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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE USA

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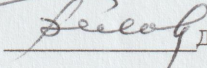
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АНОТАЦІЯ

Актуальність теми зумовлена зростанням зацікавленості проблемою того, яким чином лінгвістичні засоби та структура тексту забезпечують ефективність впливу та персуазивність рекламних повідомлень, що і досі залишається відкритим питанням. Це зумовлює потребу в системному дослідженні мовних і мультимодальних інструментів для вдосконалення комунікативних стратегій у сфері безпеки.

Об'єктом дослідження є американські відеоролики соціальної реклами на тему безпеки як особливий тип інституційного та рекламного дискурсу.

Предметом аналізу обрано прагматичні стратегії, комунікативні інтенції та мовні засоби реалізації переконувального впливу в цих повідомленнях.

Мета роботи полягає у комплексному аналізі засобів впливу, що функціонують на вербальному та невербальному рівнях. Для досягнення поставленою мети розв'язано такі завдання: окреслено теоретичні засади соціальної реклами, ідентифіковано комунікативні інтенції та стратегії переконання, а також досліджено лінгвосеміотичні особливості мультимодального дискурсу.

Методологічну базу становить поєднання загальнонаукових методів із лінгвістичним, дискурсивним, прагматичним та контент-аналізом. Наукова новизна підходів полягає у застосуванні інтегрованого методу аналізу мультимодальності, що дає змогу розглядати взаємодію тексту, візуального ряду та звукового супроводу як єдину стратегічну систему впливу. Доцільність такого підходу зумовлена необхідністю вивчення реклами не лише як тексту, а як цілісного комунікативного акту в сучасному медіапросторі.

Результати дослідження демонструють, що ефективність соціальної реклами базується на функціональному позиціонуванні аудиторії (батьки-захисники, активні громадяни, вразливі групи), що дозволяє адаптувати стратегії впливу до соціальних ролей реципієнтів та посилити їхню залученість. Визначено ключові комунікативні інтенції: спонукання до дії, інструктування

та попередження, які не лише передають інформацію, а й структурують її сприйняття та спрямовують поведінкову реакцію аудиторії.

Встановлено, що переконання реалізується через поєднання етосу (авторитетність джерела), патосу (апеляція до страху та відповідальності) та логосу (використання статистики); координація цих апеляцій забезпечує синергетичний ефект, апелюючи водночас до раціонального та емоційного компонентів сприйняття. На мовному рівні виявлено активне використання імперативів, модальних дієслів, особових займенників та лексики з негативною конотацією. Ці засоби сприяють встановленню прямого контакту з реципієнтом, актуалізують почуття особистої відповідальності та зменшують комунікативну дистанцію, що є критично важливим для переконання.

Мультимодальність соціальної реклами підсилюється невербальними компонентами (просодикою, наративним фреймінгом, анімацією, кольоровою типографікою), які посилюють прагматичний вплив через створення ефекту реалістичності, фокусування уваги на ключових аспектах та інтенсифікації емоційного впливу на глядача.

Робота складається зі вступу, трьох розділів, висновків, списку джерел та додатків

Ключові слова: соціальна реклама, громадська безпека, персуазивні стратегії, комунікативні інтенції, дискурс-аналіз, мультимодальність, лінгвістичні засоби.

ABSTRACT

The relevance of the topic is driven by the growing interest in how specific linguistic tools and text structures ensure the effectiveness and persuasiveness of public service announcements, an issue that remains insufficiently explored. This necessitates a systematic investigation of linguistic and multimodal instruments to refine communication strategies within the field of public safety.

The object of this research is American public safety video public service announcements viewed as a distinct type of institutional and advertising discourse. The subject of analysis includes pragmatic strategies, communicative intentions, and linguistic means used to implement persuasive impact. The study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the tools of influence functioning at both verbal and non-verbal levels. To achieve this aim, the research outlines the theoretical foundations of public service advertising (PSA), identifies communicative intentions and persuasion strategies, and explores the linguosemiotic features of multimodal discourse.

The methodological framework combines general scientific methods with linguistic, discursive, pragmatic, and content analysis. The scientific novelty lies in the application of an integrated method of multimodal analysis, which allows for the exploration of the interaction between text, visual, and audio accompaniment as a unified strategic system of influence.

The findings demonstrate that the effectiveness of PSAs is rooted in the functional positioning of the audience (protective parents, community agents, vulnerable groups), which allows for the adaptation of persuasive strategies to the social roles of recipients, thereby increasing engagement. Key communicative intentions identified include encouraging action, instructing, and warning, which not only convey information but also structure its perception and guide the audience's behavioural response. Persuasion is achieved through a combination of ethos (source credibility), pathos (appeal to fear and responsibility), and logos (use of statistics); the coordination of these appeals produces a synergetic effect by targeting both rational and emotional dimensions of perception.

At the linguistic level, the study reveals the active use of imperatives, modal verbs, personal pronouns, and negatively connoted vocabulary. These features facilitate direct engagement with the recipient, reinforce a sense of personal responsibility, and reduce communicative distance, all of which are critical for persuasive impact. The multimodal nature of PSAs is further enhanced by non-verbal components (prosody, narrative framing, animation, colour typography), which strengthen pragmatic influence by creating a sense of realism, directing attention to key elements, and amplifying emotional effect on the viewer.

The thesis consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of references, and appendices.

Keywords: public service announcements, public safety, persuasive strategies, communicative intentions, discourse analysis, multimodality, linguistic devices.

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INTRODUCTION

In contemporary society, communication plays a decisive role in shaping public awareness, attitudes, and behavioural patterns. Among the various forms of mass communication, public service announcements (PSAs) occupy a special place. They are an important tool of social influence, enabling governmental and non-governmental institutions to inform, educate, and motivate the public to adopt responsible forms of behaviour.

The relevance of this research is determined by several factors. Firstly, in recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in scholarly interest in PSAs, especially in the field of healthcare, which intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, public safety PSAs, despite their significant role in preventing risks and promoting safe behaviour, have not been studied as comprehensively, which creates a research gap in the analysis of their linguistic and pragmatic features. Secondly, the rapid development of digital media and multimedia communication has transformed the ways in which PSAs are created and perceived, increasing the importance of analysing their linguistic and pragmatic features.

The theoretical foundation of this study is based on research devoted to different aspects of public service announcements and advertising discourse. A number of scholars, including B. Sivakumaran, F. Martins, D. Oltarzhevskiy, A. Hudairi, and M. Doktorovych, examined PSAs as a specific type of social communication. The functions, classification, and typology of advertising were analysed by O. Prokopchuk, S. Sokolyuk, and T. Prymak. The evolution and effectiveness of PSAs were explored in the works of R. Rice, R. Jackson, C. Wagner, and I. Benoit. Linguistic and pragmatic aspects of socially oriented communication were investigated by M. Pazukha, P. Babalola, O. Tsupikov, and M. Serhiienko. Communicative, media, and social dimensions of advertising discourse were addressed in studies by T. Kolisnychenko, S. Madani Alaoui, S. Yuliah, H. Pujiati, O. Areshenkova, and T. Tailor.

The object of the research is PSAs on public safety as a type of social and advertising discourse.

The subject of the research is the pragmatic strategies, linguistic and communicative organisation of public safety PSAs in the United States, with a particular focus on the mechanisms of persuasive influence realised through lexical, syntactic, stylistic, and multimodal means.

The purpose of this research is to analyse the distinctive features of public safety PSAs in the United States, with a particular focus on their communicative intentions, persuasive language strategies, and their realisation across multiple linguistic and non-verbal levels.

The objectives of this research are:

1. to examine the theoretical foundations of PSAs and their definitions in academic and institutional contexts;
2. to analyse the distinction between PSAs and commercial advertising;
3. to explore the historical development of PSAs in the United States, including their institutionalisation and evolution across different media environments;
4. to investigate the classification and typology of PSAs according to functional, thematic, media-based, and institutional criteria;
5. to describe PSAs as a form of institutional discourse and analyse their communicative and pragmatic features;
6. to identify communicative intentions and audience positioning strategies in U.S. public safety PSAs;
7. to analyse the main persuasive strategies used in PSAs, including emotional, rational, normative, and suggestive approaches;
8. to examine linguistic means of pragmatic influence at the lexical, syntactic, and stylistic levels;
9. to analyse multimodal and non-verbal means of communication in video PSAs.

The empirical material of the study consists of a corpus of 70 video public service announcements produced in the last five years by governmental and community organisations in the United States. The materials were collected from platforms such as Ad Council and YouTube. The analysed PSAs were created by institutions including a range of U.S. governmental and non-governmental

organisations, such as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the American Lung Association, Sandy Hook Promise, the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies, the Drug Enforcement Administration, United States Attorneys, Brady and FEMA.

The methodological basis of the research combines general scientific and linguistic methods, supplemented by specific approaches to the analysis of advertising discourse. The study employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches, where qualitative analysis was used to interpret the content of PSAs and identify key communicative strategies and intentions, while quantitative analysis was applied to determine the frequency and distribution of persuasive messages. Stylistic, discourse, lexical, content, and pragmatic analyses were applied to investigate linguistic structure, thematic categories, communicative functions, and persuasive techniques within the analysed material.

The theoretical value of the research lies in its contribution to the further development of the study of PSAs as a form of persuasive and institutional discourse. The results contribute to a deeper understanding of the linguistic and pragmatic mechanisms underlying socially oriented communication, particularly in the field of public safety. In addition, the study systematises communicative and persuasive strategies used in PSAs and demonstrates how they are realised across different linguistic levels and in combination with non-verbal means.

The practical value of the research lies in the applicability of its findings to the development and improvement of PSAs as effective tools of social communication. The results of the study can be used to design advertising campaigns that more accurately take into account the linguistic and communicative mechanisms of influence on the audience.

Structure of work. The bachelor's thesis consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of references, and appendices.

The results of the research were presented at the X All-Ukrainian Scientific Readings with the participation of young scholars: “Philology of the 21st century: New research and perspectives.”

CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL AND LINGUISTIC FOUNDATIONS OF PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 The concept of Public Service Announcements

1.1.1 Definitions of PSAs in academic and institutional contexts

The modern world is filled with an overwhelming flow of information that people consume every second while constantly remaining in the online space. In such conditions, individuals often may not have time to reflect on or critically process how this information influences their lives and shapes their views, choices, and behaviour. One of the most influential forms of information in contemporary society is advertising.

Most advertising messages are primarily aimed at encouraging consumers to buy certain products or use specific services. Advertising can significantly affect people's desires, habits, and decision-making processes. However, alongside commercial advertising, another important type of advertising exists that serves social rather than economic goals. This type of communication is aimed at benefiting society, raising awareness of socially significant issues, and is often regulated at the state level. It is commonly referred to as public service announcements or using the abbreviation PSAs.

The concept of PSAs has been interpreted from different theoretical perspectives, particularly in relation to its function, social orientation, and distinction from commercial advertising.

Therefore, Sivakumaran uses a comparative approach, contrasting PSAs with commercial messages and emphasizing their non-commercial purpose and focus on collective welfare rather than individual consumption [Sivakumaran 2023, p.2451]. This approach clearly separates socially oriented communication from profit-driven advertising.

Within this framework, Feanyi Martins and D. Oltarzhevskyi offer related but distinct interpretations. Martins focuses on the pragmatic function of PSAs, viewing

them as messages intended to raise awareness, influence attitudes, and encourage behavioral change [Martins 2023, pp.91-92]. From a pragmatic perspective, this interpretation suggests that PSA discourse is linked to communicative strategies aimed at shaping the audience's interpretation and response, which is often achieved through the use of directive and persuasive linguistic devices. In contrast, Oltarzhevskyi emphasizes their social and value-based dimension, defining PSAs as communication that addresses important social issues and promotes moral values [Олтаржевський 2016, с.7]. This understanding implies that PSAs discourse typically relies on evaluative and axiological language, which contributes to the formation of widely accepted social norms and attitudes. Thus, although both scholars view PSAs as persuasive and socially oriented forms of communication, Martins emphasises their pragmatic function, aimed at prompting action, whilst Oltarzhevskyi highlights their role in shaping value systems through language.

Since this study focuses on PSAs in the United States, it is important to consider how this term is defined in this context. Unlike academic interpretations, the American approach is mainly institutional. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which regulates communication across different media, defines a PSA as an unpaid announcement that promotes the activities or services of government or non-profit organizations and serves the public interest [Public-Service Announcement — Encyclopedia of TV & Radio 2025]. From a linguistic and pragmatic perspective, such an institutional framework shows that PSAs are usually shaped by informational and social limitations, which leads to a more formal, neutral, and standardised style of communication. Because of this, PSA discourse generally avoids overly promotional language and instead focuses on creating clear and accessible messages that can be easily understood by a wide audience.

To summarise, the main difference between the academic and institutional understandings of PSAs lies in their focus. The institutional definition centres on formal and regulatory aspects, emphasising the status of PSAs as non-commercial messages produced by government or non-profit organisations. In contrast, academic interpretations pay greater attention to the communicative and pragmatic aspects,

analysing them as a form of discourse that employs specific linguistic strategies to achieve persuasive and social objectives.

From the perspective of linguistic research, the academic understanding of PSAs is more relevant to this study because it allows for a more detailed analysis of language use, including lexical choice, pragmatic strategies, and discursive structures that shape meaning and influence the audience.

1.1.2 PSAs vs commercial advertising

To gain a deeper understanding of the specific nature of PSAs and their distinction from commercial advertising, it is useful to compare their respective functions. Commercial advertising is generally oriented toward market objectives and includes functions such as informing, educating, persuading, calling to action, generating demand, product differentiation, brand reminders, and increasing brand loyalty [Sukriti 2014, p. 3]. These functions primarily focus on influencing consumer behavior to buy products or services and strengthen brand recognition.

In contrast, the functions of PSAs, as detailed by O. Prokopchuk and S. Sokolyuk, emphasize social and civic goals. These include the informational function, which raises awareness of current social issues; the motivational function, which encourages active engagement in addressing these issues; the educational function, which explains causes, consequences, and potential solutions; and the consolidation function, which reinforces shared societal values [Prokopchuk, Sokoliuk 2024, p. 222].

D. Oltarzhevskyi also adds economic and aesthetic functions to this classification. The economic function of PSAs is that they allow the state to achieve economically beneficial results. For example, anti-drug and anti-smoking PSAs help to reduce morbidity, which reduces the burden on the healthcare system, as less money can be allocated to this sector. The aesthetic function is that PSAs can shape and influence the aesthetic and cultural values of society. At the same time, PSAs can use both positive and negative images to highlight and show the consequences of solving or ignoring a problem [Олтаржевський 2016, p.15]. These additional

functions underscore a key difference from commercial advertising: PSAs operate on multiple levels (informational, behavioral, cultural, and economic) whereas commercial advertising is primarily focused on market outcome.

In conclusion, the comparison shows that the functions of commercial advertising and PSAs differ not only in purpose but also in scope. Commercial advertising mainly aims to influence consumer choices, while PSAs address broader social issues and behaviours. This leads to the fact that commercial advertising usually relies on attention-grabbing language and brand-centred messages designed to capture the audience's attention and highlight unique features of the product while PSAs tend to use more informative and didactic language oriented toward explaining social issues and guiding audience understanding.

1.1.3 PSAs as institutional communication

PSAs can be examined not only in terms of their functions, but also as a specific form of communication shaped by both institutional and social factors.

Similarly to commercial advertisements, PSAs can be disseminated through a variety of media. It may take an oral form, such as radio broadcasts; a written form, including banners, posters, or leaflets; a visual form, such as photographs, icons, or computer graphics; or a combination of these, that is, by video clips and television commercials [Олтаржевський 2016, p.13].

Nevertheless, the choice of media for disseminating PSAs is closely linked to the organizations that create these messages, as different sources often prefer specific formats to reach their target audiences effectively.

According to Salman, there are several main sources of PSAs. Firstly, they may be initiated by private companies, which use this type of advertising primarily to form a positive public image and demonstrate social responsibility. Secondly, an important role in the creation and dissemination of PSAs belongs to associations and charitable organizations, whose activities are directly related to addressing particular social problems and achieving socially significant goals. In addition, PSAs may be created by public authorities at different levels, including local, state, and federal institutions,

as an effective means of communicating socially important messages to the population. Finally, one of the most active and influential sources of PSAs is the Ad Council, a non-profit organisation supported by advertising agencies and private companies [Салман 2019, с.50].

At the same time, D. Oltarzhevskiy refers to the sources of PSAs as advertising entities and, in addition to the institutions mentioned above, mentions public organisations, religious institutions, organisations and associations, as well as PSAs created on behalf of a specific person [Олтаржевський 2016, с.14].

In conclusion, this broader perspective suggests that PSAs should be viewed not merely as institutional messages but as forms of communication shaped by social and cultural contexts, which in turn influence such discursive features as modality, pronoun use, and evaluative vocabulary. Furthermore, it indicates that the linguistic realisation of PSAs may vary depending on the source of communication, as different institutions, when addressing their audience, typically employ different modes of intonation, levels of formality, and persuasion strategies. Therefore, the choice of linguistic means in PSAs depends not only on communicative goals, but also on the social status and intentions of the announcement's author.

1.1.4 PSAs as social communication

Various sources of PSAs indicate that they should be viewed not only as an advertising product, but also as a form of social discourse in which the state, civil society, and the private sector interact.

This is why many researchers study advertising as a form of social communication. Social communication is the purposeful exchange of meaningful messages between individuals or groups, through which socially important information, ideas, knowledge, and emotions are shared. This process is influenced by the social context, the norms of communication, and the specific situation in which interaction takes place [Дікунова 2023, с.4].

Social communication consists of the following components:

- the informational component consists of conveying factual information about a specific social problem;
- the expressive component is related to demonstrating an attitude towards a specific problem;
- the pragmatic component is responsible for directly influencing the recipient's behaviour [Курбан 2009, с.64].

Similarly, M. Doktorovych identifies components of PSAs that mirror these functions. The cognitive component corresponds to the informational aspect of social communication, transmitting socially significant knowledge. The emotional component aligns with the expressive dimension, designed to evoke an emotional response from the audience. The communicative component, implemented through linguistic means such as words, slogans, or text, facilitates the rapid recognition and retention of the PSA's main message, reflecting both expressive and pragmatic functions. Finally, the motivational component is closely related to the pragmatic component, as it encourages the audience to take action on social issues [Докторович 2014, с.3].

To summarise, comparing these two classifications reveals a substantial overlap between the functions of social communication and the structure of PSAs. This correspondence demonstrates that they operate not only as advertising tools but also as structured instruments of social communication. Furthermore, this coherence indicates that the discourse of PSA videos is organised systematically, and that its various components interact with one another to create a cohesive communicative effect. This approach makes it possible to analyse how content is structured within the text, how emphasis is distributed, and how the priority of different elements of the message is determined. It also draws attention to the role of context in shaping interpretation, as the same linguistic forms can perform different functions depending on the communicative situation and the target audience. Thus, such an analysis allows for a deeper understanding of the organisation of their discourse and the mechanisms through which they achieve their communicative impact.

1.2 Historical evolution of Public Service Announcements

1.2.1 Origins of PSAs and early communication forms

PSAs did not emerge in isolation, but rather as a result of the general development of advertising communication and the media in the United States. Thus, it is appropriate to consider the history of PSAs not as a separate phenomenon, but as a derivative of the evolution of commercial advertising and the media system in general.

The history of advertising began with the distribution of newspapers in the American colonies in the 17th century [O'Barr 2015]. At that time, advertising took the form of detailed descriptions of imported goods. Even at the beginning of the 19th century, advertising was distributed through newspapers, magazines, and billboards [O'Barr 2005]. However, an important difference in advertising at this stage was the development of slogans, which began in the 18th century, as they transformed advertising messages from informative descriptions into short, emotionally charged formulas that helped to memorise and form lasting associations in the minds of the audience.

When analysing the period and place in which PSAs first emerged, many scholars mention Britain as the country where they initially appeared, as in 1923, the UK launched a radio advertising campaign about tuberculosis to raise public awareness and emphasise the dangers and the necessity to prevent this disease [Martins 2023, p.38]. However, it is important not to overlook the communication processes that were taking place worldwide, including in the United States, during the First World War. At that time, posters and illustrated images created by artists began to circulate widely. These materials explained to the public the reasons for participation in the war, encouraged mobilisation, and emphasised the importance of protecting the nation. Bill Goodwill, CEO of Goodwill Communications, a company that specialises in PSAs and their distribution, says that it was during this period that the first cases of advertising being created on a voluntary basis, and no money being paid for the creation, printing, and distribution of advertising could be seen. This fact

shows us the beginning of social responsibility in the advertising industry [Goodwill 2020].

Therefore, it can be argued that the American experience during World War I shows that early PSAs existed even before they were officially recognized as a separate genre.

1.2.2 Development during WWII as crisis communication tools

After WWI, the Federal Communications Commission was established in the United States. The FCC is an independent federal agency created by the Communications Act of 1934, responsible for monitoring and controlling wire, satellite, cable, radio, and television communications both domestically and abroad. The commission's mission is to ensure that all US citizens have access to reliable means of communication, and the FCC's activities are based on the principle of public interest, which determines how broadcasters and telecommunications companies are regulated [Moloney 2025]. In addition, it is this agency that regulates the distribution of PSAs today. The creation of the Federal Communications Commission can be seen as a key step in establishing the regulatory framework for the social function of mass communications and the development of PSAs, as it legitimised the distribution of non-commercial, socially significant messages in the media.

Before World War II, the United States was experiencing economic decline. Therefore, during this period, PSAs in the USA were created to motivate citizens to overcome economic difficulties [Салман 2019, с.21]. This demonstrates that PSAs can serve as a tool for shaping social behaviour during times of crisis, rather than merely functioning as a channel for information.

Further analysis of the history of advertising shows that social advertising continued to develop in a spiral-like manner, with World War II marking the next significant period for the growth and wider dissemination of PSAs [Goodwill 2020]. Similar to World War I, PSAs during this time conveyed messages to the public related to the war, fundraising, and mobilisation.

During this period, an organization initially known as the War Advertising Council, later renamed the Ad Council, was established. Its main goal was to unite the advertising industry in order to serve the interests of society. After the war, the Council gradually turned its attention toward creating socially significant PSAs, including collaborations with the American Red Cross, which solidified the Ad Council's position as a central institution for social advertising in the United States [Our History]. Thus, we see that World War II was a turning point that finally established PSAs as a separate and systematic form of advertising.

Based on this information, it can be concluded that social crises played a decisive role in the development and thematic content of PSAs, since it was during periods of war, economic decline and social instability that its most intensive dissemination was observed. The fact that PSAs actively developed during times of historical crisis shows how effective they are as a powerful communication tool that can quickly reach a mass audience and inform, persuade, and motivate people. Thus, we have confirmation that they are capable of influencing not only the behaviour of individuals, but also public consciousness as a whole, shaping perceptions of events and reinforcing socially acceptable models of behaviour, which demonstrates their importance as an object of linguistic analysis.

1.2.3 Expansion through television media

Another factor that contributed to the spread and development of PSAs was the rise of television, which began in the second half of the 1940s [Nardo 2010, p.24]. PSAs started to take on new forms as television became a more successful substitute for radio, able to reach a larger audience. They started placing greater emphasis on different verbal and non-verbal techniques, with facial expressions and editing playing an especially important role.

At the same time, in the 20th century, there was a tendency for most PSAs to focus on the key issues of society at a given time, leaving less obvious social issues in the background, which somewhat limited the subject matter of PSAs. For example, in the 1950s, much attention was paid to environmental issues and caring for the

environment, and many organisations focused their attention on this issue. The 1970s were characterised by large anti-smoking campaigns. These campaigns included PSAs encouraging people to give up this harmful habit and lead a healthy lifestyle. The late 1990s and early 2000s saw the development and widespread use of public service announcements against drugs [Goodwill 2020]. This demonstrates the reactive nature of PSAs, that is, their ability to respond quickly to current social challenges.

C. Atkin and R. Rice argue that it was the development of the Internet and the emergence of computers in people's homes that brought about the greatest changes in the subject matter of social advertising [Atkin, Rice 2013, p.11]. The emergence of these means of communication has opened up access to both greater consumption and greater opportunities for placing information. This is why, by the end of the 20th century and into the 21st century, we see the rise of PSAs addressing health, environmental protection and social issues.

At the same time, this development suggests a gradual increase in the complexity of PSA discourse, as new media environments require more adaptive and flexible communicative strategies. In particular, the shift toward audio-visual and digital formats has contributed to the integration of verbal and non-verbal elements into a unified message, where meaning is constructed not only through text but also through visual sequencing, sound, and timing.

To sum up, the historical development of PSAs can also be understood as a process of adaptation at the level of discourse organisation, where changes in media conditions shape not only what is communicated, but also how it is linguistically and pragmatically realised.

1.2.4 Transformation in the digital era

In the 21st century, different trends of the development of PSAs can be observed. Looking at research conducted by scientists throughout the 2000s suggests that their form prevalent at the time was considered effective, resonated with audiences, and could influence society. This is confirmed by a study conducted by Rense Jackson in

2010, which confirmed the positive impact of PSAs on environmental protection [Jackson 2010]. However, this perception has changed over time. Today, the role and effectiveness of PSAs are being reconsidered, and many researchers examine how different forms of advertising influence social behaviour. At the same time, a considerable number of scholars express concern regarding the effectiveness of PSAs. For example, Carson B. Wagner, studying anti-drug PSAs, found that sometimes these messages can have the opposite effect. They may catch the attention of people who had never thought about using drugs, sparking curiosity that in some cases can lead to experimentation and even addiction [Wagner 2004, p.3].

According to I. Benoit, who studied PSAs aimed to discourage phone use while driving, it remains unclear which linguistic means and communication strategies are most effective and which should be avoided when creating such messages. This means that not all PSAs resonate with the audience [Benoit 2024, pp.22-24]. This helps explain why modern PSAs are gradually moving away from traditional forms of presentation and increasingly experimenting with both form and content. They are no longer limited to conventional patterns, but actively employ new linguistic structures and diverse non-verbal means in order to resonate more effectively with the cultural, social, and value orientations characteristic of a particular historical period.

In conclusion, the lack of a clear consensus on the most effective linguistic and communicative strategies opens up wide-ranging opportunities for further research. This suggests that PSA discourse remains insufficiently studied, particularly in terms of how specific linguistic features influence the persuasiveness of the message and the audience's response. Thus, these observations not only illustrate the complexity of communication in PSAs but also confirm the importance of detailed linguistic and pragmatic analysis in this field.

1.3 Classification and typology of PSAs

1.3.1 Classification of PSAs within commercial and non-commercial advertising

In academic discourse, PSAs occupy a rather complex position within the overall system of advertising classification. Therefore, this study also examines their place

within existing classifications of commercial and non-commercial advertising, with particular attention paid to both Ukrainian and international approaches.

To begin with, when studying PSAs, foreign scholars tend to place less emphasis on their classification and therefore identify fewer criteria for distinguishing their different types. In contrast, Ukrainian researchers focus more on this issue.

Many English-language sources divide advertising into commercial and non-commercial, and place PSAs in the latter group because they carry socially important messages to people. In general, there are no radical differences regarding this classification approach among scholars from other countries [The Difference of Commercial and Non-Commercial Advertising 2024]. However, an analysis of the works of Ukrainian scholars shows that there are certain differences in classification caused by varying approaches and interpretations of the functions and specific features of PSAs. For instance, D. Oltarzhevskiy specifies that the non-commercial type of advertising also includes advertisements of foundations, political parties, and organisations, which are characterised by the absence of a profit-oriented goal [Оларжевський 2016, с.11]. This view highlights that non-commercial advertising can have different goals and target audiences. Linguistically, this may lead to differences in tone and language use, especially in messages with political or ideological content.

To conclude, understanding how PSAs are classified is important not only from a theoretical perspective but also for linguistic analysis. The category to which they belong influences how their communicative purpose is understood, in particular how they address the audience and express evaluation. Consequently, this also influences specific discursive features, such as modality, evaluative vocabulary and the use of pronouns. Thus, analysing the place of PSAs within the advertising system helps to better understand the formation of their linguistic and pragmatic characteristics.

1.3.2 Classification of PSAs according to communication media

Another relevant dimension for analysing PSAs is the classification based on media of communication. Although this approach originates from studies of

commercial advertising, it is equally applicable to PSAs, since both types rely on the same distribution channels [Примак 2006, с.166-168]. Understanding the choice of medium helps to see how language and communication strategies are shaped.

For example, in traditional media, such as print communication (magazines, newspapers, billboards, leaflets, brochures, posters, and transit advertising), content is necessarily concise and visually oriented. As noted by Ukrainian researchers, the distinction between internal and external advertising [Сєргієнко 2019, с.8-20] further highlights differences in their audience engagement: internal formats address a more situational and targeted audience, while external ones aim at a broader and less defined public. Linguistically, this affects the density of information, the use of slogans, and the degree of explicitness.

At the same time, audio-visual media, such as television, radio, and online platforms, introduce additional layers of meaning through sound, image, and narrative structure. In addition, digital environments, including social media, video platforms, and mobile applications, as well as newer forms such as ambient media, grow in their importance [Atkin, Rice 2013, pp.4-9]. These formats allow for more complex discourse strategies, combining verbal and non-verbal elements to enhance emotional impact and audience engagement.

Furthermore, both Ukrainian and foreign scholars point to the increasing influence of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, VR, crowdsourcing, and crowdfunding, on the development of advertising discourse [Prokopchuk, Sokoliuk 2024, p.223]. As a result, this shift confirms the fact that modern PSAs are no longer limited to static messages but function as dynamic, interactive forms of communication.

To summarise, the use of new forms and technologies in PSAs not only opens up new formats but also offers valuable opportunities for linguistic analysis. Interactive and multimedia elements let language work together with visuals, sound, and on-screen text, creating meaning in more complex ways than static messages can. This allows us to explore how word choice, sentence structure, and tone, interact with visual and auditory cues to shape the audience's perception and engagement.

1.3.3 Thematic classification of PSAs

It is important to consider the types of PSAs according to their thematic focus. To begin with, some Ukrainian scholars have proposed a more abstract and generalised classification based on the communicative purpose of the message and the environment in which the audience is situated. Such an approach takes into account the specific communicative context (for example, educational institutions, medical facilities, digital environments, or public spaces), as this context influences the type of message considered most appropriate and effective. Based on this approach, the following types are distinguished:

- PSAs aimed at reminding individuals of the importance of caring not only for their physical health but also for their inner well-being, including moral values, emotional balance, and mental health;
- PSAs focused on improving relationships between different individuals, calling on people to respect one another, be tolerant, avoid violence, conflicts, and discrimination, and to build healthy relationships within the family and society;
- PSAs directed at reinforcing the role of the individual as a member of society, that is, promoting responsible civic behaviour, compliance with laws, active participation in social life, and respect for social norms and values;
- PSAs aimed at emphasizing a responsible attitude toward the environment, which promote ecological awareness, care for nature, resource conservation, responsible consumption, and environmental protection [Бугайова 2023, с.5].

In the United States, discussions of public service announcements typically present a somewhat different, more practical, and problem-oriented thematic classification. For instance, on the AdCouncil website, all advertisements are grouped into four major thematic categories: community and opportunity; gun violence; health and well-being; safety and preparedness [Our Causes].

This leads to the fact that the thematic focus of PSAs influences how messages are formulated and structured. Different topics require different ways of presenting information and addressing the audience. For example, more abstract and value-

oriented themes tend to be expressed through generalised and descriptive language, while problem-oriented topics are more likely to use specific and direct formulations. As a result, the choice of theme affects the level of detail, the degree of explicitness, and the overall organisation of the message, which should be taken into account in the analysis of PSA discourse.

1.4 Pragmatic strategies of Public Service Announcements

1.4.1 Communicative intention and pragmatic function

According to O. Tsupikova, advertising communication performs informative and pragmatic functions, as it not only transmits information but also influences the audience through different communicative means [Цупікова 2019, с.209]. In this respect, the pragmatic component is closely related to the author's communicative intention, which refers to a deliberate attempt to shape the addressee's opinion, attitude, or behaviour.

Pragmatic intention in PSAs is realised through communicative strategies. When selecting a strategy, the author takes into account the needs and expectations of the target audience, since these factors directly affect the perception of the message.

Some communicative strategies used in PSAs overlap with those of commercial advertising. Thus, the following communicative strategies of commercial advertising can be identified:

- the argumentation strategy is based on the desire to meet the specific needs of the addressee;
- the manipulation strategy plays on the ethical motives of the addressee and their desire to conform to moral norms;
- the fascination strategy is focused on the aesthetic and emotional needs of the consumer;
- suggestive strategy addresses the subconscious motives of the addressee to directly promote particular ideas or behaviours to people, making them avoid critical thinking [Безугла 2020, с.12-13].

In PSAs these strategies perform a different function. Instead of promoting products or services, they are aimed at drawing attention to social issues and encouraging responsible behaviour.

At the same time, researchers point out that PSAs can employ more specific communicative strategies that reflect their social orientation. For example, in her study, N. Rudenko and S. Madani Alaoui highlighted the following strategies:

- the identification strategy, which works by encouraging the audience to relate to the situation or characters;
- the strategy of reflecting social norms and values, which is implemented through the demonstration of positive examples of behavior and the emphasis on current social problems;
- threat strategy, which is used to counter harmful or deviant forms of behavior, emphasizing the negative consequences of such actions;
- the cooperation strategy, which promotes participation in collective actions and social initiatives [Alaoui 2019; Rudenko 2017].

These strategies reflect the social focus of PSAs and enhance their persuasive potential by linking messages to shared values and personal responsibility.

To conclude, PSAs focus more on ethical, collective, and value-based aspects of communication, which sets them apart from commercial advertisements. Moreover, these communicative strategies of PSAs affect the choice of pronouns, the degree of directness in addressing the recipient, and the use of evaluative and emotionally charged vocabulary. They also shape the pragmatic force of the message by determining whether the text primarily guides, warns, or encourages the audience to act in a certain way, which is central to achieving the communicative purpose of PSAs.

1.4.2 Persuasion as a core mechanism of PSA discourse

Communicative strategies of PSAs may be reinforced by the use of persuasive language strategies — special linguistic techniques that strengthen the impact of the advertising message and contribute to the achievement of its pragmatic goal. In PSAs,

this influence is realised through different elements of the message, including lexical choices, stylistic devices, text structure, repetition, and calls to action [Benoit 2021, p.159]. As with communicative strategies, there is no single universally accepted list of persuasive language strategies used in commercial or public service advertising in modern linguistics. The variety of approaches leads to the fact that each researcher proposes their own classification of persuasive strategies, depending on the aim of the analysis, the research material, and the theoretical paradigm.

M. Serhiienko, I. Pidluzhna, Y. Mokriy notes that the most pragmatically significant elements of PSAs are slogan repetition, the repetition of key words, and the use of culturally specific language realia [Сергієнко, Підлужна, Мокрій 2019, с.112–113].

S. Yuliah, while noting similar strategies, focuses more on the way language is used, highlighting stylistic and structural techniques such as hyperbole, varying sentence lengths, colloquial expressions, repetition, parallel structures, and imperatives [Yuliah 2019, p.120-123]. This approach shows that the form of language can be just as important for persuasion as the content itself.

In contrast, H. Pujiati combines strategies that focus on both content and form, including commands, rhetorical questions, metaphors, imagery, and emotionally charged words, while also emphasizing the need to adapt messages to the audience's cultural context [Pujiati 2025, pp.278-283]. Pujiati's perspective underlines that persuasive language works best when it is carefully aligned with the audience's values, experiences, and ways of interpreting messages.

To summarise, the works of the scientists confirm that the effectiveness of PSAs depends on how content, language, and context work together. Persuasive strategies work best when they are carefully chosen and combined to connect with the audience's emotions, thinking, and cultural background. Therefore, studying PSAs requires looking not just at which strategies are used, but also at how they interact with the social and cultural environment to achieve the desired communicative and behavioural effects.

1.4.3 Interaction of linguistic means and context in PSA discourse

To understand how PSAs influence their audience, it is important to analyse the linguistic means through which their messages are constructed.

O. Areshenkova conducted a detailed study of advertising at the syntactic level. According to her, imperative sentences are the most common in advertising texts. Interrogative sentences are also employed, as they help draw the reader's attention to the most important information in the message. In addition, the structure of an advertising message may include optative sentences, which express the addressee's wishes using words such as *if* and *let's*, and vocative sentences, which help convey various emotions toward the addressee [Арешенкова 2019, с.51-77].

At the same time, the persuasive impact of public service announcements is determined not only by the syntactic organization of the message but also by the use of lexico-semantic means. For example, the use of synonyms and antonyms plays an important role. Synonyms are used to strengthen the message and create a climax effect, while antonyms help to highlight contrast or contradiction, which helps to persuade the PSA audience toward a particular viewpoint. Furthermore, the choice of verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and other linguistic units determines the pragmatic effect of the message, the way how key meanings and emotions are emphasized, and how the addressee is stimulated to take action or reflect on a social issue [Бурайова 2019, с.125-127].

Thus, these findings demonstrate that syntax, morphology, and lexico-semantic choices are all essential for studying PSAs from a linguistic perspective. Examining these levels together allows us to see how the structure, words, and meanings work in combination to influence the audience. Moreover, understanding these interactions helps identify which language patterns make PSAs more effective and contribute to the messages that can achieve their social and communicative goals.

Last but not least, another component of PSAs that is worth emphasizing is non-verbal means of communication, because they are used in all formats of PSAs and play an important role in shaping the overall effect of the message. According to

T. Kravets, advertising and its discourse can be analysed and considered as a collection of text and images [Кравець 2012, с.8]. In addition, non-verbal means include the way the text is organized: its font, colour, decorative elements, and gaps between words [Романюк 2012, с.2]. For PSAs issued in the form of videos, facial expressions and gestures are also important [Дигодій 2015, с.2].

To conclude, the study of PSAs requires attention not only to linguistic means, but also to the role of non-verbal elements within the overall structure of the message. Since they are usually presented in audio-visual form, meaning is formed through the interaction of several communicative components at once. Therefore, the analysis of public service announcements as multimodal discourse makes it possible to examine how different semiotic resources function together within the communicative process and contribute to the presentation of socially significant information.

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER 1

The theoretical analysis shows that PSAs are a complex and multi-layered phenomenon that combines elements of advertising and social communication. Unlike commercial advertising, which focuses on profit and promoting products or services, PSAs are aimed at serving the public interest. Their main goal is to influence people's attitudes, values, and behavior in relation to socially important issues. This key difference affects not only their purpose, but also the way messages are structured, the language used, and the strategies chosen to influence the audience.

The comparison between commercial advertising and PSAs has shown that PSAs perform a wider range of functions. In addition to informing, they also educate, motivate, promote values, and encourage social responsibility. This explains why PSAs use more complex communicative strategies and why their analysis requires attention not only to content, but also to how messages are constructed and may be perceived.

The historical overview has highlighted that PSAs developed alongside changes in society, media, and technology. Their growth was especially noticeable during periods of crisis, such as wars and economic difficulties, when there was a strong need to influence public behavior. Over time, new media platforms, including television and the Internet, have expanded the ways in which PSAs are created and distributed. This shows that PSAs are flexible and constantly adapting to new conditions.

An examination of the pragmatic aspects has confirmed that the effectiveness of public service announcements depends on the synergy between communicative intent and the appropriate linguistic tools.

Thus, examining US PSAs as a complex system of influence makes the way for the next stage of the work: a detailed study of the mechanisms of its functioning. In the following sections, this will enable the analysis of communicative and persuasive strategies, as well as an examination of the role of linguistic means and non-verbal components in the structure of PSAs dedicated to the topic of public safety.

CHAPTER 2. PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE U.S. PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS OF PUBLIC SAFETY

2.1. Target audience positioning and communicative intentions in the U.S. Public Safety PSAs

2.1.1 Target audience positioning

The analysis of the features of PSAs in the USA should begin with an examination of their target audience. The characteristics of the target audience serve not only as a contextual framework for the realization of the communicative intentions and the use of persuasive language strategies, that will be analysed further in this work, but also as one of the key factors shaping the content and manner of presenting socially significant information.

Nevertheless, rather than relying solely on demographic categories, this analysis shows that it is more effective to group PSA audiences in the USA by their roles in the communication process. These roles reflect how recipients are positioned in relation to the social issue addressed in the announcement.

Firstly, a significant group consists of protective audiences, whose primary role is to ensure the safety and well-being of others. This group includes parents, teachers and other responsible adults. PSAs aimed at parents, particularly those with young children, portray them as the people responsible for their children's lives, health and safety. Similarly, in PSAs dealing with gun violence or school safety, parents, teachers and school administrators are portrayed as observers whose vigilance directly affects the safety of others.

Secondly, PSAs are often aimed at community-oriented audiences, who are portrayed as active participants in maintaining public order. This group includes citizens, residents of neighbourhoods and local communities. Their role is to observe, report and prevent offences within their social environment. Typically, this category includes those produced by US government organisations, such as the United States

Attorneys, which ensure the safety of citizens who have been victims of criminal or administrative offences.

Thirdly, vulnerable groups form an important category, as they are portrayed as being at risk and in need of protection. This group includes the elderly, children, and, in certain situations, inexperienced individuals. For example, PSAs warning about online fraud target older people and portray them as potential victims or those who have already been affected by such crimes. Similarly, young drivers are often portrayed as being vulnerable due to their lack of experience and propensity for risky behaviour.

A distinct group of PSAs stands out from the previous examples because these messages appeal to a wide variety of social groups, from schoolchildren, families with children, elderly people, and people with disabilities. Such PSAs usually show instructions on how to act correctly in emergency situations during natural disasters. Nevertheless, the positioning of these groups is similar and portrayed as people who are responsible for their own lives and safety, and for the safety of those around them during the emergency.

To conclude, the analysis shows that the effectiveness of PSAs in the US depends to a large extent on how the audience is positioned functionally within the message. These messages not only address their audience, they assign them specific roles that determine their level of responsibility, commitment, or sensitivity to the social issues. Such positioning directly influences the choice of persuasion strategies: more narrowly defined audiences would make possible precise and role-specific appeals, while broader audiences would require more universal and inclusive approaches to communication. Thus, the positioning of the audience proves to be a key mechanism through which PSAs shape both the interpretation of the message and the expected behavioural response.

2.1.2 Communicative intentions

The analysis of communicative intentions in PSAs makes it possible to examine how these messages are structured and interpreted. Rather than examining only the

explicit content of PSAs, this approach makes it possible to investigate how different intentions influence the way the message is organized and perceived by the audience. Identifying the main communicative intentions helps reveal patterns in the use of linguistic means and message structure in PSAs.

The research material demonstrates a common pattern characteristic of most PSAs. In the majority of cases, the main communicative intention is realised through the slogan, which is pragmatically and structurally highlighted in the message. The slogan usually functions as the climactic element of the PSA, summarising its central idea and encouraging an emotional or behavioural response from the audience.

The most common communicative intention identified in the analysed material is the intention to encourage socially responsible behaviour. It is present in 56% of the analysed PSAs. Its purpose is to motivate the audience to make safer and more responsible choices by emphasising the consequences of their actions and their role in society.

For example, PSAs related to child safety in cars contain direct behavioural recommendations:

Check that your kids are in the right seat for their size and age [NHTSA 2025].

This message encourages parents to pay attention to the correct use of child car seats and to regularly monitor safety conditions during travel. Furthermore, the analysis shows that this intention can be expressed both directly and indirectly. In direct messages, the expected behaviour is stated clearly, allowing the audience to understand the intended meaning immediately. In contrast, indirect realisation relies on hints, descriptions of situations, or examples of behaviour, where the call to action is not stated openly but is understood by the viewer while watching the video. Such realisation of communicative intention contributes to audience engagement.

For example:

“School shootings are preventable when you know the signs” [Sandy Hook Promise 2021].

In this PSA text there is no direct indication or command that people should inform themselves about the first signs of danger from illegal use of weapons.

Nevertheless, the message implies the need to recognise potential threats and take preventive action.

Thus, direct and indirect realisation of intentions influence the audience differently. Direct communication simplifies message interpretation, whereas indirect presentation increases cognitive involvement.

Another common type is the instructional communicative intention, which accounts for 30% of the analysed PSAs. Its main purpose is to provide clear and practical directions that help individuals act correctly in particular situations, especially when following these instructions is essential for ensuring safety and preventing harm.

The main difference between instructional and behaviour-change intentions lies in their purpose and scope. Behaviour-change messages focus on influencing overall attitudes, habits, or patterns of behaviour. Nevertheless, instructive messages are limited to particular circumstances and do not aim to permanently change behaviour of the audience. This suggests that PSAs can serve not only as a means of shaping long-term behaviour, but also as tools for immediate, situation-specific guidance, where clarity and accuracy are key priorities.

Instructional intention may also be realised either directly or indirectly. Indirect realisation can be observed in the announcement about preparing for natural disasters in Hawaii [Hawaii Gas 2025]. Instead of presenting strict instructions, the PSA uses humorous dialogue in which a character excessively prepares for a storm that is later cancelled. Despite the humorous tone, the PSA communicates practical recommendations, such as preparing emergency kits, monitoring official updates, and following gas safety rules. As a result, the instructions are integrated into an everyday situation, making them more accessible and relatable for the audience.

Another important purpose of PSAs is to warn the audience about dangers present in society. These account for 14% of the videos analysed. These messages aim to raise awareness of potential risks and help viewers recognise threats and respond to them appropriately. Unlike instructional messages, they focus on prevention by providing knowledge and context, rather than through direct

commands, suggesting that they can influence behaviour by shaping the audience's perception of risk.

An example can be found in the PSA *"Just Joking"* launched by Sandy Hook Promise, which presents phrases that are often perceived as jokes and shows that such statements may actually indicate potentially dangerous behaviour involving weapons:

"Some of you guys are all right. Don't go to school tomorrow" [Sandy Hook Promise 2023].

To conclude, the analysis shows that PSAs are a highly structured form of discourse in which communicative intentions are closely linked to both the thematic context and the mechanisms of audience perception. The variety of types and their contextual realisation indicate that such messages are intended not only to convey information, but also to regulate how this information is perceived and interpreted at a cognitive level. The diversity of linguistic forms and message structures demonstrates the ability of PSAs to adapt to different situations and levels of audience engagement. Therefore, PSA discourse can be viewed as a flexible system that adapts its communicative strategies to different contexts and audiences.

2.2. Persuasive strategies in public safety PSAs

Persuasive language strategies are specific tools used to enhance the impact of communicative intentions on the audience and to encourage people to follow the instructions provided in PSAs. Hence, while communicative intentions define the overall goal of the message, persuasive language strategies function as psychological and linguistic mechanisms that help achieve this goal.

In the course of the research, persuasive language strategies were analysed referring to special rhetorical appeals proposed by Aristotle: ethos, pathos, and logos. These appeals represent the three fundamental dimensions of persuasion within which persuasive language strategies operate. Ethos refers to the reliability of the source of information. Pathos refers to appealing to people's feelings and emotions. Logos refers to appealing to factual information, statistics, and logical reasoning.

The classification of persuasive language strategies in PSAs is summarised in Table 2.2.1.

Table 2.2.1.

Rhetorical appeal	Persuasive language strategy	Examples
Ethos	Use of authoritative figures (experts, public figures)	Firefighters and police in Emergency Preparedness campaign [CityofOceanside 2023]; Miss America 2020 in “Take Back Day” [Drug Enforcement Administration 2020]; Sugarland in drug safety PSA [NHTSA 2025]
Pathos	1)Emotional appeals (1.fear, 2.family protection, 3.sense of civic duty); 2) rhetorical questions; 3)attacks on opposing views	1)1. <i>“Things can go wrong in an instant”</i> [Brady 2025], <i>“It may be illegal and punishable as a felony to operate without the proper license or registration in a disaster area”</i> [NASCLA 2024], <i>“The next disaster doesn’t have a name or date, but it’s coming”</i> [Disaster preparedness PSA 2023]. 2. the PSAs campaign <i>“Safe Stories,”</i> [Brady 2023] focusing on demonstrating the potential consequences of irresponsible behaviour towards children and other family members 3. <i>“If you feel that you have information that can help law enforcement, call 1890”</i> [United States Attorneys 2020] 2) <i>“Distracted driving is a gamble. Why take the risk?”</i> [NHTSA 2025]

		3) <i>“This is not the childhood we imagine. But too often, it is reality”</i> [Sandy Hook Promise 2025]
Logos	Use of facts and statistics	<i>“Gun injuries are the #1 cause of death for children and teens in America”</i> [Brady 2020], <i>“On Thanksgiving, we see 1,400 cooking fires, three times the daily average”</i> [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2025]

Therefore, the use of experts and public figures shows that PSAs establish credibility in different ways. By choosing speakers who are relevant to the issue, PSAs help the audience to perceive the message as more reliable and trustworthy. Thus, experts create a sense of competence and accuracy, while well-known public figures make the message more engaging, as audiences often associate their positive image with the ideas being communicated. As a result, the recommendations and warnings are more likely to be perceived as credible and important to follow.

Emotional appeals are widely regarded as effective persuasive devices, as they strongly influence cognitive processes of people, often prevailing over rational analysis and critical thinking.

The strategy of appealing to fear affects the audience by creating a sense of tension and making people feel more vulnerable, which helps them perceive the risk as immediate and realistic rather than distant or abstract.

The appeal to the desire to protect one’s family shows that PSAs use socially significant roles, such as that of a parent or caregiver, to make the message more personally relevant and emotionally engaging. As a result, responsibility is framed not only as a personal matter but also as an obligation towards others, which increases the likelihood of behavioural response.

Rhetorical questions encourage audiences to engage in an internal dialogue about the issue raised in the message. They transform the viewer from a passive

recipient into an active participant who reflects on the issue, while the intended conclusion is implicitly guided by the structure and wording of the message.

The strategy of attacking opposing points of view influences the emotional and psychological state of the audience by challenging beliefs, assumptions, or myths that may prevent individuals from adopting a socially responsible position. Nevertheless, instead of directly criticising specific individuals, it questions accepted perceptions and contrasts them with alternative, often uncomfortable realities.

Appeals to facts and statistics strengthen trust in the source of information by referring to verifiable data instead of emotional arguments, reducing potential scepticism towards the messages of PSAs.

Therefore, the analysis shows that persuasive language strategies in PSAs work together as a set of interconnected tools that shape how the message is understood and received by the audience. Instead of relying on one fixed approach, PSAs combine different rhetorical resources in a flexible way, adjusting them to the context and purpose of the message. This demonstrates that PSA discourse is carefully structured and oriented towards guiding audience interpretation in a clear and goal-oriented manner.

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER 2

A pragmatic analysis of U.S. PSAs shows that they are a complex and organized form of communication.

The analysis of target audience positioning revealed that PSAs address recipients not only as demographic groups but also as participants who perform particular social roles within the communicative situation. Such positioning directly affects the structure of the message and the choice of persuasive techniques, since different groups require different forms of communication and levels of emotional involvement.

The use of various means of influence demonstrates that persuasion in PSAs is not based on a single linguistic mechanism, but on the coordinated interaction of emotional engagement and logical reasoning. This combination allows messages to appeal to both the rational and emotional components of the audience's perception, thereby enhancing their overall communicative potential. Importantly, the choice and combination of strategies depend on the topic and communicative intention of the announcement, which confirms the contextual nature of PSA discourse.

Thus, the analysis has revealed a correlation between the type of target audience, the dominant communicative intention, and the persuasion strategies employed in US PSAs. The study shows that PSAs adapt their linguistic form, degree of emotionality, and persuasive force depending on the social role and vulnerability of the audience. Furthermore, their effectiveness is achieved through the simultaneous interaction of several communicative levels, as message structure, rhetorical techniques, and audience positioning function as interrelated mechanisms within a single communicative structure. As a result, PSAs in the US can be viewed as adaptive discursive models, shaped in accordance with the social context, communicative goal, and expected audience response.

CHAPTER 3. LINGUISTIC AND LINGUOSEMIOTIC FEATURES OF PSAs

3.1 Linguistic means of pragmatic impact in PSAs

3.1.1 Morphological means

Analysis of the linguistic features of American PSAs is particularly important as it allows for a better understanding of what underpins their effectiveness. In particular, it helps to trace how the persuasive effect is amplified, how communicative intentions are expressed, and how the message becomes more emotionally appealing to the audience. The main communicative effect is achieved through the interaction of various linguistic elements throughout the text, including its structure, vocabulary and stylistic devices.

At the morphological level, one of the most common features of PSAs is the use of verbs, especially verbs in the imperative mood, which realise directive speech acts.

For example:

Don't wait. Reach out [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 2025];

Protect yourself from landslides and mudslides [CDC 2025].

This makes the statement feel direct and personally relevant to each recipient. At the same time, such grammatical simplicity reduces the effort needed to understand the message, which is especially important for short and impactful texts like PSAs. From the perspective of communicative intention, such morphological forms are primarily used to convey behaviour change and instructive intentions.

Moreover, the use of modal verbs is also important as they realise epistemic and deontic modality. The modal verb “can” is one of the most commonly used modals in PSAs of the USA. From a linguistic perspective, “can” functions as a marker of possibility, which allows the message to present events as plausible rather than certain.

For examples:

Cars get hot fast and kids can be at risk [NHTSA 2024];

Emergencies can happen fast and without any warning [CDC 2024];

They could end up misplaced, stolen, or simply misused [Ad Council 2023].

At the same time, “can” is also used to express ability, especially when referring to objects or phenomena.

For example:

A button cell or coin battery can burn through a child's throat or oesophagus in as little as two hours” [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2023].

In this example, the PSA indicates the actual physical ability of the battery to cause serious harm in a very short time, which shifts the message from subjective warning to a more neutral and evidence-based statement.

Similarly, the modal verb “may” is used in PSAs to convey the likelihood of events or potential obstacles, particularly to strengthen the messages with instructive communicative intention.

For example:

I may need a little extra time if I have to leave my home [23ABC News 2020];

You may have only minutes to make decisions about what to do [Entertainment Industry Foundation 2023].

This makes the message less forceful, showing why certain actions are recommended rather than simply trying to scare the audience.

As a result, the modal verbs “can” and “may” play an important role in shaping the persuasive effect of PSAs. The use of “can” helps avoid absolute statements and presents threats as realistic but not inevitable, which reduces possible resistance from the audience. In contrast, “may” softens directives and makes recommendations sound less forceful and more advisory. Consequently, these modal verbs contribute to the implementation of persuasive strategies, particularly fear appeal.

Another modal verb worth noting is “should”. This modal verb is used in announcements differently than in everyday communication.

For example:

Gun violence shouldn't be part of growing up [Sandy Hook Promise 2025];

Oceansiders should be aware [CityofOceanside 2024].

In these statements the modal verb “should” does not simply express advice. Instead, it presents certain behaviour or values as socially accepted and expected. Rather than using direct commands, such messages create the effect of a reminder of appropriate behaviour.

Numerals are used very frequently in texts of public service announcements and function as markers of quantification, and contribute to the strategy of appeal to statistics.

For example:

There were well over two million elder victims in these cases and the financial losses exceeded one and a half billion dollars [USAO District of Massachusetts 2024].

Furthermore, numerals help compress complex information into short and easily processed forms. This is particularly important for PSAs, where messages are brief and need to be understood quickly.

Moreover, the use of first and second person deixis is important for PSAs. The most common is the use of the pronoun “we.”

For example:

We said we'd never break the three second rule [NHTSA 2024];

We have a serious problem in this country [Ad Council 2025];

Here are some lessons we need to learn about fire safety [CDC 2021].

The use of this pronoun in the text of PSAs helps create a sense of unity and equality among the audience and adds the effect of a shared experience. Moreover, it reduces the distance between the audience and the authority or representatives of the organization.

The use of the pronoun “you” makes communication more direct. Instead of general statements, the advertisement addresses the reader personally.

For example:

You can always change the information as needed [CDC 2024];

So the first thing to do is find out if you live in a storm surge evacuation zone. You can do that by going to your state, your locality and finding that information [FEMA 2020].

As a result, potential risks and recommended actions are perceived not as abstract issues, but as matters of direct relevance to the recipient. This increases the audience's engagement and enhances the persuasive impact of the message.

The use of the pronoun "I" creates the effect of a personal example or testimony.

For example:

I always make sure I'm safely strapped in before I start driving [NHTSA 2025];

I store my weapons securely not only for myself but for my family [Brady 2025].

The use of "I" creates a sense of authenticity and sincerity, reinforcing trust in the message and setting an example of appropriate behaviour. This acts as a social modelling strategy, whereby the speaker is perceived as a responsible member of society with whom the audience can identify. As a result, recipients are more likely to adopt the behaviour presented in the message.

Adjectives in PSAs contribute to the principle of linguistic economy, which is especially important in short slogan-like messages.

For example:

Store your guns safely: locked, unloaded and away from ammo [Ad Council 2020],

In this sentence, adjectives form an elliptical construction, where verbs are omitted and replaced by brief descriptive units. This structure allows for the compression of information, as complex instructions are reduced to a set of concise and clearly structured attributes.

The last morphological aspect worth highlighting is the use of degrees of comparison of adjectives. From a linguistic perspective, superlative forms act as intensifiers that help express evaluation in the message. In the analysed material, they are frequently used in PSAs addressing gun, internet and kitchen safety, as well as emergency preparedness.

For example:

the most lethal method of suicide [USAO District of Massachusetts 2024];
the most dangerous time of the year [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2022];
the most horrific experience [Ad Council 2024];
more resilient oceanside [CityofOceanside 2024].

These forms clearly highlight the level of risk and make it more noticeable. Moreover, comparative forms create contrast and suggest the possibility of change or improvement.

In this way, these grammatical forms not only make the message more expressive but also guide how the audience interprets it, showing what should be seen as especially serious or dangerous. As a result, they function as part of pathos-oriented persuasive strategies.

Therefore, the morphological structure of American public service announcements functions as a cohesive system, where each word is aimed at maximum impact with minimal text. The analysis showed that the texts are primarily composed of verbs in the imperative mood and directive speech acts, which create a sense of urgency. Modality helps distinguish levels of threat, while personal deixis shift the focus to collective values and personal responsibility. The use of numerals adds credibility to the facts, while adjectives (especially in comparative degrees) enhance emotional appeal without overloading the sentence.

3.1.2 Lexical means

At the lexical level, U.S. public service announcements are characterised by the use of vocabulary with negative connotation. For example:

lifelong addiction, poor decision, severe lung damage [Ad Council 2024];
threatening things [Ad Council 2025];
serious threat [CityofOceanside 2024];
deadliest drug [Drug Enforcement Administration 2022];
devastating results [Elder Justice Initiative 2022].

Such lexical units create a negative evaluative semantic field that emphasises danger, harm, and social risk. The repeated use of negative-connoted vocabulary enhances the perceived seriousness of the issue. Consequently, the choice of vocabulary in PSAs helps to direct the audience's attention to the negative consequences of certain actions or social problems and reinforces the overall persuasive effect of the message.

Furthermore, the results of this study show that the adverb *never*, as a marker of negation, plays an important role in the PSA discourse. This lexical unit appears frequently in the analysed corpus, as demonstrated by examples such as:

"We said we'd never break the three second rule" [NHTSA 2024];

"My service never stops" [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 2025].

Unlike other forms of negation, it expresses the complete absence of an action, making its meaning absolute rather than gradual. This characteristic strengthens the illocutionary force of the utterance. Thus, such strong negation supports directive and commissive speech acts and increases the impact on the audience.

Finally, one of the characteristic lexical features of US PSAs is the use of colloquial phrases such as:

"So, does Friday work?", "got it" [Ad Council 2025];

"gonna get it all right" [Ad Council 2022];

"make sure you nail the big stuff" [Brady 2020];

wanna [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2023].

The use of colloquial phrases and shortened forms in PSAs allows them to adopt a less formal and institutional tone and instead come closer to the characteristics of spoken language. This shift reduces the perceived communicative distance between the speaker and the audience, thereby helping to create a sense of interpersonal interaction.

Therefore, the lexical features of PSA discourse indicate that it is oriented toward achieving persuasive effect not through complex linguistic structures, but through carefully selected vocabulary that allows messages to remain emotionally expressive, direct, and easily perceived by a wide audience.

3.1.3 Syntactic level

At the syntactic level, PSAs are characterized by several features: the use of conditional sentences, syntactic parallelism, ellipsis, and interrogative sentences.

The use of conditional sentences helps to make the message less categorical and less direct:

“If you feel that you have information that can help law enforcement, call one eight hundred eighty” [FBI 2024];

“If you need more information to make your individual emergency plan, visit ready.gov/disability” [FEMA 2023].

This suggests that the intention to change the behaviour of recipients can be expressed not only through imperative forms.

The use of syntactic parallelism involves the repetition of short imperative constructions:

“Keep them safe. Clean them out. Take them back” [Drug Enforcement Administration 2020];

“Stay informed. Be aware. Protect yourself” [Drug Enforcement Administration 2021].

This technique helps to establish a clear rhythm and a structured pace of delivery, making it easier to remember the message.

The use of interrogative sentences creates the effect of cognitive dissonance. For example:

“Are your emergency kits packed? What about your family and your friends? Did they know how to get in touch and where to meet?” [FEMA 2020].

Hence, when the recipient hears the question, their brain automatically starts searching for an answer. If there is no answer (for example: "No, my emergency backpack is not packed"), discomfort arises. PSAs use this discomfort to prompt the audience to take action.

The phenomenon when the text of public service announcements combines parallelism, contrast, and different types of repetition, such as anaphora and epiphora, can also be observed:

“One guy got a ticket. One guy didn’t. One guy wore his seat belt. One guy didn’t” [USDOYNHTSA 2023].

These phrases perform several important functions for the pragmatic impact of the message:

- reduce cognitive load by presenting information in a simple and structured form. Repeated patterns help the reader grasp the main idea without having to process complex syntactic structures.
- clearly demonstrate the difference between behavioural patterns and their consequences, making it easier for the recipient to understand the contrast between appropriate and inappropriate actions.

Another feature contributing to the effectiveness of PSAs is the use of fully rhymed text. For example, PSA by US Consumer Product Safety Commission called *“Twas the Night before Christmas”* has the form of a verse modelled on the famous Christmas poem of the same name [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2025]. Thus, rhythm and rhyme enhance memorability, as structured and repetitive patterns are retained more easily by the audience. At the same time, the poetic form helps combine instruction with a more engaging and even entertaining way of presenting information. Because of this, the PSA does not adopt a strictly formal tone, but still manages to inform, warn, and emotionally involve the audience. As a result, the message feels more natural and has a stronger overall impact.

Therefore, the syntactic features identified in PSA discourse indicate that it is mainly focused on accessibility and audience engagement rather than on syntactic complexity. The use of simplified structures and patterned sentence forms demonstrates that PSAs often imitate spoken language in order to make the message sound more natural and relatable. At the same time, the combination of different syntactic forms reflects a balance between institutional authority and a more friendly

communicative tone, which helps maintain persuasive impact without creating excessive distance between the message and the audience.

3.2 Non-verbal means enhancing the pragmatic effect of Public Service Announcements

3.2.1 Narrative framing and animation

The final aspect to be examined in more detail is non-verbal means of communication as part of multimodal discourse.

Many PSAs demonstrate distinctive semiotic features and use different forms of narrative framing. Some PSAs take the form of speeches delivered by one or more speakers, while others use more unconventional formats. For example, *No Extra Life* [Brady 2020] is presented as a video game in which characters experience various accidents. Another PSA about nuclear preparedness [NYC Emergency Management 2020] presents an alternative reality in which a nuclear explosion has occurred, depicted from a virtual reality perspective. Some PSAs are also created in the form of artistic short films or breaking news reports.

Such formats enhance the immediacy and perceived realism of PSAs, which increases their emotional impact and facilitate audience understanding of the potential consequences. As a result, they are more likely to influence audience attitudes and encourage behavioural change.

It is also important to note that PSAs related to public safety during critical situations often use bright 2D animation, resembling cartoons or drawings [Appendix 2]. Animation elements allow for a visual demonstration of certain situations or behaviour models, which may be more difficult to achieve using live-action video. At the same time, this presentation style makes the message more dynamic, captures the viewer's attention, and contributes to better information retention. Moreover, the use of bright colours, simple characters, and a clear visual sequence of actions also makes it easier for people of different ages, including children, to perceive the message.

As a result, the non-verbal features of US public service announcements show that persuasion in PSA discourse is strongly supported by multimodal communication. Narrative framing and visual elements work together to make the message clearer, more engaging, and more emotionally involving for the audience. Therefore, these non-verbal means increase the persuasive effect of PSAs by improving message comprehension, creating a sense of realism and immediacy, and strengthening the audience's emotional response to the information presented.

3.2.2 Typography

An important non-verbal element of PSAs is on-screen text, which visually emphasises the verbal content and directs viewers' attention. Several typical design techniques can be identified that are linked to the persuasive function of the message.

One of the most common strategies is the use of contrasting colour combinations, in particular white text on a black background [Appendix 2]. This contrast improves readability and helps viewers to quickly process short or information-rich messages. When text is placed directly on the video background [Appendix 2], it is usually formatted to stand out visually from the surrounding images. From a pragmatic perspective, such visual clarity reduces cognitive effort and facilitates quicker comprehension of important information.

Another significant feature is the use of colour as a semiotic resource. Red is frequently used to highlight key words or parts of words and functions as a marker of urgency and danger [Appendix 2]. Due to its association with warning and risk, it intensifies emotional response and increases the perceived importance of the highlighted information.

Similarly, yellow is used because of its high visibility and strong contrast with different backgrounds [Appendix 2]. In both cases, colour directs the viewer's attention and enhances the emotional impact of the message.

The choice of font and text formatting further contributes to the effectiveness of the message. The use of capitalisation creates visual consistency and improves readability, while also adding emphasis to the written content. Additional

enhancement strategies, such as italics, are used to highlight particularly important lexical units, ensuring that key information stands out within the overall visual structure. These formatting options function as a form of visual emphasis, guiding interpretation and maintaining selective attention [Appendix 2].

In summary, the use of text elements in PSAs demonstrates that visual design is not only decorative, but also serves an important pragmatic function. Through contrast, colour coding and typographic emphasis, PSAs structure the viewer's attention, highlight critical information, and enhance the emotional and cognitive impact of the message. Thus, text design directly contributes to the persuasive effectiveness, making key information more noticeable, accessible, and memorable.

3.2.3 Audio elements

The analysis revealed a pattern in which a well-known song becomes the central element of the message and can be reinterpreted in accordance with the theme of PSAs. For example, in a campaign by Sandy Hook Promise, teenagers recite lines from the famous song "*Teenage Dream*" by Katy Perry [Sandy Hook Promise 2021]. However, in this video, the lyrics are addressed to the memory of friends lost in school shootings. As a result, the well-known line "*You and I will be young forever*" acquires a completely different meaning from its original context. This reinterpretation creates a strong emotional contrast between the audience's previous perception of the song and its new meaning within the PSA.

A similar strategy is employed in a PSA about veterans' crisis prevention that features the song "*Five More Minutes*" by The War and Treaty [Ad Council 2024]. Since the story of this song is autobiographical for its creators, when the woman asked her husband to stay for just five more minutes in a moment of despair, it closely aligns with the main message of this announcement. Thus, the emotional narrative of the song becomes integrated into the communicative intention of the PSA.

Therefore, the use of familiar songs in PSAs shows that PSA discourse often relies on already existing emotional and cultural associations in order to strengthen the impact of the message. Instead of creating emotional connection entirely through

new content, PSAs reinterpret well-known songs and connect them with socially important issues. As a result, the audience may continue associating the song with the message of the PSA even after watching the advertisement.

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER 3

The analysis presented in this section demonstrates that the discourse of PSA videos is deliberately constructed to achieve maximum pragmatic effect whilst remaining accessible to a broad audience.

Their language is characterised by simplified grammatical structures, concise syntax and emotionally charged vocabulary, which reduces cognitive effort and allows recipients to process information quickly. This suggests that PSA videos prioritise communicative effectiveness over linguistic complexity.

The study also shows that, on the one hand, PSAs contain instructions, warnings and show socially acceptable models of behaviour. On the other hand, the active use of personal pronouns, colloquial expressions and conversational syntax reduces social distance and creates the impression of a direct dialogue with the audience. As a result, public service announcements appear less formal and more personally meaningful to the audience.

Another important finding is that emotional impact plays a central role in the communication of PSAs. The frequent use of evaluative vocabulary, repetition, contrast, visual emphasis and emotionally charged audio elements demonstrates that public service announcements are designed not only to inform, but also to shape emotional perceptions of social issues. Fear, empathy, responsibility and collective engagement become important mechanisms of persuasive influence.

Furthermore, the study confirms that the discourse of PSAs is inherently multimodal. The pragmatic effect is created through the interaction of verbal, visual and audio components, rather than through language alone. Narrative design, animation, typography, colour and music function as complementary semiotic resources that enhance memorability, guide interpretation and increase emotional engagement.

Therefore, PSAs can be viewed as a strategically organised form of multimodal persuasive discourse, in which linguistic and semiotic devices interact to influence public sentiment and encourage socially responsible behaviour.

CONCLUSION

The first chapter demonstrated that PSAs occupy a middle ground between advertising and institutional communication. Although they borrow certain structural and persuasive features from commercial advertising, their communicative purpose differs significantly. Instead of promoting goods or services, PSAs focus on raising awareness of social issues and influencing public behaviour. Their discourse evolves alongside social change and media technologies, adapting its communicative forms to new social conditions and audience expectations.

The second chapter demonstrated that the pragmatic effectiveness of PSAs depends to a large extent on audience orientation and communicative goals. PSAs adapt their messages to the needs, experiences and social roles of the recipients, which increases the relevance and persuasive potential of the message. At the same time, persuasive impact is achieved through a combination of emotional appeal, rational argumentation and socially significant values.

The third chapter confirmed that the persuasive effect of PSAs is achieved through the interaction of verbal and non-verbal elements. Morphological, lexical and syntactic features contribute to the clarity, emotional impact and memorability of the message, whilst visual and audio elements enhance audience engagement and improve message reception. The analysis also demonstrated that the discourse of public service announcements is based on simplified and accessible forms of communication, which helps to reduce communicative distance and facilitates the understanding of socially important information.

Thus, American PSAs can be characterised as a form of multimodal persuasive discourse in which linguistic and non-verbal means function together to influence the audience's perception, emotional response and behavioural attitudes. The analysis showed that PSA discourse is generally oriented towards simplicity, emotional accessibility, realism, and audience engagement, which together contribute to the effectiveness of persuasive communication in the field of public safety.

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APPENDICES

Appendix1

List of data sources

No	Name of a video	Link
1	2024 emergency preparedness PSA (CityofOceanside)	https://youtu.be/_u2dlr3flGI?si=D5U1dag3k-eWU61c
2	Administrator Anne Milgram - fentanyl and prevention PSA (Drug Enforcement Administration)	https://youtu.be/00ytAK4gvjg?si=2sWxj9bLrA2xbn4T
3	Campfire (NHTSA)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/campfire/204495941
4	Catch a ride :30 (Ad Council)	https://youtu.be/6yQ6XQx5MTE?si=qSwzrQR8ySm_2yGT
5	Child car safety (Ad Council)	https://youtu.be/RbYVSGZpzJI?si=N7E1BSuL-RMYHKmp
6	City of Winter Garden - FLORIDA PSA (RedSpeed USA)	https://youtu.be/x9gff53g4CE?si=hfMEyyPDts4AukQX
7	Baby Safety - Traditional vs Contemporary (U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWNdNw5pEeQ
8	National Poison Prevention Week - Button Batteries (U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88rc8B9Va-Q
9	Put safety on the menu (U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9jnLra_yQQ
10	Cyber security (JusticeTeamNetwork)	https://www.youtube.com/shorts/IEIwsqO5gCk
11	DEA phone scam PSA (Drug Enforcement Administration)	https://youtu.be/MtUiH8u7TyI?si=a_agyH8mms1vey0l
12	DEA Take Back Day PSA with Sugarland_OC_30sec (Drug Enforcement Administration)	https://youtu.be/LWFWCdThyes?si=e-nnr_lrknZEUvG1
13	Disaster preparedness PSA – americares (Entertainment Industry Foundation)	https://youtu.be/ey1azKoAkFE?si=phZMNHXBUsm4xXZa
14	Disaster preparedness PSA	https://youtu.be/2W3iV05QOs?si=STpGGpOY6qscpjor

	(Entertainment Industry Foundation)	
15	Don't die distracted (:30) (Ad Council)	https://youtu.be/z58I9PPWz-4?si=TArT1LPbNQ3T5-Sp
16	Don't die distracted (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/dont-die-distracted/204496286
17	Emma's story (Sandy Hook Promise)	https://youtu.be/Wm3RM2-CnwQ?si=RmeE2bdXCFyxoUEd
18	FEMA preparedness PSA (FEMA)	https://youtu.be/3-EJ3luVytQ?si=zZnIz6enRVuU9El8
19	Five more minutes PSA :60 (Ad Council)	https://youtu.be/2kTcuMfKqSo?si=i1IXABY9TzTyn61H
20	Gamble (NHTSA)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/gamble/204683881
21	Hurricane evacuation PSA (FEMA)	https://youtu.be/OxfP2IMCwhQ?si=khP6MS7LRKKta0Cr
22	IC3 PSA older americans (United States Attorneys)	https://youtu.be/QNxa26s2gno?si=Zd3QBHP7x7czafj5
23	Just joking (Sandy Hook Promise)	https://youtu.be/g0qM5Cp7sTQ?si=yvt8VFevEw_XD2ZR
24	Living safely school PSA (United States Attorneys)	https://youtu.be/gWcCKzlCeVw?si=IBYBIMTcDI7RN-Us
25	Look at the damage (USDOTNHTSA)	https://youtu.be/nAwn_p6u2dl?si=kQ5W6lXFTxnvdlL5
26	Love protects (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/love-protects/204527609
27	Miss America PSA (Drug Enforcement Administration)	https://youtu.be/yQxvua0lFFM?si=D9HKwdBtxJ9FEZLk
28	Landslide safety PSA (CDC)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVRu3TcGzQA
29	Narrator (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/narrator/204503239
30	NASCAR secure (NHTSA)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/nascar-secure/204717423
31	NASCLA disaster PSA (NASCLA)	https://youtu.be/HSU2ADPXOx4?si=8b1EPnPc-AmKRRID
32	Natural disaster safety PSA 2025 (Hawaii Gas)	https://youtu.be/7I4RAbWeTBs?si=GaVqAKllEUjK0r6V
33	Never Happens Forgotten (NHTSA)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/never-happens-forgotten/204496000
34	Never Happens Gained Access (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/never-happens-gained-access/204496002
35	Next step :30 (Ad Council)	https://youtu.be/CuSMpciakwQ?si=K403jJEnFbHqFCsn

36	No debate debate (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/no-debate-debate/204611314
37	No extra life (Brady)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/no-extra-life/203218857
38	Nuclear preparedness PSA (NYC Emergency management)	https://youtu.be/N-5d7V4Sbqk?si=iAi7z9oE3JrFp-lQ
39	Pause Taylor (Brady)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/pause-taylor-il/204696916
40	Playdate (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/playdate/204622772
41	Preparedness for all (CDC)	https://youtu.be/phzNF4wwLs0?si=uD8RpyjgbDyxknKl
42	Prepare for misuse (Ad Council)	https://youtu.be/QKQhJpxgUks?si=hxCROKfxJfG8tseT
43	Prevent mass violence PSA (FBI)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-JroYsjSQk
44	Volcanic eruption PSA (CDC)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFAAfrtP8ug
45	Fentanyl dangers PSA (CDC)	https://youtu.be/zu_WtBrmScs?si=PDYzh2seooA-embC
46	Earthquake safety PSA (Oklahoma Geological Survey)	https://youtu.be/XAOV53VeuBw?si=R550jzBSsb9UW0uq
47	Elder fraud PSA (USAO District of Massachusetts)	https://youtu.be/7EDiJYqLvI4?si=uzJ4bzpcH4PwVIb2
48	Put safety on the menu (U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4G0OkM1aii4
49	Ready Kern PSA (23ABC News)	https://youtu.be/LZE5kExCnVo?si=UCiZNa7H5_VFRjOk
50	Safe stories (Brady)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/safe-stories/204466139
51	Self-care (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/self-care/204460803
52	Service never stops (Brady)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/service-never-stops-chris-il/204698836
53	Sitcom (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/sitcom/204503246
54	Spotlight (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/spotlight/204496287
55	Landslide safety alert (CDC)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vb6cjukLA8Q
56	Super Bowl 2026 PSA (Texas Department of Public Safety)	https://youtu.be/flBLaFmvO_E?si=UvLiTlkXNUtM-Bls

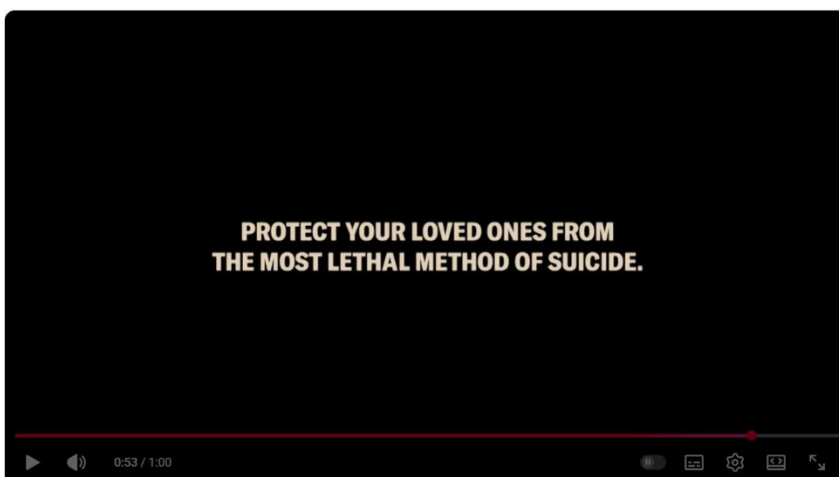
57	Teddy bear's dream (Sandy Hook Promise)	https://youtu.be/DDaBBn9HzfY?si=4Fh7diXjer8kEXBv
58	Teenage dream (Sandy Hook Promise)	https://youtu.be/T254_J8Vcvw?si=wLV13ND2p3ipUTFK
59	Tell that to them (NHTSA)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/tell-that-to-them/204731650
60	The bravest thing (Ad Council)	https://youtu.be/Vpqv4Evgrms?si=ZVWPcYulRFhnH8g1
61	The dive (Ad Council)	https://youtu.be/8-kLpMxyL4U?si=ENpO1Wsz4e4gE7M1
62	The lake (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/the-lake-il/204497642
63	Twas the night before Christmas PSA (U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfGgDAOI18k
64	Two guys (USDOTNHTSA)	https://youtu.be/mDoR0WEU-x4?si=c0vuL3bEehzX9d5i
65	Domestic abuse PSA (United States Attorneys)	https://youtu.be/wsuWp5OqXGk?si=B7ac6bs2qXzbZKRv
66	Project safe neighborhoods PSA (United States Attorneys)	https://youtu.be/yJ3HFOqv4Bo?si=CBwjMd_JjMRE2Xor
67	Violent crime PSA (United States Attorneys)	https://youtu.be/VFeHe0Yn1D4?si=CdaOih5ny3DOorD8
68	When The Earth shakes (FEMA)	https://youtu.be/MKILThtPxQs?si=BVSU075PQtFBS0_A
69	Winning formula (Ad Council)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/winning-formula/204299101
70	You are a veteran (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs)	https://www.adcouncil.org/asset/you-are-a-veteran/204731960

Appendix 2

Examples of visual and typographic elements used in public service announcements



The use of 2D animation



The use of white text on a black background



The use of text on a background of a video



The use of the colour red



The use of the colour yellow



The use of italics