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# Manipulative Strategies in Tennessee Williams' *The Night of Iguana*: A Discursive Study

**Pegah Ghanbari**
*PhD, Kharazmi University, Tehran and Karaj, Iran*
**Mohsen Hanif***
*Associate Professor in English literature, Kharazmi University, Tehran and Karaj, Iran*

## Abstract

Manipulation, one of the pivotal concepts in critical discourse analysis (CDA), is mainly considered a top-down strategy implemented by superior people on inferior ones, who are passive recipients of power, to further their goals and benefits. However, the present paper highlights manipulative strategies exercised by a less powerful individual on the more powerful one who, in turn, rather than being a passive victim, resists being manipulated by having gained counter-information to counterbalance the manipulator's arguments. In the present paper, a critical discourse analytic approach is adopted to trace the power struggle in interpersonal relationships, taking advantage of a textual-contextual analysis in general and manipulation in particular to lay bare how power relations are detectable in discourse and what strategies are employed to exert or neutralize power. The selected excerpt examines the exchange between an irresponsible tour guide who is concerned with his job security and a dissatisfied tourist who threatens to disclose his incompetency as a tour-guide which will probably result in his job loss. To accomplish this end, several manipulative strategies are identified in the chosen excerpt, drawing on Teun A. Van Dijk, Eddo Rigotti, De Saussure & Schulz and Sandrine Sorlin's proposed strategies. The aim is to indicate that manipulation can be exercised by less powerful individuals using specific strategies and discourses and the manipulated can also resist being manipulated by employing certain strategies.

**Keywords:** critical discourse analysis; manipulative strategies; interpersonal relationships

*Corresponding author: Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Kharazmi University, Tehran and Karaj, Iran. Email: mhanif@khu.ac.ir

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## 1. Introduction

Tennessee Williams's oeuvre abounds in the portrayal of power struggle and critique of unequal power relations, injustice, commodification, and corruption prevalent in his era. He noted, "every artist has a basic premise pervading his whole life, and that premise can provide the impulse to everything he creates. For me the dominating premise has been the heed for understanding and tenderness and fortitude among individuals trapped by circumstance" (Barnett, 1948, pp.113-114). Williams opposed the dehumanizing power of capitalism and "represents the machinery of capitalism as something vague that wrenches the human soul out of any recognizable shape and brilliantly creates an atmosphere of menace and futility" (Hooper, 2012, p.42). Throughout his corpus, he presented moral decay of America, the impossibility of recovering the past and idealized the Old South which "had a way of life that I am just old enough to remember—a culture that had grace, elegance . . . and inbred culture . . . not a society based on money, as in the North. I write out of a regret for that" (qtd. in Spoto, 1997, p.139). Williams' protagonists are "destroyed by the hard-edged realities of American power, as they were, more profoundly, by the ultimate futility of their attempts to resist natural process and the pull of time" (Bisgsby, 2000, p.38).

*The Night of Iguana (2009)* depicts the capitalist society of America during the Great Depression of the 1930's and the disintegration of the American economy. It is a critique of capitalist society, therefore different elements of capitalistic discourse is observed throughout the play, including job security, class difference and economic problems. C.W.E. Bigsby (2000) commented on Williams' radicalism, maintained,

> If, after the 1930s, Williams rarely chose to formulate his sense of political oppression in overtly political ways, his portraits of individuals pressed to the margins of social concern, trapped in diminishing social and psychological space, are not without ideological significance, for, as Michael Foucault has reminded us, there is a link between space and power. (p.36)

Shannon "tied in his hammock" is such character "a victim of a system resistant to human needs", "a political and economic system that encouraged corruption and broke the individual on the rack of private profit" (Bigsby, 2000, p.35-36).CDA is deemed to be an apt framework, since it also explores to lay bare

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injustice and inequality and the way asymmetry of power is evident in text and talk. It is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language and discourse in relation to their context and explores how language reinforces power relations and reproduces social and political inequality.

In what follows, the notion of manipulation in discourse and different manipulative strategies adopted by characters in this play are briefly discussed. Sometimes interactants may employ manipulative strategies to accomplish goals which are in their own interests and against the best interest of the addressee. They hide their real intentions to further their aims. Different strategies are suggested, like polarization between us and them, providing biased, incomplete or partial information, emphasizing one's power, appealing to certain ideologies of the day, and so on. These strategies might be met with success or failure in case of resistance from the addressee.

## 2. Method

This study aims to conduct a textual-contextual analysis on some excerpts of dialogues between an irresponsible tour guide and a dissatisfied passenger, taken from Tennessee Williams' *The Night of Iguana*. The theoretical stance taken in this study is CDA in general and manipulation in particular. By investigating the conversational behavior of these two characters, the asymmetry of power between them becomes evident. While manipulation is considered a top-down strategy, exerted by more powerful people on less powerful ones, this study aims to show it can also be a bottom-up strategy taken advantage of by less powerful people to change the trajectory of events to their interests. To this end, manipulative strategies proposed by some manipulation theoreticians were drawn upon, including Teun A. Van Dijk, Eddo Rigotti, De Saussure & Schulz and Sandrine Sorlin.

## 3. Manipulation as a Discursive Strategy

Critical Discourse Analysis has been an influential framework to study various phenomena. Manipulation is one of the pivotal concepts in Critical Discourse Analysis, which is defined as "persuading another person to think, feel, or act in some way that you desire" (Wray, 2009, p.267). Fairclough (1989) also delineated linguistic manipulation as "the conscious use of language in a devious way to control the others" (p.6). According to de Saussure and Schulz (2005), "to manipulate a human being may be about

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using a person, i.e. have that person adopt specific behaviors, to fulfill the needs and interests of the manipulator, regardless of the ones of the manipulated" (p.117). The matter of manipulative discourse dates back to the works of psychologists, sociologists, political scientists. These scientists defined manipulation as "impact on the person with the purpose to induce him to make something (to give information, to make an act, to change the behavior) unconsciously or contrary to his own desire, opinion and intention" (Troshina, 1990, p.63). As Sorlin (2017) claimed,

> The art of controlling others by having them do something that is not in their interest has indeed a long history of experimental testing, we can name the famous 'foot in the door' tactic tested by Freedman and Fraser (1966), the 'door-in-the-face' strategy (Cialdini etal.,1975), the importance of 'the touch' in manipulative strategies(Smith etal., 1982; Goldmanetal.,1985), the manipulation of 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger, 1957), the 'obedience to authority' testing (Milgram, 1963), and other 'weapons of influence' based on factors that affect decisions such as 'reciprocation' and 'liking' (Cialdini, 1984,2001) or engagement through preparatory acts(Joule and Beauvois, 2002; Beauvois,2011). (p.132)

Rigotti (2005) remarked, "a message is manipulative if it twists the vision of the world in the mind of the addressee, so that he/she is prevented from having a healthy attitude towards decision, and pursues the manipulator's goal in the illusion of pursuing her/his own goal" (p.68). For this to happen, a lie must seem to be true and an insincere promise has to seem authentic. To put it differently, "what is negative has to be somehow disguised as something positive" (Rigotti, 2005, p.68). Rigotti classified manipulative processes into six categories, falsity and insincerity, fallacies, violating presuppositions, manipulation exploiting the human instinct of referring to totality, the polarity temptation, distorting relevance and interest.

Van Dijk (2006) also proposed a triangulated approach to manipulation "as a form of social power abuse, cognitive mind control and discursive interaction" (p.359). Within his triangulation framework, he relates cognition, discourse and society. This theory asserts, "ideologies are the basic tools of organizing social cognition and a linkage between social cognitions and social actions (Vakili Latif, 2016, p.216). Discursive approaches are significant, for most manipulation takes place in text and talk. Cognitive dimension is also essential for manipulation targets human minds. Social approaches are urgent as well, for manipulation is a kind of talk-in-interaction and involves power and abuse of power. At the social level, manipulation is characterized as unauthorized domination conducive to social

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inequality. At the cognitive level, manipulation as mind control is regarded to interfere with processes of perception, leading to biased attitudes, opinions and ideologies. Discursively, manipulation grapples with ideological discourse like highlighting "our good things" and "their bad things" (Van Dijk, 2006, p.359). As Van Dijk (2006) claimed, at all the levels, the difference between manipulation and legitimate mind control, such as persuasion or providing information, is clearly displayed. In legitimate persuasion, the interactants are free to accept or reject the argument, while in manipulation, participants are victimized into believing or acting as manipulators please. Ethically, manipulation is a kind of illegitimate control which involves power abuse that is domination. We label manipulation illegitimate, for it does not take into account the interest of the manipulated and the real intention of the manipulator is hidden, hence it violates human rights. In this regard, Van Dijk (2006) conceives of manipulation to be "a communicative and interactional practice, in which a manipulator exercises control over other people, usually against their will or against their best interests" (p.360). In everyday interactions, manipulation has negative associations due to its violation of social norms and reproduction of inequality, in that manipulation is goal-oriented so is exercised to further manipulators goals which are against the best interests of the manipulated.

De Saussure and Schulz (2005) also identified some characteristics of manipulative discourse which are more or less in line with Dijk's, first of which is "covert intentionality" which proposes that manipulators generally don't provide the addressee with the whole information, but the part which is in their best interest (p.7). The second feature is asymmetrical nature of power relations which implies a top-down approach. This suggests that the manipulator is more powerful than the addressee and has a sort of power or superiority over the addressee. The third feature is benefit, that is the manipulator means to gain some benefit by using this strategy.

Van Dijk (2006) elaborated on why recipients of manipulation are deemed to be victims of this form of power abuse, which is mostly due to lack of essential resources to resist or ward off manipulation,

> (a) Incomplete or lack of relevant knowledge – so that no counter-arguments can be formulated against false, incomplete or biased assertions. (b) Fundamental norms, values and ideologies that cannot be denied or ignored. (c) Strong emotions, traumas, etc. that make people vulnerable. (d) Social positions, professions, status, etc. that induce people into tending to accept the discourses, arguments, etc. of elite persons, groups organizations. (p.375)

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Manipulative discourse is generally considered a unidirectional, top-down process, imposed by the more powerful individuals on the less powerful ones. As Van Dijk (2006) held "manipulation, socially speaking, is a discursive form of elite power reproduction that is against the best interests of dominated groups and (re)produces social inequality" (p.364). This definition leaves the addressee a passive recipient who is acted upon, with limited choice of producing counter-discourses. However, as Van Dijk (2006) confirmed, power can also be exercised from below, as a bottom-up practice by the less powerful to further their goals. Then, it is possible to resist manipulation by producing counter-discourses and turn the manipulation against the manipulator. Taking into account such contextual constraints, there are some strategies employed by manipulators to neutralize the probable counter-discourses, such as,

> (a) Emphasize the position, power, authority or moral superiority of the speaker(s) or their sources – and, where relevant, the inferior position, lack of knowledge, etc. of the recipients. (b) Focus on the (new) beliefs that the manipulator wants the recipients to accept as knowledge, as well as on the arguments, proofs, etc. that make such beliefs more acceptable. (c) Discredit alternative (dissident, etc.) sources and beliefs. (d) Appeal to the relevant ideologies, attitudes and emotions of the recipients'. (Van Dijk, 2006, p.376).

## *4.* Manipulative Discourse in *The Night of Iguana*

The chosen exchange is between Shannon, an irresponsible tour guide, and Miss Fellowes, a dissatisfied tourist who has been enraged by Shannon's incompetency, coolness and depravity so she decided to tell on him. Shannon, feeling threatened to lose his job and driven by having solely his own interest in mind does his best to calm Miss Fellowes down, to secure his occupation by employing several manipulative strategies, while he makes no effort to see to the tourists' needs and wants which are of no importance to him. In manipulation, the notion of interest is of utmost importance in that manipulation is goal-oriented (extra-linguistic goals). As Van Dijk (2006) contended, "manipulators make others believe or do things that are in the interest of the manipulator and against the best interests of the manipulated" as is the case here (p.360). Intentionality is another manipulative parameter, for "there is some deliberate deceptive intention involved in manipulation" (Maillat and Oswald, 2009, p. 359). This condition is also met in this play, since Shannon intends to pass himself off as a dutiful tour guide to secure his job. To this end, he pins the blame on others and brings excuses for not doing his job properly, rather than accepting his

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own shortcomings and trying to change for the better. Covertness is another manipulative feature which means the manipulator's goal mostly remains covert, while it is not a necessary condition and manipulation can happen when the manipulator reveals his/her real goal. (Maillat and Oswald, 2009, p.369). Here, Shannon's goal remains covert in that he does not disclose his real intention which is job security. As Van Dijk (2006) posited, the recipient of manipulation is a victim when he/she does not realize the speaker's real intention and the entire repercussion of the speaker's endorsed beliefs or actions. This negative reverberation of manipulation ensues particularly when the recipient does not have the necessary knowledge to resist or counteract manipulation (Wodak, 1987). Miss Fellowes, on the other hand, rather than being a passive recipient of manipulation, resists being manipulated by gaining counter-information to turn the manipulation against its utterer, which is explored later in this paper.

Often, manipulators resort to superior power and social inequity to enhance their domination, therefore, social conditions of manipulation must be taken into account "in terms of group membership, institutional position, profession, material or symbolic resources and other factors that define the power of groups and their members" in that some forms of manipulative control happen because the manipulator is in a higher position of power compared to the manipulated. (Van Dijk, 2005, p.362). One manipulative strategy Van Dijk (2006) recounted is to "emphasize the position, power, authority or moral superiority of the speaker(s) or their sources – and, where relevant, the inferior position, lack of knowledge, etc. of the recipients" (p.376). Though commonly a tour guide is in charge of taking care of tourists, organizing the trip, offering advice or giving commands then has more power than tourists, it should be taken into account that tour guides themselves are hired by a travel agency and are under strict scrutiny not to fail in fulfilling their duties. Accordingly, it is vital to tour guides that passengers be content with them for their jobs to be secured. In this exchange, Shannon is not in the position of power in view of being threatened by Miss Fellowes to be reported as an incompetent tour guide, hence he is overwhelmingly scared to lose his job. That is why, by employing several manipulative strategies, he tries to manipulate Miss Fellowes into believing that he has been a qualified tour guide, to prove her wrong. Van Dijk (2006) held one manipulative strategy employed by manipulators is taking advantage of their "social positions, professions, status, etc. that induce people into tending to accept the discourses, arguments, etc. of elite persons, groups or organizations" (p.375). Accordingly, he protects his face by self-praise, referring to himself as a "gentle man", "minister" and "tour guide" (Williams, 2009, p.19). Resorting to his power as a tour guide, a gentleman and a minister (though hiding his defrocked position), Shannon strives to dominate Miss Fellowes to reproduce and consolidate his power, mentioning his superior power

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as a tour guide, "I thought that I was conducting this party, not you". He also referred to his well-bread status as a gentleman, "I am a gentleman, and as a gentleman I can't be insulted like this" (Williams, 2009, p.19). As Sorlin (2017) noted, "using Self Face Flattering Acts to 'give a high value' to the Self as an enticing strategy" is a manipulative tactic (p.132). He also informed her about his power as a minister, "you're speaking to an ordained minister of the Church" (Williams, 2009, p.19). By pointing to his seemingly higher position, Shannon employed "strategy of positive self-presentation" as well (Van Dijk, 2006, p.373). Furthermore, Shannon resorts to passing himself off as a minister to dominate Miss Fellowes, hiding the fact that he has been recently defrocked. "Hiding the truth is an aspect of falsity and disinformation", a manipulative device recounted by Rigotti (2005, p.71). According to him, "truth and felicity conditions have been proposed as relevant criteria defining manipulative strategies in terms of falsity and insincerity" (2005, p.71). As Maillat and Oswald (2009) also remarked, "the deliberate use of a false statement is manipulative" (p.352). They contended, that from the view point of speech-act-theory, manipulation violates felicity conditions, particularly the sincerity condition. As Sorlin (1975) observed, "manipulative discourse is parasitic on both Grice's (1989) Cooperative Principle and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies" (2017, p.132). Shannon flouted the maxim of quality by passing himself off as a minister, with the intention of threatening Miss Fellowes of his supposed higher position. Shannon also resorts to denial to exonerate himself, for instance, regarding the disease inflicted upon most tourists, Shannon emphasized, "it is not dysentery, it is not amoebic, it's nothing at all but— " (Williams, 2009, p.18). Elsewhere, to manipulate Miss Fellowes into believing he has done his duties quite well, Shannon employed a manipulative strategy by which manipulators give biased, incomplete, partial information to the recipients to impose constraints on their interpretative process (Maillat & Oswald, 2009, p.362). Shannon also distorted the real fact about his making profit from selling pills to tourists, "I even passed out pills. I passed out bottles of Enteroviaform" to which Miss Fellowes replied, "You sold those pills at a profit of fifty cents per bottle" highlighting that he tended to his own personal profit not theirs (Williams, 2009, p.19). As Maillat & Oswald (2009) posited, "manipulative discourse is a form of communication that puts the addressee in a situation where s/he will be led to shallow-process contextual assumptions" (p.362). However, as is evident, Miss Fellowes is not a typical passive victim of manipulation. Rather than being a credulous woman, she gained counter-information to be able to condemn Shannon and resist getting tricked by his biased, partial information and thus avoiding the cognitive tendency called shallow processing (Allott & Rubio Fernández, 2002). She retorted, "I priced them in pharmacies, because I suspected that— " (Williams, 2009, p.19). As Van Dijk (2006) noted,

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"one of the best ways to detect and resist manipulation attempts is specific knowledge as well as general knowledge" (p.371). When Shannon pointed to his position as a minister, Miss Fellowes instead of getting mislead, retorted, "de-frocked! But still trying to pass himself off as a minister" for she had gained knowledge to counter his arguments (Williams, 2009, p.19). Later on, when Shannon blamed what they ate for their illness, Miss Fellowes replied, "it's not what we ate but where we ate that gave us dysentery! "so she made clear where they ate, for which Shannon was in charge, gave them dysentery "for disregarding all rules of sanitation" (Williams, 2009, p.18). Subsequently, When Shannon posited, "they just don't know Mexico. I do. I know it as well as I know five out of all six continents on the—"; Miss Fellowes replied back, "you never even studied geography if you—"(Williams, 2009, p.17). When Shannon emotionalized the exchange by pointing to "his faith in essential human goodness" to influence Miss Fellowes, she responded, "essential human goodness?' Why, just plain human decency is beyond your imagination " (Williams, 2009, p.16).

Shannon, furthermore, uses ideological polarization strategy (us vs. them). Characters can "represent 'ours' and 'others' in […] the way they like and, thereby, influence the ideology of [others]" (Rahimi et al., 2008, p.116). Shannon also discredits the opponent strategy when he degrades hotels in Texas and exalts the hotel he chose, "Miss Fellowes, there is such a thing as charm and beauty in some places, as much as there's nothing but dull, ugly imitation of highway motels in Texas" (Williams, 2009, p.17). Shannon also pointed to his effort "to make the tour more... unique - to make it different from the ordinary, to give it a personal thing, the Shannon touch" (Williams, 2009, p.19). Such manipulative strategies underpin positive self-representation in favor of the Shannon's own interests which is job security. Another manipulative strategy employed by Shannon is to "appeal to the relevant ideologies, attitudes and emotions of the recipients" (Van Dijk, 2006, p.376). Shannon highlighted his personal problems to emotionalize the argument by uttering "my life has cracked up on me", "I'm at the end of my rope", "it would … shake if not shatter everything left of my faith in essential--human... goodness!" and "Don't! Break! Human! Pride! " (Williams, 2009, pp.16-19). As Van Dijk (2006) asserted manipulators resort to "strong emotions, traumas, etc. that make people vulnerable", what Shannon did exactly (p.375).

As Van Dijk (2006) made clear, when manipulators wish to thwart understanding, they "speak faster, less distinctly, with more complex sentences, with more abstruse words, a confused topic on a subject less familiar to the recipients" that is they flout the maxim of manner (p.366). As Rigotti (2005)

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also held, equivocation is a kind of fallacy which is in turn a manipulative device (p.72). This is the strategy employed by Shannon to keep Miss Fellowes in the dark, "I am employed by Blake Tours and so I'm not in a position to tell you quite frankly what mistakes they've made in their advertising brochure. They just don't know Mexico. I do" (Williams, 2009, p.17). As is evident, he does not make clear which mistakes exactly they have made in the brochure. Another manipulative strategy is using rhetorical figures like hyperbole, when "people's emotions may be roused and appealed to by specially selected words, dramatic rhetoric (hyperboles, etc.), photographs, and so on" (Van Dijk, 2006, p.376). Myriad times, Shannon used hyperbole to exaggerate facts, like when he declared, "I'm at the end of my rope", or when he contended that Miss Fellowes's telling on him will bring about the wavering of his faith in human goodness, "it would […] shake if not shatter everything left of my faith in essential--human... goodness!", or when he claimed, "I know five out of all six continents" or "name any tourist agency I haven't worked for! You couldn't" (Williams, 2009, pp.16-19). "The fallacy of generalization" is another manipulative tool Shannon employed (Rigotti, 2005, p.72). As Van Dijk (2006) held, as well, "one of these strategies is generalization, in which case a concrete specific example that has made an impact on people's mental models, is generalized to more general knowledge or attitudes, or even fundamental ideologies" (p.370). When he declared, "in every party there is always one individual that's discontented", he tries to make generalization to justify his misdeeds, naturalize her dissatisfaction and also to "discredit alternative (dissident, etc.) sources and beliefs" (Williams, 2009, 19; Van Dijk, 2006, p.376). It is also an instance of violating presuppositions in that "the addressee is led to believe that he is ignorant of something he should already know and hurries ashamed to adhere" (Rigotti, 2005, p.72). "Negative other-presentation" is another manipulative strategy used by Shannon (Van Dijk, 2006, p.373). He makes effort to divert Miss Fellowes attention from his irresponsibility by shifting the topic and pinning the blame on her, therefore flouting the maxim of relevance. He points that the real cause of her anger is not really his incompetency but something personal,

> Isn't it just as plain to you as it is to me that your hysterical insults, which are not at all easy for any born and bred gentleman to accept, are not... motivated, provoked by... anything as trivial as the, the... the motivations that you're, you're... ascribing them to? Now can't we talk about the real, true cause of... […] your rage (Williams, 2009, p.17).

Somewhere else he declared, "don't make me feel that any adult human being puts personal compensation before the dreadful, bare fact of a man at the end of his rope who still has to try to go on" (Williams, 2009, p.16). When Miss Fellowes maintained Shannon sold pills to make profit, Shannon complained,

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"now fun is fun, Miss Fellowes, but an accusation like that— " (Williams, 2009, p.19). Later on he mentioned, "for days I've known you were furious and unhappy " (Williams, 2009, p.18). He also accused her of being "the leader of the insurrection! " (Williams, 2009, p.19).

Moreover, self-interested politeness which is goal-oriented is another manipulative strategy employed by manipulators. In *The Night of Iguana*, by manipulatively exploiting politeness tactic, Shannon means to further his goal and dominate Miss Fellowes. As Sorlin (2017, p.134) proposed, "manipulative discourse is parasitic on both politeness and impoliteness strategies to various degrees". He enumerated three manipulative tactics, "1.Taking advantage of the victims' emotional vulnerability and/or face needs, 2. Consenting to false Self Face-Threatening act (Chen, 2001), and 3. Using Self Face Flattering Acts to 'give a high value' to the Self as an enticing strategy" (Sorlin, 2017, p.132). Sorlin's tactics are quite observable in the exchange between Shannon and Miss Fellowes. Shannon resorts to honorific strategies by employing the honorific title "Miss". To address Miss Fellowes numerous times (Williams, 2009, p.16). He also once called her "honey" which is a title of affection to get closer to her emotionally (Williams, 2009, p.18). He also adopts a positive politeness strategy which is called "claiming common ground" trying to arouse some 'in-group' empathy, "like everyone else, at some point or other in life, my life has cracked up on me" (Williams, 2009, p.16). By emotionalizing the conversation and playing on Miss Fellowes vulnerability, he hopes to seek agreement. He also fulfils Miss Fellowes's face want when he treats her respectfully, "excuse me, Miss Fellowes, for not getting out of this hammock, but I... Miss Fellowes? Please sit down a minute. I want to confess something to you" (Williams, 2009, p.15). Apologies, as Grainger and Harris (2007) posited are "perhaps the example par excellence of politeness at work" (p.1). However, his apology is insincere, goal-oriented and infelicitous, a "pseudo-apology" in Sorlin's terms and thus manipulative (2017, p.142). Another example of manipulative use of politeness strategies is when he referred to the real cause of miss Fellowes' s anger, "isn't it just as plain to you as it is to me that your hysterical insults, which are not at all easy for any born and bred gentleman to accept, are not... motivated, provoked by... anything as trivial as the, the... the motivations that you're, you're... ascribing them to? "(Williams, 2009, p.17). Rather than imposing an unredressive FTA, Shannon adopts an off-record FTA or "(Fake) Self-face threatening acts (SFTA) " in Sorlin's terms, which are defied as acts that "if done without redress, will threaten [the Speaker's] own face" (Chen, 2001, p.95). In his statement, Shannon also used hedging opinion, ellipsis and repetition to redress the threat. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), "one characteristic device in positive politeness is to hedge these extremes, so as to make one's own opinion safely vague" (p.116).

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## 5. Conclusion

As a form of power abuse, manipulation fosters inequality, reproduces power and "involves, enhancing the power, moral superiority and credibility of the speaker(s), and discrediting dissidents, while vilifying the others, the enemy" (Van Dijk, 2006, p.380). Manipulation is generally considered a strategy exercised by more powerful people over less powerful ones (Van Dijk, 2006). While the main objective of this paper is to indicate how manipulation might also be a bottom-up strategy exercising by the less powerful people over the most powerful ones to persuade them into adopting certain attitudes or ideologies or inducing them to do something against their will. In this play, Shannon tries to dissuade Miss Fellowes from telling on him in order to secure his occupation and constructing an appealing image of himself, by employing different manipulative strategies like, positive self-representation, flouting maxims of relevance, quality and quantity, emotionalizing the exchange, giving partial information to hide the truth, employing rhetorical figures like exaggerating the fact, the fallacy of generalization to justify his misdeed, honoirific strategies, self face-flattering acts, negative other representation, and the like. However, Miss Fellowes, rather than being a passive victim, resists being manipulated by gaining counter-information to challenge and give Shannon's lies away. She thereby turns the manipulation against the manipulator. To this end, manipulative strategies suggested by theoreticians such as Teun A. Van Dijk, Eddo Rigotti, De Saussure & Schulz and Sandrine Sorlin were drawn upon.

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