On the use of manipulative techniques in English literary discourse

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Abstract: Manipulation is inherently incentive, aimed at exerting covert influence and inducing the recipient to the actions necessary for the manipulator. Such control is, first of all, the control of the mind, i.e. the beliefs of the recipients, and indirect control of their actions, with their beliefs being manipulated. This paper explores pragmatics of manipulative techniques in English literary discourse. Manipulation happens in implicit communication. Reading between the lines and explicating the implications of a text has become a primary focus in literary analysis. The analysis of linguistic material is carried out by means of discourse approach and pragmalinguistic method of research. The relevance of this study is determined by the need to cover all forms of interpersonal manipulation in fictional dialogue: deception, pressuring, and exploiting emotional vulnerability or character defects. The analysis showed that exploiting emotional vulnerability occurs much more frequently in fictional dialogue than other forms of manipulation. The investigation has focused on manipulative techniques as closely related to narrative irony. In a short story or a novel, narrative irony serves as scaffolding for using manipulation, viz. for creating the situation favourable for accomplishing the manipulator's scheme.
Key words: fiction dialogue; discourse approach; manipulative techniques; narrative irony; psychological manipulation; linguistic manipulation.

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Об использовании манипулятивных приемов в англоязычном литературном дискурсе

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Аннотация: Манипуляция по своей сути является побудительной, направленной на оказание скрытого воздействия и побуждение реципиента к необходимым для манипулятора действиям. Такой контроль – это прежде всего контроль сознания, т. е. убеждений реципиентов и косвенный контроль их действий, при этом манипулирование их убеждениями. В статье исследуется прагматика манипулятивных приемов в англоязычном литературном дискурсе. Манипуляция осуществляется в коммуникации имплицитно. Чтение между строк и выявление импликаций в тексте стало основным направлением литературного анализа. Анализ языкового материала осуществляется с помощью дискурсивного подхода и прагмалингвистического метода. Актуальность данного исследования определяется необходимостью охвата всех форм межличностного манипулирования в художественном диалоге: обмана, давления, эксплуатации эмоциональной уязвимости или отрицательных черт характера. Анализ показал, что эксплуатация эмоциональной уязвимости гораздо чаще встречается в художественном диалоге, чем другие формы манипуляции. Исследование было сосредоточено на манипулятивных приемах, тесно связанных со скрытой иронией. В рассказе или романе скрытая ирония служит опорой для использования манипулирования, а именно для создания ситуации, благоприятной для осуществления замысла манипулятора.
Ключевые слова: художественный диалог; дискурсивный подход; манипулятивные приемы; скрытая ирония; психологическая манипуляция; языковая манипуляция.

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Introduction

Manipulation is a topic that is common in a society. It pervades our daily life. When people need something, they are prone to use the other person to achieve their goals. They do not feel any remorse for treating the other as a tool or means to achieve their goals though it sometimes may look a bit unworthy or dishonourable in relation to the latter.

"To manipulate someone means to make someone think and behave exactly as you want them to, by skillfully deceiving or influencing them" (Longman Dictionary). Psychological manipulation can be defined as the exercise of undue influence through mental distortion and emotional exploitation, with the intention to seize power, control, benefits, and privileges at the victim's expense. It is important to distinguish efficient social influence from psychological manipulation. Efficient social influence occurs between most people, and is part of the give and take of constructive relationships. Contrarywise, in psychological manipulation, one person is used for the benefit of another. The manipulator deliberately creates an imbalance of power, and exploits the victim to serve his or her purpose.

Manipulation is considered in different spheres from different perspectives: in the field of theory of rhetoric and argumentation, psychology, political/public discourse, literary discourse, etc. Therefore, the goal of using manipulative techniques varies with the variety of discourse. For example, the main purpose of using manipulative techniques in political discourse is to convince the reader/audience or persuade the opponent to your point of view; whereas, in literary discourse, the purpose of manipulation is to influence the reader/character, as well as to achieve a rapport with the reader.

Although in the work by a skilled writer all features of a literary work – characterization of characters, dialogue, and setting – contribute to the development of the plot, it is the manipulative dialogue that becomes the turning point, which determines the direction of the plot development in literary discourse. The use of manipulative techniques adds an element of intrigue to dialogue, and infuses humour into a story.

This paper, therefore, **aims at** identifying techniques of manipulation and their function in literary discourse. In accordance with this goal, the following **tasks** are set in the work: 1) to consider the features inherent in the process of interpersonal manipulation; 2) to reveal the approaches to the analysis of manipulation in modern linguistics; 3) to explore the techniques of manipulation used in the texts of fiction. The analysis of linguistic material is carried out by means of discourse approach and pragmalinguistic method of research.

Theoretical Background
1. Characteristics of Manipulation

Manipulation in discourse is defined as "intentionally deceiving one's addressees by persuading them of something that is foremost in one's own interest through the covert use of communicative devices that are not in agreement with generally acknowledged critical standards of reasonableness" [van Eemeren 2005, p. xii]. F. van Eemeren clarifies the concept of manipulation by way of the summary of its distinctive features referred to by such recognized scholars as R. Blass, L. de Saussure and P. Schulz. An important feature in describing manipulative discourse is that manipulation is intentional on the part of the speaker or writer. As R. Blass justly notes, manipulation cannot happen by accident [van Dijk 2006]. Another characteristic of manipulative discourse is that the speaker's or writer's intention is always covert. As such, manipulation is quite definitely a form of deception due to its covert nature [van Dijk, p. 188]. In addition, the crucial feature of manipulation is "using the addressee", ie having that person adopt specific action, so that the manipulator's needs and interests, regardless of his target's ones, are successfully achieved [de Saussure 2005, p. 117]. And finally, the manipulator often gains "sincere consent" on the part of the manipulees and uses "emotions, in particular affectivity, which in turn trigger confidence" [de Saussure, Schulz 2005, p. 9]. The key to manipulation is confidence since "the more confident the hearer is, the less critically he thinks and the more effectively the manipulator is likely to achieve his persuasive goal" [de Saussure 2005, p. 131].

Given that the speaker's intention is important in communication, Sperber and Wilson [Sperber, Wilson, 1995 (1986)] distinguish two levels of speaker intention – an informative intention and a communicative intention. The informative intention makes certain assumptions manifest to the audience. The speaker's communicative intention involves only the recognition of their informative intention. The informative intention, on the other hand, is fulfilled whenever the intended assumptions are part of the addressee's cognitive environment. According to relevance theory understanding, the speaker's meaning and accepting their beliefs or attitudes are not the same, they are two different processes.

In communication as a whole and also in manipulation, the manipulation lies in the fact that the lower-level informative intention is recognized by the people as intended, but the higher-level intention to deceive, to communicate false or distorted information remains covert [Blass 2006]. Therefore, the speaker's informative intention is that all of their utterances should be accepted as relevant information, whereas the manipulative intention is meant to be hidden.

Psychological manipulation can be mutualistic or exploitative rather than selfish, in which case it is not detrimental to the hearer [Reboul 2017, p. 198]. Basically, reciprocity means that, if the speaker is (now) able to manipulate the hearer, the hearer will (later) be able to manipulate the speaker. This implies that an individual, when in the role of the hearer, should be wary of manipulation, while, in the role of the speaker, they should develop strategies to avoid detection. This 'arms race' is exactly what happens in implicit communication [Reboul 2017, p. 198].

All in all, the complete characterization of psychological manipulation encompasses such distinctive features of manipulation as its interactive nature; an asymmetrical relation between the two parties involved [de Saussure, Schulz 2005]; its intentional character on the part of the speaker or writer [Blass 2006]; covertness of the speaker's or writer's intention [Rigotti 2005]; interest dimension since the manipulator aims at having the target doing something in his/her interests [Saussure 2005]; involving coercion (or pressuring) as a kind of psychological manipulation [Sorlin 2017; Baron 2003]; mutualistic (or reciprocal) character of manipulation [Reboul 2017].

According to D. Maillat and S. Oswald, the obstacle in cognizing the phenomenon of manipulation is its heterogeneous nature [Maillat, Oswald 2009]. Due to the heterogeneous nature of manipulation, "most of the approaches indeed focus on some of its particular aspects, but do not – and sometimes cannot – take a step further to consider the phenomenon comprehensively" [Maillat, Oswald 2009, p. 348–349]. However, contemporary research shows that it is possible to reach a consensus on this issue. The explorers consider verbal manipulation means from the perspective of pragmatics. For instance, R. Blass lists linguistic techniques used in manipulation such as omission, minimization, exaggeration, repetition, distortion, figurative speech, connotative or substandard language and emotional appeal [Blass 2006], which might be called pragmatic techniques of manipulation. This is supported by the similar findings of Saussure [Saussure 2005] who notes that manipulation is not about using metaphors, particular syntactic structures or specific semantic features of quantifiers, but about making them play a particular role at the pragmatic level [Saussure 2005, p. 119].

Likewise, methods of manipulation from the pragmatic perspective [Sorlin 2017] are considered as based on the use of manipulative politeness strategies. According to S. Sorlin, alongside altruistic orientation of politeness theory (conceiving politeness as a means to attend to the Hearer's face) [Brown, Levinson 1987], manipulative politeness (the egocentric use of politeness to further one's own objectives) can also be a way of maintaining polite work relations (even while keeping up an underlying pressure). In this view, pragmatic tactics [Fraser 2007] mean the use of language which, because of the context in which the utterance is made, conveys a message in addition to that directly interpretable from what is said.

As it was mentioned earlier, in manipulative communication the speaker's informative intention is that all of their utterances should be accepted as relevant information, whereas the manipulative intention is meant to be hidden. The latter is implemented by means of strategic moves carried out to influence the manipulee in the interests of the manipulator.

To sum up, such distinctive features of manipulation as two-level speaker intention, manipulative techniques in terms of ulterior motives of the manipulator behind a communicative effort along with pragmatic tactics will be investigated later through the samples. The two-way interaction of conversation in fiction is carried out at the levels 'author-reader' and 'character-character'. The subject of the present study is the investigation of manipulative techniques in 'character-character' discourse.

2. Types of manipulation in literary discourse, Narrative (dramatic) irony

The types of manipulation in literary discourse can range from reader manipulation – aesthetic [Mills 2014] or cognitive [Sorlin 2020; Emmott, Alexander 2010] – to interpersonal manipulation [Sorlin 2017; Sukhanov 2017]. If the former is accomplished by way of the author's narration / narrative text, then the latter can occur in fictional dialogue or, occasionally, in narrative.

Cognitive manipulation of the reader may be achieved by foregrounding plot-insignificant items and burying plot-significant items in the background [Emmott 2017]. An author can use rhetorical strategies to cognitively misdirect readers for plot purposes. Aspects of a story may be made more or less prominent through the use of foregrounding and burying devices such as burying the clues to the solution in the intention to keep the reader in the dark until the detective points the way [Alexander 2009].

Emotional responses to a piece of fiction are judged to be appropriate not by considering the events it depicts but, rather, by considering its artistic quality. A manipulative artwork tries to elicit – and often succeeds in eliciting – an emotional response unwarranted by the quality of the work [Mills 2014]. Studying the phenomenon of manipulation in psychological prose of 1960-s, V.A. Sukhanov explores how interpersonal manipulation turned intrapersonal, destructing personality in some way. The victims of manipulation are trying to justify their dependent position by deceiving themselves [Sukhanov 2017].

Aesthetic manipulation differs from standard cases of interpersonal manipulation in that it is not intended to influence behaviour; it cannot be condemned for subverting rationality; and it is generally overt and accepted voluntarily. C. Mills argues that a work of art is manipulative if it causes its audience to have an emotional reaction that is unwarranted.

Writing fiction, therefore, is not about a strict representation of reality, but about affect. Narrative fiction provides researchers with a prime example of how to manipulate readers in an efficient,

respectful way. The very nature of this genre is one of manipulation. Narrative fiction, on the one hand, is the careful manipulation of words in order to construct an artificial imaginary world for the reader. On the other hand, writers hold a great deal of manipulative power in attracting the reader and keeping their interest until the end, particularly through various narrative techniques, combined with techniques of a different kind.

In this respect, narrative irony and manipulative techniques go hand in hand in maintaining and developing a particular course of communicative events. Narrative irony occurs when there is a disconnection between what the characters and the reader know, which often happens in dialogue. Sometimes called 'dramatic irony', it flatters its readers' intelligence at the expense of a character (or fictional narrator). A sense of detached superiority is achieved by dramatic irony, in which the audience knows more about a character's situation than the character does, foreseeing an outcome contrary to the character's expectations, and thus ascribing a sharply different sense to some of the character's own statements (Baldick 2001, p. 130). Narrative irony often connotes design, insincerity, and even lies.

In literary discourse, authors convey messages to their readers via narrative or interchange between characters by way of conversational implicatures. 'The reader is thus invited, in a novel, to draw implicatures both from character speech and authorial commentary. But this two-level response also leads to a third kind of implicature; one that is derived by the reader from character speech, very often in circumstances where the characters themselves may be assumed not to be 'in the know'. This is the novelistic equivalent of what on the stage is often referred to as 'dramatic irony' [Leech, Short 2007, p. 243]. Thus, manipulative techniques are most likely found in 'character-character' discourse which entails complex relationships between different participants so that not all the characters involved may have access to the context foreseen by the manipulator.

The paper explores manipulative techniques as related to narrative irony in 'character-character' discourse.

Methods
1. Research questions and main hypothesis
The most important approach to the study of manipulation in modern linguistics is considered a relevance-theoretic one [Wilson, Sperber 2004], which allowed D. Mailat and S. Oswald to regard manipulation as an attempt to mislead the addressee by providing him with a limited set of contextual assumptions relevant for achieving the goal by the manipulator in this situation [Maillat, Oswald 2009, p. 369]. In accordance with the approaches taken, the scholars distinguish different forms of manipulation. For example, particular attention might be paid to the relationship between the participants of manipulation process and the focus of research. Accordingly,

S. Handelman [Handelman 2009] takes a victim-focused approach, focussing on what manipulation does to its victims, whereas Baron [Baron 2003] gives preference to a manipulator-focussed one, arguing that manipulation requires intent. Consequently, the former distinguishes emotional and intellectual manipulations, whereas the latter – deception, pressuring, and employing emotional vulnerability or character defects.

Recent research carried out on the topic shows that most linguists apply a multidisciplinary approach to the study of manipulation. Suffice it to mention T. van Dijk who analysed the phenomenon within an overall multidisciplinary framework, which triangulates a social, cognitive and discursive approach [van Dijk 2006, p. 361]. Manipulation is therefore considered a social phenomenon since it involves social relations of power abuse between groups or individuals. It is also a cognitive phenomenon because manipulation involves the participants' minds. Finally, it is a discursive phenomenon because it is exercised through text, talk and visual images.

S.A. McCornack [McCornack 1992] differentiates two forms of manipulation: persuasion and deception in Information manipulation theory (IMT). In a similar vein, T.A. van Dijk [van Dijk 2006, p. 361] distinguishes between positive and negative manipulations. He argues that positive manipulations are only part of the conviction since the persuaded listeners are free to accept or reject the speaker's arguments, while negative manipulations usually give the recipients a more passive role: they are seen as "victims" of manipulations. Likewise, S. Sorlin [Sorlin 2017] contends that there can be no clear line separating persuasion and manipulation in that, in many cases, persuasion can be said to be a kind of manipulation.

Contrary to cognitive and Critical Discourse approaches, the paper focuses on psychological manipulation. Psychological manipulation is inherent in fiction and is aimed by the author at infusing wit into a story. Based on Marcia Baron's classification of manipulation forms, the paper raises the questions which need to be taken into account when tackling manipulation: 1. how manipulation operates; 2. how manipulative techniques are deployed; 3. which manipulative techniques predominate.

As a central hypothesis, I shall argue that the distinction between what is said and what is really meant should be best approached in terms of subliminal influence on the manipulee. Since manipulation is always situated in the context of communication, manipulative techniques are explored in 'character-character' discourse.

Manipulative techniques are analysed by means of discourse approach and pragmalinguistic method of research. Discourse approach implies the view of fictional text as active collaboration between the author and the reader [Mey 2001], whereby implicatures may be drawn by the reader.

2. Sample Analysis

As L. R. Horn suggests, what the author intends to communicate is characteristically far richer than what they directly express; linguistic meaning radically underdetermines the message conveyed and understood [Horn 2004, p. 3]. Literary texts, almost by definition, rely upon indirect inferred meanings. Authors of literary works might flout the conversational maxim of quality in order to make a conversational implicature, perhaps for some special and striking effect. The maxims of the Cooperative Principle are, according to Grice, shared expectations held by members of society and consequently they can also be 'flouted' by speakers in order to signal that the interlocutor should infer an intended meaning that is not directly expressed in what was said [Warner 2014, p. 369].

According to S. Sorlin [Sorlin 2020, p. 2], manipulation in fictional texts might be considered as the strategic use of pragmatic tools used by an author to intentionally produce certain effects on the reader and affect them in a certain way. The strategic use of pragmatic tools will be analysed along with manipulative techniques to illustrate the process and the effect of manipulation. Manipulative techniques are considered as intention-driven devices, they steer or influence the choices of others by affecting the manipulee's subliminal fears, complexes, and weaknesses.

In the present investigation, three basic tactics of manipulation such as deception, pressuring, and employing emotional vulnerability or character defects are analysed. The first tactic which is suggested for analysis is deception. It includes outright lying to those manipulated, including making false promises to them, but also misleading them without actually misrepresenting anything [Baron 2003]. *Deception* that can be implemented through manipulative techniques is illustrated by Excerpt 1:

"Linda is now my wife. *I sometimes ask her* why she persists in cutting Porcharlester, who has pledged me his word as an officer and a gentleman that he is unconscious of having given her the slightest ground for offence. *She always refuses to tell me*" (Shaw 2000, p. 93)

In order to conquer the heart of the impregnable beauty Linda who adores the Schubert Serenade, Colonel Green learns the piece on a cornet-a-piston. Ironically, Porcharlester, another Linda's admirer, mentions before leaving that she will soon hear him singing. As a result of the coincidence of the time of Mr. Porcharlester's departure and the subsequent serenade by the Colonel on the cornet-a-piston, Linda takes the cornet-a-piston playing for Porcharlester singing himself: making the terrible sounds that "a normal human throat cannot make". The irony of the situation is emphasized by the twist: Colonel Green gets his own – he marries Linda. In the final paragraph of the story the manipulation is likely to be accomplished through *selective attention* when the manipulator deliberately pays attention to why

the relations between Linda and Porcharlester have soured, and gets no answer, in return. The *implicature* conveyed is that Colonel Green, though being the cause of controversy, seemed to take delight in the situation when Mr. Porcharlester is unaware of what had really happened and Linda seemed offended. The manipulative technique by way of *simulation of innocence* is employed to create humorous effect.

Another example of manipulation tactic through *deception* is Excerpt 2:

'…When everything is settled I shall have an income of nine hundred pounds a year. There are three of us, so it gives us just three hundred a year apiece'.

'How am I to live on that?' cried Mrs Albert Forrester. 'I have my position to keep up'.

'You have a fluent, a fertile, and a distinguished pen, my dear'.

Mrs Albert Forrester impatiently shrugged her shoulders. […]

It was then that Mrs Bulfinch had the idea that was to have consequences of such magnitude.

'*Why don't you write a good thrilling detective story*?' she asked.

'Me?' exclaimed Mrs Albert Forrester, for the first time in her life regardless of grammar.

'*It's not a bad idea*', said Albert. '*It's not a bad idea at all*' (Maugham 2000, pp. 125–126)

After Albert Forrester and Mrs. Bulfinch had eloped, Mrs. Albert Forrester went to Mrs. Bulfinch's apartment to get her husband back. In response to her complaints about her difficult financial situation, Mrs. Bulfinch *cajoled* her into writing a detective story. Albert *supported* her since it is precisely the writing of fascinating detective stories that would help his ex-wife gain financial independence. She was taken in by their *assurances*. The manipulative technique of getting the manipulated person to '*view things differently*' yields results. The *implicature* conveyed is that by *showing concern* for Mrs. Albert Forrester's welfare Mrs. Bulfinch actually *shielded* Albert from her claims.

The last example of manipulative technique through *deception* is Excerpt 3:

'… Humour and mystery are what I aim at. I shall call it The Achilles Statue'.

'What a title!' cried Mr Simmons, recovering himself before any of the others. 'I can sell the serial rights on the title and your name alone'.

'But what about Albert?' asked Clifford Boyleston.

'*Albert*?' echoed Mrs Forrester. '*Albert*?'

She looked at him as though for the life of her she could not think what he was talking about. Then she gave a little cry as if she had suddenly remembered.

'*Albert!* I knew I'd gone out on some errand and *it absolutely slipped my memory*. I was walking through Hyde Park and I had this inspiration. What a fool you'll all think me!'

'Then you haven't seen Albert?'

'My dear, *I forgot all about him*'. She gave an amused laugh. 'Let Albert keep his cook. I can't bother about Albert now. Albert belongs to the semi-

colon period. *I am going to write a detective story'* (Maugham 2000, p. 132)

Mrs. Albert Forrester's friends are in her apartment, awaiting the results of her negotiations with her husband, who had gone to another woman. However, Mrs. Albert Forrester steered the conversation onto another topic – the story she was going to write. It was suggested to her by her husband, and she would call it 'The Achilles Statue'. In response to Clifford Boyleston's impatient question about Albert, she *evades* answering by using *repetition* "Albert? Albert?" and *exaggeration* "it absolutely slipped my memory". The *implicature* conveyed is that Mrs. Albert Forrester was not willing to admit her defeat. Consequently, interpretation of the situation *in a light favourable to* Mrs. Albert Forrester's purposes enabled her to maintain her positive image in the eyes of her friends [Brown, Levinson 1987] by way of *avoiding the topic*.

Another technique to be analysed is *pressure to acquiesce*. It can involve browbeating, wearing down the other's resistance, and making someone agree to something just to avoid further discomfort or embarrassment [Baron 2003]. A good illustration of how manipulation is accomplished through *pressure to acquiesce* may be provided by Excerpt 4:

"How could you, Choupette?"

"I want my children", she began, but Wiese broke in quickly:

"If you'd been halfway fair, Marston, we wouldn't have resorted to this step".

"Are you trying to pretend you arranged this scurvy trick since yesterday afternoon?"

"I believe in being prepared, but if you *had been reasonable*; in fact, if you *will be reasonable*, this opinion needn't be used". His voice became suddenly almost paternal, almost kind: "*Be wise*, Marston. On your side there's *an obstinate prejudice*; on mine there are *forty million dollars*" (Fitzgerald 2000, pp. 156–157).

Here Choupette and Henry Marston, who are divorced, are discussing the issue of their children's custody. Henry believes that their children should live with him, something his ex-wife Choupette and her husband Wiese disagree with. At the meeting, Wiese reminded Henry that he was in the hospital with a nervous breakdown, and they have the information from the doctor that he is insane and unable to be the guardian of children. He appeals to reason using such linguistic techniques as *repetition* "had been reasonable – will be reasonable" and *contrast* "an obstinate prejudice vs forty million dollars". The *implicature* Henry can draw is that Wiese would do anything to win a case. The technique of blackmail 'if you *will be reasonable*, this opinion needn't be used' made an impact, and Henry Marston has to give in.

The last example of manipulation tactic through *pressuring* is Excerpt 5:

"Don't worry", he said. "There will be a certain amount of unpleasantness but *I will have some photographs taken that will be very useful at the inquest. There's the testimony of the gun-bearers and the driver too.* You're perfectly all right".

"Stop it", she said. […]

"Oh, *please stop it*", she said. "*Please, please stop it*".

"That's better", Wilson said. "*Please is much better.* Now I'll stop" (Hemingway 1999, pp. 173–174).

Margaret had committed adultery with Wilson, the hunter, who accompanied Francis, her husband, on the hunt. Afterwards, on the hunt, she intentionally shot her husband, supposedly saving him from the bull, but in fact, trying to get rid of him. Wilson *hints* that he guessed about her intention. This involves *browbeating* by way of *assuring* her that no one will know about it "There's the testimony of the gun-bearers and the driver too". The pressure wears down Margaret's resistance, and makes her give in just to avoid further discomfort "Oh, please stop it", she said". The *implicature* conveyed is that through *browbeating*, the hunter made Margaret treat him with due respect.

The third tactic which will be analysed further is *playing upon emotional needs, or weaknesses* of character. It includes eliciting an emotion with the aim of making use of it. Typical emotions used to manipulate are fear, sympathy, a sense of gratitude toward the manipulator, and feelings of guilt if the manipulated person does not consent to what the manipulator wants. Typical weaknesses of character employed for manipulation are vanity and the need for approval [Baron 2003, p. 40–45]. The example of *exploiting emotional vulnerability* may be presented by Excerpt 6:

"My darling girl", said Philip, "you're quite mad, you know. It simply can't be done".

"I knew you'd say that", retorted Rosemary. "Why not? I want to. Isn't that a reason? And besides, one's always reading about these things. I decided…"

"But", said Philip slowly, and he cut the end of a cigar, "*she's so astonishingly pretty*".

"*Pretty*?" Rosemary was so surprised that she blushed.

"Do you think so? I – hadn't thought about it" (Mansfield 2000, p. 45)

This story is about a poor girl who came up to Rosemary in the street and asked her for the money to buy a cup of tea. Rosemary, a young woman, brought up on the best examples of the world classical literature, felt like a heroine from Dostoevsky's novel. This meeting might mark the beginning of a new story, a new adventure. She invited her over for a cup of tea, which caused her husband's discontent. Having exhausted all his arguments, he *plays upon her need for his approval*. He deliberately praises the looks of the poor girl "she's so astonishingly pretty", knowing that Rosemary suffers from not being distinguished by beauty. The *implicature* conveyed to Rosemary is that the poor girl might be a rival. The use of *politeness* tactic through compliment proved to be effective because having sensed a rival in the poor girl, Rosemary got rid of her as soon as possible.

Another example of manipulation tactic through *employing emotional vulnerability* is Excerpt 7:

Rosemary had just done her hair, darkened her eyes a little and put on her pearls. She put up her hand and touched Philip's cheeks.

"*Do you like me?*" said she.

"I like you awfully".

There was a pause.

Then Rosemary said dreamily: "I saw a fascinating little box today. It cost twenty-eight guineas. *May I have it*?"

"You may, little wasteful one", said he.

But that was not really what Rosemary wanted to say.

"Philip", she whispered, "*am I pretty*?" (Mansfield 2000, p. 46).

In this situation, Rosemary and Philip change their roles. Now Rosemary is manipulating her husband by *playing on his sympathy* toward her. To make him consent to let her buy a little box, she performs the speech act "Elicitation: confirm" [Tsui 1994], inviting her husband to confirm her assumption "*Do you like me?*" Having received his confirmation, she requests for permission to buy a little box "May I have it?" After receiving her husband's permission, she again uses the speech act "Elicitation: confirm", expecting him to confirm her assumption "am I pretty?". Thus, by applying the technique of *elicitation*, she managed to get the approval of her husband. The *implicature* conveyed is that whatever be her projects (eg inviting the poor girl over for a cup of tea), her only wish is to remain the most charming woman in her husband's eyes.

The last example of manipulative technique through *employing emotional vulnerability* is Excerpt 8:

'Milly, I promise if it's possible next year… Listen, Milly, you can keep the saddle till then, and all the rest of the stuff'.

'What's the good of a saddle without a horse? *And I told Captain Segura*…'

'Damn Captain Segura – what did you tell him?'

'*I told him* I had only to ask you for Seraphina and you'd give her to me. *I said* you were *wonderful*. I didn't tell him about the novenas' (Greene 1971, p. 22).

Millie is trying to persuade her father to buy her a horse. Wormold refuses, explaining to her that things are not going well in business, and that the cost of the horse is high. However, Millie hopes for her father's help and tries to win his favour. By playing upon *his fear* of Captain Segura "And I told Captain Segura…" and *his need for approval* "I said you were wonderful", she induced him to buy her a horse. The *implicature* conveyed is that Captain Segura has heard about Wormold so he will have to live up to his expectations.

In some conversations there is more than one tactic employed, specifically the tactic of *deception* along with that of *pressure to acquiesce*, thus reinforcing manipulation effect. The hybrid form of manipulation is shown in Excerpt 9:

Again he flinched at Choupette's weeping; simultaneously he saw the time had come.

"Everything depends on *one small point*", he said rapidly. "Wiese, have you got a fountain pen?"

"Yes. What for?"

"If you'll write and sign *about two hundred words* at my dictation, I'll swim to the lighthouse and get help. Otherwise, so help me God, we'll drift out to sea! And *you better decide in about one minute*".

"Oh, anything". Choupette broke out frantically. "Do what he says, Charles; he means it. He always means what he says. Oh, please don't wait!" (Fitzgerald 2000, p. 160).

At the moment of danger, when the motor boat became uncontrollable, and the tide started to drift it toward the sea, Henry realized that the time had come. Henry and Choupette change their roles. Now Henry is manipulating his ex-wife. He resorts *to blackmail*: if the children remain in his custody, he will swim to the lighthouse and ask for help. To make a greater impact, he resorts to *understatement* "one small point, about two hundred words" and *hurrying the subject along* (viz. offering no time or opportunity for reflection on what is happening) "And you better decide in about one minute". The *implicature* conveyed is that the swim is the only rescuing chance under the circumstances. However, Henry withheld the information that the launch was likely to strike a cross current from the river and drift into Peyton Harbor. As a result, the technique of *deception* along with that of *blackmail* (through conditional) compelled Choupette and her husband Wiese to give in.

A good illustration of how manipulation is accomplished through more than one technique, specifically *deception* in conjunction with that of *playing upon emotions*, may be provided by Excerpt 10:

To the old lady's nephew, Charles Ridgeway, the doctor was slightly more explicit.

"Do not misunderstand me", he said. "Your aunt may live for years, probably will. At the same time, shock or overexertion might carry her off like that!" He snapped his fingers. "She must lead a very quiet life. *No exertion*. *No fatigue*. But, of course, she must not be allowed to brood. She must be kept cheerful and *the mind well distracted*".

"*Distracted*", said Charles Ridgeway *thoughtfully*.

Charles was *a thoughtful young man*. He was also a young man *who believed in furthering his own inclinations whenever possible*.

That evening *he suggested the installation of a radio set* (Christie 2004, p. 234).

In this situation the doctor gives recommendations to Charles concerning his aunt's state of health. The technique of *catch repetition* (anadiplosis) "the mind well distracted – distracted, thoughtfully – a thoughtful young man" and the ensuing *induction* "He was also a young man who believed in furthering his own inclinations whenever possible" creates humorous effect. Echo of words with literal meaning evokes the connotation with radically different meaning. Play on words results in climax "That evening he suggested the installation of a radio set". Thus, *repetition* of

modifiers "Distracted, thoughtful" and *induction* play a significant role at the pragmatic level, creating narrative irony as the background to the plot. The *implicature* conveyed is that Charles is likely to devise his own scheme, contrary to the doctor's expectations.

Afterwards, Charles sets about implementing his scheme, which is exemplified by the following Excerpt 11:

It was that same day that Charles startled her by something he said at lunch.

"*By the way*, Aunt Mary", he said, "*who is that funny old josser up in the spare room*? The picture over the mantelpiece, I mean. The old Johnny with the beaver and side whiskers?"

Mrs. Harter looked at him austerely.

"That is your Uncle Patrick as a young man", she said.

"Oh, I say, Aunt Mary, *I am awfully sorry*. I didn't mean to be rude".

Mrs. Harter accepted the apology with a dignified bend of the head.

Charles went on rather uncertainly, "I just wondered. *You see-*".

He stopped undecidedly and Mrs. Harter said sharply, "Well? What were you going to say?"

"*Nothing*", said Charles hastily. "*Nothing* that makes sense, I mean" (Christie 2004, pp. 241–242).

This story is about Charles Ridgeway and his aunt, an elderly rich widow. He decides to drive his aunt mad in order to inherit a fortune from her. He installs a radio set so that by imitating her late husband's voice he could threaten her with coming after her every night until his aunt died of the nervous shock.

In conversation with his aunt he wondered who was the man in the portrait in the spare room. 'Having learned' that the man is his uncle Patrick in his youth, he *plays on her emotional vulnerability* by using omission, aposiopesis "You see-". Then, *feigning confusion*, he evades answering, using repetition and understatement "Nothing – Nothing that makes sense". The *implicature* conveyed is that there is something wrong going on with her husband's portrait in that spare room. Thus, the techniques of *deception and playing upon her fear* caused confusion in her mind so that she lost her peace and began to worry**.**

Another example of the hybrid form of manipulation is Excerpt 12:

For the moment the old lady said nothing more, but later that day, when they were alone together, she returned to the subject.

"I wish you would tell me, Charles, what it was that made you ask me about the picture of your uncle".

Charles looked embarrassed.

"I told you, Aunt Mary. It was *nothing but a silly fancy of mine – quite absurd*".

"Charles," said Mrs. Harter in her most autocratic voice, "I insist upon knowing".

"Well, my dear aunt, if you will have it, I fancied I saw him – *the man in the picture, I mean – looking out of the end window* when I was coming up the drive last night" […].

"The end window?" said Mrs. Harter sharply.

"*Yes, why*?"

"Nothing", said Mrs. Harter.

But *she was startled all the same*. That room had been *her husband's dressing-room* (Christie 2004, p. 242).

In response to Mrs. Harter's request to explain, Charles resorts to *evasion* by way of understatement "It was nothing but a silly fancy of mine". However, complying with his aunt's insistent demand, he informs her that he saw the man from the portrait looking out of the end window. By *feigning ignorance* through periphrasis "the man in the picture" and aposiopesis "I mean – looking out of the end window" he conveys the *implicature* to Mrs. Harter that her husband has come for her. The techniques of *deception* along with *playing upon her fear* made her feel defenceless and vulnerable. Mrs. Harter was terror-stricken, as a result.

The material showed that in some conversations the technique of *deception* can be used in conjunction with those of *playing upon emotions* and *pressure to acquiesce*, which make them a hybrid form of manipulation. The example of the hybrid form of manipulation is Excerpt 13:

She leaned again to the mouth of the tube.

"*Don't kill Robert as you killed me*", she said with slow enunciation, and a deep but small voice.

"Ah!" came the sharp little cry. "Who is that speaking?"

"Henry!" said the deep voice.

There was a dead silence. Poor Cecilia lay with all the use gone out of her. And there was dead silence. Till at last came the whisper:

"I didn't kill Henry. No, No! Henry, surely you can't blame me! I loved you, dearest. I only wanted to help you".

"*You killed me*!" came the deep, artificial, accusing voice. "Now, *let* Robert live. *Let* him go! *Let* him marry!"

There was a pause (Lawrence 2000, p. 188).

While sunbathing on the roof of the house, Cecilia overheard someone's voice, which reached her from the rain-pipe, acting as a speaking-tube. She recognized Aunt Polly's voice who spoke to herself. In conversation, she addressed her late son Henry, assuring him that she was innocent of his death. At one time she did not allow him to marry Claudia. After much suffering Henry had suddenly died from some sudden ordinary disease.

The next day, when Cecilia was sunbathing on the roof again, she heard Aunt Polly speaking to her younger son Robert in her imaginary conversation. Aunt Polly said that she was disappointed in him because there was no poignancy in him. Cecilia resorts to *playing the victim role*. She replies to Aunt Polly on behalf of Henry, using the jussive clause "Now, let Robert live. Let him go! Let him marry!" and repetition [Givón 1993, p. 267]. The *implicature* conveyed is that she should let her son do whatever he feels inclined to do. Thus, the techniques of *playing the victim role, pressuring* (through the jussive clause)*, and playing upon her feeling of guilt* proved

to be effective. Fearing Henry's 'condemnation', Aunt Polly finally allowed the young people to get married.

Thus, the investigation in the paper has explored various manipulation techniques, viz. the tactics of feigning ignorance, evasion, praise/compliment, elicitation, playing the victim role, blackmail and browbeating, as well as hybrid forms of manipulation in 'character-character' discourse. They were deployed against the background of narrative irony.

Results and Discussion

In this paper I have sought to establish the distinctive features by which the reader can identify psychological manipulation. They proved to be as follows: its intentionality, covert nature, confidence on the part of the listener, and the limited amount of information presented by the manipulator as relevant in this situation, mutualistic character of manipulation, a wide range of its types.

The types of manipulation in literary discourse can range from aesthetic to cognitive manipulation of the reader and, finally, to interpersonal manipulation. The investigation presented above has focused on interpersonal manipulation in fiction.

Psychological manipulation aims at affecting the deep layers of the manipulee's consciousness, viz. the subconscious: their subliminal fears, complexes, and weaknesses. By playing on the victim's vulnerabilities and weaknesses, the manipulator manages their inferences. Subliminal manipulation aims at achieving the subliminal effect on the manipulee. The impact turns to be effective since the victim might be unaware of the subliminal effect, and, therefore, is powerless to resist the attack.

The relevance of this study is determined by the need to cover all forms of interpersonal manipulation in fictional dialogue, viz. deception, pressuring, employing emotional vulnerability or character defects, and hybrid forms of manipulation such as deception in conjunction with pressuring or with employing emotional vulnerability or character defects.

The analysis showed that exploiting emotional vulnerability occurs much more frequently in fictional dialogue than other forms of manipulation. This is confirmed by the findings of S. Sorlin [Sorlin 2017] who notes that psychological manipulation often consists in exploiting the target's weaknesses.

Fiction tends to reflect our life. In everyday interpersonal communication, employing emotional vulnerability is commonplace. In informal conversations people keep on manipulating their friends, relations or their spouse to achieve their goals. However, when people are in conflict with one another, they tend to resort to more aggressive methods such as pressuring or hybrid forms of manipulation to resolve the conflict. The mechanism for pressuring the other can be explained from the perspective of the Relevance theory, according to which the manipulator provides the victim with a limited set of contextual assumptions, relevant to achieve their goal in the situation.

In the paper manipulative techniques are considered as related to narrative irony. Narrative irony provides the conditions favourable for the character to set about implementing his/her scheme. Manipulative techniques seem to be the most efficient ones to accomplish the task. Narrative irony and manipulative techniques seem intertwined in most situations. Used in conjunction with one another, they are designed by the writer to create comic effect.

Conclusions

The paper is an analysis of techniques of manipulation and their function in literary discourse. From the discursive perspective manipulative techniques are one of the effective ways of creating a conflictual situation or complication in a narrative. In this regard, manipulative dialogue plays a crucial role both in terms of attracting the attention of the reader and triggering off peripeteia in literary discourse.

Via interchange between characters authors convey messages to their readers through conversational implicatures. In most situations, implicatures contribute to revealing the hidden intention of the manipulator. In the paper manipulative techniques are explored as related to narrative irony in some way. Narrative irony is embedded in a work's structure and is combined with other narrative techniques to create an effect idiosyncratic to one's work. In a short story or a novel, it serves as scaffolding for using manipulation. The writer creating narrative irony cannot manage without manipulative techniques; they are complementary. Neither works well without the other. Like begets like.

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