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SOTSIAALTEADUSTE DISSERTATSIOONID

TALLINN UNIVERSITY  
DISSERTATIONS OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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**PROPAGANDA INSTRUMENTS IN POLITICAL TELEVISION  
ADVERTISEMENTS AND MODERN TELEVISION COMMERCIALS**

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Department of Government, Faculty of Social Sciences, Tallinn University

The dissertation is accepted for the commencement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Government and Politics on November 21, 2007 by the Doctoral Committee of Social Sciences of the Tallinn University.

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## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

- I. Agu Uudelepp 2007. Propaganda Instruments in Contemporary Campaigns: Comparison of Estonian Political TV Advertisements and Modern TV Commercials. – P. Dutkiewicz, O. Schmidtke (ed). *The Review of European and Russian Affairs*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, 2–18. <[http://europeanrussianaffairs.com/images/stories/files/volume3/issue1/agu\\_uudelepp\\_rera\\_volume3\\_issue1.pdf](http://europeanrussianaffairs.com/images/stories/files/volume3/issue1/agu_uudelepp_rera_volume3_issue1.pdf)>
- II. Agu Uudelepp 2005. Propaganda Aristotelesest tänapäevani. – *Riigikogu Toimetised*, 11, 170–176.
- III. Agu Uudelepp 2001. Riigikogu kõnepult kui propagandaplatvorm. – *Riigikogu Toimetised*, 4, 70–75.

# INTRODUCTION

## FORMULATION OF RESEARCH QUESTION

20<sup>th</sup> century was the time of rapid development of both humanitarian and social sciences, and mass communication. This meant better understanding of individual and mass attitudes and behavior. At the same time this was the time of development of new means for reaching mass audiences. Film and radio became commonplace in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, television in the middle and Internet during the end. The mutual influence of these tendencies signified that institutions which success depended on the effective influencing of the mass attitudes and behavior knew better how to reach their goals and benefit from mass media effects on target audiences.

Attempts to influence the minds of others are as old as human communication (Taylor 2003: 6). Many artifacts from prehistory and from earliest civilizations provide us with evidence that attempts were being made to use the equivalent of modern-day propaganda techniques to communicate the purported majesty and supernatural powers to rulers and priests (Jowett and O'Donnell 1999: 48). Early texts written in hieroglyphs also bear symbols that describe history in the way useful for leaders (Pratkanis and Aronson 2001: 11).

Since 17<sup>th</sup> century the deliberate influencing of people's attitudes is named propaganda. The beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century was "the golden age" of propaganda. This was the period when scientific research of propaganda began and due to the World Wars it was necessary to develop practical knowledge for conducting wide scale propaganda campaigns. At the same time this background created negative connotation for term "propaganda" which is still present in democratic states.

This negative connotation means that it is politically incorrect to admit the implementation of propagandistic principles for reaching aims necessary for some institution or organization. This on turn creates contradicting situation where the importance of successful influence on target audiences is rising and at the same time the open implementation of proven principles is not acceptable. There are two possible explanations of this contradiction: first, to abandon propaganda in modern societies; and second, to rename techniques formerly known as propagandistic and continue in applying them. The thesis of this article is derived from these explanations: although propaganda is considered to be mostly the tool of ideological communication in totalitarian states it is still used in contemporary democratic societies and there are no major differences in the usage of instruments of propaganda in the public or the private sector.

From this thesis several problems are raised. Considering the limitations of one thesis it is not feasible to analyze all the aspects of propaganda. Therefore, the research question is formulated as follows: Which are the main similarities and differences between the implementation of propaganda instruments in political and non-political TV advertisements?

Analysis is based on similarities and differences between Estonian political TV advertisements and modern TV commercials with emphasis on the implementation of propaganda instruments. This constitutes a new perspective in the research of propagandistic messages. It is common to study the messages in advertisements or their influence (Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 1995: 207). Comparative analysis of propaganda instruments in TV advertisements is new in the Eastern European context, and there are no similar studies about Estonian political propaganda.

Propaganda instruments are defined as deliberate and functional instructions and ways of interaction for influencing people. In the literature about propaganda it is common to refer to the seven propaganda devices defined by The Institute for Propaganda Analysis on 1937<sup>1</sup>: *name calling*, *glittering generalities*, *transfer*, *testimonials*, *band wagon*, *card stacking* and *plain folks*. Such classification is not conceptual and the wording is also more suitable for popular sciences. In this thesis author is going to present more conceptual and theoretically sound abstraction of propaganda instruments.

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<sup>1</sup> Institute for Propaganda Analysis. 1995. How to Detect Propaganda. – Robert Jackall (ed). *Propaganda*. New York University Press, 217–223. Reprinted from Propaganda Analysis, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1937.

## METHODOLOGY

The current research is based on political and non-political TV advertisements. There are two reasons for choosing TV advertisements as the basis of analysis. First, advertisements are the only form of mass communication over which political or business communicators have total control, i.e. message is formulated and presented exactly as wanted (McNair 1995: 95). Second, in most countries television is the major channel for advertisements and for most of the people, television is considered to be the major communicative link between politicians and electorate (McQuail 2003: 24).

In the sample of the study there are all TV advertisements from Estonian major political parties covering years 2003–2005, 82 advertisements in total. This timeframe is chosen because it includes all different levels of direct elections in Estonia. In 2003 were general elections, in 2004 were elections to the European Parliament and in 2005 were elections of local municipalities. The parties covered in the study were Centre Party (CP), Reform Party (R), Pro Patria (PP), People's Union (PU), Social Democrats (SD, in 2003. elections they used name Moderates) and Res Publica (RP). All these parties were elected to parliament in 2003 and all of them have conducted wide-scale TV campaigns. The electoral/public support to other Estonian parties is marginal.

Non-political advertisements are chosen from 2002 Cannes's International Advertising Festival, 100 awarded advertisements in total. The awarded advertisements of the year 2002 festival are selected as so the most modern way of creating TV advertisement should have been accessible for the makers of Estonian political campaigns in 2003.

In addition to the propaganda instruments the implementation of humour and story-telling in advertisements is also analyzed as humor is considered to be one of the reasons for liking someone (Kidron 2004: 211). Therefore, by using humour it is possible to enhance the pleasantness of communicator and also to increase his or her credibility through that (O'Keefe 2002: 190). Thus, it could be concluded that humour has got a desired side effect: if it is possible to make people smile, it is also possible to create approval for presented cause (Taylor 2004: 51). The presence of story-telling is analyzed as stories enable to attract and keep attention until message is presented.

The main research method used in this study is comparative analysis. One of the techniques of comparative analysis is content analysis that is suitable for finding differences and similarities (Kleinstaub 2004: 68). According to classical definition the content analysis is research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communicative messages (Berelson 1952: 18, cited in Bryman 2001: 178). It is common to use this research technique for analyzing the content of messages intended for broad audiences (Neuendorf 2002: 22) and specifically for propagandistic messages (Krippendorff 2004: 8). During the World War II it was believed that with messages disseminated via mass communication channels it is possible to manipulate masses and quantitative content analysis was partly developed for scientists and politicians to be aware of symbolic aspects of mass culture and to identify propagandistic messages and their influence (Deacon et al 1999: 115–116). It is characteristic for content analysis that researcher presents research question, not hypothesis (Krippendorff 2004: 32).

Content analysis has also its limitations. With that technique it is possible to gather and compare the data, but it is not possible to explain the findings and the connections between the different aspects of messages (Bignell 2004: 211). Another limitation is that content analysis is not suitable for analyzing the effects of the message (Sumser 2001: 199). Also it is difficult to answer question *why?* and inevitably the codebooks leave some space for interpretation (Bryman 2001: 191). However, these restrictions are not important in the context of this article as the research question is formulated for finding possible propaganda instruments in the TV advertisements and for identification of the similarities and differences between political and non-political advertisements; not for *explaining* them.

Supporting method in this research is discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough (Fairclough 1992). This method is applied for explaining some of the results acquired by content analysis. Fairclough argues that the nominalization of processes is possible sign of struggle for hegemony and constant repeating of some specific word is sign of ideology driving this particular organization. Constant use of images for suggesting lifestyle is sign of democratization and conversational discourse.

# 1. DEFINITIONS AND MODEL OF PROPAGANDA

Definition of propaganda varies. One of the early definitions is from 1922. Walter Lippmann's book "Public Opinion". According to that definition *propaganda is an effort to alter the picture to which men respond, to substitute one social pattern for another* (Lippmann 1997: 16). At 1928 Edward Bernays defined propaganda as a *consistent, enduring effort to create or shape events to influence the relations of the public to an enterprise, idea or group* (Bernays 2004: 52). At 1934 Harold D. Lasswell defined *propaganda in its broadest sense as the technique of influencing human action by the manipulation of representations* (Lasswell 1995: 1). These were the three most important propaganda definitions before the World War II. So in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was not yet agreed if propaganda is action or formation of techniques. At the same time it was clear that the aim of propaganda is to influence people.

This dual view of the concept of propaganda continued after the World War II. One of the most influential writers about propaganda in the post-war period, Jacques Ellul, defined propaganda as *a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated in an organization* (Ellul 1973: 61). However, the understanding that propaganda is a set of methods did not become prevailing. The two frequently quoted propaganda theorists from the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, have defined propaganda as *the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist* (Jowett and O'Donnell 1999: 6).

From these definitions it is possible to draw certain characteristics of propaganda (Table 1). According to the definitions, the aim of the propagandist is to influence the attitudes and the behavior of the target group, while the target group is formed from the individuals who are an integrated part of the society; and the propagandist is trying to manipulate them both in the way people perceive the reality and also in the way the emotions are created from these perceptions of reality.

Generalizing these definitions and characteristics the author constructs the definition of propaganda in modern democratic societies: *Propaganda is shaping of the attitudes and behavior of a person in a way desired by the propagandist. The person is considered to be an integrated part of the public and the propagandist's arguments are derived from the socio-cultural context, based on symbols and stereotypes and targeted at emotions.*

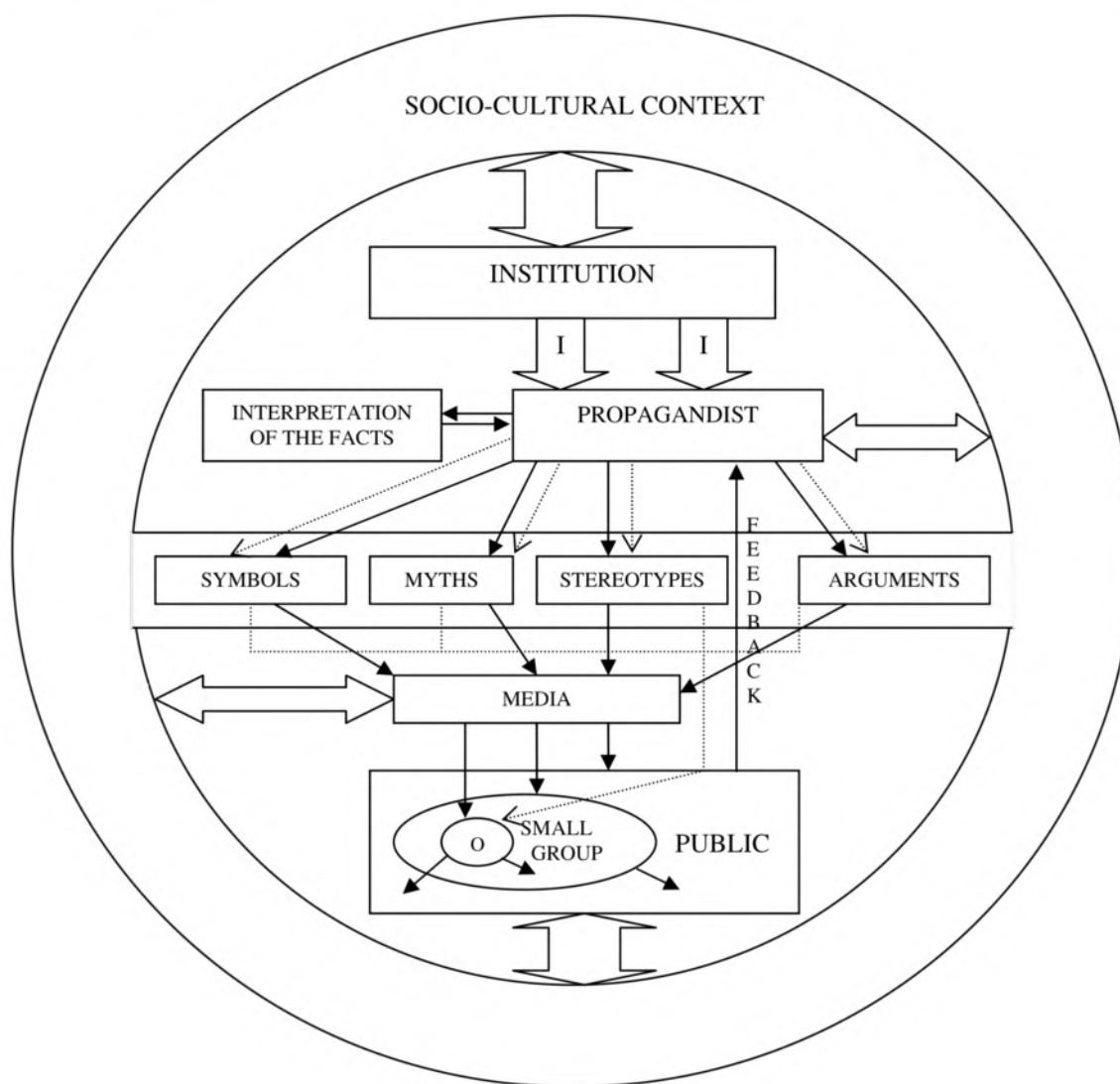
**Table 1.** The characteristics of propaganda

Author	Altering attitudes/ Behavior	Manipulating reality	Target group	Activity/Set of methods
Walter Lipmann	Altering attitudes	Forming social patterns	People	Activity
Edward Bernays	Altering attitudes	Altering relations	Public	Activity
Harold Lasswell	Altering both	Manipulation of representations	People	Technique
Jacques Ellul	Altering both	Psychological manipulations	Organized group	Set of methods
Garth Jowett & Victoria O'Donnell	Altering both	Manipulate cognitions	People	Activity



For better understanding of this definition author has constructed the propaganda model (Figure 1). The basis of the propaganda is considered to be the socio-cultural context. The effect between socio-cultural context, propagandist and mass media is mutual. Everything done during a propaganda campaign influences the socio-cultural context and this has to be taken into account when planning future actions. Influencing the context is defined as a social propaganda or pre-propaganda. Its aim is not to induce immediate change in action but to prepare ground for that, and insist on the attitudes favorable for the propagandist and reduce the impact of the unfavorable attitudes.

In the modern societies the information flow (I) is open. This means that one essential characteristic of totalitarian propaganda, censorship (Bartlett 1940: 13–14), is no more valid, because massive censoring of information is almost impossible. In modern societies manipulating the interpretations of the facts supersedes censorship. In other words, the propagandist is interpreting events, objects and arguments in the way most suitable for him. Also, he is trying to enhance the credibility of favorable sources and disregard possible opposition.



Source: Uudelepp, 2005

**Figure 1.** Model of a contemporary propaganda



The usage of symbols, events and arguments is in the centre of propaganda theory. It is admitted that a person is not capable of memorizing a huge amount of numbers and facts. Despite of the wide belief in the modern propaganda that although propaganda's content tends to be rational and factual, the individual behavior affected by this propaganda is perfectly irrational and purely emotional feeling, similar with a myth. The facts, the data, the reasoning – all are forgotten, and only the impression remains (Ellul 1973: 86). Therefore, the task of the propagandist is to create an irrational reaction based on rational and factual arguments so that the target group would act in the way desired by the propagandist (Udelepp 2005:122).

Propaganda must cover all intellectual and emotional aspects of everyday life; there must be no way of escaping the propagandistic message. The most effective mean for reaching the public is mass media. Personal contacts are also considered to be valuable especially while communicating with opinion leaders (O).

According to the definition, the aim of propaganda is to shape the attitudes and the behavior. Both of these components are equally important. Social propaganda is used to shape attitudes in the way favorable to the propagandist and by that the atmosphere for calls to action is created. Then it is easier for the propagandist to manipulate people's behavior in the desired way. Every person is considered to be an active part of the society interacting with the other people both within his social group and outside of it. By doing that, he is filtering new messages. The propagandist needs to create the circumstances where the group is ready to support his messages and diminish the importance of competing messages.

## 2. PROPAGANDA INSTRUMENTS AND THEIR BASIS

According to the propaganda model there are three different levels of possible manipulation. First level is socio-cultural context, more specifically arguments based on symbols and stereotypes deriving from that. This level is cognitive and it is possible for propagandist to manipulate the way we perceive those symbols and adapt stereotypes. The importance of symbols in propaganda is based on the understanding that ideological signs are connected more to symbols and less to issues (Conover and Feldman 2004: 213). This tie between propaganda and ideology is important, because propaganda is commonly understood as discourse serving ideology<sup>2</sup> (Burnett 1989: 127). On essence the meaning of symbols is social and these meaning are altering with persons (Millar and Millar 1976: 4). So any symbol does not have essential connection with the meaning ascribed to it. This is an opportunity for propagandists create connections that suit his or her aims. Closely connected to symbols are the stereotypes. Stereotypes are generalizations, particularly the attribution to an individual of characteristics ascribed as universal to a group from which that individual is drawn (O'Shaughnessy 2004: 57). The importance of stereotypes in propaganda has been known for long, stereotypes were the cornerstone of Lippmann's writings about public opinion and propaganda. He wrote that in the world overflowing with information people are searching for the first familiar sign and after that stereotypes fitting to that sign are applied (Lippmann 1997: 59).

Second level is social. It is possible to guide the behavior of people directing them to act according to the role model set by elite and opinion leaders or by the fellow members of their social group. Explicit ideological self-knowledge is not common; usually it is limited to rulers, opinion leaders and other elites (van Dijk 2005: 121). Classic propaganda is vertical, its source is leader, political or religious head who acts from the superior position of his authority and seeks to influence the crowd below (Ellul 1973: 80). On that is based assumption that ruling elite can indoctrinate and manipulate people on the way suitable for elite (Lukes 1988: 77) and when experts alter their ideological understanding the public will follow after some period of time (Zaller 1992: 328). If there is no example from trusted leaders people tend to base their decisions on how to behave and what to think on the values presented by the other members of the same social group. This means that people tend to decide on the right and wrong relying on others (Cialdini 2005: 121). In totalitarian propaganda this was one of the core statements.

Third level is technological. It is based on either censorship or on manipulating with facts and with their interpretations. Between the two world wars it was agreed that successful propaganda is impossible without effective censorship (Lippmann 1997: 28, Bartlett 1940: 13). Censorship is still present in modern societies but its forms have changed. Media chooses "facts" which are in accordance with the interests of elites influencing by that the mental models of broader public, while the possibilities for minorities to present their cause in mass media is limited (van Dijk 2005: 218). As applying censorship is not possible for every propagandistic body and direct lying is difficult, censorship is in most part displaced by the manipulation of interpretations of facts. For example Ellul claimed (Ellul 1973: 52) that direct lying must be avoided but propagandist is free to manipulate with context and presentation of facts.

In accordance with these levels it is possible to construct table in which there are connected the bases of different propaganda instruments, the instruments itself, classic propaganda devices, propaganda techniques<sup>3</sup> and possible sub-techniques for every technique (Table 2). So in this table is summarized the research instrument for the content analysis of this research.

From this table we can conclude that there are two contradictory categories: elite vs. social group and benefiting from patterns of cognitive process vs. distortion of input to cognitive process. Based on this two pairs author has constructed the axis of propaganda (Figure 2).

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<sup>2</sup> Ideology is in the context of this article understood as political or social system of ideas, values and norms which belongs to group or collective and which function is to legitimate and arrange the actions of this group or collective (van Dijk 2005: 14).

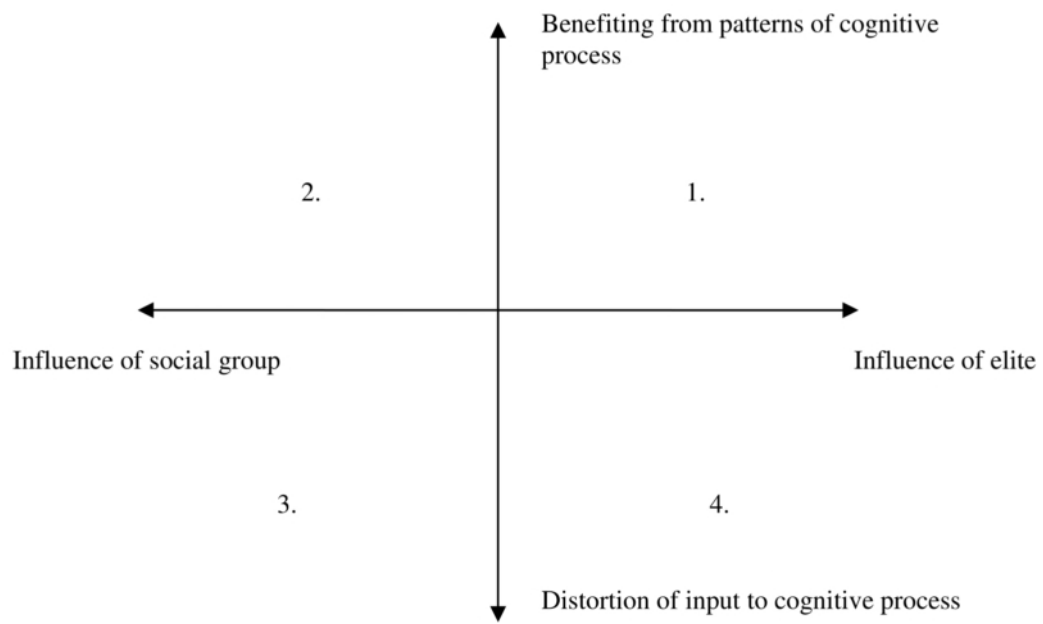
<sup>3</sup> Propaganda techniques are based on Henry T. Conserva's book "Propaganda Techniques".

According to this axis there are four possible types of propagandistic messages:

1. Message is based on the socio-cultural context and the example of strong leader;
2. Message is based on the socio-cultural context and the example of social group;
3. Message is based on the manipulation of facts and the example of strong leader;
4. Message is based on the manipulation of facts and the example of social group.

**Table 2.** Propaganda instruments, their bases and sub-techniques

Bases of instruments	Propaganda instruments	Classic propaganda devices	Propaganda techniques	Possible indicators
Symbols and stereotypes	Cognitive propaganda instruments (CPI)	Name calling	1. <i>Ad hominem</i> arguments	Greedy, unintelligent etc
			2. Ridiculing	Comparison with animal etc
		Glittering generalities	3. Selection of emotionally appealing words	Best, new, future etc
			4. Selection of emotionally appealing images	Children, animals, sun etc
			5. Calls for altruism	Claiming that person is good etc
		Transfer	6. Referring to accepted symbols	University, church, flag etc
			7. Referring to accepted professions	Doctors, judges, teachers etc
Influence of elite or social group	Social propaganda instruments (SPI)	Testimonial	1. Emphasizing on authority	Scientist, minister etc
			2. Emphasizing on celebrity	Sports star, singer etc
		Plain Folks	3. Image based on target audience	Clothing, haircut etc
			4. Behavior based on target audience	Visiting same market etc
		Band wagon	5. Creation of confident image	Lots of followers on image etc
			6. Utilization of absolutes	Always, everybody etc
Distortion of reality	Technological propaganda instruments (TPI)	Card stacking	1. False inductivity	Sample too small etc
			2. False causality	Switching cause and effect
			3. Oversimplification	Creating false dichotomy
			4. Manipulating with numbers	Mixing percentages etc



**Figure 2.** Axis of propaganda

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. PROPAGANDA INSTRUMENTS IN POLITICAL TV ADVERTISEMENTS

The aggregate data of the implementation of propaganda instruments in political TV advertisements is given in table 3. The sample consisted of 15 CP, 21 R, 14 PU, 8 PP, 6 SD and 20 RP advertisements.

**Table 3.** Propaganda instruments in political TV advertisements

PI	Technique	Political Party						Total
		CP	R	PU	PP	SD	RP	
CPI	1	1	1				2	<b>4</b>
	2		4	2			2	<b>8</b>
	3	3	19	5	6	7	13	<b>53</b>
	4	7	2	4	5	2	5	<b>25</b>
	5	2		2		1	2	<b>7</b>
	6	3	1	4	5		2	<b>15</b>
	7			1				<b>1</b>
	Total	<b>16</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>113</b>
SPI	1	2	5	4	2	5	6	<b>24</b>
	2	2		2	2		1	<b>7</b>
	3	4	3	1	2	1	2	<b>13</b>
	4	1	2	1	1		2	<b>7</b>
	5	2	1					<b>3</b>
	6	7		2	1		1	<b>11</b>
	Total	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>65</b>
TPI	1	5	5	1	1	1	2	<b>15</b>
	2	1	2					<b>3</b>
	3	1	3	1		1	1	<b>7</b>
	4	5	3					<b>8</b>
	Total	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>33</b>
TOTAL		<b>46</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>211</b>
Humor			6	1	2			<b>9</b>
Story-telling			5	1				<b>6</b>

CP has implemented CPI and SPI in relatively similar proportions, accordingly 16 and 18 times. TPI has been used 12 times; CP is one of two political parties that used TPI in every elections. In total, CP has implemented propaganda instruments 46 times or on average 3,3 instruments in one advertisement. On average in one advertisement there are 1,1 CPI, 1,3 SPI and 0,9 TPI implementations. The most frequently used cognitive propaganda technique is the selection of *emotionally appealing images*, social propaganda technique *the utilization of absolutes* and technological propaganda technique *the false inductivity* and *the manipulating with numbers*. Humour and story-telling are not in use in any of CP advertisements.

R has implemented mostly CPI: 27 times in total. In addition SPI has used 11 and TPI 13 times. So R is one of two parties that have used TPI. All in all R has implemented propaganda instruments 51 times or on average 2,4 instruments in one advertisement. On average in one advertisement there are 1,3 CPI, 0,5 SPI and 0,6 TPI implementations. The most frequently used cognitive propaganda technique is the *selection of emotionally appealing words*, social propaganda technique *the emphasizing on authority* and technological propaganda technique *the false inductivity*. Humor is used in 6 advertisements; story-telling is present in 5 advertisements. R is the only party that has used humor and story-telling in all elections.

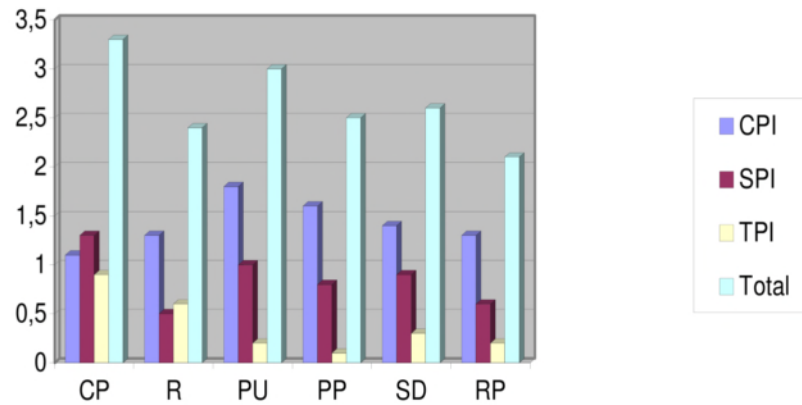
PU has implemented mostly CPI, 18 times. In addition SPI is used 10 times and TPI 2 times. All in all PU has implemented propaganda instruments 30 times or on average 3,0 instruments in one advertisement. On average in one advertisement are 1,8 CPI, 1,0 SPI and 0,2 TPI implementations. The most frequently used cognitive propaganda technique is the *selection of emotionally appealing words*, the most frequently used social propaganda technique *the emphasizing on authority* and the used technological propaganda techniques are *the false inductivity* and *oversimplification*. Humor and story-telling are both used in 1 advertisement; PU and R are the only parties which have used both.

PP has implemented mostly CPI, 16 times. In addition SPI is used 8 times and TPI 1 time. All in all PP has implemented propaganda instruments 25 times or on average 2,5 instruments in one advertisement. On average in one advertisement there are 1,6 CPI, 0,8 SPI and 0,2 TPI implementations. The most frequently used cognitive propaganda technique is the *selection of emotionally appealing words*, the most frequently used social propaganda techniques *the emphasizing on authority*, *emphasizing on celebrity* and *image based on target audience* and the used technological propaganda technique is *the false inductivity*. Humor is present in two advertisements, story-telling is not in use.

SD has implemented mostly CPI, 10 times. In addition SPI is used 6 times and TPI 2 times. All in all PP has implemented propaganda instruments 18 times or on average 2,6 instruments in one advertisement. On average in one advertisement there are 1,4 CPI, 0,9 SPI and 0,3 TPI implementations. The most frequently used cognitive propaganda technique is the *selection of emotionally appealing words*, the most frequently used social propaganda technique *the emphasizing on authority* and the used technological propaganda techniques are *the false inductivity* and *oversimplification*. Humor and story-telling are not in use.

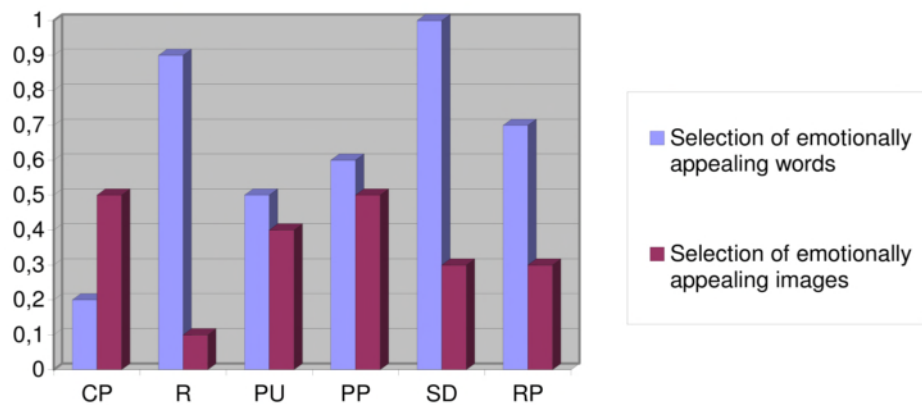
RP has implemented mostly CPI, 26 times. In addition SPI is used 12 times and TPI 3 times. All in all PP has implemented propaganda instruments 41 times or on average 2,1 instruments in one advertisement. On average in one advertisement there are 1,3 CPI, 0,6 SPI and 0,2 TPI implementations. The most frequently used cognitive propaganda technique is the *selection of emotionally appealing words*, social propaganda technique *the emphasizing on authority* and technological propaganda technique *the false inductivity*. Humor and story-telling are not in use.

The frequencies per advertisement in which Estonian parties implement propaganda instruments are presented on Figure 3. It is visible that CP, PP and SD implement more propaganda instruments per advertisement than other three parties that use propaganda in relatively similar proportions. All parties except CP use CPI more than other types of instruments; difference is biggest in the case of R and RP. CP and SD use CPI and SPI in relatively similar proportions.



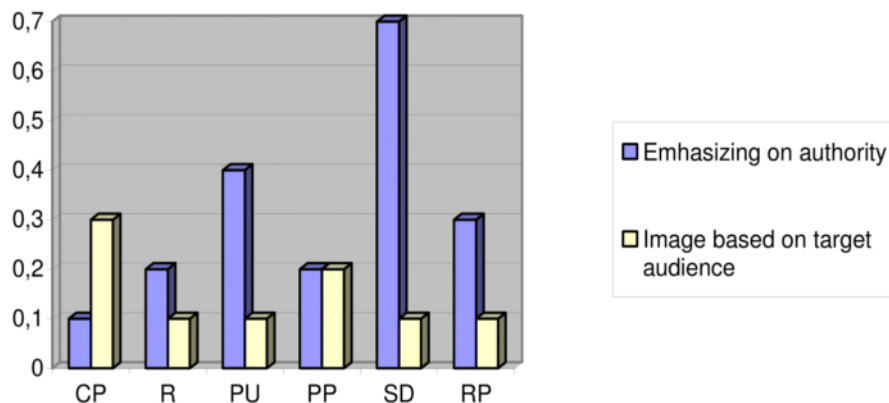
**Figure 3.** Average representations of propaganda instruments in political TV advertisements

On Figure 4 are presented the most frequently used CPI techniques for every analyzed party. All parties have used *the selection of emotionally appealing words* and *the selection of emotionally appealing images*. All the other techniques are used by only some of the parties.



**Figure 4.** Average representations of most implemented cognitive propaganda techniques in political TV advertisements

On Figure 5 are presented the most frequently used SPI techniques for every analyzed party.



**Figure 5.** Average representations of most implemented social propaganda techniques in political TV advertisements



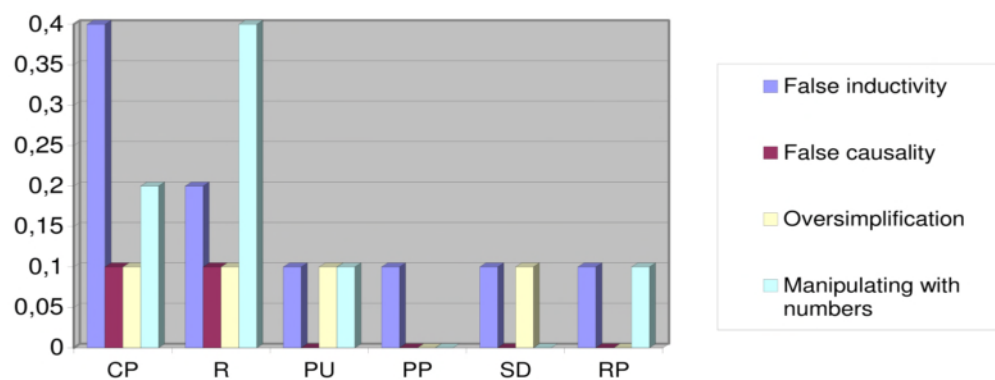
It is possible to divide parties into three according to the usage of SPI techniques. First, CP is the only party which is implementing *the image based on target audience* more than *the emphasizing on authority*. This means that for CP the herd instincts of masses are more important than the role set by some leader. CP is also the only political party which has used the *creation of confident image*, which is also referring to mass behavior tendencies.

Second, PP has implemented both of these most frequently used techniques in similar proportions, *i.e.* emphasizes both in herd instincts and role set by leaders.

Third, R, PU, SD and RP have emphasized mostly on visual authority. This technique is the most frequently implemented SPI technique for these four parties. This means that these parties try to guide target audience to behave in accordance with role model set by recognized leader.

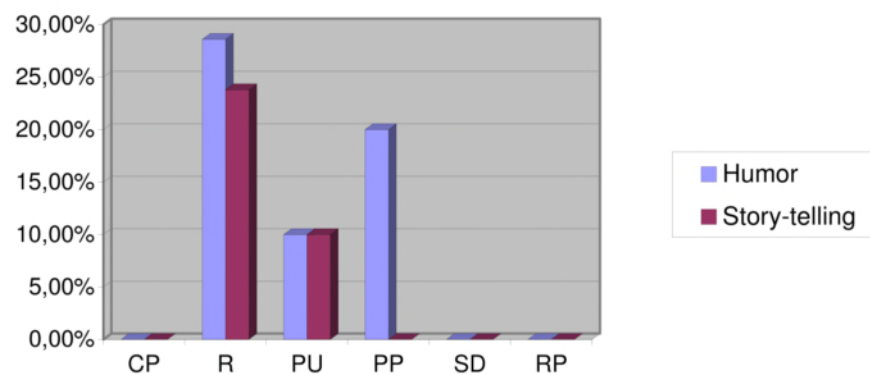
On Figure 6 is presented the implementation of TPI techniques. *False inductivity* is clearly the most frequently used technique; it is in use by all four parties. Next is *manipulation with numbers*, it has been implemented by three parties out of six: CP, R and RP. *Oversimplification* has been implemented by four parties, CP, R, PU and SDE, but the number of times it has been in use is smaller.

From Figure 6 it can be seen that CP and R have used all four TPI techniques, PU has used three, SD and RP two techniques and PP one technique.



**Figure 6.** Average representation of technological propaganda techniques in political TV advertisements

On Figure 7 is presented the implementation of humor and story-telling. Humor is use by R, PU and PP, story-telling is used by R and PU. Other three parties have used neither. At the same time only the implementation of humor and story-telling in R advertisements can be considered deliberate.



**Figure 7.** Humor and story-telling in political TV advertisements

In total six political parties used mostly CPI, 113 times in 82 advertisements. In addition SPI is used 65 and TPI 33 times. This means that political parties together implemented propaganda instruments 211 times in 82 advertisements or on average 2,6 instruments in one advertisement. Thus on average there are 1,4 CPI, 0,8 SPI and 0,4 TPI implementations in one advertisement.

The most frequently used cognitive propaganda technique is the *selection of emotionally appealing words*, social propaganda technique the *emphasizing on authority* and technological technique the *false inductivity*. Humor is present in 9 and story-telling in 6 advertisements, it is accordingly in 11% and 7% of all political advertisements.

It is possible to generalize that in Estonian political TV advertisements are implemented mostly words with positive connotation and widely accepted recognizable symbols for achieving intended changes in the attitudes and behavior of target audiences; in use are both example of elites and members of same social group; manipulating with facts is accepted<sup>4</sup>; humor and story-telling are casual.

### 3.2. PROPAGANDA INSTRUMENTS IN NON-POLITICAL TV ADVERTISEMENTS

The aggregate data of the implementation of propaganda instruments in non-political TV advertisements is in table 4.

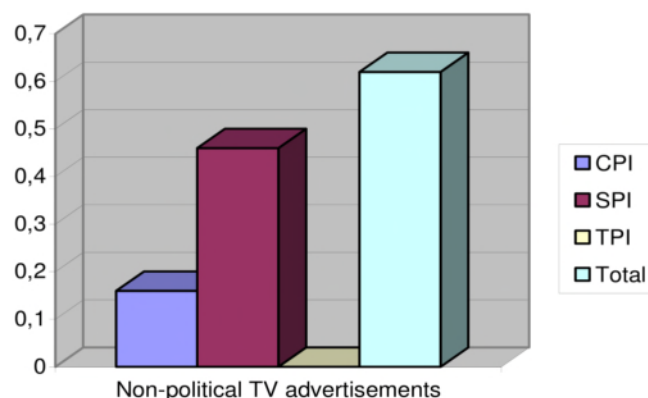
**Table 4.** Propaganda instruments in non-political TV advertisements

PI	Technique	No of times technique is used
CPI	1	
	2	
	3	2
	4	14
	5	
	6	
	7	
	Total	<b>16</b>
SPI	1	
	2	
	3	46
	4	
	5	
	6	
	Total	<b>46</b>
TPI	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	Total	<b>0</b>
TOTAL		<b>62</b>
Humor		<b>56</b>
Story-telling		<b>79</b>

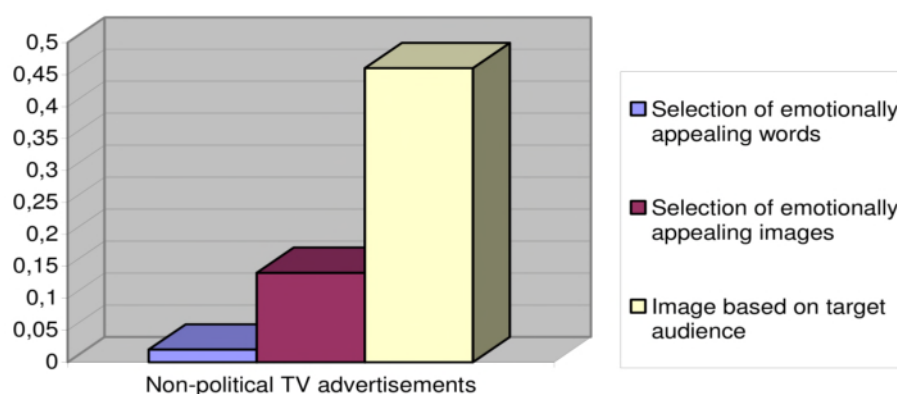
<sup>4</sup> CP and R are constantly successful in Estonian elections, CP won 2003 and 2005 elections and achieved second result in 2004, R was second in 2005 and third in 2003 and 2004.

The frequencies per advertisement in which propaganda instruments are implemented in non-political TV advertisements are presented on Figure 8. It is visible that social propaganda instruments are more in use than cognitive propaganda instruments; and technological propaganda instruments are not implemented.

On Figure 9 are presented the most frequently used CPI and SPI techniques for non-political TV advertisements. *Image based on target audience* is clearly the most implemented technique; also in use are *selection of emotionally appealing images* and *selection of emotionally appealing words*.

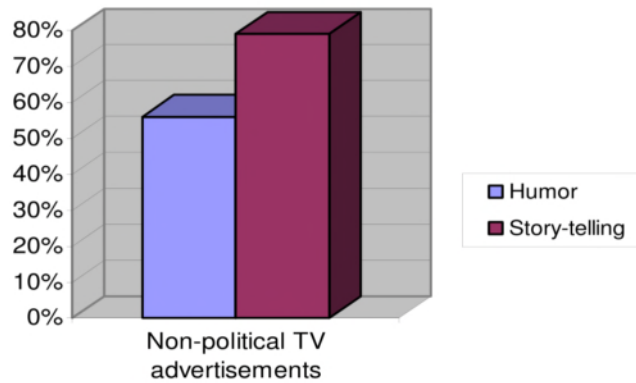


**Figure 8.** Average representations of propaganda instruments in non-political TV advertisements



**Figure 9.** Average representations of most implemented cognitive propaganda techniques in non-political TV advertisements

On Figure 10 is presented the implementation of humor and story-telling. Humor is used in 56% and story-telling in 79% on non-political TV advertisements. From that can be concluded that the implementation of humor and story-telling is deliberate.



**Figure 10.** Humor and story-telling in political TV advertisements

In non-political TV advertisements there are implemented mostly SPI, 46 times. In addition CPI are used 16 times, TPI is not in use. In total are propaganda instruments implemented in non-political TV advertisements 62 times or on average 0,6 implementations in one advertisement. There are on average 0,16 CPI and 0,46 SPI implementations in one advertisement. The most frequently used cognitive propaganda technique is the *selection of emotionally appealing images* and social propaganda technique the *image based on the target audience*. Humor is present in 56 and story-telling in 79 advertisements, it is accordingly in 56% and 79% of all non-political advertisements.

It is possible to generalize that in non-political TV advertisements are implemented mostly words and images with positive connotation, also in use is referring for accepted professions for achieving intended changes in the attitudes and behavior of target audiences; implemented social propaganda techniques are based on creating linkages with members of same social group; manipulating with facts is not accepted; humor and story-telling are deliberately added to advertisements.

### 3.3. COMPARISON OF POLITICAL AND NON-POLITICAL TV ADVERTISEMENTS

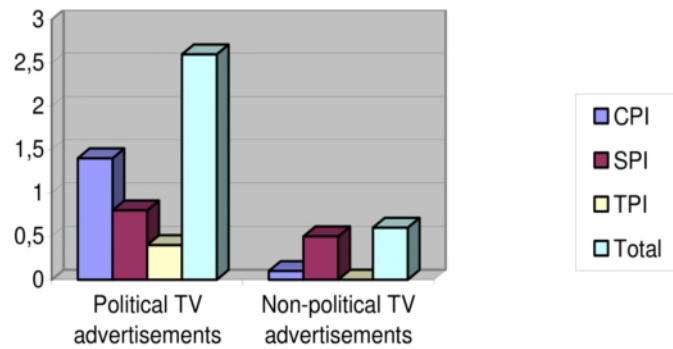
In political TV advertisements all categories of propaganda instruments were used, but in non-political TV advertisements technological propaganda instruments were not implemented. So the further comparison of TPI is not possible.

From Table 3 and Table 4 it is possible to conclude two major similarities in political and non-political TV advertisements:

- *Selection of emotionally appealing images* is used both in political and non-political TV advertisements;
- *Image based on target audience* is used both in political and non-political TV advertisements.

The frequencies per advertisement in which propaganda instruments are implemented in political and non-political TV advertisements are presented on Figure 11. From figure are obvious three major differences:

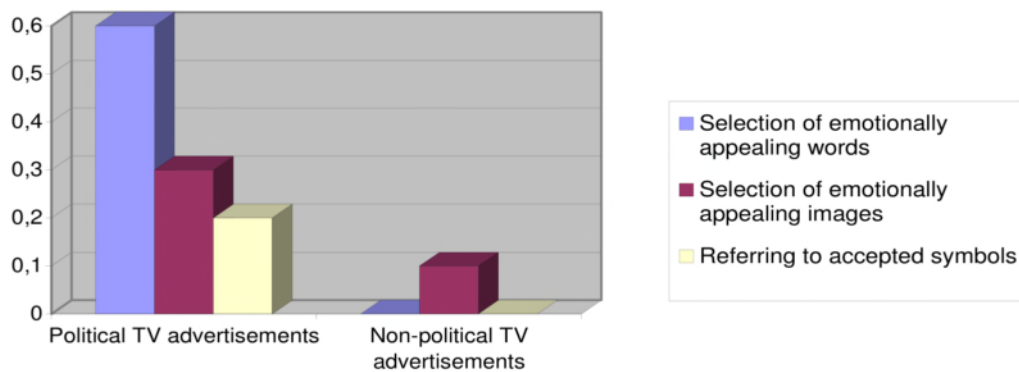
- CPI are the most frequently used propaganda instruments in political TV advertisements; in non-political TV advertisements the most frequently used propaganda instruments are SPI;
- TPI are not in use in non-political TV advertisements;
- On average more propaganda instruments per advertisement are implemented in political TV advertisements.



**Figure 11.** Average representations of propaganda instruments in political and non-political TV advertisements

Two major differences are also visible:

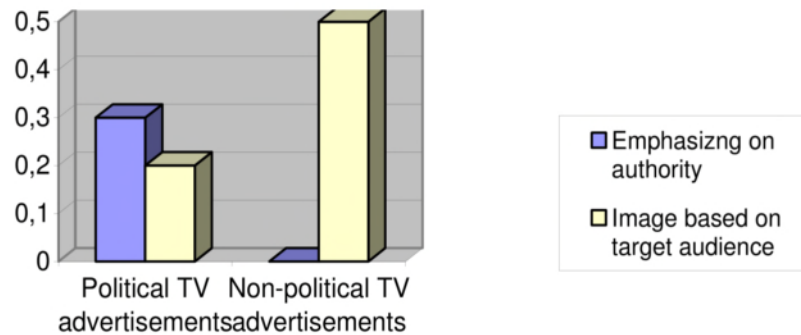
From Table 3 and Table 4 it can be concluded that both in political and non-political TV advertisements the two most implemented CPI techniques are *selection of emotionally appealing words* and *selection of emotionally appealing images* (see Figure 12). At the same time the order of these techniques is different: in political TV advertisements the most frequently used CPI technique is based on words and in non-political TV advertisements on images. In addition in political TV advertisements the technique *referring to accepted symbols* is more frequently used than any CPI technique in non-political TV advertisements. This can be explained by the fact that some non-political TV advertisements in the sample are made for international market. In that case it is difficult to find symbols accepted in different cultures and backgrounds. In the case of Estonian political TV advertisement such a factor was not emergent.



**Figure 12.** Average representations of most implemented cognitive propaganda techniques in political and non-political TV advertisements

From Table 3 and Table 4 it can be concluded that both in political and non-political TV advertisements is implemented SPI technique *image based on target audience* see Figure 13).

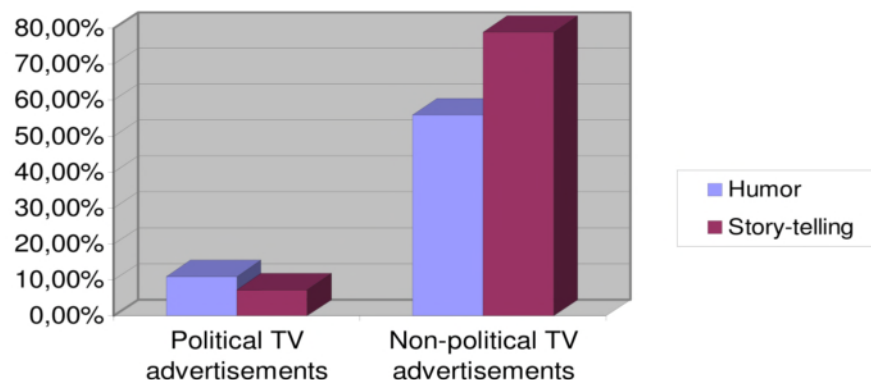




**Figure 13.** Average representations of most implemented social propaganda techniques in political and non-political TV advertisements

At the same time there is conceptual difference in implementation of SPI in political and non-political TV advertisements. In political advertisements the emphasis is on creating the image of strong leader, for that are suitable both people with authority in given field or celebrities. In non-political TV advertisements messages are directly aimed at target audience and the visual imagery is used for assuring public that people who are similar to them are thinking and/or behaving in the way presented.

From Table 3 and Table 4 it can be concluded that in political and non-political TV advertisements both humor and story-telling are implemented (see Figure 14). Although it is important to point out that in political TV advertisements the possibilities for enhancing the impact of message via humor and story-telling are not constantly and deliberately in use. Low percentages show that the use of these devices is sporadic in political advertisements. In non-political TV advertisements humor and story-telling are integral part of message.



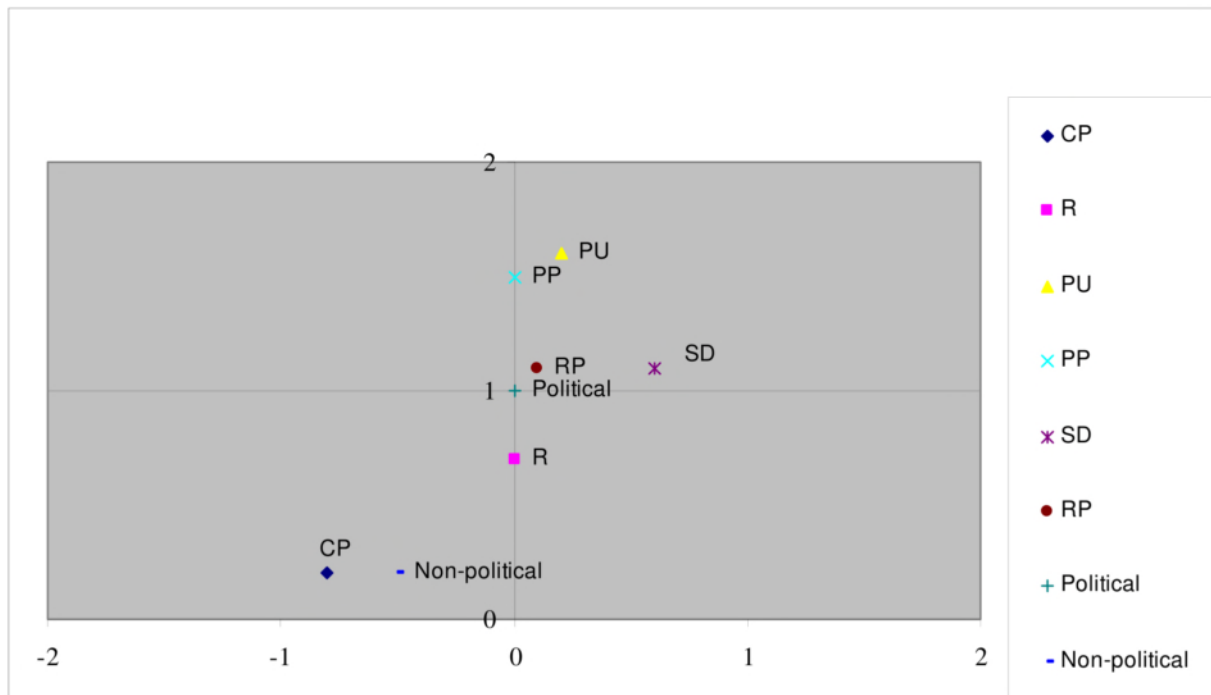
**Figure 15.** Humor and story-telling in political and non-political TV advertisements

Based on principles formulated and data gathered in this article it is possible to place political parties in the propaganda axis and analyze them in comparison with propagandistic placement of non-political advertisements. Coordinates for that placement are calculated from the average representation of propaganda techniques in different sets of advertisements (Table 5). For Y-axis coordinates average representations of TPI are subtracted from average representations of CPI. For X-axis coordinates the sum of average representation of techniques based on influence of social group, i.e. image based on target audience, behavior based on target audience, creating of confident image and utilization of absolutes is subtracted from the sum of average representations of techniques based on influence of elite, i.e. emphasizing on authority and emphasizing on celebrity.

**Table 5.** Coordinates for placing advertisements in propaganda axis

	Y-axis	X-axis
CP	0,2	-0,8
R	0,7	0,0
PU	1,6	0,2
PP	1,5	0,0
SD	1,1	0,6
RP	1,1	0,1
Political	1,0	0,0
Non-Political	0,2	-0,5

From propaganda axis it is seen that political parties can be divided in two groups (see Figure 14). In one group there are CP and R, and in the other there are PU, PP, SD and RP. The former two parties are placed closer to the representation on non-political TV advertisements on the axis than latter four parties. It shows that two Estonian parties that have been constantly successful in Estonian elections are forming the propagandistic construction of their advertisements similarly to non-political advertisements rewarded in Cannes International Advertising Festival. Also it can be concluded that modern advertisements are based more on the influence of social group and less to the influence of leaders.



**Figure 14.** Placing of political parties in the propaganda axis

Based on the discourse analyse methodology by Norman Fairclough it is possible to draw three more conclusions.



First, in terms of hegemonic struggle it is important to associate political party with words with positive connotative meaning. These words must bear the ideological message of political party and be repeated during long period of time. In Estonia the only political party which is succeeded in creating such word and repeating it in period long enough is the Reform Party. Other parties have failed in either creating new abstract meanings or in making them the integral part of social discourse.

Second, for being successful in the attempts to influence electorate it is not sufficient to just apply traditional symbols with strong meanings, it is also important to identify party's visual image with the visual image of the target group. Centre Party is the only Estonian political party which succeeded in these attempts during 2003–2005 elections. People's Union, Res Publica and Pro Patria tried to benefit from applying traditional symbols. Reform Party and Social Democrats did not concentrate on visual images in their TV advertisements.

Third, non-political TV advertisements are more democratizing and move towards conversational discourse than political TV advertisements. In non-political TV advertisements the words and images are in use in similar proportions. At the same time there are more applied such propaganda techniques, which emanate from the target group not organization itself. In political TV advertisements there are in use mostly such propaganda techniques, which are based on words not on images. If propaganda techniques are based on visual images then they also emphasize on symbols with authoritative power.

Main differences and similarities of political and non-political TV advertisements are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Similarities and differences in implementing propaganda instruments in political and non-political TV advertisements

Similarities	Differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Selection of emotionally appealing images is implemented in both political and non-political TV advertisements.</li> <li>- Image based on target audience is implemented in both political and non-political TV advertisements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On average propaganda instruments are implemented more often in political TV advertisements.</li> <li>- TPI are not implemented in non-political TV advertisements.</li> <li>- CPI are the most frequently implemented propaganda instruments in political TV advertisements; in non-political TV advertisements the most frequently used propaganda instruments are SPI.</li> <li>- In political TV advertisements are more often relied to impact of elite; in non-political advertisements to impact of social group.</li> <li>- Humor and story-telling are integral part of non-political TV advertisements; in political advertisements implementation of humor and story-telling is casual.</li> <li>- Non-political TV advertisements are more democratizing than political TV advertisements.</li> </ul>

## 4. BASIS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Author wants to draw attention to questions raised by the results of this research. First of all, is there any connection between successful persuasive communication and ways of implementing propaganda instruments as indicates placement of the successful international non-political advertisements and the Estonian political propagandistic messages in the same quarter in the axis of propaganda?

Second, analysis showed that Estonian political parties differ in implementation of propaganda instruments and are differently placed in the propaganda axis. There are several possible reasons:

- Different ideology, for example maybe liberal and conservative parties differ in the implementation of fact manipulations or techniques aimed at using impact of elite or social group<sup>5</sup>.
- Preferences, requests and know-how of party leaders or campaign managers.
- Background, professionalism, experiences and know-how of agency hired for preparing advertisements.

Third question is why humor and story-telling are not implemented in Estonian political advertisements although they have been proved necessary in international non-political level. For that are also several possible reasons:

- Elections are considered to be too serious process and because of that presenting party platform in humorous way is regarded as inappropriate.
- Agencies are not capable in writing copies for such advertisements<sup>6</sup>.
- This option has not been considered to be important and useful.

Fourth question is about possibilities for further generalizations. For example, if Estonian political TV advertisements are more similar to modern foreign political TV advertisements or Estonian TV commercials? Is the absence of humor in political TV advertisements characteristic for only Estonian, or also foreign political TV advertisements? If humor and story-telling are implemented in foreign political TV advertisements it may be further proof that the structure of propaganda instruments is changing.

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<sup>5</sup> Intuitively should then be similar R and PP or CP and PU, not CP and R and PU and PP as show the results of this research.

<sup>6</sup> This cause might not have very high probability rate as R and PU have used humor in their advertisements.



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