

## ФИЛОЛОГИЯ

(шифр научной специальности: 5.9.6)

Научная статья

УДК 81

doi: 10.18522/2070-1403-2024-107-6-72-77

### КОНТРАСТНОЕ УБЕЖДЕНИЕ И ПЕРЕУБЕЖДЕНИЕ В ПСИХОЛОГИИ И ПСИХОТЕРАПИИ: ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ

© *Елизавета Александровна Ващенко*

*Южный федеральный университет, г. Ростов-на-Дону, Россия*

*estepanova@sfnedu.ru*

**Аннотация.** Рассматриваются контрастное убеждение и переубеждение как общепризнанные техники в психологии и психотерапии. Показано, что основной функцией убеждения выступает конструктивная функция, то есть формирование у объекта новых взглядов, подходов и установок. Переубеждение по сравнению с убеждением является более сложным, трудоёмким и для реципиента психологически болезненным процессом, поскольку у него происходит ломка сложившихся взглядов и представлений, разрушение старых и формирование новых установок. Приводится множество примеров из психологической и психотерапевтической практики, свидетельствующих о том, что контрастное убеждение и переубеждение являются эффективными методами влияния и лучшими средствами изменения убеждений реципиента в процессе общения и лечения. Результаты исследования могут быть использованы как в обучении, так и в практической деятельности специалистов в области психологии и психотерапии.

**Ключевые слова:** контрастное убеждение, переубеждение, контраст, психология, психотерапия, имплицитная картина мира.

**Для цитирования:** Ващенко Е.А. Контрастное убеждение и переубеждение в психологии и психотерапии: лингвистический аспект // Гуманитарные и социальные науки. 2024. Т. 107. № 6. С. 72-77. doi: 10.18522/2070-1403-2024-107-6-72-77

## PHILOLOGY

(specialty: 5.9.6)

Original article

### Contrasting persuasion and reassuring in psychology and psychotherapy: Linguistic aspect

© *Elizaveta A. Vashchenko*

*Southern Federal University, Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation*

*estepanova@sfnedu.ru*

**Abstract.** Contrasting persuasion and persuasion are considered as generally recognized techniques in psychology and psychotherapy. It is shown that the main function of persuasion is a constructive function, that is, the formation of new views, approaches and attitudes in the object. In comparison with persuasion, persuasion is a more complex, time-consuming and psychologically painful process for the recipient, since he has a breakdown of established views and ideas, the destruction of old and the formation of new attitudes. There are many examples from psychological and psychotherapeutic practice, indicating that contrasting persuasion and persuasion are effective methods of influence and the best means of changing the recipient's beliefs in the process of communication and treatment. The results of the study can be used both in training and in the practical activities of specialists in the field of psychology and psychotherapy.

**Key words:** contrasting persuasion, reassuring, contrast, psychology, psychotherapy, implicit picture of the world.

**For citation:** Vashchenko E.A. Contrasting persuasion and reassuring in psychology and psychotherapy: Linguistic aspect. *The Humanities and Social Sciences*. 2024. Vol. 107. No 6. P. 72-77. doi: 10.18522/2070-1403-2024-107-6-72-77

#### *Introduction*

The fundamental method of modern psychotherapy is rational psychotherapy. Being an alternative to suggestion therapy, rational psychotherapy focuses primarily on the patient's thinking,

his mind [13, p. 570]. Currently, the general structure of rational psychotherapy includes such generally recognized techniques as Socratic dialogue, persuasion, reassuring, and especially contrasting persuasion, which is of interest to us.

P. Dubois noted in his work: "Rational psychotherapy is a "re-education", with the help of which it is "necessary" to develop and strengthen the patient's mind, teach him to look at things correctly, pacify his feelings, changing the ideas that caused them. There is no other means for this except persuasion through dialectics, which could be called the Socratic method" [10].

Persuasion is used in psychological and pedagogical literature in three ways, firstly, as knowledge that is part of a worldview; secondly, as the main method of psychological influence on the consciousness of a person, and thirdly, as a process of influence. In relation to psychological impact, it can perform several functions: informational, critical and constructive. The informational function depends on the degree of awareness of the recipient on the subject (problem, issue) of the impact. The critical function is to evaluate the views, opinions, and stereotypes of the value orientations of the object. The constructive function is manifested in the formation of new views, approaches and attitudes in the object.

In comparison with persuasion, reassuring is a more complex, time-consuming and psychologically painful process for the recipient, since he has a breakdown of established views and ideas, the destruction of old and the formation of new attitudes. In this regard, the subject of exposure must spend significantly more psychological and other resources on the process of exposure. Great caution, tolerance, benevolence and tact are required in persuading people, because it is quite difficult for a person to part with his beliefs even when he realized their inconsistency and fallacy [3, p. 43]. The thoughts in our soul determine what we believe and consider authentic. It is the psychologist or psychotherapist who is able to change the beliefs of the immediate recipient or recipient-reader, to change the thoughts in his soul that are true for him.

Persuasion is the most powerful method of influence. In modern psychotherapy, there is a contrast therapy of Zavilyanskaya. Any associations are based on the principle of contrast, therefore, when we evoke positive emotions, they are in contrast to the already existing negative emotions [13, p. 208–209].

As noted above, contrast persuasion is of particular interest to us. V.I. Gulevsky in his book "Individual Psychotherapy" gives an example of the use of contrast persuasion. Let's give a specific example in which the author convinces a young man that there will definitely be a job: "... It doesn't matter that there won't be a job in the specialty. If everyone around you is doing anything, then at least there is something for you. A very effective way is to connect all your friends and relatives for this purpose, and you can even get a job in a rich company by advertisement. In short, we need to act. To search and not give up" [7, p. 21].

Paraphrasing is one of the simplest techniques often used for the psychological impact. A psychologist or psychotherapist, "using the patient's complaint or remarks, paraphrases, changes them in such a way that what was negative serves as a basis for anxiety and worries, becomes the cause of positive emotions that can, if not completely remove negative experiences, then at least significantly reduce their significance and intensity" [2, p. 67].

As an example of paraphrasing, here is the following excerpt from the psychologist's dialogue with the patient from the book by Yu.E. Alyoshina, a recognized professional of the international psychotherapeutic culture, "Individual and family psychological counseling". It was a dialogue about a woman's worries towards her son, who left the institute and didn't have any hobbies and interests. As a result of this dialogue, the opportunity to look at this situation from another angle was offered to a woman by a psychologist, and the client's negative response was changed into positive reaction to this event.

#### *Discussion*

The famous psychotherapist-psychiatrist S.N. Smirnov in his article "Linguistic interventions in humanitarian psychotherapy: gradations and oxymorons" states that there are two figures, based

on the principle of contrast and often used in the humanitarian psychotherapy. They are oxymorons and gradations.

Before illustrating the use of these figures of speech in psychotherapeutic works, S.N. Smirnov emphasizes that there are several principles for conducting linguistic interventions, one of which is the most necessary and important for our work. "Intervention should be contrasting. Linguistic intervention arranged in this way becomes emotionally colored, and therefore more effective. Linguistic intervention is the precise use of figures of speech to achieve a certain therapeutic effect" [14].

The following excerpt from the session illustrates a conversation using linguistic intervention.

Irina: Or maybe I've already gone crazy? Normal people don't have such things, do they?

Psychotherapist: And what? A good option. Madness will immediately cure you of anxiety. You will be calm, with a good appetite. No frustration for you, no worries for you. Beauty!

Irina: Do you think I'm completely normal?

Psychotherapist: An anxiety disorder of the psyche is a variant of the mental norm. Anxiety can be brought under control, but it needs work. Or is it better to go crazy?

Irina: Well, no way. Let's try to work" (Smirnov, <http://hpsy.ru/public/x3972.htm>).

So, in this example, separated by a time interval: "madness will cure; an anxiety disorder of the psyche is a variant of the mental norm", are used as a humorous figure of speech. Finally, thanks to this figure of speech, the client coped with anxiety disorders and overcame all the problems in her life [14].

We can conclude that the psychotherapeutic communication can be very beneficial and effective, with the use of figures of speech based on the principle of contrast.

R. Dilts, a world-famous leader in the field of NLP, promotes the technique "tricks of language", based on the principle of contrast, which can change people's views and opinions. So, the concept of this technique is to switch a person's attention from the disastrous negative task to some different positive moments. "So instead of saying: If you have not achieved the expected result, then you have made a mistake in something or are not competent enough, it is worth using the following contrasting statement: Your task in performing this exercise was to learn something new, and not to demonstrate the successes already achieved" [8, p. 31].

M. Erickson, a famous psychiatrist and hypnotherapist, was an active user of the principle of contrast in his practice. From the linguistic point of view, he often resorted to grammatical and lexical antonyms. "A situation that you cannot handle may also be useful – later you will remember it and realize that this experience has been useful to you more than once. Such situations give you the opportunity to assess your strength, and in addition – to identify those areas in which you need to protect yourself "from the inside". Responding adequately to luck and failure is the true joy of life" [8, p. 31].

Positive thinking is a popular direction in psychology and psychotherapy. At this point the main task of psychologists and psychotherapists is to help their patients to formulate their dreams and intentions positively. Negative phrasing of positive statements comes to the fore. As a result, positivity is pushed by negative formulations. Sometimes patients' dreams can be positive, but the problem lies in the negative phrasing. Therefore, "instead of a negative statement by the patient, the psychotherapist offers a contrasting positive statement "too expensive" – "within your means", "waste of time" – "reasonable use of available resources", "fear of defeat" – "desire to achieve success", "unrealistic" – "concrete and feasible", "too much effort" – "easy and fast", "stupid" – "wise and knowledgeable" [8, p. 43-44].

A famous philosopher B. Russell created a single word-phrase formula, that gives positive connotation to a negative initial idea. For example:

1. "The original statement: I am a notorious liar; I distorted the facts. A reformulated statement: I accidentally made a mistake.

2. The original statement: I am a "rag"; I am soft. A reformulated statement: I am able to enter into the position of another person" [cit. by: 9, p. 140].

Rh. Byrne, the author of the world bestsellers such as "The Power", "The Secret", "The Magic", "Hero" and many others, stresses that our thoughts are the basis for positive or negative

actions in our life [5, p. 33]. By sending them into life, they come back to you. Negative emotions and words influence people and start persuading them in a negative direction [5, p. 198].

It's not a secret that our thoughts and words are the main constituents of our implicit picture of the world, in other words a specific reflection of the world of a person, depending on his mentality, upbringing, education, background [12, p. 9]. Different forms of speech influence, such as artistic words, medical conversation, psychological training can be used by a doctor, author or specialist for only one purpose: reconstruction and redesign of a person's implicit picture of the world [6, p. 158].

The book "The Easy Way to Stop Drinking" by a world-famous author A. Carr begins with the following lines: "The importance of an unbiased view of the world cannot be overestimated. Some consider my method to be a form of brainwashing. They don't realize how far they are from the truth. My method is anti-brainwashing, because it is very difficult to change the views that have been perceived as an immutable truth since childhood" [11, p. 25].

Disclosing the secret of rebuilding and redesigning the reader's implicit worldview, Rh. Byrne writes: "Many people, especially in Western society, chase after "time" and complain that they "don't have enough time." If they say so, they really won't have it— according to the law of attraction. If you have driven yourself into a vicious circle by thinking about the lack of time, right now declare enthusiastically: "I have plenty of time!" and change your life" [4, p. 83].

### *Conclusion*

Taking into consideration all above mentioned, we can make a conclusion that the principle of contrast, which is the basis for many psychological and psychotherapeutic techniques, is a powerful instrument for changing people's mind, angle and life. Speech influence, based on the contrast, can change not only an individual's point of view, but all his implicit picture of the world.

At the present stage of the development of linguistic knowledge about the speech impact and the pragmatic orientation of the utterance, the relevance of the study of contrasting persuasion and persuasion is due to their exceptional importance both in the process of organizing a written text and in the process of constructing an oral speech utterance. With the help of contrast, one of the main communicative tasks of a speech act is realized, namely, influencing the thoughts of the addressee when interpreting the speaker's utterance. It is the contrast that contributes to the purpose of the speech message, providing the impact of the text on the recipient, it is contrast that determines the potential of any text to have some effect on the consciousness and behavior of a particular recipient of information.

Popular science discourse uses a variety of means of conveying aesthetic information, borrowed from the arsenal of fiction [1, p. 215]. These include contrast, which in a fiction text creates a vivid, memorable image, and in a scientific text organizes the material, which is characterized by the harmony of logical presentation, and therefore allows the necessary data to be presented in an accessible form, helping to better understand and remember. According to the outstanding Russian linguist L.V. Shcherba, contrasts focus our attention on themselves [15, p. 77]. This is quite natural, since contrasting persuasion and persuasion is one of the main techniques in psychology and psychotherapy.

Presently, many psychologists and psychotherapists address to the principle of contrast in their practical and theoretical work. However, the linguistic side of this principle has not been thoroughly studied. We consider that our study will optimize the process of communicative interaction in the psychotherapeutic and psychological spheres. And the results of our study can be efficiently used in the training of specialists in the field of psychology and psychotherapy.

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*Статья поступила в редакцию 09.10.2024; одобрена после рецензирования 02.11.2024; принята к публикации 02.11.2024.*

*The article was submitted 09.10.2024; approved after reviewing 02.11.2024; accepted for publication 02.11.2024.*

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