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## **ANALYSIS OF DISCURSIVE MANIPULATION STRATEGIES IN DONNA TARTT'S NOVEL THE GOLDFINCH**

*focusing on how the first-person narrative perspective functions as a mechanism of evaluative framing and reader positioning. Conducted within the framework of critical discourse analysis, the research addresses the problem of implicit influence in literary discourse, which operates not through overt persuasion but through discursively constructed patterns of interpretation embedded in narrative structure. The study aims to identify and classify discursive manipulation strategies realized through perspective control, lexical choices, and symbolic structuring within the narrator's discourse. The methodological approach is based on critical discourse analysis, complemented by interpretive textual analysis of selected narrative fragments.*

*The findings demonstrate that manipulative influence in the novel is realized through systematic strategies such as concealment of motives, frame substitution, evaluative recontextualization, emotional appeals, symbolic anchoring, metaphorization, euphemization, and irony. These strategies function not as isolated rhetorical devices but as interconnected mechanisms of narrative control that guide the reader's moral and interpretative alignment. The study contributes to literary discourse analysis by proposing a coherent classification of narrative manipulation strategies within a discourse-analytical framework. Its significance lies in clarifying how literary discourse constructs cognitive and emotional positioning through perspective management, thereby refining analytical tools for the study of implicit influence in contemporary narrative fiction.*

*Key words: strategy, speech manipulation, irony, cognitive influence, metaphorisation, euphemisation, critical discourse analysis*

### **MAIN PROVISIONS**

The term manipulation entered English usage in the nineteenth century and originally denoted manual operation or technical skill. Over time, its meaning shifted toward the sphere of intentional influence and deceptive control. In contemporary scholarship, manipulation is primarily understood as a communicative strategy involving asymmetrical control over interpretation.

Maria Arango-Kure and Marcel Garz define manipulation as “the intentional attempt to influence a person’s behaviour, goals, emotions, or perceptions through deception or the exploitation of their vulnerabilities... without free and informed consent” [1, 4]. This definition foregrounds the ethical dimension of manipulation and its relation to autonomy. Within discourse analysis, T. A. van Dijk conceptualizes manipulation as a form of discursive control aimed at influencing the recipient’s mental model by restricting access to alternative interpretations [2, 360]. From this perspective, manipulation operates through the strategic organisation of information and evaluative framing. E. Zemskaya demonstrates that linguistic manipulation is realised through emotionally charged vocabulary, presuppositions, rhetorical questioning, and syntactic emphasis, which enhance credibility and reduce critical distance [3, 356]. Similarly, M. Lazar and R. Fairclough argue that discourse simultaneously constructs subject identity and shapes social representations, particularly under conditions of implicit persuasion [4, 64–67]. These approaches provide a theoretical basis for analysing manipulation beyond overt ideological communication.

An additional dimension of discursive influence concerns metaphorical framing. According to Jonathan Charteris-Black, metaphor functions not merely as a stylistic device but as a persuasive cognitive mechanism that shapes ideological and emotional interpretations of events. Within this framework, metaphorical structures may guide the recipient’s evaluative perception and reinforce particular narrative perspectives.

Building on these theoretical models, the present study adapts discourse-analytical criteria to the domain of first-person fictional narration. In *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt, manipulation is examined as a structural feature of retrospective narrative perspective.

For analytical clarity, three parameters are employed:

- 1) perspective control through selective narration;
- 2) evaluative recontextualization of ethically ambiguous actions;
- 3) recurrent lexical and rhetorical framing patterns.

A fragment is classified as manipulative when these indicators function systematically to restrict interpretative alternatives rather than merely express subjective experience. The identification and classification of such strategies are carried out on the basis of criteria formulated in the works of M. T. Shakhenova, D. S. Tashimkhanova, T. K. Buldybayev, and U. A. Ospanova [5, 124]. In the present study, their approaches are applied through the analysis of evaluative lexical units, presuppositional constructions, rhetorical structures, and contextual patterns of justification within the narrative.

## INTRODUCTION

Manipulation in discourse has been widely studied in media, political communication, and ideological contexts [6, 294]. However, its functioning within first-person fictional narration remains insufficiently specified in discourse-analytical terms. In literary texts, influence often operates not through direct persuasion, but through the organisation of narrative perspective and evaluative framing.

This article examines *The Goldfinch* (2013) novel written by Donna Tartt as a case study of retrospective first-person narration in which events are mediated through a single interpretative centre. The research problem addressed here concerns the discursive mechanisms through which narrative perspective structures reader alignment and moral evaluation. The object of the study is the narrative discourse of the novel. The subject is the system of discursive strategies that guide reader positioning through perspective control and evaluative framing. The research aims are to identify and classify recurrent discursive patterns that function as mechanisms of interpretative restriction within the narrative. To achieve this aim, the following tasks are formulated:

- to analyse theoretical approaches to speech manipulation in discourse studies;
- to formulate criteria for distinguishing manipulation from narrative subjectivity;
- to identify systematic linguistic and rhetorical patterns in the novel;
- to correlate the findings with established models of discursive influence.

The working hypothesis assumes that the narrator's retrospective perspective systematically organizes evaluation in ways that reduce interpretative plurality and guide moral positioning. The scientific contribution of the article includes the analytical clarification and operationalization of criteria for identifying manipulation in first-person literary discourse. By adapting discourse-analytical tools to fictional narration, the study increases methodological precision in the analysis of literary texts. The practical relevance of the research lies in refining analytical instruments for examining implicit persuasive mechanisms in narrative discourse, which may be applied in advanced literary and discourse analysis courses.

For contextual reference, the novel narrates the life of Theodore Decker, who survives a terrorist attack at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and secretly takes a painting by the Dutch artist Carel Fabritius. The retrospective structure foregrounds trauma, guilt, and moral ambiguity, creating a narrative environment in which evaluative framing plays a central role. After the tragedy, Theo finds himself in a world of loss, manipulation, and moral compromises. He moves in with wealthy family friends, then to his father in Las Vegas, where he falls under the bad influence of Boris, a charismatic but destructive friend, discovering the wicked world of drugs, crime, and deception. At the climax of the novel, Theo finds himself involved in an international criminal intrigue related to the return of stolen works of art.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research material consists of the original English edition of *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt and its official Russian translation by Anastasia Zavozova. The novel was selected due to its retrospective first-person narrative structure, which provides a consistent interpretative centre and enables systematic analysis of perspective control and evaluative framing.

The novel comprises approximately 771 pages in its original edition. The analytical corpus includes 43 fragments selected through purposive sampling. An initial close reading identified more than 70 potential instances of evaluative framing and justificatory narration. From these, fragments were selected if they demonstrated systematic co-occurrence of at least two discursive indicators and represented different narrative stages (childhood period, Las Vegas episode, and adulthood). This procedure ensured distribution across the narrative structure rather than concentration in a single episode. Each fragment was treated as a unit of analysis and examined at the level of clause structure and lexical choice. A categorical coding scheme was applied in which discursive markers were identified under four analytical categories:

- evaluative lexical marking in morally ambiguous contexts;
- presuppositional constructions presenting interpretations as self-evident;
- justificatory or mitigating framing of ethically problematic actions;
- rhetorical restriction of alternative viewpoints.

A fragment was classified as manipulative when at least two categories co-occurred within the same discursive context. This threshold principle was introduced to distinguish systematic interpretative restriction from isolated expressive features. The coding process was conducted sequentially: identification of lexical markers, examination of syntactic framing, and contextual evaluation of interpretative limitation. The analytical framework is grounded in critical discourse analysis, particularly the models associated with van Dijk, Fairclough, and Wodak, with adaptation to the specificity of first-person fictional narration. The study does not propose a new theory of manipulation; rather, it operationalizes existing discourse-analytical concepts within a clearly defined literary case. A comparative examination of selected fragments in the English original and the Russian translation was conducted to identify potential shifts in evaluative intensity or mitigation of framing strategies. The translation comparison functions as a supplementary analytical instrument, clarifying the stability of manipulative constructions across linguistic contexts rather than serving as an independent research method.

The overall methodological design combines qualitative interpretative analysis with explicit coding criteria and defined selection procedures. This ensures transparency, reproducibility of

analytical steps, and limitation of interpretation to linguistically observable patterns within the narrative discourse.

## RESULTS

Manipulative influence in artistic discourse differs from political or media communication in that it rarely manifests as explicit persuasion; instead, it operates through perspectivisation, omission, semantic reframing, and evaluative redistribution [7, 121]. In literary texts, manipulation functions not as overt propaganda but as a mechanism of interpretative guidance embedded in narrative structure.

L.P. Prokofieva defines artistic manipulation as a form of hidden influence realised through multiple communicative vectors (character–character, character–reader, author–reader), where the addressee is drawn into a layered interpretative process rather than confronted with direct persuasion [8, 99]. V.I. Karasik emphasises that such influence is frequently encoded in stylistic and lexical strategies that impose cognitive constraints and channel perception within a predetermined semantic framework [9, 233]. S.S. Zhabayeva highlights the role of symbolic cultural codes and associative structures that shape the reader’s interpretation and stabilize particular value orientations [10, 35].

Proceeding from these theoretical premises, the present analysis applies a synthesised classification of discursive manipulation strategies developed on the basis of Kazakhstani, Russian, and international scholarship [11, 6]. However, unlike descriptive approaches that merely list techniques, the present study operationalises manipulation through a predefined coding scheme.

Each fragment of *The Goldfinch* was analysed as a unit of discourse and coded according to four analytical indicators introduced in the methodological section:

- evaluative lexical marking;
- presuppositional constructions;
- justificatory or mitigating framing;
- rhetorical restriction of alternative viewpoints.

A strategy was classified as manipulative only when at least two of these indicators co-occurred within the same discursive context, thereby demonstrating systematic restriction of interpretative alternatives rather than isolated stylistic expression. This threshold criterion ensures that the analysis remains grounded in observable linguistic markers and avoids overinterpretation.

The results are structured according to five levels of impact: pragmatic, cognitive, emotional-psychological, semiotic, and lexical-stylistic. Within each level, strategies are examined in relation to the goal of influence, the linguistic means of implementation, and the discursive context in which interpretative narrowing occurs (see Table 1).

1. At the pragmatic level, manipulation is realised through concealed communicative intention, presuppositional framing, and retrospective justification embedded in dialogue. In accordance with the coding scheme described in the Methods section, a fragment is classified as manipulative when at least two indicators co-occur within one pragmatic unit (clause-level interaction). In Boris’s proposal to “*safekeep*” the painting, manipulation is constructed through lexical substitution and rhetorical control of response options. The replacement of the legally marked verb “*steal*” with morally neutral or protective formulations (e.g., “*rescue*,” “*keep safe*”) constitutes evaluative lexical marking. This is reinforced by the rhetorical question:

“*You don’t want the wrong people to find it, do you?*” [12, 267]

This utterance activates two indicators simultaneously: presuppositional construction (“*wrong people*” are already assumed to exist), and rhetorical restriction of alternative viewpoints (the structure of the tag question limits disagreement). The co-occurrence fulfils the threshold criterion and pragmatically recontextualises theft as protection, thereby reducing Theo’s capacity for explicit refusal. A similar mechanism operates in the justificatory projection of consequences:

“*You would be in prison right now.*” [12, 268]

Here, the modal construction introduces a counterfactual threat framed as objective necessity. According to the coding framework, this fragment demonstrates a hypothetical presupposition

(imprisonment is presented as inevitable without Boris's intervention) and evaluative mitigation (the initial crime is retrospectively reframed as preventive action). The pragmatic force of the utterance constructs a false causal chain: theft equals protection, thereby transforming an illegal act into a rational defensive measure. Additional pragmatic pressure is visible in appeals to loyalty and emotional solidarity. For instance:

*"You, my brother, not condemning or judging."* [12, 270]

This utterance combines evaluative emotional anchoring ("*brother*") with rhetorical pre-emption of criticism ("*not condemning or judging*"). The speech act suppresses potential moral evaluation before it is articulated, which aligns with the indicator of rhetorical restriction defined in the coding scheme.

2. At the cognitive level, manipulation operates through pseudologic, causal distortion, and systematic frame substitution. In accordance with the predefined coding scheme, cognitive manipulation is identified when presuppositional framing co-occurs with evaluative recontextualisation or justificatory logic within the same interpretative unit. When Boris interprets the painting's survival as a manifestation of destiny, the narrative constructs a false cause-and-effect relation in which accidental possession becomes moral entitlement:

*"If fate put the painting in your hands that day, then it belongs to you."* [12, 289]

This fragment activates two indicators simultaneously: presuppositional construction ("*fate*" is treated as an unquestionable explanatory category), and evaluative recontextualisation (legal ownership is replaced by metaphysical legitimacy). The causal connector "*if... then...*" produces a pseudologic structure, presenting contingency as necessity. The shift from juridical discourse to metaphysical inevitability narrows interpretative alternatives and reframes appropriation as destiny rather than choice.

A comparable mechanism appears in the reframing of destructive behaviour. The substitution of the "*addiction*" frame with a positive existential metaphor restructures semantic boundaries:

*"It's not addiction, Potter. It's freedom."* [12, 436]

Here, manipulation is grounded in the co-occurrence of lexical mitigation (replacement of negatively marked "*addiction*" with positively valued "*freedom*") and justificatory reframing (self-destructive practice is reinterpreted as autonomous self-expression). The binary contrast ("*not X, but Y*") operates cognitively as a frame reset, suppressing the pathological interpretation, and foregrounding an emancipatory one. Selective presentation of facts further illustrates cognitive control through euphemistic narrowing. When Theo retrospectively formulates his act as:

*"I didn't steal it. I just kept it."* [12, 421]

The utterance combines evaluative lexical marking ("*kept*" instead of "*stole*"), and rhetorical restriction of alternatives (explicit negation of the criminal frame before it can be elaborated). The adversative structure ("*didn't... just...*") produces semantic minimisation, guiding the reader toward a softened interpretation. The lexical substitution does not function as stylistic variation but as systematic cognitive reframing, reducing perceived culpability.

Cognitive manipulation also appears through deterministic reasoning that transforms personal decisions into inevitability:

*"Things happen the way they have to happen."* [12, 424]

The formulation combines presuppositional inevitability with rhetorical restriction of alternatives. By presenting events as predetermined, the utterance minimises personal responsibility and reframes morally ambiguous behaviour as unavoidable.

3. At the emotional-psychological level, manipulation functions through affective pressure, emotional dependency, and rhetorical normalization of risky or destructive behaviour. According to the analytical framework, emotional manipulation is identified when affective alignment co-occurs with either normalisation strategies or implicit pressure aimed at reducing the interlocutor's resistance.

One recurrent mechanism involves the creation of emotional solidarity that lowers critical distance between interlocutors. Boris frequently frames their shared experiences through the language of companionship and mutual belonging, thereby transforming ethically questionable behaviour into

a marker of friendship. This affective alignment appears when he reassures Theo during moments of uncertainty:

*"We're the same, you and me."* [12, 435]

The utterance activates two indicators simultaneously: emotional identification, which constructs psychological proximity between speakers, and implicit legitimisation, where shared identity implicitly validates behaviour that might otherwise be questioned. By dissolving the boundary between individual responsibility and collective experience, the statement reduces Theo's capacity to critically evaluate Boris's influence.

Another manipulative strategy relies on emotional minimisation of danger through humour and casual reassurance. When Theo expresses anxiety about the consequences of their lifestyle, Boris reframes the situation with performative nonchalance:

*"Relax, Potter. Nothing's going to happen."* [12, 436]

This fragment combines affective reassurance, which lowers perceived threat, and discursive trivialisation, where potential risks are reframed as insignificant. The imperative *"relax"* functions as an emotional directive rather than rational argumentation. Such phrasing guides the interlocutor toward emotional compliance rather than critical evaluation of the situation.

Emotional manipulation also emerges in moments when vulnerability is reframed as intimacy. During episodes of shared intoxication and confession, Boris explicitly emphasises emotional closeness:

*"You're my brother, Potter."* [12, 435]

Here, the discourse activates affective bonding, establishing a quasi-familial relationship, and normative pressure, where loyalty becomes an implicit expectation within the interaction.

The metaphor of brotherhood transforms the interaction from a temporary companionship into a moral relationship structured around loyalty and trust. Within this frame, disagreement or refusal becomes emotionally costly. Finally, emotional normalisation of deviant behaviour is reinforced through universalising expressions:

*"Everybody does it sooner or later."* [12, 254]

The universal quantifier *"everybody"* creates a presupposition of collective behaviour, while the temporal phrase sooner or later frames the action as inevitable. Such phrasing reduces the perceived deviance of the behaviour and encourages emotional acceptance.

4. At the semiotic level, manipulation operates through symbolic anchoring and intertextual framing that reassigns evaluative meaning to narrative objects. Within this analytical dimension, discursive influence is not produced through explicit persuasion but through the symbolic structuring of meaning that constrains interpretation. Semiotic manipulation is identified when symbolic references co-occur with evaluative framing or presuppositional interpretation. A central semiotic element in the novel is the painting itself, which gradually becomes a symbolic anchor linking trauma, memory, and moral justification. Theo repeatedly attributes existential meaning to the object, framing it not merely as stolen property but as a necessary connection to the past. This symbolic attachment is expressed when he reflects on the painting's significance:

*"The little bird chained to its perch."* [12, 548]

This metaphor activates two coding indicators simultaneously: symbolic evaluative framing, where the image of captivity introduces an implicit moral parallel between the bird and Theo's own psychological condition, and presuppositional interpretation, where the painting is implicitly treated as a meaningful sign rather than a material object. Through this symbolic alignment, the discourse shifts attention away from the legal dimension of possession and toward existential identification, thereby reducing the interpretative salience of theft.

A similar mechanism appears in Theo's description of the painting's aesthetic power. He emphasises its emotional and symbolic power rather than its legal or historical status:

*"It was a small painting, but it held the whole world."* [12, 541]

This formulation combines hyperbolic evaluative marking, which elevates the object to a universal symbolic status, and interpretative restriction, where the metaphorical expansion narrows alternative readings of the painting as a museum artefact subject to ownership and restitution. The

symbolic magnification of the object encourages the reader to perceive it as a metaphysical anchor rather than an illegally possessed artwork.

Semiotic manipulation is also reinforced through metaphors of confinement:

*"I felt trapped in my own life."* [12, 360]

The metaphor aligns the narrator's psychological state with the visual symbolism of captivity embedded in the painting. Within the analytical framework, the fragment demonstrates symbolic evaluative framing combined with presuppositional interpretation.

Intertextual references further reinforce this semiotic framing by embedding the narrative within broader cultural mythologies. Theo explicitly reflects on the symbolic resonance of art and suffering:

*"And I add my own love to the history of people who have loved beautiful things."* [12, 229]

Here, the discourse activates cultural presupposition, which positions aesthetic devotion as a historically validated human impulse, and justificatory framing, where personal attachment becomes implicitly legitimised through association with a broader cultural tradition. By situating Theo's attachment within a transhistorical discourse of artistic reverence, the narrative symbolically reframes possession of the painting as participation in cultural continuity rather than an ethical transgression.

5. At the lexical-stylistic level, manipulative influence is realised through recurrent linguistic markers such as euphemisation, irony, metaphorical intensification, and hyperbolic evaluation. Within the analytical framework of this study, lexical-stylistic manipulation is identified when expressive linguistic forms co-occur with evaluative marking or justificatory framing that guides the reader's interpretation.

One of the most frequent strategies is euphemistic substitution, where ethically or legally problematic actions are reframed through neutral or softened vocabulary. Instead of explicitly naming the act as theft, Theo describes his behaviour in neutralising terms:

*"I held on to it. I couldn't let it go."* [12, 443]

This fragment activates two indicators simultaneously: evaluative lexical marking, where the neutral phrase *"held on to it"* replaces the legally marked concept of theft, and justificatory framing, as the expression *"couldn't let it go"* introduces an emotional justification that reframes possession as psychological necessity rather than deliberate wrongdoing. Through this lexical substitution, the discourse mitigates moral responsibility and shifts interpretation from the legal to the emotional domain.

Another recurrent stylistic mechanism is metaphorical self-description combined with ironic self-evaluation. Theo characterizes his own condition through exaggerated metaphorical imagery:

*"I was a walking pharmacy."* [12, 187]

This formulation demonstrates evaluative lexical intensification, where the metaphor condenses a complex state of substance dependence into a vivid symbolic expression, and anticipatory rhetorical framing, where ironic self-criticism pre-empts external judgement and maintains reader sympathy. In this case, irony functions not merely as a stylistic ornament but as a discursive strategy that softens the perception of destructive behaviour.

Hyperbolic evaluation further amplifies emotional alignment between narrator and reader. Theo frequently describes his psychological state through totalising expressions such as:

*"Everything felt ruined."* [12, 543]

Here, the discourse activates hyperbolic evaluative marking, where the absolute quantifier *everything* exaggerates the scale of emotional devastation, and interpretative restriction, as the intensified emotional framing reduces the plausibility of alternative, more rational interpretations of events. Hyperbole, therefore, operates as a lexical-stylistic mechanism that legitimises extreme reactions by presenting them as proportionate to overwhelming loss.

Lexical accumulation may also intensify interpretative alignment:

*"It was strange and terrible and beautiful at the same time."* [12, 653]

The sequence of evaluative adjectives creates cumulative emotional framing that presents the situation as complex and tragic rather than morally condemnable.

Another stylistic marker appears in an evaluative metaphor describing the significance of the painting itself. Theo reflects on its emotional power with the statement:

*“It was everything to me.”* [12, 687]

This utterance combines evaluative lexical absolutisation, where the universal term *“everything”* elevates the object to a total symbolic value, and justificatory framing, where the emotional magnitude implicitly legitimises the narrator’s continued possession of the painting.

The analysis demonstrates that manipulative influence in *The Goldfinch* emerges not from isolated stylistic devices but from the systematic interaction of evaluative lexical marking, presuppositional framing, justificatory discourse patterns, and rhetorical restriction of interpretative alternatives. Across the five analytical levels, these indicators operate cumulatively, guiding the reader toward alignment with the narrator’s perspective and stabilising particular moral interpretations of events.

The classification presented in Table 1 summarizes the identified strategies according to the level of impact, linguistic realization, and interpretative effect, illustrating how manipulative discourse functions as a structured narrative mechanism embedded in the aesthetic organisation of the literary text.

**Table 1. Discursive manipulation strategies identified in *The Goldfinch***

Level	Strategy	Linguistic Means	Interpretative Effect
Pragmatic	Concealment of motives	Evaluative lexical substitution, modal constructions	Reframing of questionable actions as protective or necessary
	Justificatory framing	Hypothetical modal constructions, causal projections	Construction of false causal relations that legitimize behaviour
	Rhetorical restriction	Tag questions, presuppositional statements	Limitation of alternative interpretations and responses
Cognitive	Pseudologic reasoning	False cause–and–effect relations, deterministic statements	Rationalisation of morally questionable actions
	Frame substitution	Lexical replacement of negative concepts with positive ones	Transformation of evaluative perception of events
	Selective presentation of facts	Selective information, ignoring of the context	Creates a distorted view of the world
Emotional-psychological	Appeal to fear	Threat scenarios, intensified emotional vocabulary	Increase of anxiety and reduction of critical distance
	Appeal to friendship and loyalty	Metaphors of kinship, expressions of solidarity	Emotional alignment and increased suggestibility
	Emotional reassurance	Imperatives of calming, trivialisation of risk	Normalisation of risky behaviour
Semiotic	Symbolic anchoring	Object-symbols, narrative metaphors	Association of narrative objects with emotional meaning
	Cultural and intertextual framing	References to cultural narratives and artistic tradition	Transfer of established symbolic meanings
	Metaphorization	Transfer of meaning through image	Strengthening of emotional attachment
Lexical-stylistic	Euphemisation	Neutral or softened lexical substitutions	Reduction of perceived ethical or legal responsibility
	Irony and self-irony	Contrast between literal and implied meaning	Mitigation of criticism and preservation of reader sympathy
	Hyperbolic evaluation	Absolute quantifiers, exaggerated metaphors	Enhancement of emotional impact

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of Donna Tartt's novel *The Goldfinch* revealed that manipulative discourse in literary narrative functions not as a set of isolated rhetorical devices but as a complex, multi-layered system of semantic and pragmatic influence operating simultaneously on several levels: cognitive, emotional-psychological, pragmatic, semiotic, and lexical-stylistic. Such multi-channel influence confirms that manipulation in literary discourse is structurally heterogeneous and dynamically distributed across different textual layers. As noted by Yu. V. Pavlova, verbal manipulation techniques rely on linguistic means that shape the audience's attitude toward information and evoke specific emotional responses. In particular, lexical strategies include the use of emotionally charged vocabulary, euphemisms, dysphemisms, clichés, jargon, and slang [13, 18].

The findings correspond with the theoretical framework of discourse manipulation proposed by Vladimir Karasik, who argues that manipulative communication often works through cognitive restriction, limiting the interpretative possibilities available to the addressee. In *The Goldfinch*, this mechanism is manifested through conceptual substitution and reframing strategies that alter the ethical and logical interpretation of events. For instance, Boris's statement, "You know, Potter, this isn't stealing. It's rescuing. Safekeeping," simultaneously implements several discursive mechanisms. At the pragmatic level, it performs conceptual substitution, redefining theft as protection, which restricts the interpretative space available to the interlocutor. At the cognitive level, the utterance introduces a frame shift, transferring the situation from the semantic domain of crime to that of care and responsibility. In addition, the lexical choice of the euphemistic verbs "rescuing" and "safekeeping" serves as a stylistic mitigation strategy that lowers emotional resistance and creates a sense of moral legitimacy. The combination of these mechanisms demonstrates how a single statement can simultaneously manipulate logical reasoning, ethical evaluation, and emotional perception.

From the perspective of critical discourse studies, these patterns correspond to the model of ideological control developed by Teun A. van Dijk, according to which manipulation often relies on selective information presentation, perspective management, and emotional framing. In Tartt's narrative, such mechanisms are particularly visible in Theo's internal monologues, where the narrator retrospectively reconstructs events in ways that minimize personal responsibility while intensifying emotional engagement. For example, Theo's statement "I didn't steal it. I just kept it" illustrates selective presentation of facts: the crucial action of taking the painting is omitted, while the neutral verb kept introduces a reinterpretation of the act as temporary custody rather than theft. This strategy simultaneously performs cognitive simplification and pragmatic justification, allowing the narrator to guide the reader toward a more sympathetic interpretation of his behaviour.

The emotional dimension of manipulation is further reinforced through metaphorical and symbolic structures embedded in the narrative. Theo's metaphorical reflection – "The little bird chained to the perch wasn't I myself that tiny captive thing?" – creates a powerful semiotic association between the protagonist and the symbolic image of the captive bird. From the standpoint of critical metaphor analysis, such imagery can be interpreted through the theoretical approach developed by Jonathan Charteris-Black, who emphasises that metaphors in discourse often function as persuasive tools shaping emotional and ideological perception. In this case, the symbolic image of captivity reframes Theo's personal dependence, guilt, and psychological trauma as an almost natural condition of existence. Consequently, the metaphor simultaneously performs a cognitive reframing function and an emotional contagion effect, encouraging readers to empathically align themselves with the protagonist.

An additional mechanism reinforcing the manipulative potential of the narrative is the strategic use of irony and self-deprecating humour. Theo's self-characterisations – "I must have looked like a stray dog among show horses," "I was a walking pharmacy," and "Procrastination was my superpower" – illustrate how humour can function as a rhetorical strategy that softens moral judgement and increases reader sympathy. As noted in rhetorical studies of humour, ironic self-

discreditation often generates an illusion of sincerity and authenticity, thereby strengthening trust between speaker and audience [14, 142]. Within the narrative structure of the novel, such remarks act as a form of preventive self-presentation: by acknowledging his own flaws in advance, the narrator partially neutralizes potential criticism from the reader.

Another important observation concerns the mobility of manipulative strategies across narrative levels. The same discursive mechanisms appear both in interpersonal dialogue between characters and in the protagonist's introspective reflections. This fluidity supports the assumption that literary manipulation is not restricted to communicative interaction between characters but extends to the narrative relationship between the narrator and the reader. In this sense, manipulation in literary discourse becomes a structural component of narrative perspective, shaping how events are cognitively framed and emotionally interpreted.

The results also confirm the role of synchronisation between logical and emotional channels of influence. As argued by Kupareashvili, manipulative discourse becomes particularly effective when rational justification and emotional persuasion operate simultaneously, reinforcing each other within a single communicative act [15, 163]. In *The Goldfinch*, such synchronisation is consistently achieved through the interaction of framing, metaphorisation, selective narration, and evaluative vocabulary.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that manipulation in Tartt's novel operates as a multi-level discursive mechanism in which individual textual elements perform several communicative functions simultaneously. This phenomenon corresponds to the concept of discursive heterogeneity, according to which literary discourse is formed through the superposition of multiple interpretative layers. Unlike manipulation in political or media discourse, where strategies are often explicit and argumentative, artistic manipulation tends to be synesthetic, metaphorically encoded, and cognitively immersive. The reader becomes an active participant in the interpretative process and, consequently, a co-creator of the narrative meaning.

Therefore, the study confirms that manipulative strategies in literary texts should be analysed not only at the level of individual rhetorical devices but also within a broader discursive framework that integrates cognitive, emotional, and semiotic dimensions. Such an approach demonstrates the heuristic potential of the proposed classification model and contributes to the further development of critical discourse analysis in the study of literary narrative.

## CONCLUSION

The study identified and systematized the principal discursive strategies of manipulation employed in Donna Tartt's novel *The Goldfinch* and clarified their role in shaping the reader's perception of the narrative. The analysis demonstrates that manipulative influence in literary discourse functions through the interaction of cognitive, pragmatic, emotional-psychological, semiotic, and lexical-stylistic mechanisms that guide the interpretation of events and subtly structure the reader's evaluation of characters and actions.

The findings show that individual textual elements frequently combine several strategies of influence, including conceptual reframing, metaphorisation, and selective presentation of information. Such discursive patterns correspond to theoretical models of framing and cognitive restriction described by Vladimir Karasik and Teun A. van Dijk, while the persuasive role of metaphorical imagery is consistent with the critical metaphor analysis proposed by Jonathan Charteris-Black. Within this framework, manipulation appears not as direct persuasion but as an implicit narrative mechanism that shapes emotional alignment with the protagonist.

Overall, the results indicate that manipulative strategies in *The Goldfinch* serve as a means of constructing the author's conceptual model of reality and value system within the narrative. The study contributes to the understanding of manipulation in literary discourse by demonstrating how linguistic, cognitive, and symbolic elements interact to influence interpretation. Further research may focus on comparative analysis of manipulative strategies across literary, political, and media discourse in order to identify both universal and discourse-specific mechanisms of persuasive influence.

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### **Донна Тартттың «Салымшы құс» романындағы дискурстік манипуляция стратегияларын талдау**

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*Бұл зерттеу Донна Тартттың «Салымшы құс» (The Goldfinch, 2013) романындағы дискурсивті манипуляция стратегияларын қарастырады, онда бірінші жақтан баяндау перспективасы бағалау құрылымы мен оқырман позициясының механизмі ретінде қалай жұмыс істейтініне баса назар аударылады. Зерттеу негізгі әдіснамалық негіз болып табылатын сыни дискурс талдауы аясында жүргізіледі. Зерттеудің өзектілігі әдеби дискурстың ашық сендіру арқылы емес, баяндау құрылымына енгізілген дискурсивті түрде құрылған түсіндірме үлгілері арқылы қалай имплицитті әсер ететінін анықтау қажеттілігінде жатыр. Зерттеудің мақсаты - баяндаушының дискурсындағы перспективалық бақылау, лексикалық таңдау және символикалық құрылымдау арқылы жұмыс істейтін дискурсивті манипуляция стратегияларын анықтау және жіктеу. Зерттеу бірнеше тәртіптік парадигмаларды біріктірудің орнына, когнитивті және эмоционалды әсерлерді дискурсивті ұйымдастырудың нәтижелері ретінде аналитикалық тұрғыдан орналастырады. Әдіснамалық тәсіл негізінен сыни дискурс талдауына негізделген, таңдалған баяндау фрагменттерінің интерпретациялық мәтіндік талдауымен толықтырылған. Талдау романдағы манипуляциялық әсердің мотивтерді жасыру, кадрды алмастыру, бағалаушы қайта контексттеу, эмоционалды үндеулер, символдық бекіту, метафораландыру, эвфемизация және ирония сияқты жүйелі стратегиялар арқылы жүзеге асырылатынын көрсетеді. Бұл стратегиялар оқшауланған риторикалық құралдар ретінде емес, оқырманның моральдық және интерпретациялық үйлесімін басқаратын баяндауды басқарудың өзара байланысты механизмдері ретінде қызмет етеді.*

*Зерттеу дискурс-аналитикалық шеңберде баяндауды манипуляциялау стратегияларының құрылымдық тұрғыдан үйлесімді жіктелуін ұсыну арқылы әдеби дискурс талдауына үлес қосады. Оның маңыздылығы көркем дискурстың перспективалық басқару арқылы когнитивтік және эмоционалды позициялауды қалай құратынын анықтауда, осылайша қазіргі әдеби баяндаудағы жасасырын әсерді зерттеуге арналған аналитикалық құралдарды жетілдіруде жатыр.*

*Кілт сөздер: стратегия, сөйлеуді манипуляциялау, ирония, когнитивтік әсер, метафораландыру, эвфемизация, сыни дискурс талдауы*

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### **Анализ дискурсивных стратегий манипуляции в романе Донны Тартт «Щегол»**

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*Данное исследование посвящено анализу дискурсивных стратегий манипуляции в романе Донны Тартт «Щегол» (The Goldfinch, 2013), уделяя особое внимание тому, как повествование от первого лица функционирует как механизм оценочного фреймирования и позиционирования читателя. Исследование проводится в рамках критического дискурс-анализа, который служит основной методологической основой для изучения имплицитных форм влияния в литературном дискурсе. Актуальность работы обусловлена необходимостью уточнения того, каким образом нарративная перспектива структурирует интерпретационные модели и направляет когнитивные и эмоциональные реакции читателей без использования прямого убеждения. Анализ основан на качественном текстуальном исследовании отобранных нарративных фрагментов, представляющих ключевые эпизоды дискурса рассказчика. Особое внимание уделяется дискурсивным механизмам, формирующим оценочную интерпретацию и моральное позиционирование внутри повествования. Результаты показывают, что манипулятивное воздействие в романе реализуется через взаимосвязанные стратегии, такие как сокрытие мотивов, подмена фрейма, оценочная*

*реконтекстуализация, эмоциональная апелляция, символическое закрепление, метафоризация, эвфемизация и ирония.*

*Исследование вносит вклад в анализ литературного дискурса, предлагая системную классификацию стратегий нарративной манипуляции и демонстрируя, каким образом управление перспективой выступает механизмом имплицитного позиционирования читателя в современной художественной прозе.*

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