

# **THE MENTAL MODEL AS A MEDIUM TO INFLUENCE AND DIRECT BUSINESS DISCOURSE**

**RUZANNA BAGHRAMYAN**

Armenian State University of Economics

Lecturer

rouzannabaghramyana@gmail.com

**LUSINE HARUTYUNYAN**

Armenian State University of Economics

Head of the Chair of Languages

Doctor of Philology, Professor

lusineharutyunyan100@yahoo.com

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## **Abstract**

The paper aims to analyze the reproduction of mental models in business communication, highlighting the sociocognitive aspect of discourse both on personal and social levels. Discourse is a complex cognitive activity, which, according to some researchers (Graesser, Millis, van Dijk and Kintsch), comprises 5 levels; 1. surface code (words and syntax), 2. text base (semantic representation of the text), 3. situation model (all explicit and implicit factors about discourse), 4. genre and rhetorical structure (narration, description, argumentation, etc. and corresponding rhetorical structures) and 5. pragmatic communication (setting, time, place, social status of the participants, etc.). Discourse is comprehended and activated in accordance with external and internal factors inextricably intertwined in one particular situation. The social dimension of discourse in conjunction with cognitive processes hugely contributes to the formation of mental models that can affect the course of any interaction. Mental models are subjective representations based on personal cognitive processes. The cognitive processes in one's mind (thinking, perceiving, understanding, feeling) create mental models, which are underpinned by the empirical data that one has in his mind or by the acquired knowledge that can be later utilized in various situational discourses. On the one hand, mental models are construed as a form or part of ideology, however, one can detect discrepancies between the ideology shared by a group, society, company, etc. and ideologically based personal attitudes (mental models). The discursive dimension of ideology presupposes cognitive processes in various social situations which makes ideologies susceptible to different interpretations. Values and merits that constitute the foundation of a particular ideology within a group or society are subject to certain alterations in order to minimize the risk of becoming anachronistic since its foremost aim is not only to anchor to its values and merits but also to expand the scope of the people who will share the same ideology. To achieve the above-mentioned goal, one needs discourse as the most effective tool available to target a larger number of "prospective ideologists". For instance, the discrepancies that may exist between the ideology and mental models can be reduced or eliminated by finding a

common base acknowledged by all participants in the communication process. It can be a cultural, social, historical, or even business ground that will be able to persuade participants of the interaction to debate, discuss and achieve mutually beneficial solutions. Since the purpose of this research is to demonstrate how mental models are activated in business discourse, the scope of the research is narrowed to the analysis of the communicative and ongoing business situations by applying SCDS (Sociocognitive Discourse Studies) approach. SCDS is a multidisciplinary type of Critical Discourse Analysis that focuses on the interface between the discourse and society.

**Keywords and phrases:** Mental models, semantic models, context models, ideology, business discourse.

**ՄՏԱՎՈՐ ԿԱՂԱՊԱՐԸ՝ ՈՐՊԵՍ ԳՈՐԾԱՐԱՐ ԽՈՍՈՒՅԹԻ ՎՐԱ ԱԶԴԵԼՈՒ  
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**ՌՈՒԶԱՆՆԱ ԲԱՂՐԱՄՅԱՆ**

Հայաստանի պետական տնտեսագիտական համալսարանի  
դասախոս  
rouzannabaghramyan@gmail.com

**ԼՈՒՍԻՆԵ ՀԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՅԱՆ**

Հայաստանի պետական տնտեսագիտական համալսարանի  
լեզուների ամբիոնի վարիչ,  
բանասիրական գիտությունների դոկտոր, պրոֆեսոր  
lusineharutyunyan100@yahoo.com

**Համառոտագիր**

Սույն հոդվածը միտված է վերլուծելու մտավոր կաղապարների վերարտադրությունը գործարար հաղորդակցման մեջ՝ ընդգծելով խոսույթի հասարական-ճանաչողական կողմը անձնական և հասարակական մակարդակներում: Խոսույթը բարդ ճանաչողական գործունեություն է, որը, ըստ որոշ հետազոտողների (Գրեյսեր, Միլիս, վան Դեյկ և Կինտշ), ներառում է 5 մակարդակ. 1. մակերեսային ծածկագիր (բառեր և շարահյուսություն), 2. տեքստային հիմք (տեքստի իմաստային ներկայացում), 3. իրավիճակի մոդել (դիսկուրսի վերաբերյալ բոլոր բացահայտ և անուղղակի գործոնները), 4. ժանրային և հռետորական կառուցվածք (շարադրանք, նկարագրություն, փաստարկում և այլն, ինչպես նաև համապատասխան հռետորական կառույցներ) 5. պրագմատիկ հաղորդակցություն (մասնակիցների միջավայրը, ժամանակը, վայրը, սոցիալական կարգավիճակը և այլն): Խոսույթը ընկալվում և ակտիվանում է արտաքին և ներքին գործոնների համաձայն, որոնք անքակտելիորեն փոխկապակցված են մեկ կոնկրետ իրավիճակում: Խոսույթի սոցիալական հարթությունը, ճանաչողական գործընթացների հետ համատեղ, մեծապես նպաստում է մտավոր կաղապարների ձևավորմանը, որոնք կարող են ազդել ցանկացած հաղորդակցության ընթացքի վրա: Մտավոր կաղապարները սուբյեկտիվ պատկերացումներ են՝ հիմնված անձնական, ճանաչողական գործընթացների վրա: Ճանաչողական գործընթացները (մտածել, ընկալել, հասկանալ, զգալ) ստեղծում են մտավոր կաղապարներ, որոնք հիմնված են էմպիրիկ տվյալների վրա, որոնք մարդն ունի իր մտքում կամ ձեռք է բերել գիտելիքների միջոցով, և հետագայում կարող է կիրառել տարբեր իրավիճակային խոսույթներում: Մտավոր մոդելները մեկնաբանվում

են որպես գաղափարախոսության ձև կամ մաս, նկատելի է անհամապատասխանություն՝ խմբի, հասարակության, ընկերության և այլնի կողմից ներկայացվող գաղափարախոսության և գաղափարականորեն հիմնավորված անձնական վերաբերմունքի (մտավոր կաղապարներ) միջև: Գաղափարախոսության դիսկուրսիվ հատկությունը ենթադրում է ճանաչողական գործընթացներ տարբեր սոցիալական իրավիճակներում, որոնք հնարավորություն են ընձեռում գաղափարախոսության տարատեսակ մեկնությունների: Արժեքները և արժանիքները, որոնք կազմում են որևէ խմբի կամ հասարակության գաղափարախոսության հենքը, ենթակա են որոշակի փոփոխությունների՝ ժամանակավրեպ դառնալու վտանգը նվազագույնի հասցնելու նպատակով, քանի որ գաղափարախոսության առաջնային նպատակը ոչ միայն իր արժեքներին և արժանիքներին խարսխելն է, այլ նաև ընդլայնել այն մարդկանց շրջանակը, որոնք կունենան նույն գաղափարախոսությունը: Վերոգրյալ նպատակին հասնելու համար խոսույթն ամենաարդյունավետ գործիքն է՝ առավել մեծ թվով «հեռանկարային գաղափարախոսներ» թիրախավորելու համար: Օրինակ՝ նման անհամապատասխանությունները կարելի է նվազեցնել կամ վերացնել հաղորդակցման բոլոր մասնակիցների կողմից ընդունելի ընդհանուր հենքի վերհանման միջոցով: Տվյալ հենքը կարող է լինել մշակութային, սոցիալական, պատմական կամ նույնիսկ գործարար, որի օգնությամբ հաղորդակցության մասնակիցները կարող են բանավիճել, քննարկել և հասնել փոխշահավետ լուծումների: Քանի որ տվյալ հոդվածի շրջանակներում փորձ է արվում ներկայացնել, թե ինչպես են մտավոր կաղապարները ակտիվանում և իրացվում գործարար խոսույթում, ուսումնասիրության շրջանակը ներառում է միայն հաղորդակցական գործարար իրավիճակների վերլուծություն՝ հասարակական-ճանաչողական խոսույթի ուսումնասիրության մեթոդի կիրառմամբ:

**Բանալի բառեր և բառակապակցություններ.** մտավոր կաղապարներ, իմաստային կաղապարներ, համատեքստային կաղապարներ, գաղափարախոսություն, գործարար խոսույթ:

# **МЕНТАЛЬНАЯ МОДЕЛЬ КАК СРЕДСТВО ВОЗДЕЙСТВИЯ И НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ ДЕЛОВОГО ДИСКУРСА**

**РУЗАННА БАГРАМЯН**

Армянский государственный экономический университет  
преподаватель  
rouzannabaghramyan@gmail.com

**ЛУСИНЭ АРУТЮНЯН**

Армянский государственный экономический университет  
заведующая кафедрой языков  
доктор филологических наук, профессор  
lusineharutyunyan100@yahoo.com

## **Аннотация**

В данной статье делается попытка проанализировать воспроизведение ментальных моделей в деловой коммуникации, рассматривая социокогнитивный аспект дискурса как на личностном, так и на социальном уровнях. Дискурс – это сложный познавательный процесс, который, по мнению некоторых исследователей (Грессер, Миллис, ван Дейк и Кинч), включает 5 уровней: 1- поверхностный код (слова и синтаксис), 2-текстовая база (семантическое представление текста), 3- модель ситуации (все видимые и невидимые факторы дискурса), 4-жанровая и риторическая структура (повествование, описание, аргументация и т.д.), 5- прагматическая коммуникация (обстановка, место, время, социальный статус участников и т.д.). Дискурс осознаётся и активизируется в соответствии с внешними и внутренними факторами, которые неразрывно переплетены в деловом общении. Социальное измерение дискурса в сочетании с когнитивными процессами способствует формированию ментальных моделей, которые могут повлиять на процесс коммуникации. Ментальные модели - это субъективные представления, основанные на личных когнитивных процессах. Когнитивные процессы в сознании (мышление, восприятие, понимание, чувства) создают ментальные модели, подкреплённые эмпирическими данными или знаниями, имеющимися в сознании, которые могут быть использованы в различных ситуационных дискурсах. С другой стороны, ментальные модели рассматриваются как одна из форм или часть идеологии. Вместе с тем следует дифференцировать идеологию, разделяемую группой людей, обществом, компанией и т.д., и идеологию, основанную на личных отношениях, которые определяются как ментальные модели. Дискурсивное измерение идеологии предполагает когнитивные процессы в различных социальных ситуациях, что делает идеологию восприимчивой к различным интерпретациям. Ценности и достоинства, составляющие основу определенной идеологии в группе или в обществе, могут быть изменены с целью сокращения риска анахронизма, поскольку главная цель идеологии - не только закрепить ценности и достоинства, но и расширить круг людей, которые будут разделять ту же

идеологию. Для достижения вышеупомянутой цели нужен дискурс как наиболее эффективный инструмент, доступный для охвата большего числа «предполагаемых идеологов». Разграничения и разницу между двумя типами идеологий можно уменьшить или устранить, найдя общую основу, признанную всеми участниками коммуникативного процесса. Это может быть культурная, социальная, историческая или даже деловая основа, которая может убедить стороны делового общения принимать участие в обсуждении для достижения взаимовыгодных решений. Поскольку цель этого исследования - анализ процесса активизации и реализации ментальных моделей в деловом дискурсе, область исследования включает анализ коммуникативных и текущих деловых ситуаций с применением метода социокогнитивного исследования (SCDS). SCDS (социокогнитивные исследования дискурса) - это междисциплинарный тип критического анализа дискурса, который фокусируется на взаимодействии между дискурсом и обществом.

**Ключевые слова и словосочетания:** ментальные модели, семантические модели, контекстные модели, идеология, бизнес, дискурс.

## **Mental Models and Ideology**

Mental models are prototypes of verbal interpretations of different situations, events, and phenomena that exist in a human brain based on personal attitudes. The notion was first introduced by Kenneth Craik in his work "Nature of Explanation", which laid the ground for the development and advancement of the theory of mental reasoning developed by Philipp Johnson-Laird and Ruth M. J. Byrne in 1991. The perception of reality may differ from person to person; hence the mental models/images of that reality are not always the same. "If the organism carries a "small-scale model" of external reality and of its possible actions within its head, it is able to try out various alternatives, conclude which is best of them, react to future situations before they arise, utilize the knowledge of past events in dealing with the present and the future and in every way to react in a much fuller, safer, and more competent manner to the emergencies which face it" [7, p. 73]. Any time when a person hears, reads, or is involved in some situation, or event, they construct the mental model of that situation or event, and all participants of the same event create different mental models in their Episodic or Autobiographical Memory. Once the information is perceived, processed, formed and stored during cognitive processes, it can be activated through the application of a meaningful discourse that embodies their personal, biased interpretation of the event, situation, etc. The reproduction of mental models is executed through specific linguistic means relevant to each particular situation; grammar, lexicon, semantics, pragmatics, etc. The theory of mental models is closely related to the script or scenario theory, which includes information about people and the purpose of their actions. The latter is a medium to structure the information or depict the event as a frame, which is important, for instance, for understanding "why a hungry woman would go to get a telephone book" [4, p. 44]. R. Schank and R. Abelson defined the most typical terminals of frame scenarios. In this particular case, the frame scenario is a combination of questions and answers related to a hypothetical situation. For example, the following questions can be used for the "child's birthday party" frame-scenario: "Should there be a dress code for the guests? Has the present been chosen already? Will he/she like it? Where has it been bought from? Where to get money from?", etc. Likewise, we should be aware that when a hungry woman goes to get a telephone book, there are "numbers of take-out restaurants, and that the woman must be looking up such a number in order to achieve her goal of getting food" [4, p. 44]. According to Teun A. van Dijk, in order to completely perceive the discourse, the presence of a situation model is a necessity. "Yet there are also differences between real situations and their cognitive counterparts. For instance:

1. Since we cannot and need not know all facts of the world, cognitive models are typically fragmentary and incomplete.

2. Models may represent real situations at different levels of generality. Thus, we may globally represent in a model the complex action "John made a trip to Portugal," whereas, in reality, this action consists of a highly complex and continuous sequence of events, actions, objects, and people, of which only a small subset appears in the model.

3. The concepts in a model are not arbitrary but reflect socially relevant interpretations of situations. For instance, the transmission of an object from one person to another in some social situations may be seen as "giving a present."

4. Apart from the social constraints on conceptualizations of situations, cognitive models are of course personal or subjective: the same situation may be interpreted in different ways, from different perspectives, and with individually different goals in mind, by different people." [2, p. 171-172].

Teun A. van Dijk also distinguishes between semantic mental models and situation or context/pragmatic mental models. "Context models are specific instances of our ongoing experiences in which we represent (and hence understand) the social situation in which we are currently involved and active (or that define our plans for future)". "Whereas mental models represent what discourse is about (refers to) may be called semantic models" [11, p., 8]. The premise that each individual has a personal attitude, and the individual mental image of a specific situation, or event is a fact. Yet, it should be also noted, that these individuals may also share group or social ideologies, which may either coincide or vary from their mental representations of the same situation or event. To understand these variations, let us refer to the concept of ideology.

The notion of ideology dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century when French philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy coined the term and referred to it as a "science of ideas". Since then, a whole host of scientific articles and books have been written about ideology, and yet, it still remains one of the vaguest and disputable notions in social sciences. The representatives of Marxist schools regard ideologies as "false consciousness", that is, "popular but misguided beliefs inculcated by the ruling class in order to legitimate the status quo and to conceal the real socioeconomic conditions of the workers" [11, p. 7]. Due to these perceptions, the concept of ideology has almost invariably been accepted as a negative phenomenon. T. van Dijk proposes a more general interpretation of ideology on the premise that "ideologies need not be negative, they need not be dominant. They can be positive or oppositional" [11, p. 8]. Karl Mannheim calls these positive ideologies 'utopias', and claims that "ideas are products of their times and of the social statuses of their proponents". According to Van Dijk, "Ideologies are the fundamental beliefs of a group and its members" [11, p. 7]. Drawing on this, we can conclude that the path of a gradual evolution of ideology is as follows: first stage - ideas; staples, vital but yet volatile components that need to be refined after a period of contemplation, second stage beliefs; these are already refined ideas that have withstood the test of time and are more stable and sounder, the third stage - when beliefs are transformed into ideology in the form of principles that one adheres to and rarely violates.

The examples below are excerpts from 2 different movies – "The Godfather" and "Pretty Woman" and illustrate group and social ideologies respectively. On both occasions language is the main medium to convey their ideologies. The interactions comprise business negotiation and business-to-customer conversation. The first excerpt, which displays group ideology, is about a negotiation between Mr. Vito Corleone and Mr. Sollozzo. Mr. Sollozzo comes to Mr. Corleone to offer a deal – share in the narcotics

business in lieu of money, protection from the police and courts. Mr. Vito Corleone refuses and the ground is the ideology that the family/group shares. They do not want to get involved in the drug business, which is a dirty and dangerous field.

Mr. Corleone – It's true, I have a lot of friends in politics. *They wouldn't be friends long if I was involved* in drugs instead of gambling which they regard as a *harmless vice*, but drugs are a dirty business. It doesn't make any difference to me what a man does for a living. But your business is... a *little* dangerous [**"The Godfather"**, mins. 0:37:43-0:38:08]<sup>13</sup>.

By saying friends, Mr. Corleone means high-rank officials who protect his gambling business. Through discourse and the application of appropriate linguistic devices, Mr. Corleone presents his ideology. The usage of the second conditional in the first part of the sentence indicates that Mr. Corleone is talking hypothetically and the reality is the opposite, therefore the condition is unlikely to be fulfilled. He emphasizes the undesirable outcome that he can face (*they wouldn't be friendly long*), in case he accepts Mr. Sollozzo's proposition. Furthermore, to intensify the effect of the message, Mr. Corleone is trying to communicate it via conditional structure, as well as to display his mental model pertaining to gambling (a type of business he is involved in), in the second part of the sentence, Mr. Corleone employs an oxymoron (*harmless vice*) to juxtapose two different concepts: *harmless* and *vice*, with positive and negative meanings respectively. As is known, an oxymoron is a "phrase that combines two words that seem to be the opposite of each other, such as a deafening silence" [8, p. 502]. The group ideology that Mr. Corleone belongs to is premised on the sentiment that the *vice*, which is defined as a "moral weakness or bad habit" [8, p. 766], they execute, is assuaged by being *harmless* (not able or not likely to cause damage or injury), [8, p. 334]. They will not enter the narcotics business since it is against their principles/beliefs, unlike gambling which is a *harmless vice*. In the conflict between profit and ideology, ideology prevails. Concurrently, Mr. Corleone makes an effort to make the refusal less offensive by using the quantifier *little*, which mitigates somewhat the reasoning for the refusal. The pause (which is an indicator of a cognitive process) that Mr. Corleone takes before using the quantifier *little*, indicates that he is trying to find an appropriate word (linguistic expression) that will, to some extent, reduce the polarity that exists between their mental models.

In the second movie, "Pretty woman", the core ideology refers to the social (upper and lower) class segregation, where society members have deep-seated principles and beliefs pertaining to the poor, and the rich. The film is structured on two main characters Vivien, a prostitute, representing the low class of society and Edward, an affluent businessman representing the upper class of society. After spending a night with Vivien, Edward asks her to accompany him to various business events and gives him some money so that Vivien can purchase appropriate clothes. Irrespective of her "profession", which has, for all intents and purposes, socially induced roots, Vivien is a kind-hearted, honest woman, who has been brought to prostitution by need. When she enters the shop, she is

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<sup>13</sup> <https://fenglish.ru/movie/the-godfather/>

wearing a small provocative white-blue dress and over-knee, black leather boots. Shop assistants are extremely rude to her based on the way she is dressed. She faces humiliation and contempt due to her “attire”. Below is the dialogue between Vivien and the shop assistants.

Vivien - How much is this?

Shop Assistant (1) - *I don't think this would fit you.*

Vivien - *I didn't ask if it would fit, I asked how much it was.*

Shop Assistant (1)- It's *very* expensive.

Shop Assistant (2)- It's *very* expensive. [**“Pretty Woman”, mins. 0:40:49-0:41:03**]<sup>14</sup>

The problem here is the ubiquitous ideology shared by the society members; prostitutes are of low social class; they cannot be treated equally as other class members. Consequently, they were hard on her, without separating her from the deal she was trying to negotiate. The shop assistants humiliate Vivien by using a repetition of words *very*, *very* in close proximity which, combined with such pragmatic features as setting, appearance, and ironic intonation, further escalates the situation. **Repetition** is defined as a **literary device** that repeats the same words or phrases a few times to make an idea clearer. In **rhetoric**, the repetition of a word or a phrase, for the purpose to increase the emphasis, is called **epizeuxis**. Since any business discourse presupposes some elements of rhetoric, the usage of epizeuxis *very*, in conjunction with a falling intonation (which is used when one wants to be definite, clear about something) makes the shop assistants' speech vehement and fervent in advocating their ideology. The participants of business discourse oftentimes avoid exploiting abrupt, rude, or offensive language to reveal or state their positions, and attitudes. Superficially, from the semantic angle, the shop assistant's words do not convey any offensive or rude message, unless they are supplemented with pragmatic features, which contribute to the acknowledgment and recognition of the implied content. Pragmatic features can be viewed as conditions governing the conversation in order to set a particular tone and achieve a desirable outcome. When the shop assistant replies “*I don't think this would fit you*”, it implies that she does not want to serve Vivien. The usage of this sentence, which is a definite divergence from its natural counterpart (the semantic meaning of the words in the sentence does not coincide with the intention of the speaker at the moment of utterance) based on the premise of conversational implicature introduced by H.P. Grice. “Since the truth of conversational implicature is not required by the truth of what is said (what is said may be true – what is implicated may be false), the implicature is not carried by what is said, but only by the saying of what is said, or by “putting it that way”) [6, p. 59]. Obviously, Vivien's response, her tone, and facial expression (*I didn't ask if it would fit, I asked how much it was*) are not based on the direct understanding of **what is said** by the shop assistant, but rather on the interpretation of **the saying of what is said**. Furthermore, in the sentence, *I don't think this would fit you*, the maxim of Relation is violated by the shop assistant,

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<sup>14</sup> <https://fenglish.ru/movie/pretty-woman/>

whose contribution to the conversation is not relevant. Vivien is asking about the price, whereas the shop assistant's response is about fitting. "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" [6, p. 45]. Grice labels this as Cooperative Principle with its 4 categories and corresponding maxims; Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. The shop assistant ostentatiously violates the maxim and displays her unwillingness to cooperate. At this stage, one can observe how social ideology (which is based on the mental models regarding the role and status of prostitutes in society) in conjunction with pragmatic features (Vivien's appearance, plain manners) interplay with the violation of the maxim of Relation to form a conversational implicature. It can be deduced that Vivien's appearance evokes particular mental models that the shop assistant already has in her mind which, in their turn, instigate the execution of ideological discourse in accordance with her cognition of a particular social situation.

At first sight, ideologies are the mental representations, and attitudes towards a specific event, or situation and they are oftentimes identical to mental models. Polarization between mental models and ideologies occurs when the individual's personal experience, perception, and interpretation of a specific event or situation is not congruent with the company/society/group ideology they belong to. Nevertheless, as a member of the same ideological group or society, they share common socio-cultural knowledge (social cognition), which forms the same mental images and could diminish discrepancies that may arise during the reproduction of mental models and furthermore, guide the course of communication. "Since mental models – as the interface between the social and personal, feature both dimensions, they are ideal as a basis for the explanation of personally variable, but yet, socially based, ideological opinions and discourse" [3, p. 390].

Let us analyze the following dialogue from the movie "Suits" (an American legal drama, that premiered in 2011). The excerpt displays a job interview between Harvey Specter, a senior partner at Pearson Hardman, a prestigious law firm, and Mike Ross, an accidental passer-by, who is trying to escape the police and appears in the room where Harvey is conducting a job interview. The action is taking place in a hotel and the waiting room is full of Harvard graduates. Mike Ross has always dreamed of becoming a lawyer and now a unique chance is presented to him out of the blue. The pragmatic features comprising the setting, the way Mike escaped the police, his appearance, gestures all contribute to the formation of the mental model of the ongoing situation in Harvey's mind. He is impressed with the way he escaped the police and the extensive legal knowledge that he possesses, despite the fact that he did not go to any law school. Harvey presents an ideologically biased discourse based on his company's ideology, which is to hire only Harvard recruits.

Harvey – We should hire you. I'd give you the 25 grand as a signing bonus.

Mike – I'll take it.

Harvey – *Unfortunately, we only hire from Harvard. And you not only did not go to Harvard law school, but you also haven't even gone to any law school.*

Mike - *What if I told you that I consume the knowledge like no one you've ever met and I've actually passed the bar?* That's a Barbri legal handbook right there, right? Open it up. Read me something. *Anything*.

Harvey – Civil liability associated with the agency is based on several factors, including...

Mike – deviation from the path, the reasonable interference of agency...

Harvey - Where did you learn that?

Mike - I learned it when I studied for the bar. [**"Suits", season1, episode 1, mins. 0:19:13-0:20:07**]<sup>15</sup>

*Unfortunately, we only hire from Harvard.* This sentence displays the corporate ideology shared by the company, assuming that Harvard recruits possess knowledge and skills that others lack. Being a staunch defender of this ideology, the company has been hiring Harvard recruits for many years. Harvey demonstrates his extreme surprise regarding the absence of any legal education, by employing the adverb *even*, which assumes to put a halt to the job interview since the absence of legal education leaves no room for further discussion. However, the usage of another emotionally-charged adverb, *unfortunately*, emphasizes that Harvey's personal attitude, (probably based on personal experience, that not all Harvard graduates are smart enough) that is to say, his mental image is not in line with the company's ideology. The sentence "*And you not only did not go to Harvard law school, but you also haven't even gone to any law school*" is an example of rhetorical parallelism (britannica.com), in which both parts of the sentence express the same idea with slight modifications (extra components which balance the two parts of the sentence) in order to create a definite pattern and support the main idea manifested in the sentence on one hand, and linguistic parallelism, when in two parts of the sentence the same part of the speech is used (in this example the verb *go* is used), on the other hand. The grammatical analysis of the sentence is based on two noticeable grammatical structures; double negation (you not only did not go...) and the usage of correlative conjunction (not only... but also...). The latter is used partly (*but also* is omitted in the sentence), which is normally accepted in a colloquial speech. Correlative coordinators/conjunctions (not only... but also, either... or, neither... nor, both... and) are pairs of words or phrases connecting words, phrases, and sentences [9, p. 81]. Using correlative conjunction *not only* in a sentence suggests that the aim of the sentence is parallelism, which is based on the notion of balance. Referring to the double negatives in the sentence (you not only did not go...), it should also be noted that they are used in colloquial speech. All the above-mentioned linguistic devices are used to intensify the ideological essence of Harvey's utterance. Another "loophole" in Harvey's speech is the usage of the pronoun *we*, which prompts Mike that Harvey speaks for the company and that it may not coincide with his personal position. Mike detects the discrepancy that exists in Harvey's mind; corporate ideology (social dimension of the mental model) on the one hand, and his individual construction of the situation (personal dimension of the mental

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<sup>15</sup> <https://fenglish.ru/movie/suits-s01e01/>

model) on the other hand. Mike needs to find a *Common Ground* (a combination of personal and social cognition) to influence the course of communication. In his response “*What if I told you that I consume the knowledge like no one you’ve ever met and I’ve actually passed the bar*”, Mike implies that the underlying “*Common Ground*” is legal knowledge that can be accepted both on personal and social, in this particular case, corporate levels. Legal knowledge is the interface between Harvey’s mental model and his company’s “Pearson and Hardman” ideology. *What if* question structures are generally used to make suggestions about what might happen in the future? In this specific case, it is employed by Mike to propose alternative options to the situation which seems to have ended in deadlock. Mike continues by challenging Harvey to open the legal handbook and read *something*, then he adds the pronoun *anything*. Semantically, the pronoun *anything* does not have any negative meaning and refers to an unlimited set of things. Harvey acts according to the semantic model of the word *anything*. By applying the word *anything*, Mike wants to underline the fact, that he is able to reproduce *any* information related to *any* legal act or law existent in the handbook. He opens the handbook and reads. Providing for Harvey, the interaction is yet constructed on the semantic perception of the dialogue, for Mike, it is quite the opposite. He employs all available pragmatic and linguistic tools, relevant to the situation, to narrow the discrepancy between corporate ideology and the mental representation of the situation in Harvey’s mind. As mentioned above, these are context or pragmatic models, shaped in communicative situations. “They make sure that discourses (and their speech acts and interactions) are **appropriate** in the current communicative situation. This is a specific form of **adaptation**, as is the case for all human interaction (more or less well) adapted to the social situation or the natural or physical environment” [11, p. 8]. Harvey accepts the challenge, he is enthralled by Mike’s vast, encyclopedic knowledge. Nevertheless, he is determined to prove that Harvard graduates are unbeatable.

Harvey – Okay, *hotshot*. Fire up this laptop. I’m gonna show you what a Harvard attorney can do. Pick a topic.

Mike – Stock option backdating.

Harvey – Although backdating options are legal, violations arise....

Mike – You forgot about Sarbanes-Oxley.

Harvey – The statute of limitations renders Sarbanes-Oxley moot post 2007.

Mike – Not, if you can find actions to cover up the violations as established in the Sixth Circuit, May 2008.

Harvey – That’s *impressive*, but you are sitting at a computer.

Mike - *Playing hearts*. [“**Suits**”, **season1, episode 1**]

(By saying so, Mike turns the computer around so that Harvey can see the screen and make sure that Mike is not lying.)

This part of the dialogue displays how the semantic model of Harvard graduate, that Harvey has in his mind, is gradually being altered during the reproduction process under the pressure of pragmatic features of discourse (Mike playing hearts at a computer, his confidence, and calm appearance). The informal word *hotspot* indicates that Harvey has

eliminated the formal border that usually exists between the interviewer and interviewee and is making efforts to demonstrate and convince that Harvard graduates are better. The genre and style of the language are of utmost importance for setting the tone in interactions. Mike's abrupt and indifferent response "*Playing hearts*" is another example of how linguistic units; intonation, pitch, rate, etc. affect mental models in the ongoing process of communication. Harvey is impressed with Mike's competence and profound legal knowledge and his behavior indicates that his ideology, based on a certain mental model, is reshaping.

Eventually, Harvey hires Mike to have mental reasoning for his decision (extensive legal knowledge that Mike consumes), which does not come into conflict with the main thrust of the company's ideology (Harvard graduates consume extensive legal knowledge). This is a vivid example of the complex yet indispensable interaction that exists between sociocognitive and lingo-pragmatic aspects of the discourse on one hand, and ideologically biased discourse and mental models on the other hand.

The interface between discourse and mental models is indubitable. It can be deduced that discourse not only is the reproduction of mental representations that one has, but also, itself, creates or contributes to the creation of new mental models. The research has shown how ideologically based polarized discourses uncover "*Common Ground*" through mental models and, by doing this, allow the participants of the specific discourse to eliminate the existing derogatory attitude among them. Mental models, in their turn, are flexible and are able to be transformed and supplemented with **any** information depending on the situation. Another approach is that a person has an infinite number of models in their mind and given the specific conditions (where, when, with whom, how, etc.), they choose an appropriate model and "dynamically adapt" it to the current situation. Ideologies, acting as a form of social cognition, are also subject to transformations during the communication process as we can see from the above example. When social, linguistic and pragmatic features are astutely employed, a person can reshape the existing mental models representing the specific form of ideology, direct the discourse and gain an advantage.

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