politicians control their audience, make people take actions (for example, vote for the best presidential candidate) and convince them in the purity of their intentions. The conative function can be expressed explicitly, in the form of slogans or direct appeals to the audience, and implicitly, when the politician renders a certain emotion, whether it be fear, anger or a sense of unity or pride, in his discourse, thereby encouraging the supporters to act.

- The ability of political discourse to invoke feelings is connected with an emotive function. In this type of discourse, it is very important that the addresser and the addressee are on the same page because only then can they work together to achieve common goals.

In fact, one of the features of political discourse lies in the fact that it combines standardization and expressiveness. The first component is required so that the discourse can appeal to a wide range of people and involves the compliance with specific rules of structuring and organizing the discourse as well as the principles of vocabulary selection. Expressiveness allows to convey the emotional state of the politician and shows his attitude to the discussed topics. Moreover, expressive language means also make the discourse interesting to read or listen to, which is extremely important for the world of politics since the more thoughtful the discourse is, the more influence it can exert on the audience [58, p. 29].

- The third function of political discourse, a phatic one, deals with establishing and maintaining the communicative contact. Promoting confidence between the parties is of crucial importance in this case because without it the communication will not occur, not to mention become successful.

- A metalingual function helps to correctly render the meaning of words or phrases. Thus, politicians often resort to it in order to explain certain terms, concepts or ideas that are not completely clear for the general public.
- A referential function is responsible for the context of political discourse, which contains information about important political events, movements and tendencies.
- Last but not least, the poetic function is aimed at creating an aesthetic effect. Just like in any literary text, in political discourse it plays an important role since the use of stylistic devices makes the communication bright and memorable.

The abovementioned classification is thought-provoking but not exhaustive. E. I. Sheigal [61, pp. 333-340], for instance, also distinguishes an *integrative function* that lies in uniting all the people into a single nation. When analyzing political discourse, it is very important to pay attention to the pronouns the politician uses to express his point of view. For instance, when he speaks on his own behalf, he emphasizes his personal responsibility the uttered statements through the deployment of the pronoun “I.” If he uses the first person plural pronoun “we,” it means that he identifies himself as a part of a particular group of people, either his political party or the population of the whole country.

The next function of political discourse, according to E. I. Sheigal, is an *inspirational* one, which aims at convincing the nation in the country’s bright future as well as persuading the people that only they are in charge of their own welfare and that the state needs them to make the right choice to ensure stability, economic growth and prosperity.

A *declarative function*, as the researcher states, is basically an announcement of the campaign promises made by the political party or the candidate who strives to get elected. However, unlike the inspirational function, it does not serve as a call to action but as a material for reflection.

The last function is *performative*. As a matter of fact, in political discourse the audience expects the politician to act according to his social status: he should

demonstrate his readiness to prioritize the interests of the nation above his personal needs.

Political language is an integral part of political discourse. It is characterized by uncertainty, often expressed with the help of polysemantic vocabulary, words with abstract meanings or passive constructions, which conceal an agent of an action from the public. Those are used because politicians frequently have to comment on their attitude to controversial issues that may undermine their reputation. Ambiguity also helps to avoid possible conflicts because if the speaker does not specify his point of view and speaks vaguely, then s/he cannot be held accountable for what s/he has said; and it will be much easier to level the attacks of opponents and detractors [1, p. 27].

D. Greiber suggests that political language has three main goals, namely information dissemination, agenda setting and projection into the future and the past [76, p. 198].

*Spreading the information* on the state of affairs in the political community is a matter of top significance in political discourse. This is due to the fact that people, in most cases, acquire the knowledge in this field with the help of the verbal messages, prepared for them in advance, and not through their own experience. Such messages can be transmitted within a wide variety of genres: from inaugural addresses to press conferences. In addition, the audience may obtain information in an indirect way: depending on where and when, under what circumstances the discourse is initiated as well as the manner of the politician to present facts, people draw conclusions about his cultural level, intellect, honesty and sincerity, decisiveness or willingness to compromise.

The second goal, that is, *setting the agenda*, is understood as bringing certain issues into the spotlight. This helps to control the dissemination of information because the politicians can prioritize the discussion of non-relevant topics, leaving urgent problems on the periphery of public attention.

*Projection into the future and the past* means predicting the upcoming and rethinking the past events. As we have already mentioned, appealing to the future usually presupposes creating a utopian image of general happiness and prosperity. At

the same time, romanticizing past experiences and highlighting the continuity of the political course contribute to the feelings of stability and safety. A single sample of discourse can contain a number of excerpts of discourses related to the discussed topic. Those may be direct or indirect quotations, allusions as well as socio-historical context (proper names, realia and toponyms). The phenomenon itself is called “interdiscursivity.” It creates the feeling of a constant reference to the past, to what was stated at some point of human existence, and this allows the initiator of the communication to expand the semantic boundaries of his discourse [92, p. 15].

All things considered, it seems reasonable to agree that political discourse is a multifaceted phenomenon that requires a thorough research since it presupposes the exertion of political influence, aimed at manipulating the minds of people and changing the political situation so that the interests of the manipulator are satisfied. It is therefore targeted, highly contextual and dynamic.

## **1.2. Pragmatic Potential of Political Discourse**

Pragmatics (derived from the Greek “pragma,” which means “an action” or “a deed”) is a research area in linguistics and semiotics that explores the functioning of language signs in various communicative situations. The goal of pragmatics is to investigate how meaning is constructed, conveyed and interpreted by language users. J. Thomson, for instance, states that “making meaning is a dynamic process, involving the negotiation of it between a speaker and a hearer, the context of the utterance (physical, social and linguistic) and the meaning potential of an utterance [90, p. 22].” This suggests that the interpretation of the utterance in itself may be strikingly different from its comprehension in a certain situational background.

Regarding a communicative situation, it is basically a context in which communicative intentions are actualized and communicative goals are achieved. Identifying its most significant components is a rather difficult task because even what we consider to be insignificant may play a crucial role in the communication building process, that is, in establishing a mutual understanding between the author of the political discourse and its potential audience. However, in this thesis we pay particular attention to such factors as the addresser and the addressee of a political message, their

pragmatic intention, the use of presupposition in political communication and the effect that political discourse is supposed to exert on people.

Both the addresser and the addressee actively participate in political communication. The addresser, however, takes the role of a controlling party while the addressees often act as a controlled group. To put it another way, the politician dominates the audience by influencing people's minds and making them change their opinion so that his goals could be achieved. In order to do so, the addresser of the political message has to pay close attention to the interests, values and beliefs of prevalent in the society. He should be on the same page with the addressees because only in that case is it possible to influence the mass consciousness in such a way as to make substantial changes on the level of cognition and, as a consequence, modify the behavioral patterns of the audience [28, pp. 178-179].

From a psychological point of view, the addressers of political discourse can be understood as comprising a number of emotional and intellectual elements that affect the production of speech. At the same time, they act as representatives of a certain social collective. For instance, any politician may belong to the ruling or opposition party, be a member of a parliamentary group as well as speak on his own behalf. It should be emphasized that the content of the discourse directly depends on the socio-political activities the politician is engaged in.

Concerning the addressees of political discourse, they can be of three types: formal, direct and indirect. They differ depending on the level of formality of the political message and the orientation of the communicative intention of the addresser [14, pp. 27-28].

The *formal addressee* could be the opponent of the politician. The communicative intention in this case is not targeted directly at the addressee because the addresser does not wish to persuade him but to criticize the program, point of view or on any other issue related to the opposing party in order to justify his own political beliefs.

The *indirect addressees* are the voters and, more broadly, the entire population of the country. Although the politician who, for instance, delivers a speech does not

formally address the entire nation, it is implied in his discourse since one of the aims of political communication is shaping public opinion on important matters related to the socio-political life of the country.

One of the most important elements in any communicative situation is the *direct addressee* because in that case the formal appeal of the discourse coincides with the orientation of the communicative intentions of the addresser. Usually the direct addressee is recognized as the audience gathered for a short period of time and representing a socio-psychological community of people united by at least one motive, such as the desire to listen to the politician. What is more, there is a direct contact between them and the author or the presenter of information. In political discourse this is possible during rallies, electoral speeches, parliamentary addresses, etc. The direct addressees are the people physically present at those events.

The most significant component of political discourse, however, is its initiator's pragmatic intention, which, as we have already mentioned, should be considered as a specific goal of the addresser to encourage the addressee to respond to the discourse in the way beneficial to the politician. Thus, the pragmatics of political discourse is focused on the communicative influence, that is, the pre-planned and targeted impact, conducted with the help of language and accompanying non-verbal means, on the knowledge (cognitive level) and political beliefs of the addressees, on the individual or mass consciousness so that the people make certain political choices which can alter the political situation within the country [39, p. 543].

S. Romaniuk singles out four types of the communicative influence, namely informative, argumentative, manipulative and suggestive [42, pp. 40-41]:

- Informative influence occurs when the politician presents factual information in order to attract attention of the addressees and motivate them to act.
- Argumentative or persuasive influence is performed by the addresser of political discourse consciously and explicitly. It appeals to the rational sphere of human consciousness since its aim is to convince people in the correctness of the politician's way of thinking. The process of persuasion is basically a governance of the audience's reasoning under the influence of argumentation.

- Manipulative influence is characterized by a latent nature: a person who is exposed to it has an illusion of independence in decision-making. It is used to covertly engrave into the psyche of the addressee the goals, desires, intentions, or attitudes that do not correspond to those which the addressee has at the moment of communication. Information is presented in a special manner that encourages the individual to draw conclusions based on it. Then she or he automatically assesses the data less critically because for them it looks reliable;

- Another type of manipulative influence is suggestion. It lies in affecting human subconscious and making people refrain from logical analysis or criticism of the statements made by the politician. The addressee of political discourse is put into the state of a trance, in which the addresser gives him commands to behave in this or that way.

In order to exert all those kinds of influence, certain communicative strategies are deployed. A communicative strategy can be defined as a process of organization of communicative behavior in accordance with the objectives set by the communicants. It involves the selection of verbal and nonverbal means that can affect an interlocutor's background knowledge as well as his/her perception of reality. To do so, one should take into account the personalities of people entering into communication and the relationships existing between them [45, p. 89].

Every communicative strategy is implemented with the help of a number of tactics. A lot of linguists have tried to explain what a communicative tactic is, but in this thesis we have decided to adhere to the clarification given by O. S. Issers. She states that "... if a communicative strategy is understood as a set of speech acts aimed at completing the general communicative task of the speaker, then a communicative tactic should be considered as a single speech act that contributes to the implementation of this strategy. Thus, those notions are interrelated in the same way as a genus and a species [22, p.110]."

Regarding political discourse, there are different approaches to the classification of its strategies and tactics. O. L. Mikhaleva, for instance, distinguishes three main

communicative strategies: improvement strategy, reduction strategy and the strategy of theatricality.

The *strategy of improvement* is characterized by the politician's desire to present himself in a good light and to increase his importance in the eyes of the supporters. It is actualized through:

- the tactic of making people draw positive conclusions: the addresser of the discourse describes a situation which implicitly highlights his positive qualities or the services he has done for the country;

- the tactic of self-presentation: the addresser praises himself and his political party using lexical units with a positive connotation;

- and the tactic of avoiding criticism or, in other words, providing arguments that would justify certain actions of the addresser or distance him from the fact of participation in a negative situation.

The *strategy of reduction* is aimed at the discreditation of the politician's opponents and implemented through:

- the tactic of making people draw negative conclusions: the addresser depicts the situation with the help of the lexical means that implicitly express his negative attitude towards it;

- the tactic of accusation: the politician without providing any proof openly tries to put the blame for the hardships of the country on his opponents; the goal is to expose them, to reveal their negative qualities and intentions;

- the tactic of impersonal accusation: the person responsible for failures is not explicitly named, the addresser deploys ambiguous grammar patterns and lexical units, that is, those that can potentially refer to a lot of people;

- the tactics of exposure: the politician accuses his opponents; however, this accusation is based not on allegations, as is the case with the tactic of accusation, but on the arguments and facts proving their guilt;

- and the tactic of threat, which lies in is intimidating one's political opponents; the addresser promises them punishment for their deeds.

When studying political discourse, special attention should be devoted to the *strategy of theatricality*. The fact is, the politicians want to impress the potential voters and, as a result, makes political communication rather spectacular. In order to do so, he employs:

- the tactic of incentive: the addresser of discourse seeks to motivate the audience to do what he wants, using the inclusive pronoun “we” to convince the people that he does not distance himself from them;

- the tactic of differentiation: the politician highlights the “we/they” opposition to show the addressees that he has nothing to do with his dishonest opponents;

- and the tactic of promise [36, pp. 45-67].

It should be noted that the abovementioned categorization is not exhaustive. I. O. Golubovska and T. V. Orlova, while studying the manipulative strategy applied by Donald Trump in his inaugural address, identify such tactics as argumentation, identification, intimacy (that is, the politician’s portrayal as being on the same page with his nation), positive self-presentation, accusation, sacred symbolization (or the deployment of the biblical ideas of unity between people and God’s divine protection), positive forecasting, consolidation of social efforts and encouraging cooperation with the authorities [15, p. 13]. Choosing the most appropriate communicative strategies and tactics requires the politician to be very attentive even to the slightest changes in the communicative behavior of his audience.

Regarding the linguists who analyze this area of pragmatics, they should be aware that very often the line between what can be considered the communicative strategy and what should be distinguished as the communicative tactic is blurred. As a matter of fact, the interrelation between the strategy and the tactic as “a genus and a species” is contextually dependent: based on the situation, the same phenomenon can be seen as the strategy or as the tactic within another strategy [10, p. 14]. What is more, communication, if spontaneous, is dynamic process: communicants must quickly decide what to do next in order to achieve their communicative goals and, as a result, tend not to overthink their strategy.

However, political discourse is basically a pre-planned public performance full of verbal and non-verbal techniques aimed at impressing potential voters. Politicians and their teams spend weeks or even months developing the winning combinations of communicative strategies. It means that investigating the pragmatic peculiarities of political discourse is a crucial task because it helps us understand how to resist the manipulative potential of this type of discourse, how to critically evaluate the provided information and how to make reasonable decisions.

Regarding the use of presupposition in communication, we consider it necessary to mention that in the case of daily interactions it is usually based on the addresser's assumptions about the addressee's awareness of the contextual conditions in which the statements are uttered and interpreted. The speakers believe that the listeners will understand the message completely because they evaluate the background facts presented in it as belonging to the sphere of general knowledge [66, p. 68].

However, if we are to discuss presupposition in political discourse, it should be noted that this phenomenon allows the politician to avoid making direct and categorical statements, which, for instance, may damage his reputation, and to transform them into more neutral expression of opinion, for which the speaker cannot be responsible. What is more, presuppositions are often deployed to manipulate the audience, to create allusions to certain facts that distort reality, or to extend the value system and worldview of the people. This is possible because presuppositions are taken for granted: the addressees do not doubt their reliability, while the direct statements might be called into question. Thus, politicians use them to transmit the information the reliability of which the recipient is supposed to believe, regardless of whether it is truthful or not.

Last but not least, since the main objective of political discourse is influencing the audience, that is, the potential voters, its pragmatic effect or, in other words, perlocutionary potential should also be discussed. It is well known that perlocution is an inherent component of any act of communication, however, in everyday life an average person barely notices it, while in the case of advertising, mass media and politics it comes to the forefront. This is because the perlocutionary effect of an

utterance can change the addressees' worldview, their emotional state as well as the mode of thinking and behaving.

According to the period of time after which it is exerted, we can single out two types of perlocution, namely a contact perlocutionary effect and a distant perlocutionary effect. The first one encompasses immediate reactions of the audience to the discourse of the addresser. Those could be certain emotions, sensations, developed stereotypes, etc. The distant perlocutionary effect, which is delayed in time from the moment of speechmaking, is the ultimate goal of the politician and lies in winning the votes of the supporters [3, p. 6].

At the same time, achieving that goal is impossible without following certain norms of communication. The phenomenon of any communicative context is connected with the principles and postulates of pragmatics that regulate the language behavior of its participants. They are thoroughly investigated in the modern pragmatic research, mainly within the so-called principles and maxims of communication.

For instance, G. Grice in his article called "Logic and Conversation" claims that the principle of cooperation, which involves the willingness of interlocutors to act in accordance with a specific purpose and flow of conversation, forms the basis of verbal communication. It presupposes the unity of four maxims, which ensure that the communication becomes successful, namely

- 1) the maxim of quantity, that states that the statement one produces should contain no more and no less information than is necessary in order to achieve the aim of communication;

- 2) the maxim of quality, according to which the communicators are expected to avoid false statements and those that are not supported by evidence;

- 3) the maxim of relevance, that disapproves deviations from the topic;

- 4) and the maxim of manner, when one strives to speak in the language understood by their interlocutors and makes their best to avoid any ambiguity and obscurity [77, p. 46].

The peculiarity of political discourse lies in the fact that in the process of communication between the politician and his audience, on the one hand, there is an

unquestionable distance between them due to his social status. On the other hand, the addresser of the discourse strives to gain support from the society. Therefore, he often resorts to dishonest means to convince the audience that his point of view is the one that is right: the politician can conceal important pieces of information from his voters or present irrelevant facts in a favorable light. During political debates, for instance, parties tend to deviate from the topic, engage in populism, make ambiguous and vague statements, etc. Regarding the implementation of Grice's maxims in political discourse, we assume that due to its specific nature a more interesting subject for analysis is not compliance with these principles but their violation.

Later on, R. Lakoff included in P. Grice's cooperative principle a notion of pragmatic competence, consisting of two overarching postulates: "be clear" and "be polite." The first one basically encompasses the Gricean four maxims of conversation. Strict adherence to it facilitates conveying information and is peculiar for formal communication. The second postulate is divided by the researcher into three subrules: "do not impose," "give options" and "make someone feel good – be friendly" (that is, create a comfortable atmosphere) [84, p. 297].

The first subrule presupposes that the interlocutors keep distance and that their relationships are based on formal politeness. The second subrule can be defined as informal politeness, which is more common in symmetric communication. The third subrule helps the communicants express their sympathy and love. It is aimed at maintaining intimate politeness.

In political discourse, the aforementioned principles are not usually followed. For instance, parliamentary debates are characterized by various inappropriate moves on the part of the addressers and addressees, such as interruptions, open disagreements, even insults, which contradict the principle of formal politeness. What is more, by doing so, they make the communicative atmosphere almost unbearable, breaking the third rule of politeness. Last but not least, all politicians tend to impose their own points of view and push their audience as well as the opponents to agree to their policies by not giving them the time and opportunity to analyze other options. Therefore, the second rule of politeness is violated as well.

In conclusion, pragmatic orientation is an undeniable feature of political discourse. The object of pragmatics as a field of linguistics is the relationship between units of language and the conditions of their usage in real communicative situations. It is for this reason that in our thesis we have decided to take a closer look at the addresser and the addressee of political discourse, their communicative goals as well as the peculiarities of the interaction happening between them. Of particular interest in this regard are the rules and conventions which regulate the communicative behavior of politicians, strategies and tactics that they develop in order to influence mass consciousness and exercise power, the interrelationship between linguistic choices made by those politicians and the social roles they play.

### **1.3. Manipulation as a Universal Tool for Governance of Mass Consciousness. Linguistic Perspective of the Phenomenon**

Manipulation can be defined as “a type of psychological influence during which a manipulator uses all his/her communicative skills to introduce into the linguistic i of an addressee the goals, intentions, attitudes or views that do not coincide with those the addressee has at a certain moment of time [20, p. 52].” In other words, this phenomenon presupposes certain control over an individual aimed at benefiting its initiator. One of the prerequisites of successful manipulation is that a person is certain that s/he has a choice to make independent decisions based on his/her own best interests.

Other significant features of manipulative influence, according to E. S. Popova, are the following ones [40, p. 8]:

- an object of manipulation is not aware of the impact that is exerted on him because the true intentions of the manipulator are hidden;

It should be noted that, according to O. V. Dmytruk, careful concealment of the intentions of the manipulator is not a compulsory precondition for the successful act of manipulation. In some cases, the addressees understand that they are manipulated but accept this fact and willingly agree to follow the addresser’s rules [19, p. 29].

- it appeals not only to human consciousness but also to emotions and feelings that humans can experience;

- the manipulator determines the attitude of the object of manipulation to the presented information by exercising control over its processing and evaluation as well regulating his/her reaction to the discussed social and political phenomena;

- the manipulator has the power to select the facts that support his point of view and omit those which undermine his reputation. Thus, he distorts reality and, as a consequence, misleads the addressee.

It is already clear that manipulation as a specific type of psychological impact involves two parties. One of those acts as the initiator and a subject of influence. It is the manipulator. The second party, which the manipulative effect is directed at, acts as the object of manipulation. Depending on whether it represents a single individual or a mass audience, one can distinguish two types of manipulation:

- an interpersonal one, interpreted as the deployments of various means and techniques of informational and psychological influence on one person;
- and a collective one, which implies the suppression of people's will by pre-programming their behavior [17, p. 358].

As stated by O. Boyko, political manipulators rely heavily on the weaknesses typical for mass consciousness. First of all, when individuals are gathered in a crowd, their understanding of socio-political reality is, for the most part, unconscious. Despite the fact that there are exceptions to the rule, and a lot of people with a high level of education and critical thinking are aware of the real political situation in their country, even more citizens have no time or desire to dig deeper into what is going on around them. This makes them easy targets for manipulators, who are always ready to fill in their gaps of knowledge with what they find appropriate.

What is more, mass consciousness is characterized by dogmatic and stereotypical attitude to reality: mass is categorical and knows neither doubts nor uncertainties in destroying the personality who questions what is generally accepted in the group. On the one hand, unscrupulous politicians encourage the formation of prejudices and biases that prove their points of view. On the other hand, they suppress their opponents, who question such an attitude to reality.

It should also be noted that the sphere of politics combines continuous pledges of the politicians to take an innovative approach to policymaking and change the outdated rules that hamper the nation's prosperity with their so-called commitment to traditional values. The reason for this is that mass consciousness is usually fond of conventions that were the cornerstones of society and the source of stability of political power at some point of the country's past.

Last but not least, mass is impulsive, easily excitable and unable to critically evaluate the situation. Therefore, the manipulator does not need to make a great effort to compel people to believe the genuineness and authenticity of the communicated knowledge [12, p. 103].

If we are to further discuss political discourse in terms of its manipulative potential, we should, first of all, mention that the role of the object of political manipulation can be performed not only by the entire nation but also by an individual citizen or a political party; however, in most cases the addresser of the discourse refers to the whole society. Secondly, manipulative influence in politics is conscious in character: in contrast to interpersonal manipulation, which can be conscious or unconscious, political manipulation is a carefully planned and targeted phenomenon. Thirdly, it aims to create favorable conditions for the implementation of one of three tasks, such as the conquest of power, the management of power and the monopoly of power. Finally, political manipulation presupposes an active involvement of the media as a mediator which broadcasts ideas and views that are to affect public consciousness [30, p. 441].

As is generally known, language is not only a main means of communication but also a reflection of the outside world in the human mind. Linguistic units help us to classify, categorize and process the kaleidoscopic flow of sensory experience. They structure our perceptions of reality. In addition, by using them we convey messages to inform, explain, instruct, advise, persuade or merely entertain the addressees.

When one tries to influence the others to behave in a certain way and abuses his power in order to achieve that result, he resorts to linguistic manipulation, which is "the manipulation carried out through the conscious and purposeful use of certain

features of the language organization and its usage [38, p. 87].” It occurs at the four levels of language: phonemic, morphemic, lexical and syntactic.

The process of linguistic manipulation includes the following steps:

- 1) determining the purpose of manipulation;
- 2) analyzing the communicative context and the level of background knowledge of the objects of manipulation;
- 3) choosing the best manipulative strategy and developing a system of manipulation tactics that ensure the implementation of that strategy;
- 4) revealing the manipulative message to the addressee;
- 5) launching the mechanisms of manipulation and obtaining a desired perlocutionary effect [21, p. 96].

It should be noted there that the line between manipulative and communicative strategies and tactics is blurred in most cases since they both comprise a set of pre-planned communicative moves aimed at achieving the desired communicative goal. As Teun A. van Dijk claims, “The same discourse structures are used in persuasion, information, education and other legitimate forms of communication, as well as in various forms of dissent [71, pp. 374-375].” The difference, however, lies in the nature of the addresser’s intentions and the means s/he deploys to bring them to life.

To prove our point of view, we have decided to analyze what distinguishes manipulation from persuasion. V. Chernyavska considers persuasion as the influence the author of an oral or written message exerts on its addressee in order to convince him to commit or not to commit certain actions [59, p. 24]. The addresser in this case is honest about his goals and tries to provide verified data that supports his arguments. The people who are subject to this kind of impact can believe or doubt the words of the persuader, or act as they please.

Regarding manipulation, it typically involves illegitimate domination and power abuse. The addressees are neither aware of the real intentions of the manipulator nor understand the long-term consequences of the disseminated ideas: they are passive recipients of the manipulative influence. Thus, the most distinctive features of manipulation are asymmetrical relationships between the manipulator and his/her

victims; the lack of knowledge on the addressees' part; and the fact that the actions of manipulation are beneficial for the dominant group of individuals and against the interests of the ordinary people, thus contributing to social inequality [68, p. 52-53].

Returning to the question of communicative strategies and tactics, the aforementioned statement about the absence of clear distinction them and manipulative strategies and tactics indicates that the previously discussed classifications, suggested by O. L. Mikhaleva [36] and I. O. Golubovska in collaboration with T. V. Orlova [15] can be deployed to analyze the manipulative potential of political discourse as well. However, in this thesis we have decided to go a step further and continue our preliminary research on this topic.

One of the most exhaustive categorization of the strategies of manipulation inherent for political discourse is the one which was developed by O. V. Marina [32, pp. 118-119]. The linguist distinguishes seven main manipulative moves:

- *The strategy of using identification formulas*, which involves the language units that may encourage the addressees to identify themselves with the addresser, his views and political party as well as evoke a sense of belonging to a certain community of people. Personal and possessive pronouns are particularly important in that regard. However, this seemingly positive goal is of a dual nature. On the one hand, it contributes to the formation of the collective identity and leads to the strengthened feeling of solidarity with the current government. On the other hand, politicians perceive this strategy as a means of ideological influence on the masses, when the will of the ruling minority is subtly imposed on the majority.

- *The strategy of presenting a subjective opinion as an objective fact* or the unquestionable verity. In order to do so, such expressions as “as we all know,” “there is no doubt that,” “as is the case,” etc. are used.

- *The strategy of referring to authority*, when someone famous or respected shares his vision of the problem. As a consequence, the audience is relieved of any burden of decision-making since a more competent person has already made all the

conclusions. At the same time, the politician abdicates responsibility for the possible failures because he just followed the pieces of advice given to him.

- *The strategy of praising the addressee.* The politician can easily win the commitment of the audience when giving a speech full of instances of flattery and admiration of the fellow citizens' efforts for the greater good as well as emphasizing their exceptionality among other nations, etc.

- *The strategy of highlighting the significance and truthfulness of the politician's ideas.* It is implemented through the use of rhetorical questions, irony, directed against his opponents, as well as other tropes and figures of speech.

- *The strategy of complexity reduction and deployment of contrasting alternatives.* The addresser has to formulate very precisely two diametrically opposing ideas. Only in this way can he create an illusion of a choice without revealing too much "unnecessary" information. Besides, in most cases mass audience is not ready to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the whole variety of alternatives.

- *The strategy of mobilization and demobilization of public opinion.* Political events are presented either dramatically, when the state of affairs is horrible and requires immediate and decisive actions, or not so dramatically, when the politician assures the society that all perpetrators will be found and punished, at the same time asking people to be patient.

If we are to discuss manipulation typology, we should mention that, according to N. D. Tibin'ko, there are two types of manipulation, which can be divided into several subtypes:

1. *Referential manipulation*, which involves the distortion of an image of a referent in the process of depicting reality and consists of the manipulation of facts (for instance, hyperbolization, understatement, concealment, etc.) and the manipulation of the focus of attention (the politician provides his supporters with a fragmentary picture of the world in order to present himself in a favorable light).

2. *Argumentative manipulation*, which presupposes disruptions of the integrity of the utterance that a speaker makes to avoid giving direct answer to an embarrassing

question as well as to create ambiguity and evade the obligation to present evidence that would support his statements [49, pp. 142-158].

In addition, politicians resort to the use of myths and mythologems in order to manipulate mass consciousness even more effectively. A political myth can be defined as a narrative that has an ideological slant and is claimed to be the true reflection of certain events, thus contributing to the realization of specific political goals of various groups seeking political power [48, p. 41]. Its most important functions are as follows:

- the function of explanation: the myth acts as a means of social guidance and facilitates an understanding of complex political concepts and theories;

- the function of justification of political actions: politicians often resort to myths in an attempt to convince voters in the advantages of the political programs they suggest and emphasize their merits as candidates for a particular post;

- the function of maintaining the stability of the system and legitimization of the existing order of things;

- the function of social cohesion, with the help of which a connection between the citizens and the political community is guaranteed;

- and the function of manipulation and persuasion: the myth is a powerful means of influence, that is, a political weapon capable of subduing the people's will [87, p. 98]. When it gains a foothold in the minds of people, the myth can serve as an effective substitute for reality. Consequently, fellow voters change their attitude to the political situation within their country on the basis of what stories they are told. Political myths relieve the addressees from the need to critically process the choices made by them since, as was already stated, those symbolic narratives explain the existing order of things as well as justify this order by giving it a moral basis or representing it as a system based on the law.

Mythologeme is a fundamental element or motive of the myth. One of the crucial peculiarities of political discourse is the ideologization of mythologemes and their transformation into ideologemes, which are a means of spreading propaganda and strengthening political power. Regarding the classification of the phenomenon, E. I. Sheigal distinguishes three types of mythologemes:

1) a mythologeme-text, which is a detailed narrative with elements of a legend or a fairy tale, used to describe a political movement or to tell the audience the biography of the politician;

2) a mythologeme-statement or, in other words, an utterance containing false or unreliable information (for instance, pre-election slogans, that are full of unfulfillable promises);

3) and a mythologeme-anthroponym: almost all the names of more or less famous politicians become mythologemes because people tend to form either positive or negative associations about them [61, pp. 191-195].

To conclude, linguistic manipulation is an inherent component of political discourse. Its main purpose is to make the manipulated object to accept certain statements of the manipulator as being verified and truthful. If any political leader wants to succeed in the struggle for power, he should to be aware of the unspoken rules of manipulation, which presuppose analyzing thoroughly not only the mechanisms of this phenomenon but also acquiring a correct understanding of the aspirations and needs of the society one lives in. Depending on those requirements and the ultimate goal of the politician, the most appropriate strategies and tactics of influence are chosen.

It should be noted that any communication act during which the addresser does not openly express his intentions should be regarded as manipulation. In case of political discourse, this phenomenon is of particular significance because it can lead to long-term consequences and have a strong effect on future of the entire state.

#### **1.4. Manipulation from the Cognitive Perspective. The Significance of the Notion of “Concept” in Political Discourse**

Cognitive science is a relatively new field, which studies human mind, the phenomenon of ideation and all the mental processes and states that are related to them. It encompasses two main notions, namely knowledge and cognition, that is, acquiring understanding about the world during the process of its perception, and states that any individual is a complex system that constantly deals with information processing. Consequently, his/her external behavior can be explained in terms of the internal

operations that the person performs at a certain moment of time. They are physically observable and involve the reception, management, storage and mobilization of data that is needed when someone wants to find a rational solution to the existing problem [33, p. 7].

Since any language is a means of structuring people's life experiences which facilitates transformation of real-life situations and events into their verbal representations in human consciousness as well as the exchange of knowledge between individuals, it has become the focus of cognitivists' attention. Cognitive linguistics thus can be defined as "a branch of linguistics that investigates the role of language in conceptualization and categorization of the world, in storing the verbal data in one's memory and retrieving it from there [27, p. 52]." Within a cognitive approach to language, its formations are analyzed on the basis of people's background knowledge about the world, their experience of interaction with each other as well as psychological, and cultural factors that influence the process of interpretation of external stimuli and responding to them.

As we have already mentioned, political manipulation is understood from the perspective of cognitive linguistics as a covert usage by the politician of certain language tools aimed at transforming the voters' cognitive and psychological models of reality, imposing a certain attitude to political situation in the state and, ultimately, changing their behavior in his interests. However, if we are to further investigate the cognitive perspective of the phenomenon, we should, first of all, understand how manipulators deploy the peculiarities of human memory in order to successfully exert manipulative influence.

Teun A. van Dijk believes that short term memory, characterized by a relatively small period of storing information derived from various sensory experiences, plays an important role in the suppression of facts [71, pp. 365-372]. This type of memory is a crucial element of cognition since, according to the Atkinson-Shiffrin memory model, it ensures the transmission of the data that the person finds significant for the future into the long term memory, which constitutes the final stage of information processing and contributes to the formation of stable opinions and

beliefs about how the world works [65, pp. 92-94]. Politicians are aware of those facts and simply do not allow their audience to explore and comprehend the full picture of reality. In order to do so, they strive to establish control over the data flow as well as ensure that some of pieces of information remain more “memorable” than the others.

For instance, in advertorials on politics the most beneficial for the manipulator facts are printed in bold fonts so as to attract more public attention. They are usually placed at the beginning of an article since an average reader tends to get bored and may skip several passages towards the end of the text when it is too large. In terms of slogans, politicians try to repeat them to the audience as many times as possible to engrave the ideas contained in them into people’s subconsciousness. Regarding political speeches, if the manipulator wishes to facilitate understanding among the voters, he makes his language distinct and clear, using simple syntactic structures and basic vocabulary, as well as prefers talking about the topics familiar to the audience. The politician might even pronounce the utterances a bit slower than usual. However, if the speaker wants to hide something, he maintains a quick tempo, making the words difficult to discern. What is more, manipulators may discuss sophisticated topics, deploy ambiguous lexical units, etc.

Concerning manipulation of long term memory, the Dutch scholar investigates the impact it has on its episodic subtype, that encompasses the memories of events that took place in one’s life. Those episodes from the past contribute to the formation of mental models, which are individual and unique phenomena encompassing judgements and feelings caused by real-life experiences. What is even more important, those models affect our comprehension of ideas, presented in a certain piece of discourse, the acceptance of those theories as well as the attitude to the whole communicative situation [73, p. 122]. Taking into account their manipulative potential, manipulators strive to fill the audience’s episodic memory with events that support their theories and in such a way stimulate the formation of the mental models which are beneficial for them. For instance, when Joe Biden in his pre-election addresses constantly reminds the audience of the death of George Floyd and the following protests in defense of racial equality, he not only shows the voters that there are problems in the American

society as well as expresses his readiness to tackle them but also emphasizes the indifference of the President and his Administration to what is happening around them, thus discrediting the ruling party.

However, the character of political discourse implies that it is targeted at a large mass of people. This is the reason why the most proficient politicians do not wish to confine their efforts to dealing only with the creation of individual-oriented mental models but prefer operating on the level of social representations, which are gradually acquired over the course of our life, embrace general beliefs, common knowledge, shared attitudes and ideologies and facilitate the activation of the aforementioned mental models. The most widespread strategy used to control social representations is generalization, when certain mental models, evoked by specific episodes from the past, are transferred to the category of knowledge or ideology [71, p. 362]. For instance, by constantly stressing that the Muslims are responsible for a lot of terrorist attacks, politicians make citizens assume that the all representatives of this religion are dangerous criminals. As is generally known, the US government used to resort to such an unscrupulous means of manipulation to encourage their people to approve the funding of various counter-terrorism programs or to justify the military interventions in the Middle-East countries.

Furthermore, the perception of any piece of previously unknown information is significantly influenced by cognitive biases, which could be defined as systematic mental mistakes caused by the proclivity of human consciousness to oversimplify the information processing activity [80, p. 111]. They are inherent in our thinking because in order to efficiently react to external stimuli, we have to make prompt decisions based on what we believe to be the best move in particular circumstances. However, these immediate choices are usually caused not by logical reasoning but by judgments and inferences which seem to be genuine and correct, when they may be totally false.

Concerning political discourse, examples of stereotypical cognitive errors include:

- the inertia of consciousness, when modern political affairs are assessed by comparing them to how things were in the past, although there is no visible connection between now and then;

- the conformity of the mind, which is the tendency of voters to behave in a certain way just because the majority of their fellow citizens have decided to do so;

- and the faulty interpretation of ideas: it involves the selectivity of perception, (the audience interpret information stated by the politician in an uncritical way, that is, completely ignoring the pieces that contradict their beliefs about this individual), the effect of false memories (the facts that the addresser alludes to are perceived by the people as recollections, even if he made them up in order to win the votes), the conservatism of beliefs (when the opposing party proves that the politician is a liar, not all the supporters change their attitude towards him at once since they want to save their face) [64, p. 272].

Although the given list of biases is not exhaustive, it demonstrates how manipulators exploit the weaknesses of cognition to bypass the protective barrier of consciousness and to exert manipulative influence in a subtle way. Those factors are fundamental preconditions for successful manipulation.

Returning to the issue of cognition, we should mention the fact that every person has his own cognitive style. Although the term was introduced for scientific use in the second half of the 20th century, the phenomenon remains insufficiently studied since its nature still raises a lot of disputes among researchers.

In a broader sense, cognitive style can be perceived as an individual approach to problem-solving. It characterizes a person's behavior in a range of situations and does not depend on his/her intellectual level or professional competencies [91, p. 31]. W. H. Agor, for instance, distinguishes three types of styles that are deployed in order to help people cope with challenges: intuitive, analytical and combined. Those with analytical mindset separate a large issue into smaller, easily controllable parts and then deal with them one by one. Individuals who prefer intuitive thinking rely on their feelings when making decisions. They tend to solve problems holistically. A combined style

incorporates elements from both approaches. It is used when one needs to quickly adapt to new circumstances [63, p. 25].

Despite what has already been stated about cognitive style, in this thesis we are to analyze political discourse from a linguistic perspective. Therefore, this notion is understood there “as the unique style of information presentation, which encompasses not only its organization in discourse or stylistic peculiarities of the output but also the selection of items which are supposed to be discussed [31, p. 80]. Those processes are determined by the cognitive operations responsible for interpreting reality and constructing mental models on the basis of the processed facts.

In her research on the differences of political discourses of George W. Bush and Barack Obama, D. M. Kalischuk, impressed by the scientific achievements of an American sociologist R. A. Cohen [70, p. 836], differentiates between two basic styles of cognitive activity: analytical and relational. On the one hand, they differ in the range of vocabulary and syntactic patterns chosen by the politicians to promote their ideas. On the other hand, those styles are also reflected in the types of behavior the US presidents found appropriate for interpersonal and public relations, their values and beliefs. The analytical one, for instance, is characterized by the tendency towards egocentrism, social distancing and duty prioritization; while the relational style demonstrates the politician’s desire for social inclusion, proclivity to a more direct way of expressing thoughts and predisposition to acknowledge of loyalty as a prerequisite for success [24, p. 27].

However, what interests us the most in the analysis of political discourse from the point of view of cognitive linguistics is the notion of concept as the smallest unit of mental processing of reality, dependent on the culture-motivated forces and engraved into the neurolinguistic level of cognition. It comprises an infinite set of clichéd structures, through the lens of which new phenomena are perceived and interpreted [13, p. 172]. Thus, the concept is an informational entity that reflects one’s epistemic knowledge and is shaped with the help of cognitive and psychic resources of our consciousness. This operational and meaningful component of memory forms mental lexicon, which encompasses the whole picture of the world in human mind.

According to I. S. Shevchenko, concepts can exist only in a certain situational context because outside of it words just have denotative meanings, explained in a dictionary [60, p. 11].

A set of linguistic means deployed to represent the concept during a certain period of social development is called its nominative field. This notion is of a complex character because it does not function as a structural cluster in the language system but as a bunch of nominative units, identified and classified by the researcher [41, pp. 66-68]. Nominative fields include lexis from all parts of speech and are essentially heterogeneous: they contain direct nominations of concepts as well as the nominations of their cognitive features, which indirectly reveal the inner meaning of those concepts and the attitude to them in different communicative situations.

A. Wierzbicka divides the tools that are used to verbalize concepts into direct and indirect. Direct means encompass words thematically related to the concept under analysis, while indirect instruments of linguistic representation of concepts involve compatibility and grammatical characteristics of the lexemes from which one can deduce the features of the concept [93, pp. 204-208].

The structure of the nominative field of any concept consists of its core, basic layer and periphery. The core includes one or several hypersemes, which are special lexical components of a higher order. They determine the development of the semantic field around them. The basic layer entails units that have an integral, common to the core differential value. At the periphery lie the most distant from the core elements, the generic meanings of which belong to the area of “potential” semantics [50, p. 135].

It should also be mentioned that nominative fields are continuously modified due to the changing nature of the external world and the internal value system of humans. Concepts cannot be stable: they are replenished with new elements, while the old ones become archaic, irrelevant, and eventually disappear. Therefore, any research on them is always an analysis of their structure and content at a particular stage of historical development. In other words, the results of their investigation cannot be extrapolated to the future.

Regarding political discourse, that affects the wellbeing of all members of a certain community, we cannot but agree that notion of concept deserves special attention because when appealing to those units of cognition, politicians have the power to inform, inspire and persuade the audience as well as motivate those people to action by manipulating them. The last function is possible to perform because at the core of political communication lie value and moral categories that determine human behavior and perception of the world, form a basis on which we assess other people and divide them into friends and enemies [34, p. 113].

The most common concepts deployed for the purpose of manipulation in this type of discourse are the ones that are universal, recognizable by the majority of citizens of this or that state. For instance, in the US political rhetoric the most prominent concepts are those which were proclaimed to be the cornerstones of the American society, namely democracy, freedom and equality. The electorate there expect their politicians to demonstrate strong devotion to those principles of state governance, and the latter often resort to such concepts to impress their supporters, make them believe their words as well to look good in their eyes.

Another important method of manipulation of mass consciousness in political discourse is the imposition of negative or positive attitudes towards certain events and situations, when politicians encourage the formation of biases and stereotypes among the general public by implicitly modifying the nominative fields of concepts, changing their pragmatic effect and making people create stable associations about them, which most often are far from reality.

To summarize, the problem of political manipulation has become more apparent in recent years, and we believe that a cognitive analysis of this phenomenon can help us investigate its internal mechanisms since cognition, as a unity of knowledge and reasoning, reflects how humans perceive the world and, at the same time, determines our viewpoints, system of values, methods of reality categorization, etc. Manipulators strive to find the key to this layer of human psyche so as to subjugate the general public to their wishes both consciously and unconsciously. They resort to the use of various linguistic tools to achieve that result. However, the most effective among them are

those means which are aimed at people's mental models and their conceptual structures.

### **Summary of the First Part**

In the modern world, politics is one of the most influential means of mass communication, which performs not only a sociocultural function of uniting people with different backgrounds, economic status, level of education and awareness of the internal and external affairs of their state into one community responsible for its own prosperity, security and peaceful coexistence with other nations but also the function of power abuse since politics belongs to the public sphere of social life and presupposes the maintenance of asymmetric relations between the addressers of a political message (a politician) and its recipients (the ordinary citizens).

From a linguistic point of view, political discourse is an institutional type of discourse, developed in accordance with the views and beliefs of a certain politician as well as the policies, promoted by his party, and aimed at creating in the subconsciousness of the audience a picture of the outside worlds that is beneficial to its author and might not reflect the actual state of things within a particular society. It is characterized by semantic and syntactic ambiguity, which makes it possible for the politician to evade responsibility for the uttered statements, and a great level of expressiveness, necessary to impress the people and make them believe the words of the politician.

Concerning the fact that in this thesis we are to analyze the manipulative potential of political discourse, we have decided to take a closer look at its pragmatic orientation, which deals not only with the context of an utterance or the properties of language users that can affect its interpretation but also with the issue of the communicative impact. This phenomenon can be defined as a pre-planned and targeted effect, achieved through numerous verbal and non-verbal means, and exerted on the knowledge and beliefs of the addressees so that they make various decisions, which can change the political climate in the state. In order to do so, politicians tend to deploy a wide range of communicative strategies and tactics. When a communicative strategy is understood as a process of organization of communicative behavior based on the goals set by the

communicants, a communicative tactic is considered to be a single step that contributes to the implementation of the desired strategy.

Manipulation is a specific type of communicative impact, a psychological influence during which a manipulator uses all his/her expertise to subtly introduce into the psyche of an addressee the intentions, viewpoints and ideas that do not coincide with those the person has at a certain moment of time. At the same time, an object of manipulation believes in ability to make independent decisions. The information provided by the manipulator is organized in a special manner so that the individual draws reasonable conclusions from seemingly reliable facts. In such a case s/he automatically evaluates the data less critically since it looks truthful to them.

Last but not least, manipulative potential of political discourse is actualized on the level of the addressees' cognition. As a result, politicians resort to the techniques that can physically hamper people's comprehension of ideas, such as the concealment of important facts from the public and the acknowledgement of some irrelevant details as being of paramount significance. However, the most effective approach, which requires the manipulator to be proficient in his or her sphere of work, is aimed at transforming voters' cognitive models of reality. In order to achieve that result, s/he deploys the method of manipulation of value concepts. Those are cognitive constructs that affect human perception of the world and provide a stable ground for the distinction between what is appropriate and beneficial for wellbeing of an individual and what should be avoided so that the individual does not get in trouble. As a result, politicians modify the semantic fields of the concepts in order to make them conform to the content of their discourse, thus substituting the connotative meaning of those concepts and making people question their reliability. Another option for the politicians is to simply utilize certain concepts with the intention to praise themselves or discredit their opponents.

## **PART 2. MANIPULATION STRATEGIES AND TACTICS OF DONALD TRUMP AND JOE BIDEN**

In the theoretical part of the thesis it was already stated that manipulation is an inherent component of political communication and focuses on implicit, covert motivation of an addressee to perform certain actions which serve the interests of a manipulator and contradict the interests of the addressee [59, p. 19].

However, given the fact that we have decided to perform the comparative analysis of the strategies and tactics of manipulative influence exerted by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in their rally speeches during the 2020 US electoral race, we believe that there is a need to outline the peculiarities of pre-election discourse as a part of a large-scale political rhetoric. From the functional point of view, the addresses of the presidential nominees are designed to defeat political enemies; to unify people into a less critical and, therefore, easily controllable mass; to show the political status of their addressers; and to make the ideas of the politicians available to the public so that the voters are ready to support the “right” candidate. Thus, the effectiveness of pre-election communication directly depends on an oratorical style of a politician, his ability to inform, persuade, inspire and even entertain the audience.

After the first processing of the material of our study, which consists of 80 campaign speeches (40 for each presidential nominee), selected through the random sampling method, we came to the conclusion that the subjects of the 2020 presidential campaign, pursuing the same goal of communication and being in the same communicative situations, demonstrate dissimilar approaches to applying linguistic manipulation while presenting their political programs at the campaign rallies.

Having interpreted, generalized, and classified (with the help of the methods of qualitative comparative, discourse and communicative-pragmatic analysis, etc.) the linguistic units applied in those addresses, we not only identified the strategies and tactics of manipulation but also conducted a comprehensive research of the lexical and stylistic devices as well as the syntactic patterns deployed to implement them, and made an attempt to investigate the interdependence between the chosen techniques of manipulation and the individual beliefs and inclinations of the politicians.

## 2.1. The Strategy of Integration

Integration in political discourse is a cooperative type of communicative interaction happening between the politician and the public. In order to achieve it, the addresser organizes his linguistic behavior in such a way as to influence the addressees emotional and rational components of mental activity as well as to perform one the most important tasks in any communicative situation, namely to overcome distance between himself and the audience.

Regarding the US electoral tradition, the strategy of integration lies in the formal declaration of solidarity of a presidential candidate with the potential voters or, in other words, the people who seek for peaceful coexistence and prosperity of various social and ethnic groups within a multinational American society [5, p. 19]. The politician and the political party that stands behind him act not as representatives of State power or members of the government but as independent subjects ready to engage in a dialogue with the fellow citizens, to attend to their needs and to serve their best interests. In such a way they gain the audience's trust and indirectly build their positive image.

At the same time, the strategy of integration in the US pre-election discourse is a communicative activity, characterized by a great manipulative potential: it is carefully planned and developed with the intention to control people's minds, to deceive them with the assurances that there is a mutual understanding between the politician and the electorate, even if it is not true. In order to better understand the mechanisms of pragmatic impact, in our thesis we provide a detailed analysis of manipulative tactics aimed at changing the beliefs and attitudes of the voters and provoking them to make the decision that yields benefits for a certain presidential nominee.

*The tactic of unity* is deployed to consolidate millions of incompatible individuals with their unique life experiences, worldviews, personality traits, etc. into a single nation, which is proud of its common heritage and inspired to reach new heights of welfare as well as to help the addresser of political discourse to establish close relationships with the audience. As a general rule, it is possible for any politician,

regardless of the party he belongs to or the policies he supports, to achieve a great level of public confidence, provided that he constantly claims that he belongs to the common folk and, in the long run, manages to convince the electorate that his ideas, statements and actions should be treated positively because he is one of them and deserves to be trusted.

The conducted analysis of the rally speeches made by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in the course of their presidential campaigns showed that both of them resort to developing the semantic field that we have decided to label “WE” in the absence of better alternative. It is deployed to represent US citizens, who slowly but surely build an institution, based on the rule of law and democratic values. However, what interests us the most there is the fact that the peculiar nature of the lexemes from the mentioned field makes it possible for the politicians to automatically include themselves into the that social collective.

In order to illustrate our point of view, we suggest to take a closer look at the fragment from Donald Trump’s speech in Lansing, Michigan on October 27, 2020:

*“Together, we will continue to protect American families, fight for American workers, support **our** police, defend **our** second amendment .... Secure **our** borders and ensure more products are proudly stamped with the beautiful phrase, Made in the USA [137].”*

In this example, unity is achieved with the help of such lexical items as the inclusive personal pronouns *we* and *our* as well as the adverb *together*. Moreover, we assume that the repetition of the adjective *American* with reference to *families* and *workers*, the groups that are believed to be the cornerstones of the US society and the driving force of its economic prosperity, also contributes to the sense of national pride and the feeling of security, guaranteed by the republic. The phrase *Made in the USA* is intended to appeal to the citizens’ commitment to the idea of patriotism, lift their spirits and inspire them to vote. On the whole, this excerpt could also be perceived as illustrating the deployment of the tactic of subtle appeal to the audience’s emotions, which is the next to be explained after the tactic of self-presentation (for more information, please see page 56).

However, in most of the cases, the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the US organizes his discourse in such a way as to bring to the attention of the electorate the fact that he and his Administration are the ones in the driver's seat, even though they work day and night for the good of the ordinary people.

For example, in the following passage from Donald Trump's rally called "Save America," which occurred in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2020, the anaphoric repetition of the pronoun *we* is deployed not to attribute economic achievements of the country to the efforts of the citizens and, consequently, flatter them but to make sure they know that only Trump and his team could bring "a dream of millions of Americans" to life. The hyperbole in the final sentence serves to enhance the pragmatic effect of the utterance even more:

*"We created the greatest economy in history. We rebuilt our military. We get you the biggest tax cuts in history. We got you the biggest regulation cuts. There's no President who, whether it's four years, eight years, or in one case more, got anywhere near the regulation cuts [142]."*

Regarding the pre-election discourse of Joe Biden, we should mention that he uses the lexemes *we*, *our* and *us* to integrate himself in the American society as well, but when his political opponent speaks predominantly about the future accomplishments of his compatriots, the former Vice President tries to establish a deeper emotional connection with the audience through discussing the hardships they all have to face as one nation.

For instance, talking about the COVID-19 pandemic in North Carolina on October 18, 2020, Joe Biden acknowledges the problem and strives to keep the citizens' spirits up. The pronoun *we*, deployed in this case, serves to remind the people that they will not be left to deal with troubles on their own. What is more, the repeated verb *build* is supposed to create the image of the future as "a building" which is meant to be "constructed" only by collective efforts:

*"Folks, we're so much better than this. Despite the crisis we face, we have enormous opportunity if we just build. We can build back better. We just got to stand*

*up and take it back. Look, we can build an economy that gets everyone a fair return on their work, an equal chance to get ahead [172].”*

In his continuous attempts to unite the country, Biden goes even further and makes an unprecedented, at least from the point of view of Donald Trump, step when making in his virtual campaign speech October 3, 2020 such a statement:

*“We aren’t blue states and red states. We’re the **United States. United States.** If you elect me President, I’m going to be President for **all Americans.** I’m running as a Democrat proudly, but I’m going to make sure I’m President for **the people who voted against me as much as those who voted for me** [160].”*

Analyzing this fragment, we would like to pay attention to the phrase *United States*, which is repeated two times to highlight the interrelation of its denotative and connotative meaning. In addition to that, the author expresses his readiness to reach solidarity with every single US citizen by including into the semantic field “WE” *all Americans* and two mutually exclusive parties: *the people who voted against me* and *those who voted for me*. The repetition of the phrase *I’m going to* emphasizes Biden’s determination to act as was promised.

Concerning other means of implementation of the tactic of unity, Donald Trump, for instance, draws his supporters’ attention to their common heroic past and the ancestors who were ready to sacrifice everything to build a brighter future for the generations to come. In his address, delivered in Sanford, Florida on October 12, 2020 he says,

*“**From Tampa to Tallahassee, from Pensacola to Miami ... we stand on the shoulders of patriots who gave their blood, sweat, and tears for this beloved nation. We stand on the shoulders of American heroes that crossed the oceans, blazed the trails, settled the continent, tamed the wilderness, ... won two world wars, defeated fascism and communism, and ... landed our brave American astronauts on the face of the moon** [105].”*

The politician not only fills the audience with pride and reminds those people of the responsibility for the electoral choice they are going to make by using the metaphor *stand on the shoulders of patriots* but also sets spatial frames in the initial position of

the sentence. They are supposed to convince his supporters that, no matter where they live, they belong to one family, namely the American family, which binds communities together and makes them a cohesive entity. What also catches our interest in the first sentence is the phrase *blood, sweat, and tears*. It is a perfect illustration of the rule of three and alludes to Winston Churchill's famous speech in which he informs his nation about the need to prepare for war. The second sentence deploys enumeration to illustrate the feats of the *American heroes*.

The approach of Joe Biden in that regard is completely different. His plan is not to speak in platitudes about past accomplishments. In a speech in Hermantown, Minnesota on September 18, 2020 he intends to show the people with ordinary occupations that they are outstanding personalities, whose great work may remain unnoticeable for the majority of those from the ruling establishment but not for the fellow Americans, not for him and his future Administration:

*“Now **the American people** have seen these women and men, **the essential workers, workers** who stock the shelves in the middle of these crisis in the grocery stores, **drivers** who drove the trucks, delivered the food, **farm workers, nurses** who risk their lives, in many cases, gave their lives in the middle of this pandemic to save other people. **Essential workers** [64].”*

The politician stresses the fact that those workers are *essential*: firstly, by defining with the help of anadiplosis who they are and what they do for the society and, secondly, by repeating the word combination *essential workers* transformed into an elliptical sentence at the end of the sense group. Such an approach makes the addressees feel compassion towards the described people and even imagine themselves in their shoes.

In order demonstrate his devotion to the needs of the middle-class families, Joe Biden even shares his personal story. The excerpt from the speech given in Alliance, Ohio during his ‘Whistle-Stop’ campaign tour on September 30, 2020 serves as a perfect illustration of this communicative behavior:

*“**I can remember my father, we lived in a three-bedroom house with four kids and a grandpop. I can remember the walls were thin. I can remember my dad** rolling*

*around at night. I could hear him. Our room was next to him. I remember asking my mom one day, 'What's the matter with dad?' She said, 'We just lost the insurance. We have no health insurance.' So look, these are the things that people are worried about [178]."*

Talking about his family: siblings, granddad, mother and father, who raised him in difficult conditions, Biden shows the audience that he is open, that he has nothing to hide from the general public as well as demonstrates his awareness of the problems of ordinary people because he himself had to repeatedly face and tackle those challenges. The parallel sentences based on anaphora (*I can remember...*) are meant to strengthen the pragmatic effect of what was stated.

Another interesting example of such an approach to the implementation of the tactic of unity in the discourse of the former Vice President is the fragment from his address given after the first presidential debate in Cleveland, Ohio on September 30, 2020:

*"... after my wife and daughter were killed when I was first elected, I started going home every single night so I'd be there in the morning to get my kids, Beau, Hunter and Ashley ready for school. Actually, Jill, God love her, she came into our life five years later and made things good [181]."*

There Joe Biden speaks about his loss, making himself even more vulnerable and human. Calling his wife, sons and a daughter by their names immediately reduces the communicative distance, which most certainly exists between the presidential nominee and the fellow citizens.

Donald Trump, on the contrary, prefers keeping silence about his private life and financial affairs so as not to acknowledge the privileges he has been enjoying since childhood and which are definitely unobtainable for most of the Americans. Mentioning those facts could make the President look indifferent to the needs of the voters. Instead, he tends to invite several guests of honor to his rallies, narrate their stories in public and manipulate in such a way the minds of the supporters by convincing them that he cares about each and every US citizen.

For instance, during a campaign rally in Newport News, Virginia on September 25, 2020 the politician pays tribute to the soldiers who passed away while performing their duty to the fatherland:

*“We’re all so deeply moved to be joined by two **gold star spouses**, two incredible people. **Karen Owens** was a guest at my first address to Congress, as we honored the supreme sacrifice of her husband, fallen **Navy Seal, Ryan Owens** .... And we’re also joined with **Brittany Jacobson** .... And we honored the memory of her incredible husband and **Christian’s dad, Marine Sergeant Christopher Jacobs** .... But we thank God every day for our courageous warriors, and we’ll always support our incredible **gold star families** [126].”*

First of all, he uses the euphemistic phrases *gold star spouses* and *gold star families* so as to not hurt the feelings of those who lost their loved ones during armed conflicts. Second, by giving the full names of the wives and the ranks of their husbands, Donald Trump shows them his respect and gratitude. Third, he indirectly enquires about the wellbeing of a son of one of the heroes. This cannot but have a positive effect on the President’s reputation.

Last but not least, we would like to analyze the attitudes of both presidential candidates to the problem of immigration and ethnic minorities. The opinion of Donald on this issue is pretty clear: illegal immigrants put the future of law-abiding American taxpayers at risk; therefore, illegal immigration has to be eradicated. At the same time, the politician acknowledges that his nation unites millions of representatives from different social and cultural backgrounds.

This explains the fact that while criticizing at Minden, Nevada on September 12, 2020 Biden’s pledge to reinstate Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule, Trump tries to convince the audience that he is ready to protect the interests of all US citizens, irrespective of their skin color or origin:

*“30% of the people that live in the suburbs are **minorities**. They’re **Hispanic**, they’re **Black**, they’re **Asian**, it’s the American dream. And they want the American dream and they don’t want that to happen. That’s why I’m doing so well with **African American**, with **Asian American**, with **Hispanic American** and with **women** [121].”*

In order for everyone to feel included in the category of “WE”, the politician decided to clarify who should belong there: *minorities* (African, Asian and Hispanic Americans) and *women*. In such a way he makes those categories of people consider themselves to be the members of the big American community as well as feel that they are all actively involved in making important decisions for the country which has become their homeland. What is more, Donald Trump emphasizes that he totally understands the desire of the former immigrants to achieve “the American dream” and is ready to help.

Regarding Joe Biden, he adopts an opposite view on the matter of immigration. It is no secret that the politician strongly disapproves the penalizing policy advocated by the President, when children are taken away from their parents and locked in detention camps and when asylum seekers get harassed and deported.

The presidential nominee openly expresses his opinion at a Hispanic Heritage Month event in Kissimmee, Florida on September 15, 2020:

*“Unless you are a Native American or your ancestors were enslaved and brought here by force beginning 400 years ago, we’ve all come from somewhere else. For most of us, that journey began with a choice, to try for something better here in the United States, whether it’s my ancestors who boarded coffin ships in the Irish sea, in the famine in the 1840s, or **families that fled oppressive regimes, and natural disasters in Latin American and the Caribbean...** All of our ancestors, **yours and mine**, they came equipped with only one thing. **The only thing they had in their pocket was hope** [165].”*

Thus, Joe Biden appeals to the original image of America as the land of freedom and opportunities. By providing a personal example, he seeks to remind his compatriots of the initial reasons (*oppressive regimes* and *disasters*) which forced the forefathers to come to the US as well as invokes the feeling of sympathy for those who face crises and need to go down that road nowadays. When Joe Biden uses the personal pronouns *yours* and *mine* to refer to the ancestors who had to make a choice and overcome hardships caused by that decision, he convinces the voters that there is no difference between them and him and, as a consequence, unites the nation. The periodic sentence

at the end of the sense group creates suspense and serves to emphasize the value of hope in one's life, whether it is a life of a US citizen or an immigrant.

In conclusion, although Donald Trump and Joe Biden take dissimilar approaches to its implementation, the tactic of unity remains an inherent component of the discourse of both presidential candidates. Speaking about past experiences, comparing their stories with the stories of common folk, the politicians can create an image of a family man, a friend, a community member who shares the views of Americans, grew up on the same values as them, raises his children just like them, etc. This makes the presidential nominees close to every citizen, strengthens the credibility of their words and persuades the audience to take their sides.

*The tactic of appeal to the audience's emotions* is aimed at shaping in the mind of an individual a certain psychological attitude towards the issues in question since under the influence of strong feelings a person does not think logically and, therefore, tends to perform actions that contradict the common sense and one's best interests. In most cases, politicians resort to the use of this tactic when they cannot provide rational arguments that would support their ideas [22, p. 111].

The pragmatic potential of political speeches at rallies is closely related to how effectively the speaker can assess the value systems of his listeners as representatives of a particular society, nation, all humankind, etc. and make use of this knowledge in order to exert control over them. In this respect, we assume that, because of their collective nature and versatility, manipulation of basic human emotions is one of the most common methods of influencing people's psyches during presidential campaigns. It not only has an impact on what the audience think at a certain moment of time but also facilitates the formation of biases and stereotypes, which oversimplify a decision-making process.

For instance, Donald Trump is a huge proponent of the belief that evoking the negative response to the policies advocated by Joe Biden is the most effective technique of motivating the people choose "the lesser of two evils" and act to his benefit. In order to do so, the President decided to bombard his compatriots with their

worst fears, concerning their safety and security from internal and external threats, economic welfare, religious freedom, healthcare, etc.

The following fragment from Trump's speech in Des Moines, Iowa on January 30, 2020 provides a bright illustration of the implementation of this approach:

*“Today’s Democrat party is run by **left-wing extremists** who want to **massively** raise **your** taxes, increase regulations, cancel **your** health plans, raid Medicare, shut down American energy, **destroy your social security**. **They will destroy your social security**, eliminate religious liberty, punish free speech, confiscate **your** guns, abolish **your** borders, and indoctrinate America’s children with **hateful, left-wing ideology** [113].”*

Analyzing these statements, we should pay attention to the word combinations with strong and inherently negative connotations, namely *left-wing extremists* and *left-wing ideology*, the perlocutionary effect of which is intensified by a descriptive adjective *hateful*. What makes his speech even more convincing is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person possessive adjective *your*, repeated a number of times so that the voters get the idea that it is their future in danger. The phrase *destroy your social security* is an example of anadiplosis, but when it is repeated the second time, Donald Trump uses the modal verb *will* as a means of showing his confidence in the inevitability of such an outcome. Last but not least, the adverb of degree *massively* is a modifier which exacerbates the negative semantics of the verb *raise*, deployed in combination with the word *taxes*.

The next basic emotion which is constantly targeted by this presidential nominee is anger. It arises as a natural response to grief, insult or injustice, that the politician claims to be taking place in the country during his rally in Toledo, Ohio on January 9, 2020:

*“On no issue have Democrat politicians more clearly betrayed the American people than the issue of illegal immigration... **They want open borders. Can you believe it? And because of Democrats’ open border policies, they want open borders. They want more people flowing. Come on in. Come on in. Innocent Americans are being brutalized and murdered by illegal alien criminals. As just one example right here in Ohio... an illegal alien went on a deadly crime spree, attempting to rape a 14-***

*year-old girl. Then **raping** and **murdering** a 60-year old woman... And finally the police came .... And they were able to apprehend this terrible criminal [128].”*

First and foremost, Donald Trump resorts to the use of inversion in order to increase the expressiveness and emotionality of his speech. The initial sentence also contains presupposition, which implicitly suggests the listeners that Democrats *betrayed* (a verb with strong negative connotation) Americans not once and not only with their policies on immigration. The rhetorical question *Can you believe it?* has a significant manipulative effect as well. When asking it, the politician expresses his unwillingness to accept what is going on, provokes the audience to have similar opinions and discredits his political enemies.

Moreover, since this is oral discourse, the sentence beginning with *and because of Democrats’ open border policies* and ending with *innocent Americans are being brutalized* provides an example of parcellation, which by its nature is aimed at focusing, with the help of intonation and logical pauses, the attention of the addressees on particular parts of an utterance. However, in this very case, parcellation is deployed to introduce into the sense group new pieces of information that might damage the reputation of Democrats. The continuous repetition of the sentence *they want open borders* and the *phrase come on in* serves this purpose as well. In fact, we believe that the mentioned phrase is used to mock the opponents and evoke the feeling of outrage from the community.

The given examples from the lives of the American citizens, who are described with the adjective *innocent* to strengthen the distinction between them and illegal *aliens* (the word is used metaphorically), only support our point of view. In order to exacerbate the effect of his words even more, Trump deploys such harsh verbs as *brutalize*, *murder* and *rape*, deliberately avoiding deploying any euphemistic expressions, which could mitigate the repulsiveness of those crimes. In the end, the President positions himself as guardian of safety and law enforcement.

Last but not least, Donald Trump seeks to facilitate the formation of judgmental attitudes towards Joe Biden in the minds of his supporters or even provoke aversion to his deeds. Making judgements is the first step towards shaping stable and long-lasting

stereotypes, that can affect human behavior by facilitating the deployment of a number of clichés for the swift interpretation of the world. They can be applied to capture people attention and to coerce them to accept certain communicated ideas as being genuine and truthful. Regarding aversion, we believe that it is an extremely strong emotion which causes the audience to refuse to give the “accused” presidential candidate a chance to explain himself.

The quote from the President’s rally in Phoenix, Arizona on February 19, 2020 perfectly illustrates the peculiarities of the application of such an approach:

*“All of the **radical** Democrats in the presidential debates have declared their **unlimited** support for **extreme** late-term abortion, **ripping babies straight from the mother’s womb** right up until the very moment of birth. That is why in my State of the Union, I asked Congress to prohibit late-term abortion of babies because Republicans believe that every child is a sacred gift from God [129].”*

In this excerpt, Donald Trump addresses his supporters as a true believer, as a Christian who cannot sit on his hands when the nation needs him to stop this sacrilege. Democrats, at the same time, are described as being *radical* (this adjective tend to create negative associations the minds of the voters since it is often used along with the word combination “terrorist attacks”). Other adjectives, namely *unlimited* and *extreme* are supposed to highlight the unacceptability of their actions. However, it is the phrase *ripping babies straight from the mother’s womb* that evokes a powerful visual image and makes the voters feel contempt for the Democratic Party and its nominee.

Regarding Joe Biden, after analyzing his pre-election discourse, we can conclude that the politician prefers to affect the audience’s emotional state by deploying the lexemes the semantics of which is connected with such American values as dignity, constitutional rights, the rule of law, equality, better prospects for younger generation, etc.

Let us analyze the fragment from the rally held Broward County, Florida on October 29, 2020, when, discussing racial discrimination, the politician mentions the social movement called “Black Lives Matter” and explains his view on the problem:

*“But these **protestors are a cry for justice** from communities that have long, long had the knee of injustice on their neck. The names George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, Jacob Blake... They’re not soon going to be forgotten, **not by me, not by us and not by this country** [145].”*

What instantly catches our attention there is the repetition of the noun *justice*, which is interpreted not only as the administration of the law but also as the quality of being fair and impartial. In the first sentence, the phrase *protestors are a cry for justice* is a metaphor that enhances the rhetorical effect of the utterance. The figurative expression *a new wave of justice* is used with the same purpose. However, the most interesting pragmatic tool there is the line *had the knee of injustice on their neck* since it immediately draws the listeners’ attention to the way in which one of the victims of police violence was murdered. The part *not by me, not by us and not by this country* is an example of the rule of three and is supposed to gradually increase the emotional tension within the sense group.

Almost all the techniques applied by Joe Biden in his campaign speeches are targeted at gaining the trust of the American nation. This pre-election behavior could be explained by the fact that the more faith the people have in the addresser of the discourse, the readier they are to make decisions and the more confident the politician feels, manipulating the consciousness of the audience. Only if the presidential nominee knows the needs of the folk, acknowledges their problems and seeks to solve them can he reach a mutual understanding with the voters.

*The tactic of self-presentation* can be defined, on one hand, as an approach of impressing the addressees of political discourse through demonstrating the strengths of its addresser and, on the other hand, as a means of controlling opinions on his personality formed in the minds of other people. According to O. S. Issers, this tactic is subtly present in any communicative situation [68]. Therefore, the researchers distinguish between two main types of an individual’s presentation of oneself, namely sincere and manipulative. The first one is non-intentional: a person spontaneously reacts to an external stimulus. However, the second type of self-presentation involves the conscious plan of portraying a manipulator in a positive light. It does not

presuppose any impromptu actions: s/he thoroughly develops the overall strategy of communication and distinguishes the manipulative means necessary to bring it to life [2, p. 276].

Although, there exist various approaches to the analysis of the aforementioned tactic, considering the peculiarities of political discourse, we have decided to examine it from the point of view of such techniques of manipulation as “real me” and “ideal me” [44, p. 115].

The “real me” method of self-presentation allows the presidential nominees to focus the audience’s attention on their positive attitude to work, the professional experience they possess as well as the moral values, beliefs and worldviews they are influenced by.

Regarding the pre-election discourse of Joe Biden, the politician depicts himself as a competent official, showing the voters that he acknowledges the responsibility for the policies he suggests to implement and from which the future of the country depends. In order to do so, Joe Biden resorts to using such lexemes with positive connotation as *reliable, trustworthy, honest, wise, responsible, logical*, etc. while describing himself and his political program. What is more, he also likes to refer to his previous accomplishments as the Vice President (2009 – 2017) of Barack Obama’s Cabinet.

The following fragment from Biden’s rally in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on August 31, 2020 perfectly illustrates this communicative behavior:

*“When **President Obama and I** were in the White House, we **had to** defend federal property. **We did it** .... **You didn’t** see us whipping up fears around the deployment of secret federal troops. **We just did** our job, and the federal property was protected. When president Obama and I were in office, **we didn’t** look at cities as Democratic or Republican run. These are American cities [174].”*

By using the expression *President Obama and I*, the former Vice President not only mentions that he worked with the President at some point of his professional career but also attributes to himself Obama’s achievements. The emphasis on the fact that they *had to* manage certain problems and the repetition of the part *we did it*

contributes to the portrayal of both of them as a powerful team, full of decisiveness and determination to change their country for the better. The sentences *You didn't see us ...* and *When president Obama and I were in office, we didn't ...* are bright instances of a hidden criticism of Donald Trump's approach to presidency; however, we are to discuss that issue in greater detail when analyzing the second strategy of political manipulation, that is, the strategy of confrontation (please see page 61). What catches out attention in this excerpt even more, is the compound sentence beginning with *We just did our job ...* because the syntactic pattern, meant to show a cause-effect relationship between the two clauses, has an inherent manipulative potential: they worked and achieved a good result in protecting federal property.

Another role played by Joe Biden in his campaign speeches is the role of a fighter. It is designed so that he meets the expectations of the electorate, who wants to have in the post of the Head of State a man of spirit, ready to combat injustice, solve acute social problems, eliminate previous mistakes of the state apparatus, prevent any internal and external dangers.

A good example of such a technique is an excerpts from Joe Biden's address in Miami, Florida on October 5, 2020:

***"I've taken on the very people that in fact we're worried about. I've taken on the Castro's of the world. I've taken on the Putin's of the world. I've taken on all these dictators. I haven't cozied up to them. I'm the guy that's been straightforward with them. I'm the guy that let them know it stops here. It stops with me. It stops with me as president [171]."***

Parallel constructions based on anaphora and epiphora are supposed to make the speech more distinct and clear and add emphasis and emotionality to the statements, made by the politician. The abundance of the contracted forms and phrasal verbs (*taken on* and *cozied up*) as well as the self-identification of the politician with the help of the common noun *guy* ensure that the utterances sound casual and understandable for the fellow citizens, reducing the distance between the communicants. However, what makes the politician look like the true fighter is the strong resolve expressed at the end

of the sense group by means of anadiplosis and two parallel sentences in the present simple tense, namely *It stops with me* and *It stops with me as president*.

As is generally known, patriotism and commitment to national interests are the bedrock on which the American society is built. Therefore, the role of a patriot is especially relevant for the pre-election discourse of the former Vice President. A high level of devotion in his speeches helps him to integrate in the linguocultural community as well as holds a manipulative and ideological potential that is able to encourage the listeners to perform actions beneficial to the politician. As means of the implementation of this technique, Joe Biden deploys such conceptual values as heroism, duty, loyalty, etc.

In order to prove his devotion to patriotism the politician on September 9, 2020 reminds the people of Warren, Michigan of his late son Beau, who has served the country:

*“My son Beau was an assistant US attorney. He **volunteered** to go to Kosovo to help them set up a government **in the middle of the war**. I know I’m being proud here, but he’s the only foreigner who has a monument that they raised and built in service to him, thanking him for what he did. My son also then as attorney general **volunteered** to go to Iraq for one year. He wasn’t a loser or a sucker. No one who served this nation has been a loser or a sucker. They’re **all heroes** [177].”*

First of all, by repeating the verb *volunteered* the politician highlights the fact that Beau Biden willingly decided to put his life and safety in danger in order to perform his duty to the state. The expression *in the middle of war* is aimed at emphasizing the riskiness of his choice. Another thing that catches attention is the anaphora, based on the repetition of the phrase *a loser or a sucker* which is a reference to the phrase once spoken by Donald Trump (the politician was severely criticized for those words). The sentence *They’re all heroes ...* is intended not only to remind the people of the heroism of Joe Biden’s son but also to assure them that all the Americans *who served this nation* are equally important and remembered. The analyzed fragment is also an example of implementation of the tactic of unity.

Regarding the discourse of Donald Trump, after analyzing his campaign speeches we cannot but agree that he resorts to the deployment of the same social roles as Joe Biden does in order to actualize the tactic of positive self-presentation. However, the difference between them lies in the tools applied to depict those roles. As was already mentioned, the sitting President of the US uses the plural pronoun *we*, speaking about the achievements he has made together with his team during the four years of presidency. Such a communicative behavior may indicate Trump's inclination towards sociocentrism, his wish to form a coalition and use its advantages for his own benefit. However, we assume that it can be explained by the desire that any politician exhibits: to avoid or share the responsibility for the committed wrongdoings with a large number of people and, in such a way, to get away with all the possible failures, save his face and career.

In this respect, the approach of Joe Biden is fundamentally distinct from that of his opponent. Although, the singular pronoun *I* in one's idiolect is typically understood as the sign of the speaker's egocentrism and predisposition to focus all the attention on oneself, in this thesis we consider it to be the result of the Vice President's attempts to look like a responsible person, as a person who can take a stand and openly speak with the audience about his program.

The total number of uses of the personal pronoun *we* (including its derivatives) and the pronoun *I* (plus its derivatives) in Donald Trump's campaign speeches is 15328 cases. The frequency of use of the pronoun *I* accounts for 41 percent of the whole. The overall number of uses of both pronouns in Joe Biden's discourse comprises 3564 cases. The frequency of use of the pronoun *I* accounts for 48 percent, which is 7 percent more than the analysis of Donald Trump's addresses showed. Therefore, we can conclude that the obtained result testifies to the validity of our assumption.

Regarding the "ideal me" method of self-presentation, it comprises the politicians' reasonings on who they strive to become. If we are to discuss this issue in terms of the role they play to manipulate the voters, we should mention that, in most cases, it is the role of reformers, when the nominees make attempts to suggest new and flexible approaches to solving numerous economic and social problems. The reason

for that is simple: any citizens in any country, even the most successful one, expect their officials to make a plan about how to transform it for the better. In order to implement this manipulative technique, both Donald Trump and Joe Biden resort to the use of future verb forms (*will* and *be going to*) and the expressions with future meaning (*be to* or *be due to*) as well as the lexical units with positive connotations, such as *welfare*, *rebuilding*, *safety*, *stability*, *change*, etc. However, this method will be analyzed in more detail within the framework of the strategy of persuasion, the tactic of making promises (please see page 77).

## **2.2. The Strategy of Confrontation**

As was already noted, the US pre-election discourse entails the conflict of power relations between two opposing parties, namely Republicans and Democrats, as well as the politicians who represent those entities during the presidential race. This is the reason why such a subtype of political discourse is characterized by the increased aggressiveness of its participants.

On the behavioral level this mutual hostility is reflected in the following features of pre-election rhetoric [53, p. 124]:

- the demonstration of superiority and the struggle for power, when a politician accentuates his higher communicative status or questions an opponent's status in the discourse;
- compulsion of the others to accept one's point of view as the only one that is right, when the opponent is not given any choice but to succumb to the will of the politician;
- the conquest of communicative space, when the politician invades the opponent's sphere of interests;
- rejection of all the achievements of those who threaten the status of a certain politician and, as a consequence, the demonstration of his total disrespect towards the opponent.

Concerning the verbal component of pre-election communication, aggression there is expressed with such language means as irony, which acts as an implicit invective; labelling, when the politician openly criticizes his political enemies;

syntactic patterns aimed at expressing doubt and accusation, or distancing oneself from their political opponents, such as rhetorical questions or passive voice; etc. However, all those tools do their job only when they are integrated in the discourse objectives. In other words, they are meant to be deployed to facilitate the implementation of certain confrontational tactics, which are discussed below.

*The tactic of open discreditation of opponents* is peculiar for any kind of political discourse. In case of the pre-election one, we believe that it works as an effective regulator of the popularity of this or that presidential nominee since the politicians resort to it in order to create (with the help of various rhetorical techniques that are supposed to cause the intended pragmatic effect) a negative image of their political enemies and, as a consequence, change the public opinion about those people [56, p. 189].

The most frequent manipulative technique of both candidates for presidency, Donald Trump and Joe Biden, is making accusations, which serve to express criticism of the actions performed by one's opponent and attribute blame for any failures in the state governance to him. In order to succeed in doing so, the politicians purposely fill their speeches with lexical means that can increase the emotionality of their statements as well as try to make the audience evaluate a described situation as being negative. In most cases, however, the accusation is ungrounded, based on fabricated facts or hearsay.

As a matter of fact, accusations can be targeted not only at the professional but also at the moral qualities of an individual. This is especially typical for Joe Biden's speeches. The following fragment from the former Vice President's address during a campaign visit to Manitowoc, Wisconsin on September 21, 2020 perfectly demonstrates how he ruins the reputation of his opponent only by appealing to his personality traits:

*“The simple truth is that Donald Trump ran for office saying he would represent the forgotten man and women in this country. And then once he got in office, he forgot us. Not only did he forget them, the truth is that he never really respected us very much...”*

*Oh, he loves his rallies but look closely: Trump keeps his distance from anyone in the rally. The folks who come are **packed in tight** as they can be **risking** disease, mostly without mask, **but not Trump**. He **safely keeps his distance**... The former employee said he calls his own supporters, “Disgusting ....” For Trump these rallies are about **entertainment, adoration and not respect** ....*

*And all the things that Trump has said and done, nothing is more **offensive** than the way he’s spoken about the brave women and men who served the nation in uniform... It’s been confirmed by every outlet that he referred to them as **losers and suckers**. That’s what Trump calls those who served and they’ve made **the ultimate sacrifice** [159].”*

To begin with, by repeating the verb *forget* in relation to the expression *forgotten men and women* the politician assures the audience that Donald Trump is not a man of his word and, which is more important, manipulates the people by implicitly suggesting them that they are betrayed for the second time, only in this case it is the sitting President who neglects their interests. In order to establish a strong emotional connection with the voters, Joe Biden resorts to the tactic of unity and includes himself in the conceptual field defined as “WE.” The phrase *the truth is that* serves to stress the fact that Joe Biden, as compared with Donald Trump, does not tell lies and, therefore, should be treated as an honest candidate. In addition to that, the preceding subject-auxiliary inversion (*Not only did he ...*) add emotional focus to the uttered statements.

The following paragraph depicts the President as a light-hearted, immature, irresponsible child. The former Vice President achieves this effect by describing his rallies with such nouns as *entertainment* and *adoration* as well as constantly telling the audience that Donald Trump is disrespectful towards the common folk. The opposition of the phrases *packed in tight*, deployed to portray his supporters, and *keeps his distance*, which is meant to characterize their leader’s behavior as well as the preposition *but* are aimed at showing the gap between those two categories of people. The verb *risking* and the adverb *safely* perform a similar function since they are antonymic in meaning. The goal of the introduced real-life situation, shared by the

politician's former employee, and the adjective *disgusting*, that has an extremely strong negative connotation, is to shock the citizens.

The last portion of information depicts the President as a rude man, disrespectful towards the men and women who served in the army and made *the ultimate sacrifice*. What is important, the politician deploys there a euphemistic expression, which automatically makes the speech more eloquent and characterizes Joe Biden as a tactful person.

Thus, the conducted analysis revealed that the discreditation of the personal and moral qualities of presidential candidates is performed with the help of the lexemes which represent their negative personality traits such as dishonesty, irresponsibility, carelessness, ignorance, egotism, meanness, etc. and reinforced by the corresponding stylistic and syntactic means.

In terms of the criticism of the professional experience of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, after processing a number of the addresses of those politicians, we can conclude that the President is more concentrated on denouncing the future plans of his political enemy, while Joe Biden tends to uncover the past failures of Trump's presidency.

For instance, at a rally in Middletown, Pennsylvania on September 26, 2020 Donald Trump claims that his opponent will undermine economic stability of the USA:

*“If Joe Biden becomes president, first of all, **you’re going to** have a massive tax increase. **You’re going to** see interest rates **go through the ceiling**. You will have a depression, the likes of which this country has never seen before [117].”*

In this fragment Trump frightens the audience by assuring the people that it is them who will suffer from the questionable actions of Joe Biden. In order to achieve the desirable pragmatic effect, he resorts to the use of a first conditional sentence and repeats the main clause two times, creating syntactic parallelism based on anaphora. The idiom *go through the ceiling* and the expression *the likes of which* are deployed to emphasize the scale of possible damage.

In general, the sitting President describes his opponent's deeds with such negative adjectives as *devastating*, *destructive*, *catastrophic* and so on, step by step drawing a picture of a national disaster that might happen if Biden wins; the verbs *kill*,

*destroy, inflict, ban, impose*, which are supposed to add tension to the speeches; and the nouns *nightmare, betrayal, defeat*.

To summarize, Donald Trump tends to overexaggerate the negative consequences of the Biden's decisions that do not coincide with his best interests. The purpose of that is to intimidate those who believe in success of the Democratic nominee, and destroy their confidence in the Vice President's political plan. On the levels of grammar and syntax, such a manipulative technique is achieved through the use of verbs in the present and future tenses; first conditionals (*What will be if...*), that emphasize the high probability of the actions taking place at some point in the future; and the modal verbs *might* and *could*, deployed to introduce the speaker's assumptions.

Having examined the pre-election discourse of Joe Biden, we can deduce that, in most cases, Donald Trump is accused of committing a crime against the people of the US. The former Vice President does so with the help of legal terminology (for example, the expressions *to sabotage the law* and *to be in force*) and lexical items that evoke the feeling of condemnation or strong disapproval (such as *to humiliate women, to deceive American citizens, to spread the lies*, etc.).

The excerpt from Joe Biden's campaign speech about the Affordable Care Act in Wilmington, Delaware on October 28, 2020 perfectly illustrates this approach:

***“In two short weeks, exactly one week after the election, the Trump administration will make its case, asking the Supreme Court to strike down the Affordable Care Act ... Let me say that again. They're arguing that **the entire law must fall**, which would strip 20 million Americans have their health insurance overnight, rip away protections for pre-existing conditions for more than 100 million people in the middle of an upswing of a pandemic [176].”***

In the very beginning the politician uses the adverbial *in two weeks*, which then is specified and becomes *one week after the election*. In such a way he makes his listeners realize that, regardless of the results of the voting and the desires of the majority of Americans, Trump is determined do what he wants. The phrase *let me say that again* expresses disbelief in what is going on, when the figurative expression *the entire law must fall* is at aimed at highlighting the unlawfulness of the actions of those

responsible for that wrongdoing, that is, the President himself. The verbs *strip* and *rip away* highlight the fact that the citizens are deprived of their lawful rights.

In addition to the aforementioned techniques of manipulation, we have decided to mention one more that is peculiar only for the representative of the Republican Party: Donald Trump often resorts to a highly dishonest means of discrediting his opponent, namely to the method of mockery.

For instance, during a campaign rally in Kenosha, Wisconsin on November 2, 2020, he describes Joe Biden's son Hunter in such a way:

*“His son had no job. He left the military... And then what happens is the father becomes Vice President, and this kid becomes **like a human vacuum cleaner**. He follows the father into countries. ‘Dad, who are you going to today?’ ‘Well, let’s go to China.’ And he’s **a vacuum cleaner. Follows the father, takes in money** [135].”*

This fragment illustrates how disparagingly the President allows himself to speak of his political enemies and their family members. By stating that Hunter Biden is a jobless “daddy’s boy” (rephrased as *follows the father*) who abandoned his duty and refused to serve his country, Donald Trump portrays him as a frivolous and corrupt person, suggesting that it is his father, Joe Biden, who is responsible for son’s mistakes. What is more, the fake dialog played out by the politician persuades the people that the “unscrupulous” Vice President has encouraged his child to cross the line. However, what catches our attention, is the simile *like a human vacuum cleaner* and the metaphor *he’s a vacuum cleaner*, aimed at producing a strong visual image in the subconsciousness of the voters, making the statements memorable and creating stable associations on the topic. The last sentence is an example of ellipsis and demonstrates a cause-effect relationship between two clauses.

In addition, Trump mocks his political enemies (not only Joe Biden but also other members of the Democratic Party) with the help of offensive nicknames such as *Sleepy Joe*, *1% Joe* or *Basement Joe*, *Nervous Nancy* in relation to Nancy Pelosi, *Mini Mike* (Michael Bloomberg, the Mayor of New York City), *Crazy Bernie* (Bernie Sanders), etc. In that way the speaker puts himself in a stronger communicative position: he

claims to have the authority and power to do as he pleases with no worry of disapproval from the insulted individuals or the general public.

In conclusion, although, this move is peculiar to the idiolect of Donald Trump and surprise no one nowadays, we assume that by resorting to it he discredits himself even more than his opponents since such a behavior does not suit the sitting President of the US.

*The tactic of impersonal accusations* lies in presenting a certain political, economic or social situation in a bad light without stating explicitly who is to blame for the lack of success in the discussed issues. It should be mentioned that overexaggeration of the unfavorable decisions made by the members of both parties, Republican and Democratic, is a rather common practice in the US political discourse. However, when the politicians strive to avoid legal responsibility (which might be inflicted on them due to their controversial statements), or even a diplomatic scandal, they refuse to give the full name of an accused person, replacing it with deictic markers, lexical units that have abstract or general meaning and grammatical patterns which make it possible to report on someone's wrongdoings but conceal the identity of the doer [55, p. 64].

Regarding the pre-election campaign of Joe Biden, although the politician sounds extremely confident in what he says about Donald Trump and, therefore, rarely resorts to the tactic of impersonal accusations, after analyzing a number of his addresses we noticed that he uses demonstrative and indefinite pronouns (*those who, one, some of, everybody*), nouns referring to a group of individuals (*people and men*) and the passive voice in order to subtly suggest the audience who is in charge of what happens to their country.

The excerpt from Biden's campaign rally in Broward County, Florida on October 29, 2020 can serve as an illustration of how the former Vice President prefers implementing the tactic of impersonal accusations:

*“And we shouldn't be politicizing the race for a vaccine, we should be planning it safe and equitable and free distribution. Providing the funding for PPE, the mask and everything we need to protect ourselves. Setting a national standard for schools*

*and businesses to reopen. Bringing together Republicans and Democrats to deliver the economic relief .... for working families, the young employed, for schools, for businesses. Allowing **you** to stay in your home if **you** don't have the money for rent [124].”*

The combination of the inclusive personal pronoun *we*, referring to the voters as the citizens of the country, and the modal verb *should* in the negative and affirmative forms is aimed at criticizing the internal and external policies of the US and the actions of Donald Trump in particular. The following bunch of parceled clauses is deployed to enumerate what the President failed to do for the good of his own people. The pauses that separate them also serve as an additional emphatic means that brings the listeners' focus to the uttered statements. The transition from the inclusive pronoun *we* to the pronoun *you* at the end of the sense group shows the people that it is they who suffer the most. In such a way Joe Biden encourages the voters to take matters in their own hands and make a “good” decision.

In terms of the pre-election discourse of Donald Trump, he tries to reinforce the accusations of Joe Biden by condemning all the initiatives supported or disapproved by the Democratic Party, the representative of which his political opponent is. When doing so, the President extrapolates the collective decision of a group of people to the matter of choice of one individual and, as a consequence, makes him responsible for the things he has not performed.

For instance, during his rally held in Wildwood, New Jersey on January 28, 2020 Trump makes the following statement:

*“**Under my direction**, the US military launched a **flawless precision strike** that killed **the world's number one terrorist** Qasem Soleimani. Soleimani was responsible for murdering and wounding thousands of Americans, and **actively** planning new attacks, but we **stopped him cold**. Yet **Washington Democrats**, like crazy Bernie Sanders and nervous Nancy Pelosi opposed our action to save American lives. They oppose it. They oppose it [145].”*

The phrase *under my direction* is supposed to emphasize that the politician is a leader who is not afraid to make swift and radical decisions, as a result, contributing to

the tactic of positive self-presentation. At the same time, the initial position of this adverbial diminishes the importance of lexical units that come after it. By this we mean that the word combination *the US military* loses its pragmatic significance and potentially remains unnoticed by an average listener. The description of the attack and Soleimani with the help of such hyperboles as *flawless* and *the world's number one terrorist* only highlights the accomplishments of the President. The opposition of the adverb *actively* and the idiom *stopped him cold* creates a dynamism and convinces the audience in the rightfulness of the decision to kill the general.

However, what interests us the most there is the fact that Donald Trump, in response to the unwillingness of Nancy Pelosi and Bernie Sanders to endorse the operation, directs his criticism not only on those individuals but mentions all *Washington Democrats*, implying that Joe Biden thinks in the same way. Moreover, Trump manipulates the voters' minds by presenting the whole situation as refusal to *save American lives*. The final sentence (*They oppose it.*) is repeated in order to provoke some sort of reaction from the people and make them angry.

Summarizing, we assume that the tactic of impersonal accusations is one of the most effective approaches to manipulation since it ensures that the impact remains hidden from the general public: the audience listen to the hints given by the politicians and make inferences based on how they understand what was said. Thus, the voters perceive the manipulated knowledge as the product of their own cognitive activity.

The next widely used manipulative approach is *the tactic of labelling*, which can be deployed both to openly discredit one's political opponent or to do it in an indirect way.

It should be mentioned that this tactic is peculiar only for the pre-election discourse of Donald Trump: the sitting President of the US often characterizes the Democratic Party, Joe Biden as well as everything that contradicts his beliefs and worldview using the mentioned technique, which can be defined as one of the manipulative moves that lies in describing a certain phenomenon, person, idea, event, etc. with words or expressions having an inherent negative or, conversely, positive connotation. However, deploying positive labels is extremely rare practice and,

therefore, we assume them to be means of confrontational communicative behavior [23, p. 80].

Since labels belong to the invective lexis (highly insulting language aimed at attacking and offending one's opponent), it is characterized by ideological nature, subjectivity and bias. A negative assessment, inherent to the label, does not pertain to the objective properties of the portrayed objects but marks them on the basis of the category of ideological otherness. It captures the real or imagined social deviations, either from the standpoint of a society as a whole, or in terms of the assumptions about the political feasibility of this or that social group or movement [18, p. 92].

The function of labels can be performed by pejorative words, which indicate a departure from moral norms; political terms, including words with a stable negative connotation; dysphemisms or derogatory expressions replacing the neutral ones; proper names, which often serve as manipulative tools in political discourse; ethnonyms, etc.

Concerning the manipulative use of labels in Donald Trump's pre-election discourse, we believe that the following fragment from his campaign rally that occurred in New Hampshire on August 28, 2020 deserves our special attention:

*“Joe Biden is **the puppet** of the radical left movement that seeks to obliterate and destroy everything that you hold here including your second amendment, which will have no chance [123].”*

The noun *puppet* there has a strong negative connotation and functions as a stable label put on the presidential nominee to depict him as a weak person who cannot take his own decisions and is manipulated from the outside. The characterization of the *radical left movement* with such verbs as *obliterate* and *destroy*, which are to a certain extent synonymic, is aimed to aggravate the pragmatic effect of the uttered statement. The hyperbole *destroy everything* in combination with the personal pronoun *you* and the phrase *your second amendment* is used to appeal to the audience's emotional desire to feel safe in their own country as well as to emphasize that it is their state-guaranteed right to possess weapons to protect themselves.

Other labels which Donald Trump deploys in order to discredit the good name of Joe Biden are *left-wing (radical) extremist*, *lobbyist*, *socialist*. The members of the

Democratic party, at the same time, are defined as *fakers* or *wrongdoers*. In general, almost all of the linguistic units that are transformed into labels in the discourse of the sitting President belong to the field of political terminology and, due to the peculiarities of their regular contextual usage, cause negative associations in the minds of the general public.

Apart from labels, Trump's speeches are full of dysphemisms. For instance, when discussing immigration, he calls the people who illegally cross the border *aliens* or *predators*. In terms of the actions they perform, the President has the tendency to talk about *rape*, not *assault* (which is a conventional term in the political and media discourse nowadays) and *butchery* instead of *murder* or *homicide*. In such a way Donald Trump not only demonstrates the listeners that he is honest with them or that he speaks the same language they are speaking but also focuses their attention on the negative aspects of things in question and makes them support his course of action.

*The tactic of distancing yourself from your opponents' actions* lies in developing "WE" vs. "THEY" opposition, that is one of the most distinctive features of pre-election discourse and within the frameworks of which the politician is expected to persuade the voters that he is different from his opponents by deliberately emphasizing the erroneousness of the statements and actions of the rival party and its presidential nominee. In such a way the candidate not only discredits his political enemies but also potentially improves his image in the eyes of the audience.

The lexical means of implementation the tactic of distancing are similar to the ones deployed to bring to life the tactic of unity. Those are deictic markers (personal pronouns, demonstratives and adverbs of time), ethnonyms, toponyms, as well as the lexemes denoting the politician's attitude to the discussed phenomena. However, the manipulative focus in this case is not on the assurance of someone's solidarity with the people but on the affirmation of "otherness" of the political enemy.

Both Donald Trump and Joe Biden resort to the use of this manipulative technique, deploying similar linguistic units to achieve success and win the voters' hearts. The main difference between them lies in what they choose to be the basis of manipulation.

The President, for instance, tries to draw a line between his own professional plans and accomplishments and the policies supported by the political party of his opponent. He does that with the help of such tropes and figures of speech as irony, hyperbole, metaphor, simile, etc. as well as adjectives and adverbs with positive (to refer to himself) and negative connotations (to give assessment of the actions made the political enemies).

The excerpt from the Trump's address in Charlotte, North Carolina March 2, 2020 serves as a perfect illustration of such an approach:

*“**Their** Democrat Governor, Roy Cooper, vetoed a bill that would save North Carolina lives and ban sanctuary cities. **What is he thinking?** But while **their** super **liberal** Governor is putting your families at risk, **your** Republican Senator Thom Tillis has introduced a bill allowing American victims to sue sanctuary cities for the horrible pain and suffering they inflict on our people [107].”*

First of all, what creates distance in this example is the opposition of the possessive pronouns *their* and *your*, used in combination with the proper adjectives *Democrat* and *Republican*, respectively. The pronoun *their* is meant to portray the Governor as an official who does not get much support from the general public, while the pronoun *your* assures the audience that the Senator remembers about them, their needs, and does everything he can to improve the quality of life in the state. From the syntactic point of view, the complex sentence with a subordinating conjunction *while* also contributes to the contrast between the politicians. In terms of the grammatical patterns, the same function is performed by the verb *put*, deployed in the present continuous so as to show the action in progress (endangering lives of the American citizens), and verb *introduce* in the present perfect, which is supposed to make Thom Tillis' gesture look swift and potentially effective. The rhetorical question *What is he thinking?* not only highlights the fact that Donald Trump does not support Roy Cooper's decision but also subtly suggests that the voters ask themselves the same question and try to find the answer. Last but not least, we believe that the adjective *liberal* is an example of irony or even sarcasm since it presupposes that the Governor is willing to respect immigrants and not his people.

In contrast to the pre-election discourse of Donald Trump, Joe Biden is focused on distancing himself from the opponent on the basis of his moral qualities as well as his image of an ordinary man. During his campaign rally in Johnstown, Pennsylvania on September 30, 2020 he says the following words:

*“By the way, Donald Trump can **only** see the world from Park Avenue... **He only** sees value in stock portfolios. **I** don’t own a single share of stock. **I** have the dubious distinction, when **I** got elected ... Maybe that’s why **he** doesn’t like **me** very much. **I**’ve been listed as the poorest man in Congress for 36 years [180].”*

The opposition between Donald Trump and Joe Biden in this case is achieved with the help of personal pronouns *he* and *I*. The adverb *only*, repeated two times, is meant to enhance the pragmatic significance of the uttered statements as well as to portray the President as a man who has a narrow worldview and as an official interested in nothing except for what coincides with his interests. The sentence, inserted with the help of parcellation (*Maybe that’s why he doesn’t like me very much.*), reduces the reasons for Trump’s negative attitude towards Biden to just one explanation, which is the absence of wealth. In such a way the former Vice President neutralizes any criticism directed at him and, at the same time, undermines the reputation of Donald Trump.

### **2.3. The Strategy of Manipulative Persuasion**

One of the main preconditions for accomplishing the final goal of pre-election discourse is the politician’s ability to influence the consciousness of the electorate, convincing the people in the sincerity of his intentions as well as in the truthfulness of the statements often made with only one aim, which is to impress the electorate.

Despite the fact that, according to V. Chernyavska [59, p. 24], persuasion can be achieved with the help of logical reasoning and argumentation, when the discourse addresser is honest about what he says and feels no need to conceal his intentions from the public, and manipulation, due to its implicit nature, focuses not so much on logical as on emotional impact, during the process of communication it is difficult to differentiate between those two phenomena since they overlap rather frequently. As a result, a seemingly logical argument may acquire a manipulative coloring, which

makes it possible for the researcher to distinguish the combined type of political influence, that is, manipulative persuasion [37, p. 10].

If that is the case, the politician still appeals to the rational component of mental activity; however, his discourse contains some signs of disinformation, evasion from giving direct explanations of the issues in question, distortion of facts, understatement or exaggeration of their importance, biased selection of arguments, wrong interpretation of ideas, usage of the data out of context, etc. Therefore, we can conclude that in certain “unfavorable” circumstances, any statement, that appears to be supported by evidence and makes the audience believe in its truthfulness, may turn out to be a carefully planned manipulative move.

Having analyzed a number of campaign addresses of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden, we came to the conclusion that *the tactic of providing rational arguments that support one’s political beliefs* is brought to life in their pre-election discourse with the help of special manipulative techniques, which encompass the comparative analysis of the data and the usage of arguments that refer to the future of the country and its citizens. By rational argumentation we mean a linguistic act consisting of a thesis and a series of arguments, for which the existence of factual (statistical and illustrative) material is compulsory [11, p. 15].

The method of comparative analysis of the data is based on the politician’s assessment of any pieces of information (about past vs present events), which he assumes to be viewed by the audience as convincing arguments. In order to increase the level of persuasiveness, presidential candidates tend to incorporate in their speeches statistical evidence, which is supposed to underpin their statements.

This approach is frequently deployed in the pre-election discourse of the sitting US President: as was already mentioned, he often makes a comparison between his achievements and the failures of the predecessors in order to depict himself in a positive light. Thus, the arguments involved in the so-called comparative analysis could also be treated as performing the function of the tactic of positive self-presentation.

The following fragment from Donald Trump’s rally in Battle Creek, Michigan on December 19, 2019 proves that this assumption is true:

*“We’ve eliminated more **job-killing** regulations than any administration in the history of our country, whether it’s four years or eight years, or in one case, much more than eight years... You’re saving almost **\$3,000 a year** because of regulation cuts. Total income gains for median households will reach **\$10,000 a family**.*

*I’ll give you a couple of quick numbers. Under President Bush, for eight years, you saved **\$450**, meaning you took in **450 bucks**. Under President Obama, you took in \$975. Under President Trump, including the energy savings, and the regulation savings, and the tax cut savings, it’s **more than \$10,000 in less than three years** [118].”*

First of all, the contrast here is achieved through the opposition of the policies of George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump himself. In order to emphasize his achievements on the post of the President, the politician deploys such linguostylistic devices as hyperbole (*we’ve eliminated more ... regulations than any administration in the history of our country*) and epithet (*job-killing*). In terms of the informal vocabulary (*bucks* and *took in*), it is used there to gain the trust of the audience and to reduce the distance between the presidential candidate and the ordinary people.

However, what interests us in this excerpt is the deployment of figures, which, in certain circumstances, can be a powerful tool of manipulation. This is because they are always rounded in such a way as to make them more substantial than they actually are. In addition to that, even if someone decides to question their accuracy, the majority of voters will believe the words of a manipulator. Last but not least, figures make the discourse look sophisticated and trustworthy as well as contribute to portraying its addresser as a knowledgeable and dedicated person.

Having analyzed the addresses of Joe Biden, we can assume that its peculiar characteristic is the deployment of rational arguments that refer to the future welfare of the state. This technique lies in presenting to the general public the strategic goals and plans of the politician. Thus it coincides to a certain extent with the tactic of election promise. It should be mentioned that when revealing his political program, the addresser of pre-election discourse demonstrates the voters that he knows how to

evaluate the socioeconomic situation in his country and can predict the direction of its development.

For example, during a campaign event in Miami, Florida on October 5 Joe Biden makes the following statements:

*“My plan will get \$50 billion in capital flowing to small businesses, which would get repaid in employment and taxes, especially minority owned small businesses, and make another \$100 billion in low interest loans available to those businesses to get back on their feet and stay alive, because you know as well as I do, and ethnic communities, they are the heartbeat, they’re the center of a community [169].”*

To begin with, the politician deliberately emphasizes (with the help of the possessive adjective *my*) the fact that only he can make those promises a reality. In order to convince the audience that the mentioned plan is what they really need, he provides rational arguments organized in the form of figures because, as we have already stated, what is proven by statistical evidence is generally perceived as belonging to the rational sphere of cognition.

It is also worth mentioning that the distinctive characteristic of any pre-election speeches is the use of tropes and figures of speech that are meant to make the speech memorable and emotional, and this excerpt is no exception: Biden uses several words with transferred meanings (*capital flowing* and *stay alive* in relation to businesses), an idiom (*to get back on their feet*) and a metaphor (*they are the heartbeat*).

In conclusion, we believe that the tactic of providing rational arguments that support one’s political beliefs should be regarded as an auxiliary one because it can be recognized almost in all the statements made by the politicians, regardless whether we discuss the strategy of integration or confrontation, or the tactics that are deployed to implement them. This happens because the line between what should be considered rational and what does not belong to it is rather vague and depends on how the discourse addressees evaluate the provided information. The presidential nominees, for their part, focus on making their addresses as persuasive as possible and, as a result, resort to supporting their points of view with “reasonable” proofs.

Along with the aforementioned methods, the politicians resort to such a means of manipulation as making promises in order to persuade the audience in their exceptional competence and the true wish to make transformative changes. The thing is, during the pre-election campaign presidential nominees are ready to agree to do anything that could help them win the race. However, the determination to fulfill the commitments depends on the level of conscience and decency of a person and can be proven only after the official inauguration. Therefore, this scheme is entirely based on trust. As a result, the possibility of the politician spreading lies and abusing the voters' confidence is pretty high.

*The tactic of election promise* in this type of discourse is implemented with the help of the modal verb *will*, the semi-modal *be going to* or a non-finite adverbial clause (*by + -ing* form of verbs), and comprises public assurances made by the presidential nominees with the aim of winning the votes of their electorate. The promise can be direct (if the subject of an action is introduced into a sentence with the help of the personal pronouns *I* or *we*) and indirect (when the politician portrays a bright and prosperous future without mentioning what he plans to do to bring this picture to reality). It should be noted that the second type of promise provides the addressee who failed to fulfill certain obligations with numerous ways of verbal "retreat" as well as serves as a perfect example of the manipulative potential of political discourse.

If we are to analyze the differences of the implementation of this tactic in the discourses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, we should mention that due to its effectiveness and the fact that during pre-election campaigns the audience expect presidential nominees to make promises concerning the internal and external affairs of the state, all of them, regardless of the country the interests of which they are supposed to defend, resort to the use of this manipulative method. The line between the participants of the 2020 US electoral race might be drawn on the basis of their preferred approach towards making commitments.

The addresses of Donald Trump, for instance, are characterized by populism. The politician promises a number of things, from reasonable ones, such as economic stability and safety of his compatriots, to those that appeal to the audience's emotions.

For instances, he continuously makes assurances that the US will become even more powerful and the American nation will establish its superiority among other nations in the world. However, the politician provides no plan how to achieve the those aims.

Even from the linguistic perspective, his technique appears to be pretty simple. After analyzing the addresses of the sitting President, we can conclude that he deploys such nouns with positive connotations as *welfare, liberty, security, respect*, etc. Regarding the most frequent verbs, they are *protect, defend, achieve, ban* and so on. In terms of the adjectives, used to manipulate the audience, we singled out such of them as *free, equal, transparent, great, powerful*, and others.

In order to prove our point of view, we suggest to take a closer look at the following excerpt from Donald Trump's "Great American Comeback" campaign rally in Fayetteville, North Carolina on September 19, 2020:

*"We will\_ban deadly sanctuary cities. We will defeat everybody that we have to, including the virus, but we will defend the dignity of work, and we will defend the sanctity of life. We will uphold religious liberty, free speech and the right to keep and bear arms. We will\_strike down terrorists who threaten our citizens, and we will keep America out of these ridiculous foreign wars. We will maintain American's unrivaled military might, and we will ensure peace through strength [133]."*

These promises there can be classified as being direct. They are made with the help of the plural personal pronoun *we*, that contributes to the sense of unity and is meant to convince the people in their ability to achieve anything if they truly want it. Moreover, this pronoun makes it possible for the politician to identify his ambitions as being the desires of ordinary people. The parallel sentences based on anaphoric repetition of the phrase *we will* are deployed so that the speech sounds more emotional. In addition to that, those statements look like the enumerated points of Trump's campaign agenda. In order to inform the listeners of his attitude to the discussed topics as well as to enhance the pragmatic effect of the promises, the politician resort to deploying such negative attributes as *deadly* and *ridiculous*.

That part when Donald Trump says, *"We will uphold ... the right to keep and bear arms ..."* can be perceived as an example of an indirect criticism of Democrats

and Joe Biden, who, as the President claims, are going to abolish the Second Amendment. In general, having analyzed the excerpt, we assume that the politician resorts there to the tactic of threat (*We will defeat everybody that we have to ... and ... we will ensure peace through strength*), addressing not only the enemies of the US but also his political opponents.

Regarding the discourse of Joe Biden, he strives to look professional and qualified for the position of the US President, which affects the content of his speeches. The former Vice President tries to make his promises as trustworthy as possible, using factual data, proper names, figures that illustrate his point of view as well as organizing the flow of information with such adverbials as *firstly, secondly, thirdly, lastly, etc.*

For instance, in his address Warren, Michigan on September 9, 2020, Joe Biden says such words:

***“First, we’re going to impose a tax penalty on companies that avoid paying US taxes by offshoring jobs and manufacturing, only to sell those goods back to the American consumer. If your big corporate strategy is to boost your shareholders’ profits, your CEOs’ bonuses by moving jobs out, well, we’re going to make sure you not only pay full US taxes on those profits, but we’re going to guarantee. We’re going to add a 10% off shoring penalty surge tax to your bill [177].”***

The adverb *first* in the initial position of the sentence creates the impression that the presidential nominee is a decisive person who has a strategic plan of what is going to be implemented during his presidency. The pronoun *we* in that case is used to refer to him and his team, that is ready to serve the American nation. Biden’s strong determination of do what he promised is expressed not only through the opposition of verbs *make sure* and *guarantee* but also with the help of of the semi-modal *be going to*. Addressing the big corporations’ owners with the personal pronoun *you* and the possessive pronoun *your* shapes the image of the official who is powerful enough to stand his ground and handle any problems.

In conclusion, although the tactic of promise effectively helps to raise the importance of the presidential nominees in the political arena, they should remember that all the promises made in front of the public should be fulfilled. Otherwise, even if

the manipulation did its job and the politician got elected, the population' support will eventually decrease, and they will not elect him to serve the second term.

### **Summary of the Second Part**

At the core of modern political discourse, which presupposes the struggle for power occurring between various groups of politicians as well as the individuals who strive to take a leading role in the political arena by occupying the highest post in their country, lies the necessity of all those people to get elected since in democratic communities it is the right of the folk to choose their government. Therefore, the politicians' communicative behavior is targeted at winning public confidence by any means, including the manipulative ones.

Having performed an analysis of the strategies and tactics of manipulative influence deployed by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in their campaign addresses during the 2020 US electoral race, we were able to identify three strategies to which the politicians resort in order to manipulate the minds of the citizens.

The first strategy is integration, aimed at overcoming distance between the nominee and the ordinary people by appealing to their subconscious desire to achieve rapport with their leader. Integration can be implemented with the help of three tactics.

The tactic of unity is deployed to consolidate the US society as well as to incorporate the presidential nominees into that community. Both Donald Trump and Joe Biden develop the semantic field "WE" in order to do so. What differentiates them is the framework of this tactic's implementation: when the President refers to the future accomplishments or common heroic past of his compatriots, the former Vice President speaks about the present-day hardships that his nation has to face, reminding the people that everyone is equally important for the state.

The tactic of appeal to the audience's emotions is aimed at evoking either positive or negative attitude to the subjects of conversation so that the voters behave as the manipulator wishes. Concerning the analyzed addresses, Donald Trump tends to frighten the electorate by stating that Joe Biden will jeopardize their safety and security, economic welfare, religious freedom, etc. The former Vice President, on the contrary,

appeals to the notions of dignity, constitutional rights, equality, better prospects for younger generation in order to gain public confidence.

The tactic of self-presentation is a method of demonstrating the strengths of this or that politician. We have distinguished two approaches to its use, namely “real me,” which draws audience’s attention to one’s professional or moral qualities and “ideal me,” that encompasses the nominees’ ideas about who they strive to become. In terms of the first approach, Joe Biden portrays himself with the help of corresponding lexical means as a competent official, a fighter and a patriot. Although Donald Trump deploys the same social roles, he extrapolates them to his Administration. The second approach is actualized within the tactic of promise.

The second strategy is confrontation, which lies in establishing superiority of one presidential nominee and dishonouring another. Regarding the pre-election discourses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, we have identified four tactics of its actualization in their campaign speeches.

The tactic of open discreditation of opponents is exploited to create a negative image of one’s political enemy and change the public opinion on him. The most common method of its actualization for both politicians is accusations. In that regard, Joe Biden is targeted at personal qualities of his opponent and blames him for being disrespectful as well as reveals the past failures of Trump’s presidency through the use of legal terminology combined with lexical items causing strong disapproval, when the President denounces Joe Biden’s future plans by describing them with such adjectives as *devastating*, *destructive*, *catastrophic* and using the technique of mockery.

The tactic of impersonal accusations lies in portraying a certain issue in a negative light without mentioning who responsible for that. Among the most common means of its implementation are deictic markers, lexical units with abstract meaning as well as grammatical patterns concealing the identity of the agent. Joe Biden, for instance, deploys demonstrative and indefinite pronouns, nouns referring to a group of individuals and the passive voice to actualize this tactic. Donald Trump often refers to the Democratic Party to accuse the opponent without naming him.

The tactic of labelling, peculiar only for the President's pre-election discourse, is deployed to openly discredit his political enemy as well as to do it indirectly. The most common labels used to tarnish Joe Biden's image are *left-wing (radical) extremist, lobbyist, socialist* and *puppet*.

The tactic of distancing yourself from your opponents' actions requires developing "WE" vs. "THEY" opposition. The results of our survey on its implementation in Donald Trump's addresses have shown that he makes a distinction between himself and his enemy (with the help of irony, hyperbole, metaphor, simile, ect.) on the basis of their professional accomplishments. Joe Biden distances himself from the opponent using the image of an ordinary man.

The third strategy is manipulative persuasion since one of the prerequisites for successful political communication is the ability of politicians to convince the public that their intentions are sincere. It is implemented with the help of the following tactics:

The tactic of providing rational arguments supporting one's political beliefs involves the use of statistical evidence which would underpin the communicated information. It is present in the discourse of both presidential nominees, although the usage directly depends on the position of the politicians: it is Joe Biden who tries to become the President, when Donald Trump makes his best effort to stay in office. As a result, the former Vice President's arguments refer to the future, and the ones made by the President are related to his past achievements.

The tactic of election promise, which can be realized with the help of the modal verb *will*, the semi-modal *be going to* or a non-finite adverbial clause (*by + -ing* form of verbs), encompasses the assurances made to win the votes of the audience. Concerning Donald Trump, we should mention that his promises include such nouns as *welfare, liberty, security, respect*. The addresses of Joe Biden contain factual data, proper names, figures as well as the adverbials as *firstly, secondly, thirdly, lastly*, meant to organize the flow of information.

In conclusion, the choice of the verbal means of implementation of the aforementioned tactics depends not only on the content of the message one strives to transmit or the peculiarities of the communicative situation in which the discourse is

produced but also on the worldviews of the individual, his moral qualities, level of education and experience in the field of politics, etc. All those things might be of use for further investigations on the issue of interrelation between political discourse, manipulative intentions of its addressors and the patterns of their idiolects' functioning.

### **PART 3. BASIC VALUE CONCEPTS APPLIED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MANIPULATION BY DONALD TRUMP AND JOE BIDEN**

According to the linguocognitive approach, a concept is a mental and linguistic entity that reflects a certain fragment of the world and contributes to the categorization of objects of reality [29, p. 226]. It summarizes individual and collective knowledge as well as facilitates the formation of a conceptual picture of the world of any individual. Therefore, concepts can be viewed as the cornerstones of cognition. By analyzing, comparing and merging them in the process of thinking we can create more concepts or transform the already existing ones into something totally new.

In addition to the aforementioned facts, concepts can be defined as the units of culture, which incorporate certain value components and act as structures of consciousness responsible for determining what is normal in this or that society. That is the reason why concepts take a special place in the political communication: they are represented in the form of basic values to which the politicians appeal in their campaign addresses, subtly manipulating the audience and convincing the people in the truthfulness of their intentions. The addressers of political discourse constantly use them when there is a need to justify some controversial decisions that were made in the past, give the compatriots a call for action or even highlight the importance of values, promoted by the government. What is more, political values are universal and, as a result, shared by the majority of citizens in any country, which means that, when resorting to them, presidential nominees establish a strong connection with their supporters, assure the people that they understand their needs and are willing to change their life for the better [43, p. 174].

A high level of abstractness of concepts allows the politicians to add new shades of meaning to them, transforming the voters' initial beliefs about certain things into what is beneficial to the manipulator in certain situational and communicative contexts [29, p. 229]. In fact, the nature of the concept gives us the reason to interpret it not as a static unit, but as a constantly evolving structure that reflects the results of a

human cognitive activity. Therefore, it is understandable that the addressers of political discourse strive to affect this process so as to manipulate the common folk.

Regarding the conceptual categorization of the material of our research, which comprises 80 addresses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, chosen through the method of random sampling, we have decided to select and analyze such historically motivated concepts of the US political rhetoric as democracy, freedom, and equality. Those are the values that are believed to have laid the foundation for the prosperity of the American nation. As a consequence, they are frequently deployed as the tool of implicit manipulation of public opinion: the politicians either assure the audience that they are huge proponents of them or accuse their opponents of violating those moral and social standards.

A comprehensive study of the mechanisms of achievement of the main pragmatic goal of political discourse (which is the exertion of the targeted impact on the mass consciousness) in correlation with the cognitive patterns of knowledge representation in the minds of the politicians and their verbal explication in pre-election speeches not only will help the future politicians who do their best to develop an effective procedure of manipulation of the electorate but also might allow the ordinary people to quickly discover the true intentions of manipulators and the hidden techniques of manipulative influence.

### **3.1. The Concept of Democracy**

The phenomenon called “democracy” has been known to the world for more than two and a half thousand years. During that time, both the perception of the democratic form of government and the understanding of the term in itself were constantly modified. At the present stage of political development, we agree with the opinion of B. Barber [67, p. 546], a famous American political scientist, that democracy should be perceived not as the rule of the majority but as the exercise of electoral power by well-educated citizens of a particular state since this form of government requires not just active participation on the part of the individual but a high level of knowledge of the social, political and economic affairs of the country, awareness of the problems it faces or might face in the future and the true willingness to make things better. Only if

the people possess all those qualities can they participate in political discussions and decision-making processes.

The concept of democracy belongs to one of the fundamental social values of the US culture, closely related to the concepts of freedom, equality and justice. Stereotypical expectations about the role of a presidential candidate or, in a broader sense, any politician suggest that he or she should embrace democratic standards and take into account the opinion of the public when arriving at any decisions that are important for the good of the country. That is the reason why this concept has become the subject of study of linguists: axiologically, it is regarded as the highest value of the American people; ideologically, democracy is seen as a historically determined phenomenon; and linguoculturally, it is believed to be a socially significant aspect of American mentality [83, p. 179].

There is a huge number of interpretation of the term of democracy, each of them is far from being comprehensive. In order to distinguish the core of the nominative field of the discussed concept, we searched for the definition of its key word in various dictionaries. To begin with, the Merriam-Webster online dictionary explains democracy as “a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections [100].” However, the inspection of this one source is not enough to acquire the in-depth knowledge of the issue under analysis, which is why we have decided to continue our research on the subject using other specialized and non-specialized literature, such as A. S. Hornby’s “Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English [97, p. 239],” “Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English [98, p. 123],” “Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language [103, p. 383]”, Frank Bealey’s “The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science: A User’s Guide to its Terms [95, p. 297]” and P. H. Collin’s “Dictionary of Politics and Government [96, p. 47],” and found out that the main definitions of notion “democracy” are as follows:

- 1) the rule of the majority;

2) a form of government according to which citizens have the authority to elect representatives to administer internal and external affairs of their state;

3) a state which has such a system of government;

4) an approach to running an organization or a group of people according to which everyone has the right to take part in the decision-making process.

Due to the peculiarities of the selected research material, which comprises the campaign addresses of the presidential nominees participating in the 2020 US presidential election, the last interpretation is not relevant for our analysis. Therefore, we will not refer to it in the future.

The concept of democracy can be implemented, first of all, directly – through the key lexeme, the noun *democratization* and the adjective *democratic* – as well as indirectly – with the help of their synonyms to which belong such words, word combinations and expression as *republic* and *republican*, *constitutional government*, *representative government*, *elective government*, *self-government*, *self-rule* and its derivatives ending with *governing* and *ruling*; *commonwealth*; *elections* or *electorate*, *elect* and *elected*; *autonomy* and *autonomous*; *egalitarianism* and *egalitarian*; etc.

The antonyms of the word *democracy* are *tyranny*, *dictatorship*, *totalitarianism*, *monocracy*, *autocracy*, *despotism*, *monarchy* and so on. Taking into account the fact that that these nouns can easily be turned into adjectives, we find it necessary to mention such of them as *dictatorial*, *totalitarian*, *monocratic*, *autocratic*, *monarchal* and *despotic*.

We find it important to mention that all the enumerated vocabulary items constituting the synonymic and antonymic sets of the lexical unit *democracy* and the key lexemes of other concepts that are to be analyzed in this thesis, namely freedom and equality, were selected from the website called “The Free Dictionary: Dictionary, Encyclopedia and Thesaurus [102].”

The relevance of the research on the concept of democracy in the pre-election discourses of both presidential nominees, Donald Trump and Joe Biden, can be proven by the results of conducted content analysis, according to which the frequency of its use in the selected addresses is rather high. This is because democracy plays an

important role in the value hierarchy of the American people. When resorting to it, the presidential candidate, on the one hand, emphasizes the fact that the electorate's opinions are of great importance to him and, on the other hand, assures that the USA is an extremely developed country, which promotes the expression of free will and acts as a guarantor of peace, democratic approach to state governance and respect for human rights.

The initial analysis of the discussed value concept showed that Joe Biden's addresses contain 224 instances of its usage. The overall amount of direct or indirect appeal to democracy in the discourse of Donald Trump is 513 cases. However, such a substantial gap does not necessarily mean that the sitting President is a bigger proponent of manipulation with the help of the concept of democracy than the former Vice President. The explanation for those figures might be pretty simple: the average speech of Donald Trump is three or four times larger than the average address of Joe Biden.

That is the reason why in this research we are especially interested in the frequency distribution of the lexical units belonging to the core of the nominative field of democracy concept. In order to get a better understanding of the similarities and differences in the approaches to its implementation in the addresses of the chosen presidential candidates, we find it useful to arrange the quantitative indicators of the vocabulary items that shape the nucleus of the democracy concept in a tabular form. The preliminary results of the survey are presented in the *Table 3.1*.

*Table 3.1*

**The Core of the Concept of Democracy in the Pre-Election Discourses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden**

<i>The lexical units contributing to the formation of the core of the concept</i>	<i>The quantity of their usage in the discourse of Joe Biden</i>	<i>The quantity of their usage in the discourse of Donald Trump</i>
<i>DEMOCRACY and its derivative democratic</i>	53	86

Table 3.1 (continued)

<i>ELECTIONS, electorate, elect and elected</i>	167	417
<i>GOVERNMENT</i>	3	1
<i>COMMONWEALTH</i>	-	7
<i>REPUBLIC</i>	1	2
<b>In total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>513</b>

In Biden's speeches the keyword *democracy* together with the adjective *democratic* is used 53 times, which constitute 23.7 percent of the total number of all the usages of the analyzed lexical units. Regarding the discourse of Donald Trump, we counted that the politician mentions it and its derivative 86 times. Thus, the frequency of the use of *democracy* and *democratic* accounts for 16.8 percent of the total word usages.

It should be noted that the lexeme *democratic* might also be deployed to refer to the Democratic Party. Those word usages are of no interest to our research, and we do not include them into the statistics so as not to decrease the level of accuracy of the analysis.

The most common lexical unit, which belong to the core of the nominative field of the democracy concept, is the word *elections* together with *electorate*, *elect*, and *elected*. In Biden's discourse we have found 167 instances of their deployment, which correspond to 74.6 percent of the total number of all the lexemes used to implement the analyzed concept. The discourse of Donald Trump contains 417 occasions of resorting to the aforementioned words, which constitute 81.3 percent of the whole vocabulary items.

Such an impressive amount of the lexical units *electorate*, *elect*, and *elected* can be explained by the peculiar character of pre-election discourse: it is organized and developed in such a way as to manipulate public opinion and make the voters change their electoral decisions to the benefit of a particular presidential nominee. In the

second part of the thesis we have already analyzed the manipulative strategies and tactics that ensure the fulfillment of this goal. However, apart from using them, politicians strive to focus the attention of the audience on the importance of the upcoming elections and their choice for the future of the country as well as to convince the people that the opposing party strives to destabilize the electoral process, undermining the very idea of democracy, which lies in providing an equal right for anyone to speak for oneself and be heard.

According to the results of the survey, the least frequent lexemes are those related to the interpretation of democracy as the form of government. For instance, the speeches of Joe Biden contain 3 cases of utilizing the phrase *government of the people*, which comprise 1.3 percent of the total number of the word usages. In the pre-election discourse of Donald Trump, we found only 1 instance of deploying the very same phrase. It constitutes only 0.2 percent of all the lexical units belonging to the core of the analyzed nominative field.

In addition to the already discussed means of developing the concept of democracy, the sitting President mentions the word *commonwealth* 7 times, which correspond to 1.4 percent of the total number of vocabulary items. He appeals to this phenomenon in order to strengthen the sense unity among the people and convince them in their invincibility in the face of internal and external threats. In the discourse of the former Vice President such a lexical unit was not found.

Last but not least, Joe Biden once deploys the noun *republic* (0.4 percent of all the vocabulary items) while its use in Donald Trump's addresses counts for 2 cases, which constitute the same percentage ratio his opponent demonstrates. It should be mentioned that both of the politicians resort to appealing to *republic* in order to evoke the sense of national pride in their compatriots. This idea can be proven by the language means they use in combination with the discussed lexeme, which are *prosperous*, *thriving* and *fortuitous*.

The bar charts *A* and *B*, presented in the *Appendix 3.1*, provide an illustration of the percentage distribution of the lexemes which constitute the core of the value concept of democracy in the campaign speeches of Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

In conclusion, we assume that in the pre-election discourses of both politicians the nucleus of the analyzed nominative field includes such vocabulary items as the keyword of the phenomenon under research together with its derivatives (*democracy* and *democratic*); the word *elections* along with *electorate*, *elect* and *elected* as well as the phrase *government of the people* and the lexeme *republic*. Although, the addresses of the sitting President of the US contain a few instances of resorting to the notion of *commonwealth*, those cases are rare and cannot affect the results of the survey. Therefore, we believe that the nuclei of the democracy concept, developed by the presidential nominees, do not demonstrate any significant differences in their structure and content.

Regarding the cognitive features of the discussed nominative field, at first, we would prefer to critically review those engaged in the addresses of Joe Biden: a closer inspection of his discourse has made it possible for us to distinguish four cognitive features of the democracy concept, which, depending on the regularity of their usage, were classified as pertaining to the close and distant periphery of the examined nominative field.

The closest to the core cognitive feature of the concept of democracy is “***genuine elections,***” represented through the combination of the lexeme *elections* with such accompanying words as *free*, *transparent* and *fair*.

The following fragment from the former Vice President’s speech given in Cleveland, Ohio on September 30, 2020 serve a perfect illustration of how even those expressions that look innocuous from the first sight can manipulate the minds of the voters by subtly suggesting that the even the US government officials couldn’t ensure the virtuous behavior of Donald Trump during 2016 presidential elections and assuring them that only Joe Biden can eradicate certain unscrupulous practices:

“*The nation needs new leaders that will preserve that principle by **honoring the outcome of elections**, by disavowing foreign **interference in our electoral process**, by paying their taxes and by **safeguarding the right** of every American to participate in **free and fair elections** [181].”*

The speaker in this case resorts to the tactic of impersonal accusations. The phrase *honoring the outcome of elections* appeals to the desire of the people to be heard and respected by those whom they endow with public power. The next part about *interference in ... electoral process* is meant to play on the increased emotionality of the mass audience and make the people feel indignation towards the President because it implies that the value of democracy has been called into question and even endangered by the actions of the republicans. The collocation *safeguarding the right* appeals to the duty of the President, which he failed to perform during his term. Last but not least, Biden claims that honesty during elections is the main precondition for true democracy.

The next cognitive feature of the discussed value concept, if we are to classify them according to the frequency of their usage, should be **“*democracy as a living organism.*”** It is achieved when the keyword *democracy* is deployed along with such lexical units as *save, give life and vibrancy to* and *be born*.

What is more, when Joe Biden addresses the public in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on August 31, 2020, he uses the phrase *poisoning our ... democracy*, which could be regarded as belonging to the sense group of “democracy in danger,” fairly common in the discourse of the Donald Trump as well:

**“*Donald Trump has been a toxic presence in our nation for four years. Poisoning how we talk to one another, poisoning how we treat one another, poisoning the values this nation has always held dear, poisoning our very democracy. Now, in just a little over 60 days, we have a decision to make. Will we rid ourselves of this toxin or will we make it a permanent part of our nation’s character [174]?*”**

First of all, there we should pay attention to the metaphor *Donald Trump has been a toxic presence*, incorporated in the first sentence. It serves to immediately discredit the opponent and to give grounds to further allegations against him. Second, the parcellation of the sense group with the help of intonation deployed together with the enumeration of Trump’s wrongdoings, made through the repetition of the present participle form of the verb *poison*, enhances the manipulative effect of the utterance by giving additional emphasis to the content of the statement. As a result, the audience

experiences strong negative emotions towards the President. Third, Joe Biden's appeal to the national values and identifying *democracy* as being of them not only contributes to the formation of the nominative field of this concept but also depicts Donald Trump as a leader who jeopardizes the traditional way of state governance. What is more, by suggesting in the next sentence that the voting decision of the US citizens should be made *now* and then specifying this adverb with the phrase *in just a little over 60 days*, Joe Biden makes the people believe that there is not much time left to reflect on their choices: they need to hurry up and vote for him in order to reverse the damage done by the President. Among other things, the rhetorical question which seemingly gives the people two alternatives to select from but presents one of them as being totally unacceptable is a bright instance of linguistic manipulation as well.

Another cognitive feature labeled "*democracy as an abstract value*" may be distinguished in the discourse of the former Vice President on the basis of the ability of the noun *democracy* to collocate with such verbs as *advance*, *strive for* and *restore*.

The following fragment from a rally held in Houston, Texas on March 2, 2020 provides a bright illustration of how Joe Biden discredits his political enemies, deploying this cognitive feature:

*"We have to beat Donald Trump and the Republican Party, but we can't become like them. We can't become like them. We have to heal our divisions. Restore democracy. And above all, it's time for America to get back up on its feet and once again fight for the proposition that we hold these truths to be self-evident [169]."*

The repetition of the phrase *we can't become like them* as an independent clause and a separate sentence distances this presidential candidate from his opponent and, at the same time, suggests that Donald Trump and his team are unworthy of their posts in the state management. The next part of the sense group is disrupted. Parcellation there gives the audience time to process the uttered pieces of information. In addition to that, the collocation *restore democracy* is an example of presupposition, which in a subtle way performs a manipulative task: Biden avoids making direct accusations against Donald Trump but claims that democracy needs to be reestablished after his presidency.

Last but not least, we have differentiated the cognitive feature of “*democracy as a material object*.” Among the lexical units that facilitates its implementation are such lexical units as *take back, recover* and *earn*.

The excerpt from a “Souls to the Polls” rally, which took place in Philadelphia on November 1, 2020, demonstrates the way in which resorting to the aforementioned feature helps Joe Biden in his attempt to unite the people and make them elect him as their representative and defender of the values which the American society believes to be the most important for the welfare of the country:

*“There’s one thing that remains the same, we have **to earn our democracy**. We have to get out and vote. And as my late friend John Lewis reminded us, **freedom is not a state, freedom is an act**. We have to defend it [169].”*

The phrase *earn our democracy* persuades the audience that such a form of government requires them to take constant efforts to ensure its proper functioning as well as reminds the voters that they should take responsibility for their decisions. The quotation of John Lewis, a famous US politician and civil rights activist, contributes to the identification of democracy as an expression of freedom. When analyzed in the context of Biden’s previous comments on Donald Trump and Republicans, who jeopardize this phenomenon, the statement could be regarded as the attempt of the politician to increase emotional tension in the American society by making the people believe that the deeds of their President undermine the very concept of freedom.

In conclusion, according to the results of the conducted research, in the discourse of Joe Biden the periphery of the nominative field of democracy concept includes the following cognitive features: “genuine elections,” “democracy as a living organism,” “democracy as an abstract value” and “democracy as material object.” Almost all the instances of the resorting to those features are somehow related to the global goal of pre-election discourse, which is winning the audience by manipulating people’s minds and making them believe in the things that may contradict reality but support the politicians’ points of view. What differentiates them is the character of the lexical tools chosen to achieve that task.

Regarding the deployment of the value concept of democracy in the addresses of Donald Trump, the survey on the compatibility of the lexical units belonging to the core of its nominative field has made it possible for us to identify four cognitive features that form close and distant periphery.

According to the frequency of their deployment, the most widespread and, respectively, the closest to the nucleus category is labeled “*elections in danger*.” It is represented by such accompanying verbs as *steal* and *overthrow* as well as the adjective *rigged*.

In order to illustrate our point of view, we suggest to take a closer look at the excerpt from a rally that took place in Middletown, Pennsylvania on September 26, 2020 and which contains direct accusations against Democrats, contained in the collocation *steal the election*:

“*North Carolina, Michigan, Nevada, all of these places, they’re all run by Democrats. They’re the ones that count the ballots. Does anybody have even a doubt? It’s just common sense. It’s common sense. We’re going to be very careful. We’re going to watch... They’re going to try and steal the election* [117].”

First of all, the rhetorical question *Does anybody have even a doubt?* serves to highlight the fact that it is preposterous to challenge the credibility of the information provided by the President. The repetition of the following sentence only proves this assumption: when defining the uttered statements as belonging to the sphere of the common sense, Donald Trump implicitly makes the voters believe in their absolute truthfulness. The phrase *we’re going to* and the personal pronoun *we* in particular are aimed at uniting the people and making them assume that there is a need to be on guard against the “injustices” caused by Democrats. In such a way the politician step by step shapes a generalized image of a public enemy. Last but not least, the expression *steal the election* not only is a bright example of manipulation that rely on the cognitive feature of “elections in danger” but may also be regarded as existing within another category labeled “elections as a material object.”

The same cognitive feature also works with the keyword *democracy*. In such a case the President deploys not only the already mentioned lexical units such as *steal* and *overthrow* but also even stronger words, namely *subvert* and *poison*.

The excerpt from the rally held in Battle Creek, Michigan on December 19, 2019 within the framework of Donald Trump's second presidential campaign clearly demonstrates how the sitting President resorts to the image of endangered democracy in order to disparage Nancy Pelosi, a Democratic politician and the 52<sup>nd</sup> Speaker of the US House of Representatives, as well as other representatives of the Democratic Party who tried their best to impeach him:

*“You are the ones interfering in America’s elections. You are the ones **subverting America’s democracy**... You are the ones that are **obstructing justice**. You are the ones **bringing pain and suffering to our republic** for your own selfish, personal, political and partisan gain [118].”*

The accusation there is built on the basis of syntactic parallelism, achieved through anaphoric repetition of the phrase *you are the ones*. In terms of the vocabulary items, we should discuss how Donald Trump makes a connection between *democracy* and *justice*, manipulatively substituting one notion with another to his personal benefit and, at the same time, claiming that Democrats threaten both of these phenomena. The last sentence evokes rather strong emotions with the help of the nouns *pain* and *suffering* (which have inherently negative connotations) and attributes them to the selfishness of Democratic politicians.

Another pervasive cognitive feature, also peculiar for the discourse of Joe Biden, is *“genuine elections.”* It is implemented through the combination of the noun *elections* with such adjectives as *democratic*, *competitive*, and *legitimate*. It should be noted, however, that the sitting President often distorts the original understanding of those collocation by facilitating certain changes on the connotative level of their meaning.

The following fragment from Donald Trump's address made in Phoenix, Arizona on February 19, 2020 shows how the politician transforms the phenomenon of “competitive elections,” that is necessary for the promotion of democratic values in

any society, into something totally redundant and jeopardizing the accepted way of state governance:

*“And if I was treated fairly ... Meaning, if you were treated fairly by the news, we’d be up 20 points higher in the polls. There **wouldn’t even be a competitive election.** Unfortunately, it’s probably going to be competitive. But I actually think **we’re going to win** by a lot, just like we did last time [129].”*

First of all, we should discuss there the transition from the first-person pronoun *I* into the second-person pronoun *you*, referring to the citizens of the US. In such a way Trump extrapolates his personal affairs with the news agencies to the sphere of public concern. The second conditional sentence is deployed to express the impossibility of the outcome, depicted by the politician as the only one which is favorable to the people, as well as to unite the supporters, encourage them to fight the injustices they have to face with their votes for Donald Trump and make the elections “non-competitive.” This very purpose serves the last sentence in which the President with the help of the phrase *we’re going to win* demonstrates his confidence in their common victory. However, what interests us there is the adverbs *unfortunately* and *probably*, used to express the attitudinal and epistemic stance of the speaker. Such a characterization of elections, that are supposed to ensure the rule of law in any democratic country, discredits the President and undermines the people’s confidence in the US electoral system.

The third cognitive feature that needs to be mentioned is “*elections as a movement,*” achieved through a variety of lexical units that represent the electoral procedure as a dynamic process. Those are the combination of nouns with prepositions, as is the case with *way to*, *path to*, *journey to* and *the process of*.

For example, during a campaign rally in Toledo, Ohio on January 9, 2020 Donald Trump makes such a statement:

*“We are **all together** doing something, **not only** in terms of the election, **not only** in terms of what we’re doing right now. Don’t forget, it’s **a long way to the election** [128].”*

The inclusive pronoun *we*, which manipulative potential is reinforced by the adverbial phrase *all together*, is aimed at persuading the potential voters that their

efforts for the welfare of the country are appreciated. The correlative conjunction *not only ... but also* is supposed to highlight that elections are not as significant as ensuring the proper functioning of the state. However, the second part of the sentence is omitted, and the listeners are supposed to fill the missing part with their own thoughts. By doing so, Trump manipulates the people, deliberately creating ambiguity and “allowing” them to misinterpret his words. In terms of the phrase *a long way to the election*, we believe that the politician represents this phenomenon as final destination that the nation can reach and, at the same time, implies that the road in itself is more important than the results.

Last but not least, we assume that the most distant from the core of the value concept of democracy cognitive feature is “*prosperous republic*,” represented through the use of the keyword along with the adjectives *thriving*, *strong* and *glorious*.

As an example of the implementation of that category, we have decided to analyze the fragment from a “Save America” rally, which took place in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021, long after the results of the 2020 presidential elections were announced:

*“Hundreds of thousands of American patriots are committed to the **honesty of our elections and the integrity of our glorious Republic**. All of us here today do not want to see **our election victory stolen** by emboldened radical left Democrats [142].”*

In this case, Donald Trump engages several cognitive features that have already been described, one of which is “elections in danger.” In addition, this time he manipulates the public opinion by acknowledging the importance of elections as well as proclaiming the glory and integrity of his state with one aim, which is to ensure that the audience agree with his previous claims on the law infringements during the voting process. What is more, the politician deploys this feature to accuse his opponent and discredit him by questioning his honesty.

Summarizing, the analysis of the pre-election discourse of Donald Trump showed that such cognitive features as “elections/democracy in danger,” “genuine elections,” “elections as a movement” and “prosperous republic” shape the periphery of the nominative field of democracy concept. If we are to compare them with the ones

deployed by his opponent, Joe Biden, we should mention that the former Vice President, despite accusing Trump and Republicans, strives to create an image of a bright future, convincing his compatriots that all the drawbacks and injustices of the old system of state government can be rectified. The sitting President, by contrast, resorts to the tactic of intimidating his supporters by drawing a picture of a rather pessimistic future that awaits them if they choose Democrats.

### **3.2. The Concept of Freedom**

Almost the entire history of human thought has been devoted to the study of freedom. However, it was in the times of the ancient Greek poleis that this phenomenon started to be perceived as belonging to the sphere of politics. In modern times, the definition of freedom as a factual and legal status of a human in a society involves the distinction between its three levels [86, p. 339].

First and foremost, it is understood as an internal characteristic of an individual, his inherent quality, which distinguishes him from other living beings. At this stage, freedom is socially autonomous since one's desires and intentions are not limited by external forces: when focusing on this value concept, the human does not need an approval of the general public.

The second approach to freedom identification defines it according to the one's position in society: the individual not only acknowledges his nature, becomes the master of his life and shows the world his personality but also opposes himself to the social environment, local communities or society as a whole, and builds relationships with the members of those entities on the basis of the principles that indicate the degree of unity of individual and collective interests as well as the level of democracy and self-organization of these relations. This aspect can be characterized as encouraging the liberation of individuals from restrictions and violence (which may include economic or political coercion, national oppression or discrimination) and ensuring their status as citizens of a particulate country. It is often interpreted as a "negative" layer of freedom, that is "freedom from something."

At the third level, freedom should be defined as a characteristic of human activity: one is not only independent but has the opportunity to act as in one's best

interests, choosing different options of social behavior that lead to transformative changes in his/her life. This is a positive freedom or “freedom of something,” actualized through civil rights and liberties as well as legal incentives, promoted by state officials.

As is clear from the information stated in the previous three passages, only the last two meanings of freedom can be of interest to the researchers of political discourse since they can be attributed to the so-called “external freedom,” which can be granted, achieved, secured or taken away. It can also be measured: there may be more or less of freedom, depending on the number of obstacles one is supposed to overcome to acquire the power of free will [6, pp. 92-94]. In this context we can speak about freedom of speech; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of education; freedom of information; and so on. In general, those can be defined as the social values to which politicians tend to appeal in their pre-election discourses. In the hierarchy of political merits, freedom is the highest and absolute value, which explains the reason why this concept has an extremely high potential of influencing the voters’ decisions and subjugating them to the will of the manipulators.

The conducted analysis of the discourses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden allows us to state that the verbalization of the value concept of freedom, the frequency and compatibility of its cognitive features depend on the politicians’ idiostyle as well as on the content of the message he seeks to transmit to the audience. However, before making conclusions concerning the conceptual means of mass consciousness manipulation, we believe it is of primary importance to establish the core of the nominative field of the discussed concept. In order to do so, a comprehensive analysis of all the possible definitions and interpretations of the keyword *freedom* have been performed.

After the inspection of a number of dictionaries, also involved in the research of the democracy concept, namely “Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English [98, p. 377],” “Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language [103, p. 598]” and P. H. Collin’s “Dictionary of Politics and Government [96, p. 69]” as well as several new publications on the contemporary

political terminology, such as David Robertson's "The Routledge Dictionary of Politics [101, p. 108]" and Garrett W. Brown's, Iain McLean's, and Alistair McMillan's "The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics [99, p. 131]," we came to the conclusion that the main definitions of the phenomenon of freedom are as follows:

- 1) the state of being free to do what someone desires without any external regulations or limitations;
- 2) the absence of any restraints, as contrasted with imprisonment or slavery;
- 3) the quality of being able to exercise one's civil and political rights;
- 4) a liberty secured by the laws of a state that claims to function according to the democratic principles;
- 5) or the condition of not having to suffer from any kind of oppression.

As is clear from the aforementioned pieces of information, the keyword *freedom* may be explained by its closest synonym *liberty*, the adjective *free* and the noun *right*, relevant for the investigation of political discourse. All those lexemes contribute to formation of the core of the freedom value concept. Apart from them, it encompasses such lexical units as *liberation*, *liberal* and *liberality*; "*independence* and *independent*; *autonomy* and *autonomous*; *sovereignty*; *emancipation*; *immunity*; *home rule*; *self-determination* and *self-government*; *privilege*; *choice* and so on, which are to a certain extent synonymous with the word *freedom* or deployed to explain it in an indirect way. It should be noted, however, that not all of those vocabulary items are relevant for the implementation of the freedom concept in the campaign speeches made within the framework of the 2020 presidential elections. Consequently, not all of them will be included in the nucleus of its nominative field.

The antonyms of freedom, are such lexemes as *captivity*, *slavery*, *compulsion*, *dependence*, *imprisonment*, *obligation* and *necessity*, *oppression*, *subjugation* and so on. The common-root lexemes of those units are also considered to be the opposites of the keyword of the analyzed concept.

According to the results of the preliminary analysis of the discourse of Joe Biden, the politician resorts to the usage of the keyword *freedom* and its synonyms 151 times. The total number of appeals to the discussed value concept in the discourse of Donald

Trump accounts for 494 instances. As was already stated during the survey of democracy concept, such inconsistencies in figures can be explained by the differences in the length of the examined addresses.

This explains why, as was the case with the concept of democracy, our goal is to measure the frequency distribution of the lexemes constituting the core of the nominative field of freedom value concept. However, before that it is important to identify their quantitative indicators. The results of that investigation are presented in the *Table 3.2*.

*Table 3.2*

**The Core of the Concept of Freedom in the Pre-Election Discourses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden**

<i>The lexical units contributing to the formation of the core of the concept</i>	<i>The quantity of their usage in the discourse of Joe Biden</i>	<i>The quantity of their usage in the discourse of Donald Trump</i>
<i>FREEDOM and free</i>	73	229
<i>RIGHT</i>	46	125
<i>LIBERTY</i>	4	74
<i>INDEPENDENCE and independent</i>	15	39
<i>SOVEREIGNTY</i>	-	26
<i>PRIVILEGE</i>	13	1
<b>In total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>494</b>

First of all, we should pay attention to the key lexeme *freedom*, together with the common root adjective *free*, which are the most widespread tools of the implementation of freedom concept in the discourses of both presidential candidates. If we are to take a closer look at the distribution of those units in their pre-election addresses, we should mention that Joe Biden’s deploys them 73 times, which constitute 48.3 percent of the total instances of word usages. Regarding Donald Trump, although

the number of those words accounts for 229 cases, which is a lot more than his opponent demonstrates, they correspond to only 46.4 percent of the whole amount of references to the concept of freedom in his discourse. Therefore, we can conclude that the gap between the politicians is insignificant.

In terms of the second most frequent lexical unit, the noun *right*, the situation is quite the same. In the discourse of Joe Biden, we recorded 46 instances of its usage, which constitute 30.5 percent of all the units shaping the nucleus of the concept of freedom. In most cases, those are appeals to the basic human rights, namely the right to life, liberty and security, healthcare, education, etc., that the former Vice President promises to defend during his presidency. Donald Trump, on the other hand, prefers to refer to the rights of his people only to discredit his opponent by making the audience believe that he and his team plan to endanger their future. However, this issue will be analyzed in more detail in the section concerning the cognitive features of this value concept. In general, Donald Trump resorts to the deployment of the noun *right* 125 times, which account for 25.3 percent of the whole word usages.

Third, we believe that there is a need to discuss the usage of the word *liberty*, that is regarded as the closest synonym of *freedom*. In case of Joe Biden's addresses, the frequency of its distribution is approximately 2.6 percent of the total number of references to the analyzed concept (only 4 cases of its deployment were recorded). Donald Trump referred to it 74 times, which account for 15 percent of the whole vocabulary items.

In order to give a proper explanation of the reason behind such a significant discrepancy between the number of times the politicians mentioned *freedom* and the cases when *liberty* was involved, we find it important to clarify the semantics of these nouns. If liberty is understood as a politically and socially oriented term, denoting the legal right of people to do what they want without unjustified interference from the state, freedom is usually deployed in a more general sense, meaning the ability to act as one wishes or under no one's control. Despite the public character of pre-election speeches, the nominees tend to choose a less specific word. This can be explained, firstly, by an attempt of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden to make their discourse

comprehensible for all US citizens, regardless of their socioeconomic status or level of education, and, secondly, by the desire of the politicians to appeal to the personal feelings of the electorate and make their utterances trustworthy and persuasive.

Regarding the other lexemes forming the nucleus of the value concept of freedom, we have found that the noun *independence* together with the common root adjective *independent* are used 15 times in Joe Biden's addresses, which constitute 10 percent of all the instances of freedom concept deployment. Donald Trump's discourse contains 39 cases of their involvement. This figure accounts for approximately 7.9 percent of the total number of all the lexemes belonging to the nucleus.

In addition to the previously described means of shaping the value concept of freedom, we have decided to include into its core the noun *sovereignty*. In terms of the pre-election speeches of the President, 26 instances of its usage was found. This makes 5.3 percent of the total amount of vocabulary items contributing to the core. In the discourse of his opponent, Joe Biden, such a lexical unit were not found.

Last but not least, the word *privilege* might also be considered as the one belonging to the core of the concept of freedom. However, the number of its usages is relatively insignificant: in Joe Biden's speeches it was deployed 13 times, while his political opponent resorts to this lexeme only once. As a result, frequency distribution accounts for 8.6 and 0.2 percent for each presidential candidate respectively.

The bar charts *A* and *B* from the *Appendix 3.2* clearly demonstrate the percentage relation of the vocabulary units constituting the core of the value concept of freedom in the campaign speeches of Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

In conclusion, the conducted analysis allows us to assume that the nuclei of the nominative fields of freedom concept developed in the discourses of both presidential nominees are quite alike. In terms of the differences that exist between them, we need to mention the lexeme *sovereignty*, missing in the addresses of the former Vice President, and the word *privilege*, underrepresented in the speeches of the President. Nevertheless, regarding the manipulative potential of the concept of freedom, our primarily focus remains on its cognitive features, which indicate how the politicians organize the targeted impact on the consciousness of the voters as well as confirm the

assumption that their linguistic preferences depend not only on the sociopolitical situation within the state but also on their personal viewpoints on this or that issue.

In order to acquire a better understanding of the mechanisms of manipulative exploitation of freedom value concept in the discourses of the presidential nominees, we suggest analyzing the cognitive features pertaining to that concept one by one, beginning with the peculiarities of Joe Biden's appeals to the aforementioned phenomenon. Having processed his pre-election speeches during rallies, we managed to distinguish four categories, which belong to the periphery of the studied nominative field.

The most widespread and the closest to the core cognitive feature of the discussed concept is labeled "***the value of freedom.***" It is represented through the combination of the keyword *freedom* with such nouns as *democracy, justice, security* and *opportunity*.

The following fragment from Joe Biden's public address Hermantown, Minnesota on September 18, 2020 shows how he endows this feature with manipulative coloring:

*"We're all here because we understand that, when people have **the right to come together** collectively to organize for **better working conditions, better wages, safer places to work, they do better, their families do better, and everybody in this country does better.** And, from what I've learned from talking to **hardworking people** all over Minnesota, is that what they want is **the freedom and the opportunity** to build the lives that they want [164]."*

When claiming that *people have the right to come together*, the politician assures the audience that he understands their concerns and support the freedom of assembly and, as a consequence, democracy since the latter presupposes the ability of the general public to express their opinions on everything that is related to their welfare. At the same time, by stating that the US citizens need *safer workplaces* and *better working condition*, he implies that the sitting President is unable to ensure those essential things, thus subtly criticizing Donald Trump. After that, Biden resorts to the deployment of climax, combined with the epiphora so as to increase emotional tension at the end of

this very same sentence. In the end, he once again addresses the audience and describes the voters *as hardworking people*, which can be considered as an example of flattery directed at them. What is more, he convinces the public that the main prerequisite for state prosperity is *freedom and opportunity* and in such a way demonstrate his readiness to safeguard those values as the US President.

The cognitive feature, representing “*types of freedom*,” to which belong the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the state and enshrined in the Constitution as well as a number of other legislative acts, is the second most common feature in the former Vice President’s addresses. Therefore, we assume that it pertains to the close periphery of the nominative field of the freedom concept. Among the lexical units which accompany its keyword are *press, assembly, speech, religion, education*, and so on.

For instance, during a campaign rally in Broward County, Florida on October 29, 2020 Joe Biden makes such a statement:

*“Trump is **the worst possible bearer for democracy** in places like Cuba, Venezuela, North Korea. For my entire career, I’ve **stood for democracy and human rights**. For **freedom of the press, assembly, freedom of religion and against dictators**, whether they’re left or right. Folks, it unconscionable that the Trump administration, that says it cares so much, are deporting hundreds of Cubans and Venezuelans back to their **dictatorships** [145].”*

First of all, he deploys hyperbole and accuses Donald Trump of neglecting his duty as the President of the US to promote democracy across the world, including the countries which have decided to adopt the path of oppression of their citizens. Then, against the background of that overt discreditation, Joe Biden resorts to the tactic of positive self-presentation: the politician uses parcellation in order to enlists his “accomplishments” in securing basic human rights and freedoms that are supposed to be guaranteed at the governmental level. In such a way he takes credit for the things which outside his sphere of competence. Such a simple address as *folks* portrays Joe Biden as an ordinary man and makes his speech sound personal. In the last sentence, the politician deliberately draws a line between what the President claims to do and

how he actually behaves, thereby stating that he is a liar. Such an effect is achieved with the help of the relative clause *that says it cares so much*.

The next cognitive feature concerning the compatibility of the keyword *freedom* is “***freedom as a miracle,***” actualized in Joe Biden’s discourse through such lexical units as *sanctity, inviolability* and *holy light*.

In order to demonstrate how it is deployed in his addresses and what manipulative function it performs, we suggest to take a closer look at the excerpt from the politician’s campaign speech in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on October 6, 2020:

*“There’s no more fitting place than here today in Gettysburg, to talk about the cost of division. About **how much it has cost America in the past, about how much it is costing us now, and about why I believe in this moment, we must come together as a nation. For President Lincoln, the Civil War was about the greatest of causes. The end of slavery, widening equality, pursuit of justice, the creation of opportunity, and the sanctity of freedom** [170].”*

We should mention that in this case the presidential candidate speaks about unity and overcoming differences in order to achieve the common goal, that is, to make America prosperous. He makes a distinction between the present and the past, and so as to make his arguments more compelling, resorts to mentioning such an outstanding personality as Abraham Lincoln, one of the first defenders of freedom and democracy for in the US. What is more, Biden enumerates his achievements, including there not only *the end of slavery* but also the promotion of such values of the American nation as *equality, justice, opportunity, and freedom*. In such a way he manipulates the audience by appealing to what is recognizable and shared by the majority of members of the that society.

Last but not least, we believe that it is important to discuss the peculiarities of usage of the word *right*, belonging to the core of the nominative field of freedom concept. It should be noted, however, that the cognitive feature that we have distinguished is, to a great extent, similar to the already mentioned “types of freedom.” We have decided to call this it “***categories of rights.***” This category includes a right to *healthcare, to come home safely, to protest peacefully, to participate in free and fair*

*elections, to vote, as well as human, women's, reproductive and land rights. In terms of the adjectives, deployed to characterize those notions, they are most often fundamental and unalienable.*

As an example of the manipulative use of this cognitive feature we have decided to choose a fragment from Joe Biden's speech in Wilmington, Delaware on September 14, 2020:

*"We'll launch a new, modern Civilian Climate Corp to heal our public lands and make us much less vulnerable to wildfires and floods. I believe that every American has a **fundamental right to breathe clean air and drink clean water**. I know that we haven't fulfilled that right yet [156]."*

In this case, the politician resorts to the tactic of promise and convinces the audience that they need his ecological program of climate improvement to be implemented. By stating that *every American has a fundamental right to breathe clean air and drink clean water*, the former Vice President appeals to the common sense and shows the public that he cares about their wellbeing as well as about the future of the generations to come. The last sentence suggests that the discussed right haven't been satisfied yet and manipulates public opinion by implying that only Joe Biden as the President can make his plan come true.

In conclusion, the performed analysis of the cognitive features of the concept of freedom in the discourse of Joe Biden allows us to assume that the peculiarities of its verbalization depend the message he tries to transmit and the manipulative goals which he pursues. In general, we have managed to distinguish such features as "the value of freedom," "types of freedom," "freedom as a miracle" and "categories of rights," enumerated in accordance with their proximity to the nucleus. The lexical units that accompany *freedom* and *rights* give us the reason to believe that the discourse of this presidential candidate is aimed predominantly at his self-presentation: it contains only a few expressions that highlight the fact that his opponents might somehow endanger the value of freedom. As a result, we believe them to be insignificant for our research.

Regarding the addresses given by Donald Trump, the survey on the verbalization of freedom concept there has made it possible for us to identify four cognitive features belonging to the periphery of its nominative field and having manipulative power.

The most common feature among them is also peculiar for the discourse of Joe Biden and labeled “*types of freedom.*” It is actualized not only with the help of the already mentioned lexical units, namely *religious freedom, freedom of speech* and *freedom of healthcare* but also with through such newly introduced items as *freedom to live your life, freedom to protect yourself, freedom to live in security* as well as the expressions *free trade, free markets*, etc. It should be noted that instead of *freedom* Donald Trump tends to use the term *liberty* as well.

A bright instance of exploitation of that cognitive feature is contained in the following excerpt from Donald Trump’s address in Kenosha, Wisconsin on November 2, 2020:

“*A vote for sleepy Joe Biden is a vote for lockdowns, layoffs, misery, and no fracking ... If you want a vaccine to kill the virus, a job to support your family, and freedom to live your life, then you have no choice but to cast your ballot for a gentleman named, Donald J. Trump [149].*”

First of all, the politician mocks his opponent with the help of the label *sleepy*. Second, he plays on one of the weaknesses of mass consciousness, which is the inability of a large crowd of people to critically evaluate the information given to them by a well-known reputable individual, and deceives the voters with the help of enumeration of the policies that Biden “presumably” wants to implement in the state. What is even more important, he mentions the abstract noun *misery*, that has an excessively strong negative connotation, along with phenomena as *fracking, layoffs* and *lockdowns*, which evoke the audience’s anger by themselves. The second sentence brings even more controversy: it appears that Donald Trump tries to “blackmail” the US citizens. The politician manipulates such notions as healthcare, financial security and even freedom – things that should be safeguarded by the state – in order to win the elections. The phrase *you have no choice but to* exaggerates the hopelessness of the situation and makes the people make rushed and often unjustified decisions.

The second cognitive feature that we want to discuss is very much connected with the previous one. It is “*the protection of freedom,*” represented through the combination of the lexeme *freedom* with such verbs as *defend, protect* and *secure, uphold, restore* as well as the expressions in *defense of, fight for* and *struggle for*.

For example, in Lansing, Michigan on October 27, 2020 Donald Trump makes several promises, appealing at the same time to the aforementioned category:

“*Over the next four years, ... we will hire more police, increase penalties for assaults on law enforcement, and we will ban deadly sanctuary cities. We will uphold religious liberty, free speech and the right to keep and bear arms. We will maintain America’s unrivaled military might, and we will ensure peace through strength* [165].”

In this excerpt the sitting President continues to promote his politics on illegal immigrants by informing the public that he has chosen a violent way of conflict resolution with *more police*, penalizing legislation and the prohibition of the cities that refuse to collect and transmit to the federal government any data on the undocumented citizens of foreign countries. The adjective *deadly* reveals Trump’s attitude to the them as well as subtly suggest that the audience share that opinion. Then the politician assures the people in the military potential of their state as well as promises them to ensure peace through strength. The problem is, any manifestations of violence is unacceptable in the democratic society. What is even more interesting, Donald Trump also claims that he is ready to guarantee the freedom of religion and speech as well as *the right to keep and bear arms*. However, those statements contradict his previous and following remarks. The anaphoric repetition of the phrase *we will* contribute to his image as a decisive person.

The next important cognitive feature is peculiar for the discourse of the former Vice President as well. It is labeled “*categories of rights,*” implemented with the help of the lexical units that reflect Donald Trump’s views on certain controversial topics concerning the US domestic policy, such as *the right to life*, which is a reference to the Democrats’ attitude to late-term abortions; *the right to keep and bear arms* as well as *the right to self-defense*, claimed in response to Kamala Harris’ plan to enact a strict

gun-control legislation; and *the right to keep your doctor*, that is related with Obama's promises (which Trump claims to be unfulfilled) within the framework of Affordable Care Act.

During a campaign rally in Hershey, Pennsylvania, on December 10, 2019 the politician says,

*“Republicans will defend your sacred right to choose the doctor, and you can choose your plan, and you choose the plan that's right for you. We will strongly protect patients with preexisting conditions. We will also protect your right to get the physician that you want [108].”*

In this fragment Donald Trump assures the people that he is ready to defend their right to get access to proper healthcare and make a choice that works best for them. He even deploys the adjective *sacred* so as to highlight the fact that nobody can take away that opportunity from the US citizens. Nevertheless, during his presidency the politician has made numerous attempts to discredit and eliminate Obamacare, which is aimed at providing an affordable health insurance plan for all Americans, irrespective of their economic status. Therefore, the aforementioned statements of the President can be attributed to hypocrisy, deployed to manipulate the public opinion.

The fourth and the last cognitive feature we classified as *“jeopardized right.”* It is verbalized in Donald Trump's discourse through the combination of the noun *right* with such accompanying verbs as *attack, eliminate, punish, take away, erase, extinguish, terminate* and the prepositional phrase *war on*. In addition, those lexemes can sometimes be used along with *freedom* and its close synonym *liberty*; however, those instances are not numerous.

The politician's address in Swanton, Ohio on September 21, 2020 contains a bright instance of the deployment of such a feature:

*“The Biden nominated justices will shred our Second Amendment, eliminate the right to self-defense, and allow the government to confiscate your privately owned firearms. You know that. Put in other language, they will end your Second Amendment [129].”*

First of all, Donald Trump creates an emotional tension by evoking the sense of fear from the supporters. He achieves that result through the use of several verbs with negative connotations, namely *shred*, *eliminate* and *confiscate*. In addition, the President implies that the Second Amendment, which proclaims the right of the people to keep and bear arms, promotes *the right to self-defense*; thus, substituting the impartial law with the phrase that makes Kamala Harris' plan sound completely unreasonable. In order to manipulate the audience even more, Donald Trump deploys the personal pronoun *you* to refer to the general public, in such a way emphasizing the fact that those are the ordinary people who will suffer from the decision of *Biden nominated justices*. The phrase *you know that* serves to make the previous statement more compelling. At the end, Trump summarizes what he has stated by repeating the phrase about the Second Amendment but with slight modifications, made for rhetorical purposes.

All things considered, the discourse of Donald Trump is full of references to the value concept of freedom; however, what enables us to evaluate its manipulative potential is the cognitive features that the politician develops. They are: "types of freedom," "protection of freedom," "categories of rights" and "jeopardized right." If we are to compare them with the categories peculiar for the addresses of Joe Biden, we should mention that the difference between their implementation is often vague, as for instance when the politicians resort to the universal human rights and democratic freedoms, such as the freedom of speech or religion. However, at the same time, the President tends to use a great number of accompanying words the semantics of which presupposes the presence of a certain external force which exerts a negative impact on upholding the principles of freedom in the country. Those are the verbs *defend*, *support*, *endanger*, *threaten*, etc.

### **3.3. The Concept of Equality**

Equality as a universal human value plays a significant role in the mental space of a modern individual. When perceived and reproduced, this term evokes in the minds of the general public certain connotative and evaluative associations, attributable to the collective subconsciousness, the peculiarities of which depend not only on a certain

sociocultural picture of the world, developed among the representatives of all the existing nations, but also on the challenges of time, that shapes the background against which moral codes and values are identified [82, p. 309].

The attempts to achieve equality has been recorded in all civilized societies throughout all the history of humankind. However, as Y.S. Stepanov notes, concepts can behave in different ways, based on their layers of meaning, and this can affect their cognitive evaluation [46, p. 40]. In other words, the interpretation of the value concept of equality, including the lexical units belonging to its core, is directly connected with the stage of historical development of society since every era has its own ideas about this phenomenon and ways to achieve it.

In the past, the most effective of them were believed to be revolts that occurred rather regularly and were caused by a number of reasons, from economic to political and social ones. The concept of equality then was associated with the notions of fight, war, uprising and social turmoil. Despite the fact that these phenomena have inherently negative connotations nowadays, at that time people were not that judgmental, especially when their initiative had a noble purpose. If we are to find an example within the context of the US history, we should mention the American Civil War (1861 – 1865), which was needed to launch the process of modernization of the country, end slavery and liberate the people as well as unite the Northern and the Southern States. However, the main goal of that campaign was to establish peace and equality in the country.

It is important to note that the aforementioned value concept deals not only with the military-related spheres. For example, during the first-wave feminism that emerged in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and continued up to the 1920s, equality was associated with gender rights, access to education and voting process, financial independence of women, their emancipation, etc. All these phenomena affected the semantics of equality concept as well as gave rise to new interpretations of it.

Last but not least, we find reasonable to discuss the Civil Rights Movement, associated with the struggle of African Americans to break the cycle of oppression and discrimination of the black community in the US and take their rightful place in its

multicultural society. Therefore, the semantic field of the value concept of equality has expanded with such additional meanings as the fight against racism or desegregation, proving its dynamic nature and the ability to adapt to the changing circumstances of public life.

In terms of the idea of social equality, it has been transformed by various scholars over centuries. For instance, Aristotle, interpreted it as distribution of wealth according to people's needs; François-Noël Babeuf, a French political activist and one of the founding fathers of scientific communism, believed that this phenomenon lies in providing people with equal number of benefits; while Karl Marx was a proponent of the theory of proportional equality [35, p. 41].

The foundations of the modern understanding of equality were laid in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and are related to the name of a famous philosopher called Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu. In his book "The Spirit of the Laws," the researcher claims that all people are equal by birthright. However, when living in the society, they are forced to reject that privilege, and only the law is able to return them to the normal existence [85, p. 112]. This very same idea paved the way for the US Declaration of Independence (officially ratified in 1776) and lies in in the following lines: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness [89]." Those fateful words marked the beginning of a new era of human thought during which equality was interpreted from the philosophical and ethical perspectives as the indication of individual dignity. Currently, it means the opportunity of everyone to freely develop their abilities and talents as well as to satisfy their individual needs. According to that principle, the state has to ensure that people belonging to different social classes and groups get an equal chance to achieve success, based on their expertise and desire to learn new things.

After providing a small-scale description of the dynamic nature and historical development of the value concept of equality, which is meant to facilitate its comprehension, it is time to take a closer look at the linguistic peculiarities of the concept so that we are able to perform a comprehensive analysis of its manipulative

potential in the pre-election discourse of the presidential candidates chosen by Republicans and Democrats to run for the 2020 US presidential election.

As was already stated, before distinguishing lexical units belonging to the core of the concept, it is necessary to search for the dictionary definitions of the term *equality* and investigate how the meaning of this notion may change in relation to the context of its use. The sources we have deployed to do so include A. S Hornby's "Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English [97, p. 309]," Michael Mayor's "Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English [98, p. 311]," David Robertson's "The Routledge Dictionary of Politics [101, p. 94] and P. H. Collin's "Dictionary of Politics and Government [96, p. 62]." According to the results of the preliminary research, equality may be interpreted in the following ways:

- 1) as the quality of having the same value or esteem;
- 2) as the principle of fair and impartial behavior towards people, irrespective of their age, gender, race or religion;
- 3) and as the standard guaranteed by the state which treats their citizens as equal in political, economic and social rights as well as provides equitable opportunities for their self-realization.

Such an explanation of the concept of equality prove that it can be actualized in discourse not only directly, with the help of the key lexeme, and the common-root nouns *equity* and *equivalence*, but also indirectly, through a number of synonyms, such as *fairness*, *justness*, *justice*, *impartiality*, *parity*, *egalitarianism*, *sameness*, *similarity*, *likeness*, *evenness* plus the corresponding adjectives and adverbs.

The antonyms of equality are *inequality*, *imparity*, *discrimination*, *prejudice*, *bias*, *disparity*, etc. They may contribute to the formation of the aforementioned concept as well since the differentiation of the true meaning of any notion is impossible without clarifying and evaluating its opposites.

However, not all of those units are involved in the implementation of the value concept of equality in Joe Biden's and Donald Trump's addresses, made during the 2020 pre-election race. Therefore, in order to identify which of them are important for our research, we have examined the speeches and made counts of the existing means

of verbalization of the discussed concept. The results of this analysis have shown that Joe Biden appeals to the concept of equality only 272 times. Therefore, we can conclude that it is not so common in his discourse as, for instance, the concepts of democracy and freedom. The total number of deployments of equality concept in the addresses of Donald Trump is even lower and accounts for 188 instances. The gap between those two figures appears to be even wider when we take into account the already discussed inconsistencies in the length of their speeches: the public addresses of the President are significantly bigger than those made by his opponent.

That is the reason which stands behind our decision to determine the frequency distribution of the lexical units that contribute to the formation of the nucleus of equality value concept. In order to do so, we have organized the quantitative indicators of the distinguished vocabulary items in the *Table 3.3*.

*Table 3.3*

**The Core of the Concept of Equality in the Pre-Election Discourses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden**

<i>The lexical units contributing to the formation of the core of the concept</i>	<i>The quantity of their usage in the discourse of Joe Biden</i>	<i>The quantity of their usage in the discourse of Donald Trump</i>
<i>EQUALITY, equal and equally</i>	63	14
<i>EQUITY and equitable</i>	19	2
<i>FAIRNESS, fair and fairly</i>	82	129
<i>JUSTICE and just</i>	108	43
<b>In total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>188</b>

Although they do not belong to the most common lexical units in the discourse of both politicians, we would prefer to discuss the distribution of the keyword *equality*, its common-root adjective *equal* and the adverb *equally* in the first place because they

reflect the semantic potential of the concept of equality in the most precise and effective way. Regarding the addresses of Joe Biden, the research showed that he deploys those items 63 times, that constitute approximately 23.2 percent of the whole number of word usages. In the discourse of Donald Trump, we recorded 14 instances of resorting to such lexemes. This number accounts for 7.4 percent of all the vocabulary items constituting the nucleus of the analyzed nominative field.

In terms of the closest synonym of the word *equality*, we assume it to be the noun *equity*, although their meanings are slightly different. Equality is interpreted as the principle of distribution of resources which ensures that everyone gets the same amount of something, while equity is understood as the provision of proportional allocation of wealth, that is needed so that the people of different backgrounds, levels of education and societal status have the opportunity to achieve an equal level of success. We believe that those definitions can explain why the politicians usually avoid using *equity* to transmit the message about a just American nation: it is rather difficult and controversial question how to determine which segments of the US population need more attention from the state and which ones can tackle their problems without any external help. During the pre-election campaign, the presidential candidates strive to gain as much support from the voters as possible and prefer not to ruin their reputations by raising that topic.

In the discourse of the former Vice President we counted 19 instances of usage of the lexemes *equity* and *equitable*, which constitute 7 percent of the of the total number of vocabulary items. The sitting US President resorts to the deployment of those linguistic units only 2 times, that correspond to only 1.1 percent of all the words shaping the nucleus of equality concept.

The next items that deserve our attention are *fairness* and the adjective *fair*. They are especially common in the addresses of Donald Trump since the politician is a huge proponent of the strategy of discrediting his opponents as well as all the individuals who “seemingly” do not support his policies. He accuses them of being biased and treating him *unfairly*. As a result, this presidential nominee mentions the discussed lexemes 129 times. Such a number counts for 69 percent of all the units constituting

the nucleus of the nominative field of equality concept in his campaign speeches. Joe Biden, on the contrary, tends to deploy them only to highlight the problem of inequality that his nation has to address. We found 82 cases of their usage, which constitute 48 percent of the total number of references to the analyzed concept.

Finally, we want to mention the lexemes *justice* and *just*. The situation with them is quite the opposite: it is the former Vice President who most often resorts to their deployment. Summarizing the results of our research, we recorded 108 instances of resorting to those words, which account for 40 percent of the total number of word usages. Concerning the addresses of Donald Trump, he tends to avoid those vocabulary units, which could be explained by the fact that, at least in pre-election discourse, the politician prefers to deny the existing drawbacks of the US domestic policy and praise himself for the country's achievements. Therefore, justice as a means of implementation of the principles of democracy in practice is not on the agenda. The frequency of usage of the analyzed vocabulary units constitutes approximately 23 percent of the all the references to the concept of equality (we recorded 43 cases of its deployment in Donald Trump's addresses).

In order to give the readers a better understanding of distribution of all the lexemes that facilitate the formation of equality concept in the discourses of the presidential nominees who participated in the 2020 US pre-electoral race, we suggest that they take a closer look at the bar charts *A* and *B*, provided in the *Appendix 3.3*.

To conclude, after a thorough examination of the addresses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, we have discovered that the linguistic means of shaping the nucleus of the value concept of equality in their discourses are pretty much alike and encompass such lexemes as the keyword *equality* together with its common-root adjective *equal* and the adverb *equally*; the closes synonym of equality, which is *equity*, as well as its derivatives; the words *fairness*, *fair* and *fairly*; and *justice* plus *just*. The difference between those politicians lies in the frequency of resorting to this or that tools. In order to investigate the manipulative power of their linguistic behavior, we find it necessary to make a small survey on the cognitive features of the concept under analysis since those categories ensure the fulfillment of the global (persuading the audience to vote

for the manipulator) and local (depends on the communicative situation in which the transmission of information takes place) goals of pre-election speeches.

As was the case with the concepts of democracy and freedom, we find it reasonable to critically examine the features involved in the addresses of Joe Biden in the first place and then compare our findings to those which are derived from Donald Trump's discourse. Thus, a research on the cognitive features of equality concept in the pre-election speeches of the former Vice President has made it possible for us to differentiate between four of them, that shape the periphery of the analyzed nominative field.

The first cognitive feature that is worth discussing is "*equality as a key to bright future.*" It is achieved through the combination of the words *equality* and *equal* with such lexemes as *opportunity*, *chance* and *shot*. There we also include the instances of usage of the modifying adverb *equally* along with the adjectives that have inherently positive connotations, namely *successful* and *important*.

The following fragment from Joe Biden's campaign rally in Miramar, Florida on October 13, 2020 demonstrates the manipulative potential of those ostensibly simple phrases:

*"It's about time we start rewarding work, not wealth. To get everyone a fair return on their work, an equal chance to get ahead. For example, for communities of color in South Florida and all across this country, the question is how do we break the cycle where in good times you lag behind, and in bad times you get hit first and the hardest, and when recovery comes, you're the last ones to bounce back? The answer is simple: justice [170]."*

Initially the politician speaks about the economic crisis caused by coronavirus disease but then extends his criticism of the policies advocated by Donald Trump on the problem of inequality across the country. When creating an opposition of work and wealth, he assures the audience that he understands their concerns and has best intentions to change the situation when big businesses can avoid paying progressive taxes, and the main tax burden falls on the shoulders of fellow citizens. In order to obtain more support from the voters, he appeals to their rightful desire to have an

opportunity to achieve success in life and promises them *to get a fair return on ... work* and, what is even more important, *an equal chance to get ahead*. Then Joe Biden deploys the euphemism *communities of color* to tactfully address the people of other nationalities who tend to suffer from discrimination in the US. The rhetorical question, to which the presidential nominee resorts to perform that function, makes his statements sound like a dialog and facilitates overcoming distance between him the listeners. The last sentence is climactic. The word *justice* gives a new undertone to everything that was stated previously since this notion belongs to the most important principles that should govern the decisions of any Head of State.

The next cognitive feature deals with *“types of inequalities.”* We have decided to distinguish such a category of formation of equality concept because Joe Biden in his pre-election discourse strives to discredit his political opponent and, as a consequence, focuses audience’s attention on the absence of fairness and justness in the American society. Its means of implementation include such vocabulary units as the adjectives *racial*, *educational* and *economic* deployed along with the lexemes *inequality* and *inequity*. In addition, when processing the speeches, we noticed the expression *income and wealth inequality*, referring to the President’s discriminatory policies towards the representatives of minorities in the US.

The excerpt from the address made by Joe Biden in Toledo, Ohio on October 12, 2020 serves a perfect illustration of manipulation with the help of the aforementioned cognitive feature:

*“Our divisions today are long standing, economic and racial inequities have shaped us for generations, but **I give you my word. I give you my word.** If I’m elected president, I will marshal the ingenuity and goodwill of this nation to **turn division into unity** and bring us together because I think people are looking for that [156].”*

First of all, Joe Biden gains people’s trust by acknowledging the existence of *economic and racial inequalities*, deeply rooted in the American society. Regarding that issue, it is worth mentioning that the sitting President prefers to deny them in his addresses and persuade his supporters that he has made everything he could to ensure the prosperity of the state. However, the former Vice President decides to adopt another

strategy and present himself as a capable leader who is wise enough to tackle those challenges. The repeated sentence *I give you my word* proves that he considers himself a trustworthy figure of authority and expects the citizens to believe his promises. After that, Joe Biden resorts to the power of flattery while speaking about *the ingenuity and goodwill* of his people. Finally, the phrase *turn division into unity* is an instance of the technique of contrast, deployed to achieve a desired rhetorical effect.

The third cognitive feature is labeled **“*the implementation of equality.*”** It is actualized with the help of such verbs as *deliver, fulfill, obtain, get, fight for* and *insist on*. In such a way Joe Biden demonstrates his commitment to the common good as well as highlights his democratic inclinations.

For example, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on October 6, 2020 he makes an attempt to unite the audience and, in order to do so, appeals to the principles according to which the American republic was initially built:

*“America has to be about possibilities. The possibility of prosperity, not just for the privileged few, **but for the many, for all of us.** Working people deserve an opportunity. Lincoln knew this. He said that the country had to give people, and I quote, ‘**An open field and a fair chance ...**’ That’s what we’re going to do in America. We’re going to build together. We fought a civil war that would secure a union that would seek to **fulfill the promise of equality for all** [149].”*

The concept of equality there is realized, in the first place, though the identification of *the possibility of prosperity* as pertaining to all the people. Then the former Vice President mentions *opportunity* and resorts to the quotation of Abraham Lincoln, one of the founding fathers of the state, in order to explain what he means by that. The collocation *an open field* is rather significant in this case because it visualizes the concept, makes the voters imagine that space full of potential and hope. The appeal to the *fair chance* only intensifies the effect from Biden’s previous words about what the US citizens deserve to have in their country. However, the politician continuously stresses the fact that this dream can be realized only through the joint efforts of the people. In the end, Joe Biden summarizes his statements as well as once again assures

the voters that he will *fulfill the promise of equality*. The use of the pronoun *all* in combination with the preposition *for* is meant to add emphasis to the preceding phrase.

In spite of the fact that the noun *fairness* and its common-root adjective *fair* are the most commonly used lexemes from the nominative field of equality concept, after the thorough analysis of all the instances of their deployment we came to the conclusion that their manipulative power is a rather controversial issue since Joe Biden often deploys those units to discuss the existing problems that the US government has to face on a daily basis, namely the absence of a just approach to the distribution of therapeutics and vaccines against COVID-19 or the unfair criminal justice system which is aimed at penalizing the prisoners instead of rehabilitating them. Therefore, we believe that those pieces of information should be classified as the instances of persuasion.

Last but not least, it is important to mention the cognitive feature of “*shattered justice*,” achieved through the ability of the word *justice* to collocate with such accompanying vocabulary units as *crisis*, *wreck* and *failure*.

The following excerpt from Joe Biden’s public address in Kissimmee, Florida on September 15, 2020 demonstrates how this feature can manipulate people’s minds:

“*More than 25% of Hispanics here in Florida have reported being worried about how they’re going to pay their rent or their mortgage. A study found that one in three Hispanic small business owners have taken a hit during this pandemic with many more likely to close and close permanently. That’s on top of his [Donald Trump’s] failure, and, in fact, he demonstrates the complete disinterest in addressing the crisis of racial justice in America. He does exactly the opposite. He fans the flames of hatred and division in our country for his own gain* [165].”

What initially catches the listener’s attention there is the fact that the politician provides statistical data that perfectly supports his allegations, makes them trustworthy and is rather difficult to verify. Then Joe Biden resorts to the use of hyperbole, while claiming that the President’s inability to ensure the employment of Hispanics during the pandemic is *on the top of his failure*, and shares an utterly subjective opinion about Trump’s indifference to the problems of minorities. Although that statement can be

true, it is the task of the voters to make conclusions regarding their President's behavior. What is more, in the discussed sentence the former Vice President demonstrates an overtly dishonest technique which causes the audience disapprove the policies of Donald Trump: he explains the economic hardships of the communities of color, caused by COVID-19, by *the crisis of racial justice* in the US. At the end, Joe Biden involves figurative language to make his speech more eloquent and suitable for the general public.

In conclusion, the performed analysis of the periphery of the nominative field of the value concept of equality in the pre-election discourse of Joe Biden has shown that it comprises such cognitive features as “equality as a key to the bright future,” “types of inequalities,” “the implementation of equality” and “shattered justice.” Most of them are actualized within the framework of the tactic of discreditation of the Donald Trump and the tactic of positive self-presentation. By skillfully introducing into his addresses the vocabulary items that contribute to the formation of equality concept, the former Vice President subtly appeals to the desire of any human being to be treated in a decent way, gains people's trust and, as a result, wins their votes.

Regarding the implementation of the concept under analysis in the discourse of Donald Trump, we should mention that it is not very peculiar for the politician to manipulate the notion of equality in order to affect the audience's decisions. Therefore, the research on the ability of the lexical units constituting the nucleus of the concept's nominative field to collocate with other lexemes has allowed us differentiate only two cognitive features pertaining to its periphery.

The first one is labeled “*fairness in action.*” This feature is verbalized when the adjective *fair* is deployed in combination with such vocabulary units as *system of immigration, trade deals* and *estate tax*. If we are to draw a parallel between the references to the phenomenon of fairness in the discourses of Joe Biden and Donald Trump, it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that when the representative of the Democratic Party only notes that it is necessary to improve certain aspects of state policies to make them fair to the ordinary citizens, Donald Trump claims that he has

succeeded in rectifying all the mistakes of the previous government, thus contributing to the formation of his positive self-image and misleading the voters.

In order to illustrate our point of view, we suggest to take a closer look at the fragment from the President's campaign speech in Colorado Springs, Colorado on February 20, 2020:

*“While the extreme left has been wasting America’s time with vial hoaxes, **we’ve been** killing terrorists, creating jobs, raising wages, **enacting fair trade deals**, securing our border and **lifting up citizens of every race, color, religion, and creed**, right [108]?”*

This excerpt contains a negative reference to Democrats, described as being *extreme left*. In order to harm their reputation even more, Donald Trump deploys a rather unusual expression *vial hoaxes*. However, it also performs a subtle function of diminishing the importance of the accusations that led to the first attempt of the President's impeachment. The enumeration of the accomplishments “seemingly” made by the politician is aimed at creating the illusion of a great economic boom, which happened under his leadership. Nevertheless, what is important for our analysis of the aforementioned cognitive feature, is the collocation *fair trade deals*, contributing to Trump's portrayal as a person who would stand up for justice in all spheres of human life, no matter how harsh the circumstances are. When Trump mentions *citizens of every race, color, religion, and creed*, he automatically includes them into the semantic field “WE” and demonstrates his devotion to the idea of fairness even more strongly.

The second cognitive feature that is worth mentioning is *“the distortion of justice,”* achieved through the combination of this lexeme with such adjectives as *double-sided* and *smear* as well as the verbs *deny* and *reject*.

For example, in Phoenix, Arizona on February 19, 2020 the politician resorts to this category in order to discredit Democrats and call into question the impartiality and of the American system of justice:

*“We have **a double-sided justice**. It’s very **unfair** what’s going on ... But let’s see how it all works out, folks ... I hope you’re going to be happy, because there are a lot of dishonest **slimeballs** out there ... Dirty cops, a lot of dirty cops. By the way, the*

*FBI, those guys in that are incredible. But the ones on top, they were absolute scum. What they were trying to do, if that happened to Obama, or a Democrat, or especially a liberal Democrat, they'd be in jail for 50 years ... They spied on our campaign. Remember that. After they spied, we won [129].”*

First and foremost, this fragment contains a direct statement about the distorted justice that Donald Trump had to face. His indignation then is enhanced with the help of appeal to the unfairness of the situation in which he ended up. In such a way the politician deliberately creates suspense and makes the supporters listen to his words even more attentively. After that, the President deploys the lexemes that belong to the derogatory layer of vocabulary, namely *slimeballs* and *scum*, while describing FBI top officials. The next move is to threaten Democrats with the imprisonment. Only having fulfilled all those steps, Trump reveals the reason behind such harsh words and accuses his opponents of spying on his campaign. However, in the end he assures everyone in his invincibility and indirectly promises to become a winner of this campaign as well.

In conclusion, the research of the campaign addresses of Donald Trump has revealed that the periphery of the nominative field of equality value concept encompasses such cognitive features as “fairness in action” and “the distortion of justice.” The reason why he does not pay much attention to those phenomena is quite simple: it is the responsibility of the President to ensure justice and fairness for each US citizen. Therefore, the politician cannot severely criticize other people for any failures on that matter (nevertheless, he does so a few times as is clear from the second cognitive feature). At the same time, everyone in the state has heard of, for instance, Trump’s attitude to women and illegal immigrants. That explains why he cannot provide personal examples that would prove his devotion to the idea of equality and resorts to enlisting his “professional achievements.”

Comparing Donald Trump’s means of verbalization of the concept of equality and the cognitive features he develops in order to acquire the voters’ support to those peculiar for the addresses of Joe Biden, we believe that the latter strives to demonstrate with the help of various linguistic means his humanism and commitment to addressing the problems people of different socioeconomic statuses, educational levels, sometimes

even cultures and religions have to face on a daily basis, while criticizing his political opponent. Donald Trump, on the contrary, is more focused on the unfair treatment of himself and his political party. As a result, we assume that the President's strategy of manipulation is less convincing than the one advocated by Joe Biden.

### **Summary of the Third Part**

Since concepts are mental and linguistic units that mirror certain fragments of the physical world, facilitate human interpretation of real-life events as well as perform the function of culture-motivated elements responsible for determining the norms of this or that society, we have decided that our research on the manipulative potential of the pre-election discourses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden should include the conceptual analysis of the basic value categories, which they deploy to persuade the electorate in their sincerity, discredit their political enemies or just reinforce the pragmatic effect of the uttered statements so that they sound trustworthy and reliable.

The first concept we have chosen for our survey is democracy because it is one of the fundamental values in the US. The core of its nominative field consists of pretty much the same lexical units in the discourses of both politicians. However, their frequency distribution is different. In order not to spend too much time and effort on a detailed explanation, we suggest enumerating the results on those vocabulary items, beginning with the keyword *democracy* together with the adjective *democratic* (23.7 percent of all the references in the addresses of Joe Biden and 16.8 percent in Donald Trump's speeches). After that go *elections* together with *electorate*, *elect*, and *elected* (74.6 percent vs 81.3 percent); *government of the people* (1.3 percent against 0.2 percent); *commonwealth* (peculiar only for the discourse of the President and accounting for 1.4 percent of all the word usages) and *republic* (0.4 percent of all the word usages in the pre-election discourse of the former Vice President).

This statistical data was needed to distinguish the most prominent cognitive features of the nominative field of democracy concept deployed to manipulate the audience so that the citizens vote for a certain politician. Having analyzed the addresses of Joe Biden, we differentiated such categories as "genuine elections," implemented through the combination of the lexeme *elections* with the adjectives *free*, *transparent*

and *fair*; “democracy as a living organism,” actualized when *democracy* is deployed along with the verbs *save*, *give life and vibrancy to* and *be born*; “democracy as an abstract value,” identified on the basis of the ability of the key lexical unit to collocate with the words *advance*, *strive for* and *restore*; and “democracy as a material object,” verbalized when it is used in combination with *take back*, *recover* and *earn*. The discourse of Donald Trump contains such cognitive features as “elections in danger,” represented by the accompanying verbs *steal* and *overthrow*; “genuine elections,” achieved through the combination of the lexeme with the adjectives *democratic*, *competitive*, and *legitimate*; “elections as a movement,” implemented with the help of the vocabulary units *way to*, *path to*, *journey to* and *the process of*; and “prosperous republic,” represented when the noun *republic* is deployed along with the adjectives *thriving*, *strong* and *glorious*.

In general, all the mentioned cognitive features are aimed at discrediting the politicians’ opponents in this or that way. However, when Joe Biden convinces his compatriots that all the faults of the President can be rectified, Donald Trump draws a picture of a rather pessimistic future that awaits them if they choose Democrats.

The second value concept that was analyzed is freedom. The frequency distribution of the lexemes constituting the core of its nominative field are as follows: *freedom*, together with the adjective *free* (48.3 percent in the discourse of Joe Biden and 46.4 percent in Donald Trump’s addresses); the noun *right* (30.5 percent vs 25.3 percent); *liberty* (2.6 percent vs 15 percent); *independence* and *independent* (10 percent vs 7.9 percent); *sovereignty* (the word was found only in the President’s addresses and accounts for 5.3 percent of the total references to freedom concept) and *privilege* (8.6 percent against 0.2 percent).

Concerning the cognitive features of freedom concept in Joe Biden’s campaign addresses, we have identified “the value of freedom,” implemented through the combination of *freedom* with *democracy*, *justice*, *security* and *opportunity*; “types of freedom,” represented when the keyword is used together with the lexemes *press*, *assembly*, *speech*, *religion*, *education*; “freedom as a miracle,” achieved through the deployment of *freedom* along with *sanctity*, *inviolability* and *holy light*; and “categories

of rights,” for instance, *a right to healthcare, to come home safely and human, women’s, reproductive rights*, etc. Regarding the pre-election discourse of Donald Trump, he most frequently appeals to “types of freedom,” represented in Joe Biden’s discourse as well but actualized there in the phrases *freedom to protect yourself, freedom to live in security*; “the protection of freedom,” achieved through its combination with the verbs *defend, protect* and *secure*; “categories of rights,” such as *the right to life, the right to keep and bear arms* as well as *the right to self-defense*; and “jeopardized right,” represented when *right* is combined with such words as *attack, eliminate, erase, extinguish*, etc.

To summarize, although some of the cognitive features are present in the discourses of both presidential nominees, the context of their usage is completely different: the former Vice President makes his best effort to gain people’s trust, thus contributing to the tactic of positive self-presentation, and Donald Trump develops the freedom concept in such a way as to create the image of external enemy who strives to deprive the US citizens of their God-given rights.

The third and the last value concept is equality. The core of its nominative field in the campaign addresses of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden encompasses such units as *equality, equal* and *equally* (23.2 percent in the discourse of the former Vice President against 7.4 percent in the President’s pre-election speeches); *equity* and *equitable* (7 percent vs only 1.1 percent); *fairness* and *fair* (48 percent vs 69 percent); *justice* and *just* (40 percent vs 23 percent).

The most common cognitive feature in the discourse of Joe Biden is “equality as a key to bright future,” implemented when *equality* and *equal* are used together with *opportunity, chance* and *shot*. Other categories are “types of inequalities,” among which are *racial, educational* and *economic* ones; “the implementation of equality,” achieved with the help of the verbs *deliver, fulfill* and *obtain*; and “shattered justice,” actualized when *justice* collocates with *crisis, wreck* and *failure*. In terms of the implementation of equality concept in the addresses of Donald Trump, there we have distinguished only two cognitive features, namely “fairness in action,” implemented when the adjective *fair* is used with such items as *system of immigration, trade deals*

and *estate tax*, and “the distortion of justice,” when the notion is described with the adjectives *double-sided* and *smeared*.

It is important to mention that Joe Biden, when resorting to equality, tries to show his humanism, persuade the audience that he is committed to implementing its principles on all levels of state governance. Donald Trump, on the contrary, is focused on the unjust treatment towards himself and his party.

In conclusion, the performed survey on the peculiarities of actualization of the concepts of democracy, freedom and equality has made it possible for us to examine the dynamic nature of those constructs as well as evaluate their manipulative potential. Concerning the perspectives for further research on the correlation between concepts and manipulation, we suggest investigating how politicians fill them with new meanings, change the connotative layer of understanding of those categories, and facilitate the formation of prejudices that are beneficial to those in power.

## CONCLUSIONS

Political discourse is a special type of discourse aimed at winning and retaining political power. It has a number of functions and is designed to promote certain ideas, persuade and motivate its recipients to take political action, encourage them to internalize political decisions made by top officials, etc. Thus, political discourse involves manipulation of mass audience.

At the basis of our research lies the definition of this phenomenon provided by S. K. Romaniuk, who understands it is a specific type of subtle psychological impact during which a manipulator introduces into the psyche of an object of manipulation the intentions, viewpoints and ideas that do not coincide with those the person has at a certain moment of time but serve to the benefit of the individual who exerts that influence. Manipulation presupposes hidden coercion, pre-programming of social behavior and control over information output. The main purpose of manipulation in politics is the formation of an “approved” picture of the world in the minds of potential voters and limitation of their critical thinking abilities.

All these functions are implemented with the help of language since it is the main means of communication and allows politicians to affect human cognitive processes, change the patterns of knowledge perception, evaluation, categorization and comprehension. In order for them to achieve the global goal of political discourse, which is gaining public confidence, and enhance the pragmatic effect of their statements, politicians resort to various manipulative strategies and tactics. If a strategy is understood as a set of acts aimed at completing the general task of a speaker, then a tactic should be considered as a single act contributing to implementation of that strategy.

Having performed an analysis of the strategies and tactics of manipulative influence deployed by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in their campaign addresses during the 2020 US electoral race, we identified three main strategies and a number of tactics to which the politicians resort to make American citizens vote for them.

The first strategy that needs our attention is integration, deployed to reduce distance between the presidential nominee and his compatriots. The former strives to

declare their solidarity with the latter and acts as an ordinary man, ready to start a dialogue with his electorate. Integration can be implemented with the help of the tactic of unity, appeal to audience's emotions and positive self-presentation.

The tactic of unity is meant to consolidate the society as well as to include the politician into that community. Both Donald Trump and Joe Biden develop the semantic field "WE" to do so, actualized with the help of corresponding personal and possessive pronouns, the lexemes *all* and *together* and so on. The tactic of appeal to the audience's emotions is used to evoke in the voters' minds either positive or negative attitude to the issues discussed by the manipulator so that they act as he wishes. When Donald Trump appeals to the feeling of fear for safety and security, economic welfare or religious freedom through such verbs as *cancel*, *destroy*, *raid* and *shut down*, the former Vice President speaks about dignity, constitutional rights and equality in order to gain public confidence. The tactic of positive self-presentation is not only a technique of impressing the electorate through demonstrating the strengths of the presidential nominee but also a tool for controlling opinions on him formed by the people. In terms of the analyzed discourses, Joe Biden portrays himself with the help of the adjectives *reliable*, *trustworthy*, *honest*, *wise*, *responsible*, *logical* as a competent official, a fighter and a patriot. Donald Trump deploys the same social roles but resorts to them to refer not only to himself but also to his Administration with the second-person pronoun *we*, prevalent in his speeches.

The second strategy that we have distinguished is confrontation. It presupposes the conflict of power relations and lies in establishing superior position of one presidential nominee and criticizing another. Confrontation can be actualized through the tactic of open discreditation of opponents, impersonal accusations, labelling and distancing yourself from opponents' policies.

The tactic of open discreditation of opponents lies in presenting one's political enemy in an unfavourable light. The most common method of its implementation in the addresses of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden is accusations. In that regard, the former Vice President concentrated on the personal qualities of his rival through describing him with the vocabulary that directly or indirectly refers to his *dishonesty*,

*irresponsibility, ignorance, egotism and meanness*. The President denounces Biden's future plans by describing them with the adjectives *devastating, destructive and catastrophic*. The tactic of impersonal accusations is deployed when the politician discusses a certain negative situation but keeps silence about the person responsible for such an outcome. In terms of Donald Trump's addresses, the politician often refers to the Democratic Party to accuse his opponent without naming him. Joe Biden uses demonstrative and indefinite pronouns (*those who, one, some of, everybody*), nouns referring to a group of individuals (*people and men*) and the passive voice. The tactic of labelling is peculiar only for the President's pre-election discourse and implemented with the help of such lexical units *left-wing (radical) extremist, lobbyist, socialist and puppet*, all characterizing Joe Biden. The tactic of distancing yourself from your opponents' policies presupposes the development of "WE" vs. "THEY" opposition, peculiar for both candidates. However, when Donald Trump, deploying irony, hyperbole, metaphor, etc., makes a distinction between himself and his opponent on the basis of their competencies, Joe Biden distances himself using his image of an ordinary man.

The third strategy is manipulative persuasion since it is impossible to achieve success in political communication if politicians cannot convince the voters in their honesty and good intentions. It is implemented with the help of the tactic of providing rational arguments and the tactic of election promise.

The tactic of providing rational arguments that support one's political beliefs include the methods of comparative analysis of data and the usage of arguments related to the future of the country. In order to enhance pragmatic potential of their statements, politicians present in their speeches statistical evidence, supporting the communicated information. This manipulative approach is equally common in both Donald Trump's and Joe Biden's addresses. The tactic of election promise encompasses the assurances made by those running for presidency in order to win the votes of the audience and can be implemented with the help of the modal verb *will*, the semi-modal *be going to* or a non-finite adverbial clause (*by + -ing* form of verbs). The promises made in the speeches of Donald Trump are rather simple from a linguistic point of view and include

such nouns as *welfare*, *liberty*, *security* and *respect* as well as the verbs *protect*, *defend*, *achieve*, etc. The addresses of Joe Biden contain a lot of statistical data, proper names, figures as well as the adverbials as *firstly*, *secondly*, *thirdly*, *lastly*, meant to structure information flow.

After the investigation of the main manipulative strategies and tactics used in the pre-election speeches of the politicians, we performed an analysis of the basic value concepts peculiar for the US political rhetoric because political discourse is directly related to moral and social values of a certain linguocultural community, which can be interpreted not only as semantic but also as cognitive constructs. When appealing to them, politicians have the power to affect people's emotional and rational components of mental activity, thus manipulating their minds.

The first concept that we have discussed is democracy. The core of its nominative field developed in the pre-election discourses of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden encompasses the keyword *democracy* and the adjective *democratic*; the lexeme *elections* together with *electorate*, *elect*, and *elected* as well as the vocabulary items *commonwealth* (peculiar for Donald Trump's pre-election discourse) and *republic* (found only in the campaign addresses of Joe Biden).

Having identified the structure of the nucleus of the value concept of democracy we were able to distinguish its most prominent cognitive features, used to affect the audience so that the people make certain electoral choices. The addresses of Joe Biden contain such categories as "genuine elections," "democracy as a living organism," "democracy as an abstract value" and "democracy as a material object." Concerning the discourse of Donald Trump, there we differentiated the features labeled as "elections in danger"; "genuine elections"; "elections as a movement" and "prosperous republic." All the mentioned categories are deployed to discredit the politicians' rivals. Nevertheless, Joe Biden when accusing Donald Trump and Republicans makes an attempt to convince the citizens that the US will be prosperous as soon as he rectifies the mistakes of the old government. The President, on the other hand, intimidates his supporters with a rather pessimistic portrayal of the future that might become reality if they vote for Democrats.

The second value concept that was chosen is freedom. The core of its nominative field includes the lexeme *freedom* together with the adjective *free*; the nouns *right* and *liberty*, the vocabulary units *independence* and *independent*, and the lexical items *sovereignty* (which was found only in Donald Trump's speeches) and *privilege*.

Regarding the cognitive features of this concept, in Joe Biden's campaign addresses we have found such categories as "the value of freedom," "types of freedom," "freedom as a miracle" and "categories of rights." In terms of the speeches of Donald Trump, he most often resorts to "types of freedom." In that regard, we should make a distinction between its usage in the politicians' discourses. The former Vice President resorts to universal, commonly accepted categories, among which are *freedom of the press, assembly, speech, religion, education*. Donald Trump, on the contrary, develops such interpretations of this phenomenon which would support his internal policies, namely *freedom to protect yourself* and *freedom to live in security* (claimed in response to Kamala Harris' plan to enact a strict gun-control legislation). Other cognitive features his discourse demonstrates include "the protection of freedom," "categories of rights" and "jeopardized right." If we are to compare the politicians, it is important to mention that the former Vice President uses freedom concept to achieve a great level of public confidence. Donald Trump discusses it so as to create the image of external enemy who wishes to jeopardize the rights of the US citizens.

The third concept is equality, inscribed in the US Declaration of Independence and, as a result safeguarded by the State. The analysis of the campaign addresses of Donald Trump and Joe Biden has shown that to the core of its nominative field belong such lexical units as *equality, equal* and *equally*; *equity* and *equitable*; *fairness* and *fair*; *justice* and *just*.

The cognitive feature that is most frequently actualized in the pre-election discourse of Joe Biden is "equality as a key to bright future." After that go "types of inequalities," "the implementation of equality" and "shattered justice." Regarding the speeches of Donald Trump, he deploys only two categories of equality concept, namely "fairness in action" and "the distortion of justice." Concerning the contextual usage of

those features, we should note that, despite the fact that the former Vice President criticizes his political enemy, he deploys the concept of freedom predominantly to show the people his humanistic nature, thus facilitating the implementation of the tactic of positive self-presentation. Donald Trump is more egocentric in that regard, focused on the injustices he and his political party have to face because of Democrats.

In conclusion, manipulation is a complex phenomenon. Its successful actualization in political discourse requires that the politician not only shows a great understanding of the sociopolitical realities in the state but also takes into account cultural and moral codes of his time since those factors as well as the peculiarities of the local and global goals of political communication determine which strategies and tactics of manipulative influence work best in this or that situation. Given the fact that manipulation becomes more and more pervasive in politics, there is a growing need to investigate its hidden mechanisms.

## КОРОТКИЙ ВИКЛАД ЗМІСТУ РОБОТИ

У сучасному світі політичний дискурс – один із найвпливовіших видів масової комунікації, який не лише виконує функцію об'єднання людей в одну спільноту, відповідальну за власний добробут та безпеку, а й передбачає боротьбу за захоплення й утримання влади. Оскільки у демократичних державах саме громадяни вирішують хто захищатиме їхні інтереси на політичній арені, його призначення у просуванні певних ідей, переконанні людей у їхній правдивості й доцільності, мотивації народу до вигідних для правлячої верхівки політичних рішень. Таким чином, невід'ємною ознакою політики є маніпуляція масовою аудиторією.

Мета нашого дослідження полягає в тому, щоб проаналізувати, систематизувати та порівняти стратегії й тактики маніпулятивного впливу у промовах Дональда Трампа та Джо Байдена (їх кандидати у президенти виголосили в рамках передвиборчої кампанії), виділити основні синтаксичні й лексико-стилістичні засоби їхньої актуалізації та розкрити маніпулятивний потенціал базових ціннісних концептів американської політичної риторики.

Актуальність роботи зумовлена роллю політичного дискурсу у формуванні суспільної свідомості, все частішим його застосуванням як засобу масової маніпуляції та інструменту пропаганди, а також необхідністю комплексного аналізу мовних механізмів здійснення маніпулятивного впливу на маси.

Наукова новизна полягає у розробленій класифікації стратегій і тактик маніпулювання колективною та індивідуальною свідомістю в сучасному передвиборчому дискурсі; проведеному порівнянні маніпулятивних прийомів, що використовуються політиками з тієї самої соціокультурної спільноти заради однієї мети і протягом однакового проміжку часу, та у здійсненому аналізі найбільш прихованого способу прагматичного впливу у політичній комунікації, а саме маніпуляції когнітивними конструктами – ціннісними категоріями.

Об'єктом дослідження виступає політичний дискурс та використані у ньому методи маніпулятивного впливу. Предметом є передвиборча риторика, маніпулятивні стратегії й тактики, а також основні ціннісні концепти, задіяні

політиками для досягнення глобальної (виграти вибори) та локальної (залежить від контексту комунікації) мети передвиборчих виступів.

Матеріалом дослідження послужили 80 передвиборчих промов Дональда Трампа і Джо Байдена (40 на кожного кандидата), вибраних за допомогою методу суцільної вибірки з сайту “Rev: Speech-to-Text Services.”

Досягнення поставленої мети передбачає виконання таких завдань:

1. обрати теоретико-методичну базу дослідження;
2. окреслити дистинктивні риси політичного дискурсу; його прагматичні характеристики; принципи маніпуляції, які регулюють комунікативну поведінку політиків; та механізми впливу на когнітивну діяльність людини, необхідні для досягнення мети маніпуляторів;
3. класифікувати та порівняти стратегії і тактики маніпулятивного впливу, вжиті Дональдом Трампом та Джо Байденем у своїх передвиборчих зверненнях;
4. проаналізувати вербальні засоби їхньої актуалізації в дискурсах кандидатів у президенти;
5. визначити універсальні ціннісні концепти, що найчастіше стають інструментами маніпуляції в політичній риториці США;
6. на основі публічних звернень Дональда Трампа та Джо Байдена виділити лексеми, що входять до ядер номінативних полів цих концептів і проаналізувати маніпулятивний потенціал їхніх когнітивних ознак.

Згідно з поставленими метою і завданнями в роботі були використані методи суцільної вибірки, кількісного і порівняльного аналізу, дискурсивного та комунікативно-прагматичного аналізу, концептуального аналізу, контент-аналізу тощо.

У першому розділі магістерської роботи ми з'ясували суть поняття маніпуляції як особливого виду психологічного впливу, під час якого маніпулятор вводить у психіку об'єкта маніпуляції наміри, бажання та ідеї, які не збігаються з тими, що їх людина має у даний момент часу, але вигідні для того, хто чинить тиск. Головною метою цього феномену у політиці є створення у свідомості потенційних виборців «потрібної» картини світу та обмеження їхньої

здатності до критичного мислення. Всі ці функції реалізують за допомогою мовних засобів, що формують маніпулятивні стратегії й тактики.

У другому розділі магістерської роботи було проаналізовано промови, виголошені Дональдом Трампом та Джо Байденом під час передвиборчої гонки 2020 року, та визначено три основні стратегії та ряд тактик, які політики використали до того, щоб переконати американців проголосувати за них.

Перша стратегія, яка потребує нашої уваги – це інтеграція, націлена на те, щоб скоротити дистанцію між кандидатом у президенти та його співвітчизниками. Вона може бути втілена за допомогою тактик єдності, апеляції до емоцій аудиторії та позитивної самопрезентації. Тактика єдності має на меті консолідувати суспільство, а також інтегрувати політика у цю спільноту людей. І Дональд Трамп, і Джо Байден тут вдаються до семантичного поля “WE,” до якого входять відповідні особові і присвійні займенники, лексеми *all* і *together*. Тактика звернення до емоцій аудиторії повинна викликати у виборців або позитивне, або негативне ставлення до питань, що обговорюються маніпулятором. Якщо Дональд Трамп апелює до почуття страху за безпеку, економічне благополуччя чи релігійну свободу, використовуючи при цьому такі дієслова як *cancel*, *destroy*, *raid* і *shut down*, Джо Байден говорить про гідність, конституційні права та рівність. Тактика позитивної самопрезентації спрямована на завоювання довіри електорату через демонстрацію позитивних сторін політика. У її контексті Джо Байден зображає себе за допомогою прикметників *reliable*, *trustworthy*, *honest*, *wise*, *responsible*, *logical* як компетентного чиновника, борця і патріота. Дональд Трамп апелює до тих самих ролей, але посилається не лише на себе, а на свою Адміністрацію з допомогою займенника другої особи *we*.

Друга стратегія, яку ми виділили – конфронтація. Вона полягає у підкресленні вищості одного політика та критиці іншого. Реалізувати конфронтацію можна через тактики відкритої дискредитації опонентів, непрямих звинувачень, наклеювання ярликів та дистанціювання. Тактика відкритої дискредитації опонентів полягає у змалюванні ворога у невігідному для нього світлі. Найпоширенішим методом її актуалізації у зверненнях як

Дональда Трампа, так і Джо Байдена є звинувачення. Проте якщо колишній Віце-президент зосереджується на особистих якостях свого суперника, описуючи його з допомогою лексики, що підкреслює нечесність, безвідповідальність, егоїзм тощо, то Дональд Трамп сконцентрований на майбутніх планах Байдена, характеризуючи їх прикметниками *devastating*, *destructive* і *catastrophic*. Тактика непрямих звинувачень вживається тоді, коли політик описує певну негативну ситуацію, але навмисно не називає винного. Дональд Трамп, наприклад, часто посилається на Демократичну партію, коли хоче звинуватити опонента. Джо Байден використовує демонстративні та невизначені займенники (*those who, one, some of, everybody*), іменники, що стосуються групи осіб (*people* та *men*) і пасив. Тактика наклеювання ярликів властива лише передвиборчому дискурсу президента і втілюється за допомогою таких лексичних одиниць як *left-wing (radical) extremist, lobbyist, socialist and puppet*, вжитих стосовно особи Джо Байдена. Тактика дистанціювання від політики опонентів передбачає опозицію “WE” та “THEY.” Вона присутня у дискурсі обох проаналізованих кандидатів.

Третя стратегія – маніпулятивне переконання, яке може бути актуалізованим за допомогою тактики наведення раціональних аргументів та тактики передвиборчої обіцянки. Перша передбачає порівняльний аналіз даних та використання аргументів, спрямованих на майбутнє країни. З метою посилення прагматичного ефекту, політики у своїх виступах подають і статистичну інформацію, що підтверджує їхні слова. Цей маніпулятивний метод однаково часто зустрічається як у зверненнях Дональда Трампа, так і Джо Байдена. Друга тактика може бути впроваджена через модальне дієслово *will*, напівмодальне *be going to* або прислівникове підрядне речення (*by + -ing* форма дієслів). Зобов’язання Дональда Трампа досить прості з лінгвістичної точки зору і включають такі поняття як *welfare, liberty, security* і *respect*. Промови Джо Байдена містять багато посилань на кількісні показники та власні імена.

У третій частині магістерської роботи ми провели аналіз основних ціннісних концептів, характерних для політичної риторики США. Звертаючись

до них, політики здатні вплинути на емоційний та раціональний рівень людської свідомості, маніпулюючи таким чином розумом електорату.

Перший досліджений концепт – демократія. Ядро його номінативного поля в дискурсі Дональда Трампа і Джо Байдена охоплює ключове слово *democracy* та прикметник *democratic*, а також лексичні одиниці *elections*, *electorate*, *elect* та *elected*, *commonwealth* і *republic*. Проте ми вважаємо що найбільший маніпулятивний потенціал мають когнітивні ознаки концепту. Звернення Джо Байдена містять такі категорії як “genuine elections,” “democracy as a living organism,” “democracy as an abstract value” і “democracy as a material object.” Що стосується дискурсу Дональда Трампа, то у ньому ми виділили “elections in danger,” “genuine elections,” “elections as a movement” та “prosperous republic.” Усі перелічені когнітивні ознаки так чи інакше використовуються для дискредитації конкурентів. Тим не менше, Джо Байден, звинувачуючи Дональда Трампа та республіканців, робить спробу переконати громадян, що держава процвітатиме, як тільки він матиме змогу виправити помилки колишньої влади. Останній навпаки прагне залякати людей песимістичним майбутнім, що може стати реальністю у разі президенства Байдена.

Другим обраним концептом є свобода. Ядро його номінативного поля включає лексему *freedom* разом із прикметником *free*, іменники *right* і *liberty*, словникові одиниці *independence* та *independent*, *sovereignty* і *privilege*. Що стосується когнітивних ознак цього поняття, то в передвиборчих виступах Джо Байдена ми виявили такі категорії як “the value of freedom,” “types of freedom,” “freedom as a miracle,” а також “categories of rights.” Дональда Трамп у своїх промовах найчастіше використовує вже згадану ознаку “types of freedom.” Проте якщо колишній Віце-президент апелює до універсальних цінностей, серед яких *freedom of the press*, *assembly*, *speech*, *religion*, *education*, Дональд Трамп інтерпретує це явище таким чином, щоб воно показувало правильність його внутрішньої політики (наприклад, *freedom to protect yourself* чи *freedom to live in security*). Інші когнітивні ознаки дискурсу президента включають “the protection of freedom,” “categories of rights” та “jeopardized right.” Порівнюючи політиків,

слід зазначити, що Джо Байден використовує концепт свободи для завоювання довіри громадськості. Дональд Трамп звертається до цього феномену, щоб створити образ зовнішнього ворога, який може поставити під загрозу права громадян США.

Третій концепт – рівність. До ядра її номінативного поля належать такі лексичні одиниці, як *equality*, *equal* та *equally*, *equity* й *equitable*, *fairness* і *fair*; *justice* та *just*. Когнітивна ознака, яка найбільш поширена у передвиборчому дискурсі Джо Байдена – “equality as a key to bright future.” Після цього йдуть “types of inequalities,” “the implementation of equality” та “shattered justice.” Щодо виступів Дональда Трампа, він використовує лише дві категорії, а саме “fairness in action” та “the distortion of justice.” Якщо проаналізувати контекстуальне використання цих ознак, стає зрозумілим що, незважаючи на те, що Джо Байден критикує свого опонента, він використовує концепт свободи переважно для того, щоб показати людям свій гуманізм. Дональд Трамп є більш егоцентричним у цьому плані, оскільки політик зосереджений на несправедливому ставленні до себе та своєї партії.

Отже, маніпуляція – це складне явище, яке вимагає від політика комплексних знань не лише у сфері соціально-політичних реалій своєї держави, а розуміння культурних та моральних кодів свого часу, оскільки аби здійснити вплив на електорат, слід знати чим живуть ці люди і що для них є критерієм благополуччя. Тільки після цього можна спрогнозувати які стратегії та тактики маніпулятивного впливу спрацюють у тій чи іншій ситуації та до яких ціннісних концептів варто апелювати. Враховуючи той факт, що маніпуляція прихована й непомітна для більшості громадян, зростає потреба дослідити її механізми, аби навчити людей ефективно їй протистояти.

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176. <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/joe-biden-speech-on-the-affordable-care-act-transcript-october-28p>
177. <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/joe-biden-speech-transcript-warren-michigan-september-9>
178. <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/joe-biden-train-tour-campaign-speech-transcript-alliance-ohio-september-30>
179. <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/joe-biden-train-tour-campaign-speech-transcript-greensburg-pa-september-30>

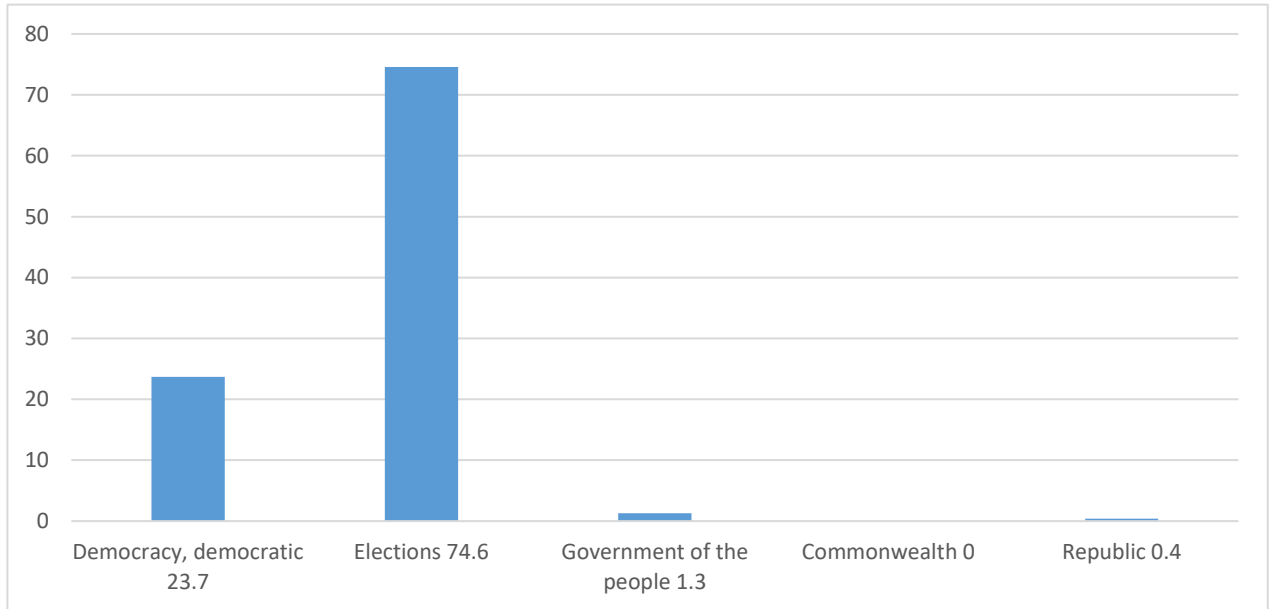
180. <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/joe-biden-train-tour-campaign-speech-transcript-johnstown-pa-september-30-night-after-debate>
181. <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/joe-biden-train-tour-speech-transcript-cleveland-ohio-september-30>
182. <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/super-tuesday-speech-transcripts-biden-sanders-warren-bloomberg-speeches-to-supporters>
183. <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/joe-biden-victory-speech-transcript-biden-wins-south-carolina-democratic-primary>

## APPENDICES

*Appendix 3.1*

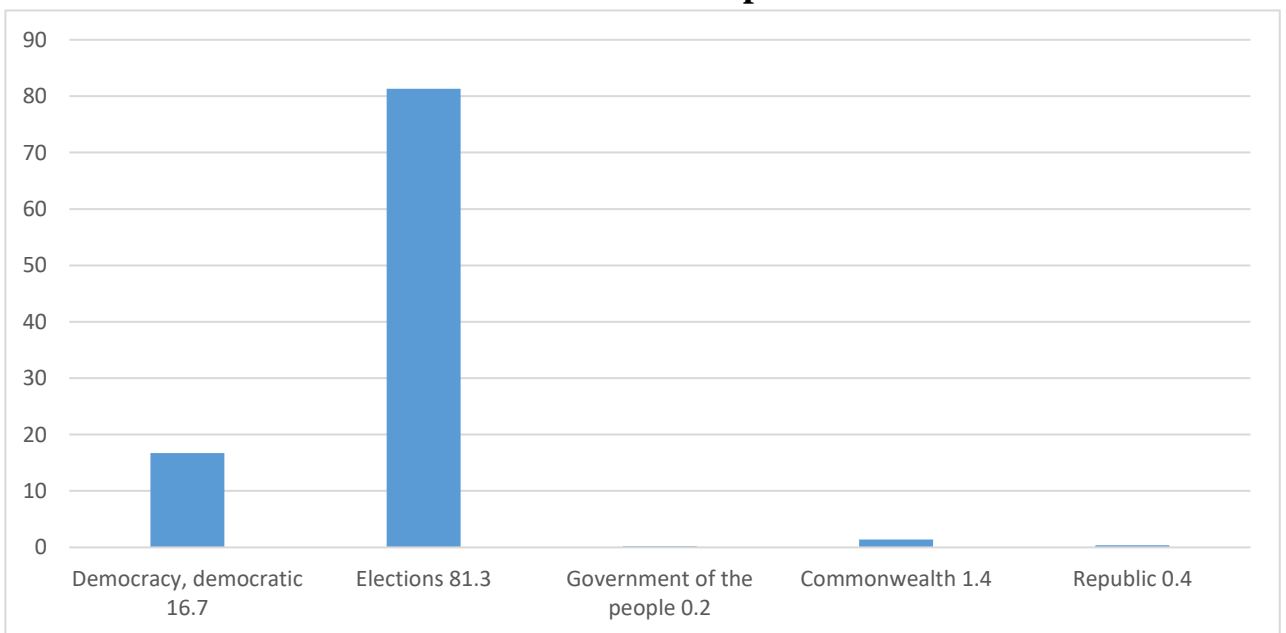
Bar Chart A

### **The Frequency Distribution of the Lexical Units Constituting the Core of the Nominative Field of the Concept of Democracy in the Pre-Election Discourse of Joe Biden**



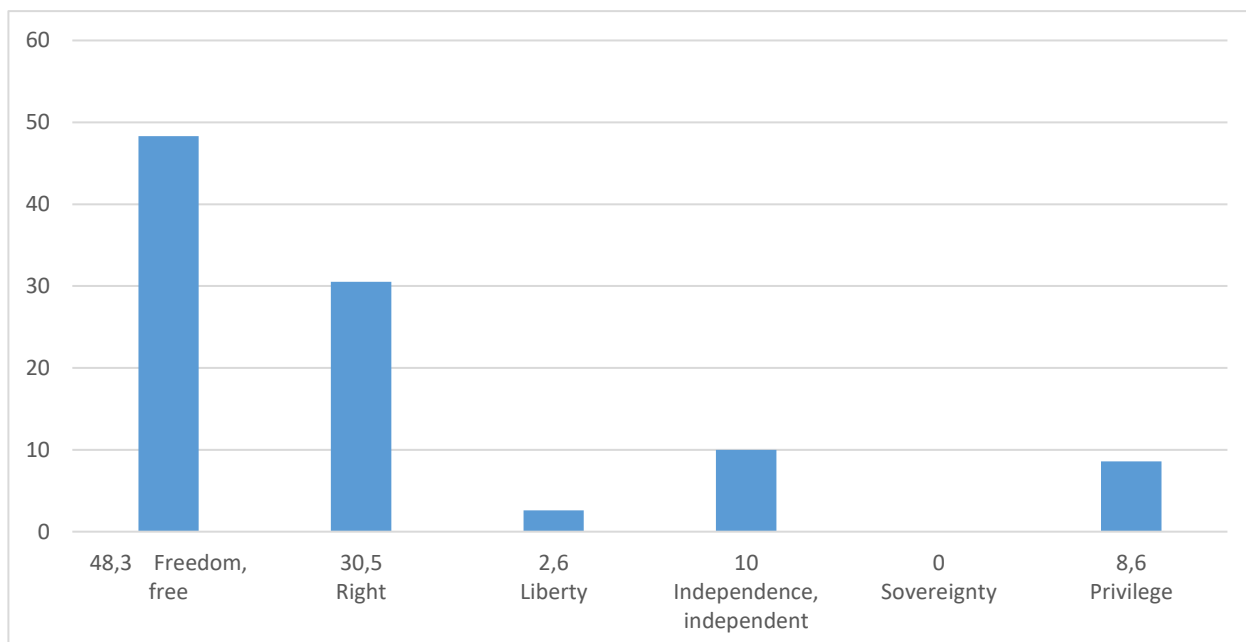
Bar Chart B

### **The Frequency Distribution of the Lexical Units Constituting the Core of the Nominative Field of the Concept of Democracy in the Pre-Election Discourse of Donald Trump**



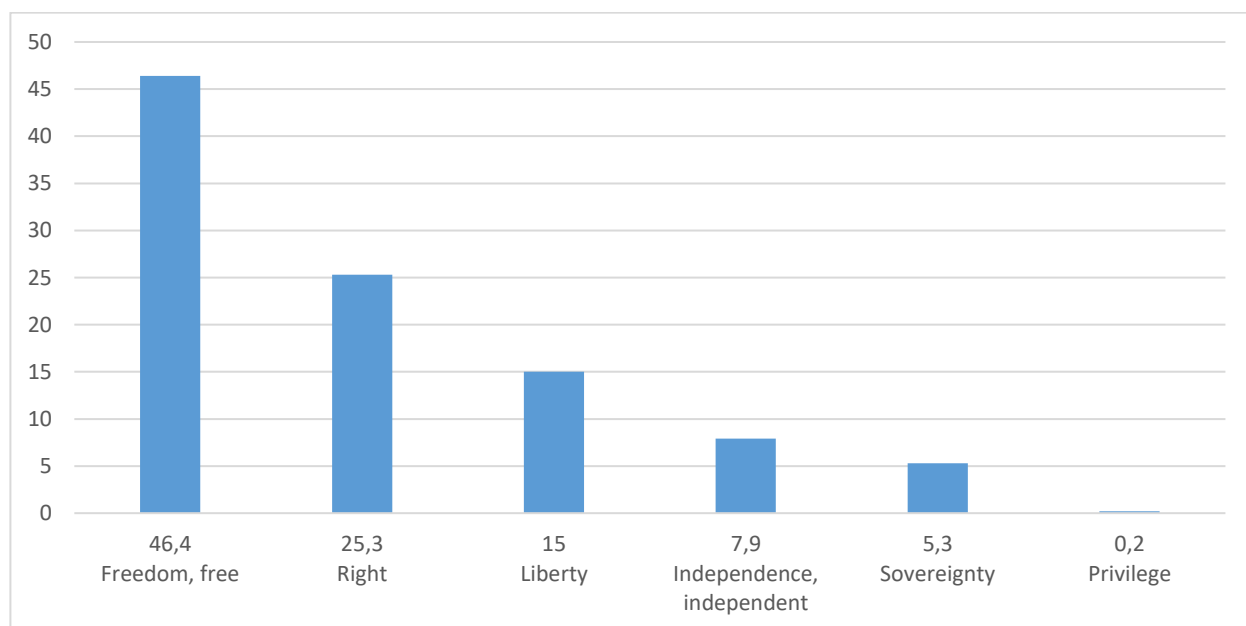
Bar Chart A

**The Frequency Distribution of the Lexical Units Constituting the Core of the Nominative Field of the Concept of Freedom in the Pre-Election Discourse of Joe Biden**

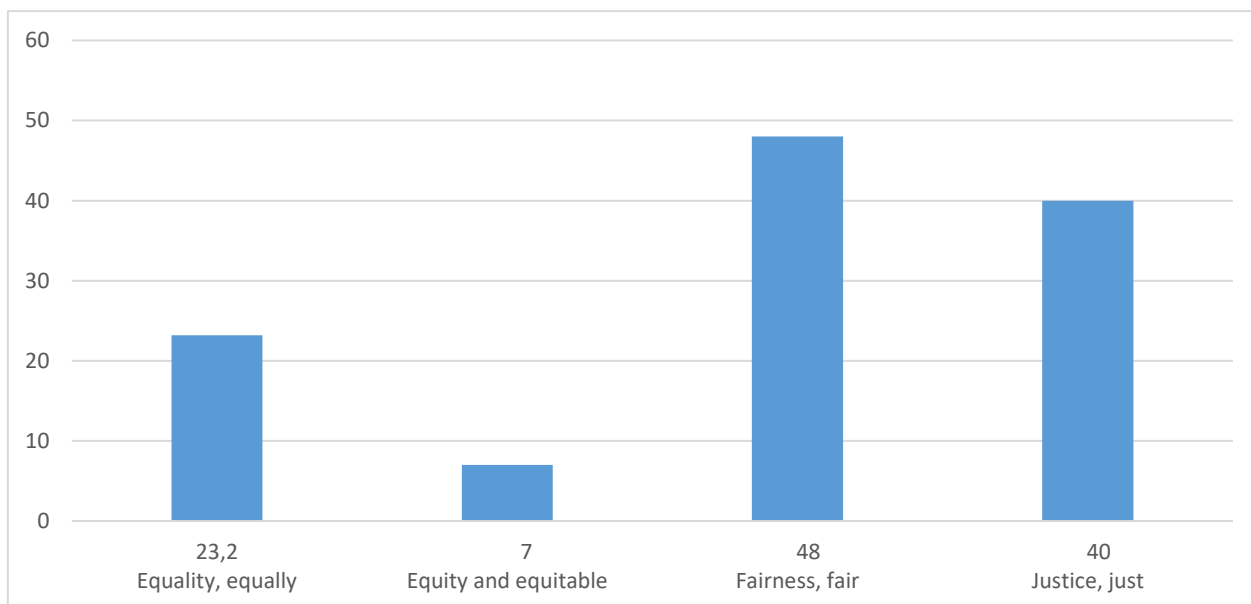


Bar Chart B

**The Frequency Distribution of the Lexical Units Constituting the Core of the Nominative Field of the Concept of Freedom in the Pre-Election Discourse of Donald Trump**



**The Frequency Distribution of the Lexical Units Constituting the Core of the Nominative Field of the Concept of Equality in the Pre-Election Discourse of Joe Biden**



Bar Chart B

**The Frequency Distribution of the Lexical Units Constituting the Core of the Nominative Field of the Concept of Equality in the Pre-Election Discourse of Donald Trump**

