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RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES: THE CASE OF THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

MA thesis

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***Authorship Declaration***

I have prepared this thesis independently. All the views of other authors, as well as data from literary sources and elsewhere, have been cited.

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*Anastasiia Lopina, 13.01.2025*

## **Abstract**

Russia, which has been promoting its propaganda narratives for years, is a complex and acute topic for research. The reason is that the Kremlin's propaganda is characterised by its complexity, diversity, and multi-orientation. Despite the immense interest in its investigation since the beginning of the Russian Federation's war in Ukraine, few works have examined how its propaganda has changed over time. This raises a research problem that I attempt to close in this thesis. Hence, I analysed two periods of the Russia-Ukraine war to find out how Vladimir Putin's propaganda techniques changed and what their proportion was during the hybrid warfare and the beginning of the full-scale invasion. By creating a more systematic approach to analysing propaganda techniques in the form of three separate categories — emotional, social, and cognitive propaganda methods, I detect that propaganda has altered since the beginning of 2022, compared to 2014. The findings show there have been changes in the prioritisation and proportion of propaganda techniques. The work facilitates a better understanding of the approaches of Russia's information warfare, its strategies during the war, and what countermeasures should be developed to resist the Kremlin's propaganda. The comparative analysis was carried out based on a selection of speeches by President Vladimir Putin. It included 152 articles mentioning information about Ukraine, where examples of propaganda techniques were identified.

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## Introduction

With the onset of digitalisation, informatisation and mediatisation (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999), which is the process of accumulating media influence on various sectors of human activity, mass media has started playing an even more important role in political and social sciences. Choosing topics for discussion, the way of its presentation and framing, media coverage of certain political groups and leaders, their sentiment and ideas, supporting particular interests and positions on a specific issue entail significant consequences of how people think about politics, as well as how they behave. As Edmund Burke sharply pointed out, mass media are “the fourth power” (Hampton, 2009). Political leaders or elites who control “the fourth branch of government” (Braeman, 1985) monitor news broadcasts, press and content on the internet to achieve their own goals (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). These individuals resort to manipulation, disinformation, and forming certain ideas or interests that they seek to instil in the population. In other words, they use propaganda. Pratkanis and Aronson (1992, p. 7) once noted that we live in an era of propaganda, being daily manipulated, receiving persuasive narratives and succumbing to emotional messages. However, propaganda can be used not only to instil a certain worldview principle among the masses but also to prevent the absorption of other ways of thinking (p. 41).

Russia, which has been influencing and shaping public opinion for years, notoriously promotes such a form of communication (Pomerantsev, 2015). Considering the threats that this communication can bring to society and global security in general, increasingly more political scientists investigate and research propaganda, its features, techniques and impact on the media ecosystem (Kwon et al., 2022). However, since the beginning of a full-scale war of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine in 2022, the theme of the propaganda peculiarities and its contextual application became an intriguing point, as well as topic of concern, because of its complexity, diversity of target audiences and the scale of its distribution (Osadchuk, 2023).

Kremlin propaganda has been gaining more and more volume, speed and complexity. When some researchers concentrate on the visual analysis of propaganda techniques (Dimitrov et al., 2021), the rest emphasise the importance of a copious study of textual sentiment on the basis of propaganda methods (Da San Martino, 2019). In return, Howard et al. (2023), refer to

computational propaganda that has gone beyond what it was a few years ago “in terms of the methods and scale of the manipulation campaigns”. Someone chooses a separate technique and researches it (Alieva et al., 2024). Others explore the specifics of propaganda on social media such as Twitter and Facebook (Park et al., 2021). Some focus the attention on the studied activities of the pro-government propaganda media of Russia and their subversive activities (Henriksen et al., 2024). Less work is done on analysing the influence of propaganda on people’s behaviour (Kwon et al., 2024). Henriksen et al. (2024) consider propaganda content to be widespread and different across diverse social platforms. Other scholars emphasise the importance of researching propaganda over time to explore a broader view of how attitudes and narratives may change (Park et al., 2021). Additionally, there is a study that examines the rhetoric of Vladimir Putin in his declaration of war through the lens of four propaganda techniques (Jovanović, 2023).

The most significant research problem that arises during the elaboration of the literature is the following. There are few systematic works that analyse the changes of Russian propaganda techniques regarding Ukraine over time, which the Kremlin uses to influence public opinion and their ratio. Although, studying propaganda techniques and its changes in characteristics allows us to understand information and hybrid warfare that embraces various means and methods against the opponent without limiting to military actions. It helps to get a better knowledge about the geopolitical strategies of a country, how it sways different public opinion and what exact narratives it applies to societal cleavages and polarisation. A clear and more systematic depiction of the propaganda techniques that are used by the Russian Federation and how this ratio alters over time will answer the question of what countermeasures, resilience strategies and approach of media literacy education should be adopted to resist propaganda further.

Hence, in my research, I will focus on this preliminary research problem in order to discover what propaganda techniques the Kremlin used during 2014–2015, which mark Russia’s hybrid warfare in Ukraine and how propaganda changed during 2022–2023 since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine to compare propaganda at the beginning of two phases of the Russia-Ukraine war. I analyse the textual sentiment in the articles on the official website of the President of the Russian Federation, containing mentions about Ukraine, to compare which

propaganda techniques were central during the Russian-Ukrainian war, what their proportional interrelation was, and how this ratio altered during the 2014–2015 and 2022–2023 periods. This entails subsequent research questions: (1) What is the profile of Russian propaganda techniques about Ukraine in the Russian hybrid war and the full-scale invasion? (2) How has this profile changed over time?

This master thesis is structured in three main chapters. In the theoretical part, I explore (1) what we know about propaganda as such, what its characteristics, types, and what it is usually confused with. I point out a separate subchapter devoted to (1.1) the analysis of propaganda techniques to find out what methods can be used to influence public opinion. Moreover, I examine (1.2) the research problem, highlighting what political scientists have written about Russian propaganda and its methods, what is missing and how it can be solved. In (1.3) the last “Milestone of analysing Russian propaganda” subchapter, I summarise the conceptual framework, type and techniques of propaganda that I will use to make a comparative analysis. The second chapter will present and argue (2) methodology, explaining the (2.1) case and time frame selection, (2.2) categorisation of the three main groups of propaganda techniques, (2.3) data and selection of articles which I will use for propaganda analysis, as well as (2.4.) the approach of how these materials were analysed and how the data were obtained. The (3) findings chapter will include (3.1) the results that reveal Russian techniques of propaganda (3.1) that were used in 2014–2015, (3.2) the findings for 2022–2023, (3.3) a comparison of the portfolio of propaganda techniques used by the Russian Federation during the two periods and (3.4) discussions with recommendations that should be taken into account in further studies of propaganda. The thesis will end with the conclusion.

## **Chapter 1: What we know about propaganda**

Although the topic of propaganda research has become more acute and gaining momentum with the onset of digitisation, research in this field can also be found in works of the 20th century. Throughout the 20th century, the topic of propaganda and its term have been scrutinised in political studies (Hanisch-Wolfram, 2010, p. 197). Despite its long evaluation, there is still no definitive conceptualisation, and the types, as well as techniques of propaganda vary among scholars. The uncertainty and complexity appear due to the context in which propaganda is considered, as well as societal differences across time and cultural diversity (Doob, 1948). However, below, I attempt to find out what is known about the field of its research, what certain characteristics and peculiarities of propaganda are, what its types, what it is usually confused with, what propaganda is in general and how it is conceptualised.

As noted by Mull & Wallin (2013), the original meaning of propaganda comes from the Latin word “propagare”, which in translation implies as to “extend” or to “increase”. Until the end of the 18th century, the concept of propaganda had a religious colour (Jowett & O’Donnell, 1992, p. 2; Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992, p. 9), and with the beginning of revolutionary events in the life of France as well as subsequent occurrences in history, the concept began to change into a term with a political context.

Propaganda, as a tool for achieving strategic political goals, was also used during the world wars. During and after World War I, the term propaganda began to gain a negative connotation, as it was attributed to totalitarian regimes that used lies, manipulation and psychological methods to achieve their military goals. Propaganda began to be classified as “the communication of a point of view with the ultimate goal of having the recipient of the appeal come to “voluntarily” accept this position as if it were his or her own” (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1992, p. 9).

Analysing the techniques of propaganda during World War I, Lasswell (1971) came to the conclusion that propaganda then had four main goals. Among them there are actions directed against the enemy, influence aimed at allied friendship, activities targeted at redirecting neutral representatives to their side, as well as actions aimed at demoralising the enemy. Having

concerns about the critical thinking of the public in the USA before and during World War II, a special organisation — the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) was created. Its activities were aimed at combating propaganda and spreading objective coverage of information about the events of that time. In this way, propaganda became the main means both for application and for study during pre- and post-crisis periods, as well as during warfare. It is also confirmed by Davison (1971), who emphasised that “the pervasiveness of international propaganda has increased not only as a result of the availability of new channels but also because of the recognition of propaganda as a regular, permanent function of national governments, in peace as well as in war”. Moreover, scholars have also resorted to analysing propaganda content and studying behaviourist principles to investigate how propaganda and mass media influence people’s behaviour (Fondren, 2021). Thus, making significant contributions to the treasury of political, communicational and even psychological sciences, the following is acknowledged about propaganda.

As it has been mentioned before, the definition of propaganda has many conceptualisations. Miller (1939), for instance, citing Institute for Propaganda Analysis, noted that propaganda is a diction or an act that is carried out by individuals or groups of people in order to influence public thoughts or a group of certain men referring to objectives that were determined beforehand. Lasswell (1927) instead indicated that “propaganda is the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols.” That is, these are actions aimed at building a certain collective perception of a particular object, idea, event or person. To achieve this, propaganda distributors or propagandists manipulate public opinion using certain symbols and methods that help them achieve their goals. “Collective attitude, arrangement and rearrangement” happen through propaganda attributes that can be messages, narratives, videos, films, posters, etc. The main goal of propaganda activities is to spread their message or thought, destroy hostile attitudes, and gain support among others. “Translated into this vocabulary, which is especially intelligible to some, the propagandist may be said to be concerned with the multiplication of those stimuli which are best calculated to evoke the desired responses and with the nullification of those stimuli which are likely to instigate the undesired responses” (Lasswell, 1927). In his future works Lasswell (1935) conceptualised propaganda “as a technique of social control, or as a

species of social movement”, that also makes it a method to carry out surveillance among citizens and the means of incitement to certain actions that are beneficial to propagandists.

Considering the study of Silverstein (1987), a significant clarification can be found in his work. Propaganda, in his sense, is a message that is deliberately spread with a conscious intention and purpose. However, the researcher notes that it is not limited to this and the term is not exhaustive. It spreads in a variety of ways, from deliberate disinformation to accidental dissemination of propaganda narratives. In fact, it is so, but it is a matter of distribution, not of the concept itself. The use of propaganda to achieve someone’s goals requires a strategy, the determination of a specific audience on which the manipulative symbol will be launched, the identification of their interests, etc. Thus, this automatically requires a conscious desire (Bernays, 2005), which in its turn explains why deliberate intent should be mentioned while conceptualising propaganda. Besides, Silverstein (1987) is convinced that people’s beliefs and prejudices affect the perception of certain events, news and ideas created by the mass media. And so propaganda will not always be the reason that controlled organisations are specifically spreading it. But in this case, it will be more accurate to talk about how the media frame and cover events, in whose interests and for what purpose, and separately about the perception of these messages. Because intention and perception are different concepts by their nature. The last is more likely to flow from a message that is delivered with a specific intent.

Interpretations of Newman (1951), where propaganda is defined as a cheaper means of fighting between ideologies and spreading one’s power, appear to be a thorough reflection. The researcher explains this in the example of the United States of America and the Soviet Union, where the latter endeavoured to spread the Soviet regime around the world, and the US authorities tried to restrain the dissemination of the ideology of the USSR. “The “struggle for the minds of men” is one aspect of this power struggle” (Newman, 1951). Propaganda also attempts to change people’s minds and behaviour, as well as deprive them from the opportunity to make a choice, and steal the freedom of an alternative.

Increasingly widespread due to the invention of printing, which initiated a new stream of propaganda, and later the deployment of a broader range of information transmission channels,

propaganda became a peculiar tool of state administration (Davison, 1971). Mass media, which have the ability to formulate the discussion and perception of people on certain political events, as well as significantly influence their behaviour, make it the fourth power or branch of government (Cater, 1959). Accordingly, information in the form of propaganda that they can spread also becomes a regular branch of government, as it has a great influence on the masses. “The great innovation of modern times is the frank recognition of propaganda as a regular branch of government alongside, alongside economic and military departments” (Whitton, 1951, p 142). That is, propaganda is a state arm that is aimed to purposefully influence the opinion and behaviour of people “without themselves making any definite search for reasons” (Bartlett, 1954, p. 464). This part of the conceptualisation of propaganda is congruous for my study of Russian propaganda, which has been an integral and separate part of the Russian government since the 2000s (Pomerantsev, 2015), as well as for better understanding the tone of its peculiarities. Integrating this and the characteristics of the propaganda definition above, I classify it as a deliberate information activity by individuals, groups of people or state governments that aim to plant certain statements, arguments, ideas or perceptions of specific objects in order to influence public opinion, values and beliefs of the masses to achieve their own goals.

Investigating the definition of propaganda, it is equally important to note what terms it is tangled and compared with. Similar characteristics with this term can be found in definitions such as manipulation, persuasion and agitation, as well as strategic communication, public relations, political advertisement. If the first three are a component of propaganda and can be used by propagandists in their activities, then the last remaining ones can consist of propaganda and add it to their characteristics. This means that in order to drag the masses, influence their opinion and impose certain views, propagandists can use manipulation (influence on the human psychics) (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018), persuasion (conviction in particular beliefs) (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992) and agitate (incite) people to take definite actions that will help propaganda individuals to achieve their own goals. While propaganda can be a tool of strategic communication Mull & Wallin (2013), public relations, and political advertisement. For instance, public relations (PR), which is a legitimate process of forming positive relations between certain objects or achieving mutual understanding between them by forming public opinion, differs from propaganda by goals and ethical approaches (L'Etang & Pieczka, 2006). If PR is considered to

build trust, maintain reputation and respect the recipient’s values, then propaganda is mostly aimed at manipulating public opinion. Public relations maintain openness and accountability to the target audience, while propaganda uses methods aimed at occultly misleading and confusing the public. However, regardless of generally accepted norms and perceptions, public relations, per se, can resort to methods inherent in propaganda — for example, emotional techniques, persuasion, etc. — to get public acceptance or adherence.

Furthermore, there are three more definitions — education, public diplomacy and disinformation that are confused with propaganda. But in the studied literature I detected a sophisticated diversity between them that helps a better understanding of the concept of propaganda itself. In Table 1, I show a brief description of separate terms and how they are distinguished from the concept of propaganda.

**Table 1.** *Characteristics and differences between propaganda, education, public diplomacy and disinformation*

<b><i>Education</i></b>	<b><i>Propaganda</i></b>
<p>The process of acquiring or exchanging particular information, knowledge, perception and beliefs.</p> <p>Objective.</p> <p>Aimed at presenting the information without engagement, illuminating different points of view, providing a spectrum of knowledge, where a certain way of thinking, theory and experience will be chosen by a getter of education.</p>	<p>The act of planting certain ideas to achieve political or other goals.</p> <p>Subjective.</p> <p>Aimed to promote ideas and condemnation of dissenters without providing choices and alternatives, as well as planting it in the minds of the masses.</p>

<i>Public diplomacy</i>	<i>Propaganda</i>
<p>The tool of a state’s foreign policy, which it embraces to promote its image and strengthen the country’s positive perception by others.</p> <p>Based on truth.</p> <p>Respect for other states.</p>	<p>The tool of a state’s policy that can be used in order to justify its image and whitewash the country’s harmful activities in order to gain a positive perception by others.</p> <p>Choice of truth or falsehood.</p> <p>Hostile to other states.</p>
<i>Disinformation</i>	<i>Propaganda</i>
<p>False information that is aimed to intentionally cause harm to people, misleading them about the true course of events or a specific object. One of the technique of propaganda</p> <p>Falsehood.</p>	<p>Communication that can be based on false information in order to mislead people.</p> <p>Selective truth.</p>

Hence, education, which is the process of acquiring certain information, knowledge, perception and beliefs, echoes the propaganda concept that, as it was mentioned earlier, is the act of planting certain ideas to achieve political or other goals. But an important aspect that cannot be ignored because of its significant role in detaching these two separate concepts is objectivity and subjectivity. If education is aimed at presenting the content of information objectively, without engagement, to illuminate different points of view, providing a spectrum of knowledge, where a certain way of thinking, theory and experience will be chosen by a getter of education, propaganda, in turn, is aimed at the subjective promotion of ideas and condemnation of

dissenters, without providing choices and alternatives, as well as planting it in the minds of citizens. “The spread of controversial attitudes is propaganda; the spread of accepted attitudes and skills is education” (Lasswell, 1935).

The next term that comes up when discussing propaganda is public diplomacy. It is used to believe that this type of diplomacy is a tool of a country’s foreign policy, which it embraces to promote its image, as well as strengthen the country’s positive perception by others. Thus, this term finds an echo in the concept of propaganda. But there is a significant difference, which is the choice of truth and respect for others. That is, if propaganda can choose whether to cover true information or lies, and is hostile to other ideas, opinions and systems, then public diplomacy goes beyond these limits. It is always based on the truth. Its activities, which are aimed at building and promoting a positive attitude towards one’s country, will always be expressed on the basis of respect for other states, without an opposed attitude towards them. Hence, public diplomacy and propaganda follow different guidelines. As Mull & Wallin (2013) explicitly emphasise in their paper, “public diplomacy involves a much larger sphere of influence, focusing more on the creation of mutual understanding through open dialogue and increased cultural and educational interactions.” It is built on branding and open communication, through which the country’s government can maintain or improve the image of its state. The authors also emphasise the selective truth, secrecy, targeting to influence someone’s opinion, and perception of other ideas as false, which is inherent in propaganda. While public diplomacy is based on truth, openness, it can influence only the originator, as well as respect the politics of others. But it also should be underlined that propaganda can also be part of public diplomacy, when diplomatic representatives act in the interests of the government, which, in turn, focus its communication and policy on propaganda.

Last but foremost, the concept of propaganda is usually defined as disinformation (Persily & Tucker, 2020, p.10), that is also not a proper interpretation. Such confusion occurs due to inappropriate classification and typology of the concept of propaganda itself. Both terms refer to false reports or misleading information that is intended to harm and mislead the public. Indeed, disinformation is false information that is aimed at intentionally hurting a certain target audience, with the aim of misleading them about the true course of events or a specific object (Farkas &

Schou, 2018). On the other hand, propaganda, which is also aimed at people's behaviour and awareness, does not always use false messages. As it was mentioned in the previous paragraph, selective truth is inherent in it, that is, propagandists choose whether they will promote their ideas based on facts or lies. Additionally, disinformation is a part of propaganda (Benkler, Faris & Roberts, 2018, p. 32), in particular one of its techniques, which is used in manipulative activities. As Martin (1982) once designated, disinformation is "an instrumentality in the propaganda arsenal". However, I will focus on this in the following subchapters because before that, it is important to classify propaganda and find out what its different types are established by scholars, which helps avoid its confusion with other concepts.

Consequently, having an inexhaustible conceptualisation, there is also a particular range of propaganda typology. Quite often, the connotation of propaganda carries a negative perception because of its natural form of interfering with the opinions of the masses and changing them. However, definite scientists rely on a structure where propaganda can be "white" and "black" (Lakshmana Rao, 1971). In addition to that, "grey" propaganda stands out among them (Mull & Wallin, 2013). Thus, propaganda that has a clear and genuine sender, uses truthful information based on facts, is a "white" form of communication. Instead, "grey" propaganda is characterised by hiding the source of the message and its sender, as well as "black" propaganda is communication during which the source of the message tries to be someone else and present false information to be the truth. That is, promoting the message can take place within a democratic framework, respecting human rights and freedoms. As Stanley (2015, p. 64) noted, propaganda can consist of "claims that are true and made sincerely". Besides, there is also propaganda that deliberately pretends to be what it is not, operating within the scope of violating the rights of the masses at whom the act is aimed. In saying this, I do not mean that propaganda is a tolerated object that can be used by governments. Because as Lasswell (1935) once said "propaganda begets propaganda" and "propaganda against propaganda is just another propaganda." Therefore, my explanation is instead directed to show the multifaceted nature of the propaganda process itself, which helps in the further study of propaganda as such.

However, propaganda is not limited to a three-stage typology. For instance, Huxley (n.d.) distinguished "good" and "bad" propaganda, emphasising the importance of benefit to society. In

other words, if propaganda is “good”, it is rational because it is directed with a proficient goal and intention for society. And if the message is promoted irrationally to the masses, then this is “bad” propaganda. However, consistent argumentations come up. By creating social initiatives that are supposedly aimed at public goods, a boundary arises that underlines how a certain narrative can be useful for citizens based on what and in the interests of whom it acts. Moreover, representatives who are authorised to determine policies and make decisions may not always act within good or bad limits or operate with an amiss or delusional purpose but present it as an acceptable step that supposedly benefits society. This means that the authority can provide the so-called rational solutions, resorting to manipulations while presenting their idea as good for society, which is actually the opposite. Postman (1979) provides an explicit example in his work regarding this line. A person that has back pain, wants to buy a certain medicine in order to get rid of it. Having seen a promotional advertisement for the purchase of a particular drug that can help with this issue, the man decides to buy it on the basis of rational choice. But the representatives of the promotion did not mention that the medicine would cause side effects on the liver. Thus, the subsequent question arises. Was this information “bad” for the person, or was it still “good”? And who is responsible for making a rational choice: the advertisers who promote their product, or the person who buys it? Hence, interpretations of Huxley (n.d.) do not remain completely closed, as well as point to further searches and definitions of a clearer typology of propaganda.

Continuing the previous classifications, such types as “democratic” and “authoritarian” propaganda can be found in the work of Fondren (2021). It reflects similarities with those types that I have already mentioned above. “Democratic propaganda” is a form of communication that is used in democracies to influence people’s opinion for the public good. “Authoritarian propaganda” relates to a message that aims to spread a socio-political or other principle or idea into the minds of people in order to achieve the authoritarian state’s own goals. Referring to Lasswell, Fondren (2021) highlights that propaganda is “a linear communication process in which the propagandist produces either direct incitement (democratic propaganda) or indirect incitement (authoritarian propaganda)”. That is, propaganda in a democracy operates within the framework of openness, where the recipient of a message knows that the source of the message is using propaganda against the receiver. While propaganda in an authoritarian regime will resort

to stealth to incite and influence the public based on secretiveness. In this case, the group of people being manipulated does not distinguish an agitation act and the influence exerted on it by the propagandist authoritarian source.

Moreover, a separate type of propaganda can be found in the literature. Silverstein (1987) was convinced that such a model as “integrational propaganda” is “the most influential propaganda in a society” because it is promoted to integrate people on the basis of a certain system. The scholar notes that society and country cannot survive for a long time without the support of its citizens. That is why it needs integration propaganda aimed at uniting society around ideas and directing this synergy of forces to achieve certain goals. Propaganda goes beyond negative connotations, acquiring a nationalist character and can be spread without intentional disinformation. In contrast to the integrative form of manipulation, there is also “agitational propaganda”. Agitation seeks to induce people to certain actions through manipulation and influence on the consciousness of the masses. Such activity in a political context usually aims to destroy an established system or object. However, a momentous point should not be ignored here. Both “integrational” and “agitational propaganda” aim to influence the masses of people. Citizens can be united and integrated into a specific group that is united by a certain idea or message, but this idea can be threatening to the rest of society. For instance, terrorists may be integratively unified with the goal of carrying out attacks and violence to achieve political goals. “Integrational propaganda”, in this case, acquires a negative character. Conversely, a group of environmentalists can agitate the rest of society to adhere to a more sustainable life and development. Thereby, agitation takes campaigning to a new level, in which the goal that is at its core, acquires a positive character.

Another prominent type of propaganda that requires special consideration and which my research will be focused on is “war propaganda”, which is a form of communication used in warfare. Before the onset of war, propaganda operates as a substitute for physical coercion, strategically shaping public opinion and gaining mass support. Once warfare starts, propaganda goes in parallel with the violence, further consolidating public sentiment and justifying military actions (Ellul, 1965, p. 10). It is classified as “conceived of as strategically devised messages that are disseminated to masses of people by an institution for the purpose of generating action benefiting its source” (Parry-Giles, 2002, p. 26). Such campaign communication can also be called “the

struggle for the minds of men” (Newman, 1951). In order to achieve military goals, representatives of warfare resort to fighting not only on the battlefield but also try to demoralise the opponent psychologically through manipulation, intimidation and persuasion or to rally society for a sustainable struggle on the battlefield. Oleinik (2023) classifies war propaganda as a communication that “targets the population of a country at war serving the interests of its leaders”. However, this statement needs to be supplemented. Because military propaganda can be aimed not only at the country involved in the war but also at other states that observe the course of military events, support an ally or an opponent, or remain neutral. One example of this is the involvement of representatives of other countries to intervene in the military process by supporting one of the parties or discrediting the enemy in the eyes of his allies. In addition, by resorting to various techniques of confusion, military propaganda creates “a media noise” that misleads even those people who are not paying close attention to the course of action in the war. After all, they are more vulnerable to absorbing false information (Osadchuk, 2023).

Analysing propaganda it is also considerable to deem who delivered the propaganda narrative or idea, in what way, using what methods, to whom the source of the message was addressed, with what intentions, and what the promoters were ultimately trying to achieve (Newman, 1951). When promoting their messages, propagandists always have a specific, defined audience on which they launch manipulative campaigns and spread their ideas. Only by knowing the interests and general characteristics of their audience, skilful promoters of propaganda determine which messages will be more successful and more acceptable to the masses, which method is better to distribute among them, and which propaganda techniques are needed to mislead specific groups, in order to accomplish the desired goals. Thus, propaganda techniques are an important component that helps determine the characteristics of messages, the level of their threat, as well as methods of preventing or combating them, which reduce the impact of propaganda on people. I focus on propaganda techniques and its diversity more thoroughly in the next subchapter.

## **1.1. Techniques of propaganda**

It is appropriate to consider that propaganda began to be thoroughly scrutinised since the 20th century, after the end of the Great War (Lasswell, 1927, 1935, 1971), whereas diverse techniques of influencing thoughts, views and values were used to carry out military activities and psychological warfare (Horbyk et al., 2023). “In the 1930s, psychologists, sociologists, and educators were active in the field of propaganda analysis” (Silverstein, 1987). Such a polyhedral synergy of researchers is conditioned because propagandists used various techniques of promoting their messages and manipulating people. The elaboration took place from the analysis of the source of communication, the message itself and the audience to which the propaganda symbol is directed to more systematic studies of the content of the message, its specificity and the language of the propaganda message.

Techniques of propaganda, which are methods or ways persons achieve a specific propaganda goal, vary according to the target audience who are trying to be persuaded to accept a certain worldview or idea. Hence, during World War I, propaganda absorbed four main techniques. Among them there were methods that were directed against the enemy, messages that were directed at other potential states that could become allies of the propaganda country, techniques that aimed to preserve communication and relations with countries that occupied neutrality, and demoralisation techniques (Lasswell, 1971). German propaganda during World War II was characterised by the technique of repeating the message and censorship, executing control over the citizens’ opinions, books and periodical press (Davidson, 1982). That is, in order for a certain message to penetrate the consciousness of people and germinate the seed of a propaganda narrative there, “repetition” was effectively used on the front pages of the press and in the proclamation of German propagandists. And to ensure that hostile narratives did not make noise alongside nationalist messages, monitoring was carried out over what was printed and whether the published information did not contain anti-Nazi sermons.

Soviet propaganda, which was also aimed at both internal and external audiences of the USSR, is characterised by its own methods of propaganda, such as “disinformation”, “discreditation” (Horbyk et al., 2023) and “exaggeration” (Kozytskyi, 2022). “Even in 1971, active measures,

compromising materials, and disinformation were proposed as key methods against the anti-Soviet emigres, while the pro-Soviet groups and individuals had to apply active measures targeting the host countries more broadly” (Horbyk et al., 2023). In order to suppress emigration to the USA or Canada, as well as the interest in westernised life, the Soviet authorities used the technique of undermining the authority and image of these countries in the eyes of the Soviet Union citizens. They also used the “opponent’s attack”, dividing groups into “us” (USSR) and “them” (USA), thus appealing to the bandwagon effect, where people absorbed Soviet-imposed behaviour, patterns and values, fearing to be rejected, isolated or distinguished from “we”<sup>1</sup>.

Propaganda, which criticised Western capitalism, instead promoted and hung the idealism of Soviet socialism to the masses, widely used posters (graphics with a short text on it) through which they tried to impel a communist social and economic order in the world. Resorting to “exaggeration”, Soviet propagandists often exploited distorted coverage of their regime, presenting it as something powerful and invincible that sometimes could not coincide with reality. This can be traced on a vivid example of a poster called “Comrade Lenin Cleanses the Earth of Filth”<sup>2</sup>. There the Soviet politician was presented as an all-powerful saviour of the world who came to rescue humanity from the politics of the Western world. Additionally, another technique that was inherent in Soviet propaganda is “euphemism”. It is a softened word or expression used to replace unwanted or objectionable language or term. Pratkanis and Aronson (1992, p. 40) named these phrases as “purr words-words” that aim to hide negative connotations. As a consequence of this technique, the authorities manage to protect their reputation in the eyes of citizens. For example, when the politics of the Soviet Union got out of control, the authorities tried to hide or mitigate the consequences that arose from their activities. Therefore, in order not to call the Holodomor (famine) by its name, they designated it “food difficulties”<sup>3</sup>.

A more structured and general classification of propaganda techniques can be traced in the work of Miller (1939), where he calls seven methods of “propaganda devices”, which are the following. “The name-calling device” is a narrative, saying or word that aims to form a judgement in the recipient of the information without delving into the facts and evidence. For example, through “name-calling”, an appellation with negative colouring is hung in order to

undermine the authority or image of certain individuals, people, groups of people, beliefs, principles or ideas.

“Glittering generalities” is another technique by which a propagandist lends dignity, prowess, and virtue to his activities or actions. Using this device, “shining ideals” are promoted, through which the propagandist attracts a certain group of people to take his side. For instance, a vivid slogan of Donald Trump and other US presidents, “Make America Great Again”<sup>4</sup>, which they used during their presidential campaigns, can be considered a “glittering generalisation”, because it encourages people to believe in idealised perspectives and take the side of the cause promoted by the sender of the message.

The third technique is “transfer”, where the propagandist uses the authority or a weak point of another object that a certain group of people respects or is hostile to. By voicing support for the propagandist’s side, such an object encourages the masses to adopt the preferences of the former, and the propagandist thus is attracted by support. For instance, a propagandist can turn to a famous artist for supporting him and his idea. As a result, the artist who has authority among the masses, showing his commitment to a propaganda source, influences the preferences of citizens who eventually take the side of propaganda.

“The testimonial” device can be considered a more concrete subtype of the prior technique. This method of propaganda uses an already specific person and an expert in his field, whose opinion can be listened to because he is competent in this realm (Bernays, 2005, p. 27). That is, a propagandist, promoting false narratives, can refer to an expert source and thus strengthen his information, making it allegedly qualified.

The following method is widely used among populists who refer to the “common people”. “The plain folks” device is a technique through which propagandists show themselves in the light of ordinary people, that they are plain people, like the rest of the masses.

The penultimate technique is “the card stacking” device when the propagandist does not provide complete information, misses important points and tells half-truths. Miller (1939) explained that

in this technique, the emphasis is placed on those nuances in which the propagandist is interested. Instead, the shift in emphasis diverts attention from the main facts. The author gives an example of five teachers with an average experience of five years. But the cover-up was that the claim of the informant was incomplete, as one of the school's representatives had twenty-five years of experience, while the other four had no experience.

The last technique that Miller (1939) analysed is the “bandwagon” device, which is the effect when people adopt a certain behaviour, interest or belief, because it is supported by the majority of the masses. Thus, a propagandist in this form will always appeal to the vast majority so that you will be forced to do a certain act that is followed by a large number of citizens. And in the opinion of the masses, if it is followed by the majority, the message, idea or belief cannot be wrong. Although, in reality, this is not always the case.

If the devices proposed by Miller (1939), emphasising their relevance to the feeling of belonging and emotions that make people accept propaganda messages, are limited to only seven types, then in modern scientific works on propaganda, I find a much larger scale of propaganda techniques. In their nature, one can find not only an emotional and social aspect, but also narratives that are built on rationality, where the receiver of information uses thinking and memorisation. I thoroughly elaborate them below.

A spectrum of eighteen propaganda techniques can be found in the paper of Da San Martino et al. (2019). One of the methods that are aimed at memorisation is “repetition”, which is used by propagandists so that the audience can accept the propaganda message over time. “Exaggeration or minimisation”, as well as “doubt” techniques are also listed in the analysis, that aim to present a certain object, issue or person in the best or worst form (Lippmann, 1922) and cast doubt on the credibility, authority or appropriateness of the propaganda opponent. Additionally, several similar or the same techniques that Miller (1939) wrote about in his work can also be discovered in the paper of Da San Martino et al. (2019), which leave the same content but acquire a different naming. For instance, “appeal to authority” coincides with “the testimonial” method, where propagandists try to justify their statements referring to a certain expert or authority. However, the information may not be valid or contain an unreliable source or expert, despite his popularity

and influence. Similar to “glittering generalities” are “slogans”, which by their nature are short and well-directed phrases that are quickly remembered and resonate with the masses. “The card stacking” technique, when the propagandist does not provide complete information, is alike in “causal oversimplification”, where the propagandist hides all the reasons for a certain issue, instead presenting to the public only one or several cases that are simplified from the general context. Likewise, Da San Martino et al. (2019) include the “bandwagon” technique and distinguish the “name calling or labelling” method, the goal of which is to impose a label on the propaganda opponent.

Complementing the previous methods, Da San Martino and colleagues (2019) highlight a “black-and-white fallacy, dictatorship” technique, where several options are offered to a group of people as the only variants for solving a certain issue. Although, in fact, the rest of the possible alternatives are hidden. Accordingly, a person, in this case, is forced to make or accept a choice between the few worst options that are suggested.

The detailed lexical synergy of the latest techniques is also combined in “thought-terminating cliché”. It is based on expressions that block critical thinking of recipients who get the information (Bernays, 2005, p. 28), which can be accompanied by “simple answers to complex questions”. For example, they could be “it is what it is”, “better late than never”, “nobody’s perfect”, “it doesn’t matter”, etc. (Da San Martino et al., 2019). Or they can be short phrases that replace the original meaning of words to soften the seriousness of certain events. Moreover, interesting techniques given by scientists are “flag-waving”, where propagandists always appeal to nationalist ideas and sentiments, as well as “whataboutism”, where there is an opponent’s attack through unjustified facts, without meaningful arguments. This method aims to divert attention from the criticism that is initially directed at the propagandist. That is, instead of directly responding to the statement, he shifts the focus to his opponent and his non-idealities. Sometimes, such discussions can be accompanied by phrases where the interlocutors turn to personal things.

A particular technique that requires a scrupulous study of the attitudes of the target audience of propaganda is “*reductio ad Hitlerum*”. This method is used with a specific idea or action that a

group of people do not accept, are hostile to, or reject. The propagandist, knowing that his target audience condemns a certain ideology, can use it as a smear on the opponent. Eventually, the recipient builds an associative series that causes automatic hostility toward the opponent with whom the associative line was created. Instead, Shah (2005) singles out “smear” as a separate technique by which a propagandist can discredit the authority of his opponent. “Loaded language” can have the same characteristic because it is an expression or words that have positive or negative undertones. It consists of phrases with emotive subtext. As well as “appeal to fear or prejudice” is a technique that is directly aimed at provoking fear or distorted perception regarding an object that contradicts the source of the propaganda.

Last but foremost, techniques that Da San Martino et al. (2019) analysed in the research are “red herring”, “obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion”, and “straw man”, that are connected with delusion and ambiguity. “Red herring” is usually used to distract the recipient from the main meaning and details of the information by providing irrelevant data. “Obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion” entail ambiguity, tangle and unclear or complex information that confuses a listener. And “straw man” is distinctive by twisting or using an idea of the opponent, that is replaced by another, which is similar to it, that will later be more refuted and distorted (Walton, 1996). For example, interlocutor A says that he is a representative of Washington, Oregon and California states. To which interlocutor B, simplifying the phrase, says that interlocutor A is a representative of the western states of America. Thus, resorting to twisting and summarising, interlocutor B leaves a distorted perception of the information of his collocutor since the latter mentioned only three western states out of thirteen possible.

Combining the above methods with the “doubt” and “appeal to strong emotions” and adding them to the list of their analysis, Dimitrov et al. (2021) complete a group of 22 techniques that I will eventually use in my research. I group them in Table 2, with a brief explanation, and diligently elaborate on them in the methodology, explaining how I grouped them into three narrower categories. Hence, “doubts” allow to question the idea of the opponent of the propaganda or the source as such. And “appeal to strong emotions” is aimed at evoking emotions in the masses, to which they are exposed and will eventually do what the propaganda source

seeks to achieve. Such phrases can be aimed at arousing in recipients joy, anger, disgust, hatred, etc.

Therefore, propaganda is diverse in terms of its typology and the techniques used by propagandists to influence public opinion. Each of them has similar characteristics and can be assigned to a narrower group, which allows for studying propaganda on a more generalised level. Thus, in my research, I create three main types of propaganda techniques, which include the persuasive methods discussed above. However, I elaborate on this in detail in the next subchapters.

*Table 2. Propaganda techniques and their explanation (Dimitrov et al., 2021)*

<i>Nº</i>	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
1.	<b>Loaded language</b>	An emotive expression or words that have positive or negative undertones.
2.	<b>Name calling or labelling</b>	The method, the goal of which is to impose a label on the opponent of propaganda or call it names.
3.	<b>Doubt</b>	The way to question the idea of the opponent of the propaganda, or the source as such.
4.	<b>Exaggeration or minimisation</b>	The way to present a certain object, issue or person in the best or worst form than it really is.
5.	<b>Appeal to fear or prejudices</b>	The technique that is directly aimed at provoking fear or emotionally distorted perception.
6.	<b>Slogans</b>	Short and well-directed phrases that are quickly remembered and resonate with the masses.
7.	<b>Whataboutism</b>	Communication based on an opponent's attack and discreditation through shifting the focus from propaganda source to opponent, often by unjustified facts

		and without meaningful arguments with the attempt to avoid critics that was initially aimed at the propagandist.
8.	<b>Flag-waving</b>	It is an appeal to nationalist ideas and sentiments.
9.	<b>Misrepresentation of someone's position (straw man)</b>	The method of twisting the opponent's argumentation or using an idea of the opponent, that is replaced by another, which is similar to it, that will later be more refuted and distorted for misperception.
10.	<b>Causal oversimplification</b>	The way to hide all the reasons for a certain issue, instead present to the public only one or several cases that are simplified from the general context.
11.	<b>Appeal to authority</b>	The technique that seeks to justify propaganda statements referring to a certain expert or authority.
12.	<b>Thought-terminating cliché</b>	A short expression or phrase that is used to replace words that are not acceptable to the propaganda source.
13.	<b>Black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship</b>	The technique, where one or several options are offered to a group of people as the only variants for solving a certain issue, although the rest of the possible alternatives are hidden.
14.	<b>Reductio ad hitlerum</b>	It is a method of convincing the masses that the opponent is associated with a certain idea that is unacceptable or hostile to them.
15.	<b>Repetition</b>	The message which is repeatedly used to force the audience to accept the propagandist message over time.
16.	<b>Obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion</b>	The message that entails ambiguity, tangle and unclear or complex information that confuses a listener.
17.	<b>Presenting irrelevant data (red herring)</b>	It is a way that aims to distract the recipient from the main meaning and details of the message by providing irrelevant information.

18.	<b>Bandwagon</b>	The message that seeks people to adopt a certain behaviour, interest or belief, because it is supported by the majority of the masses.
19.	<b>Smears</b>	It is a way to discredit the authority of the opponent or tarnish his reputation.
20.	<b>Glittering generalities (virtue)</b>	The expression that encourages people to believe in idealised perspectives or positive images of a certain object and take the side of the cause promoted by the sender of the message.
21.	<b>Appeal to (strong) emotions</b>	The phrase that is aimed at evoking emotions in the masses, to which they are exposed and will eventually do what the propaganda source seeks to achieve.
22.	<b>Transfer</b>	The technique where the propagandist uses the authority or weak point, acceptable or antipathetic association, and transfers/lays it on his opponent or himself.

## 1.2. Russian propaganda

Since 1999, Russian TV channels have been colonised by the politics of the propaganda machine. Russian governing bodies built a discourse in the media space, starting from religion and art to more significant political issues. News channels were given instructions on what topics have to be covered on the media landscape, from which angle they have to be presented, as well as which political figures could be shown during TV broadcasts. Then, when Vladimir Putin came to power as president of the Russian Federation, television became under even more strict and direct control of the higher authority. Media became “crucial to Vladimir Putin’s rule” (Pomerantsev, 2015). From that moment, a political campaign was launched to build a bright image of Putin. The propaganda technique of “the cult of leader” represented Putin as a hero whose mission was to perform feats and a courageous ideal politician who was ready to be with the people and resist any threat in the geopolitical arena of the world. Pomerantsev (2015) gives several examples of this persuasive communication: “Putin bare-chested, riding on a horse; Putin

stroking tigers; Putin in leather, riding a Harley.” All these manipulative techniques exaggerated the figure of Putin and eventually gained favour among the Russian population.

Increasing its power and the hegemony of informational influence, since 2008, the Russian authorities have begun to change their rhetoric and shift the emphasis of their propaganda to external objects. From promoting the image of its representative and the country as such, Russia resorts to “confusion”, “blackmail”, “demoralisation”, “subverting”, and “paralysis” techniques of political communication (Pomerantsev & Weiss, 2014). Putin has expanded his corridors, wanting to win the sympathy of other countries and influence the opinion of their citizens. Information campaigns began to acquire an increasingly multi-complex character, which provoked more involvement in the study of Russian propaganda among scientists. Pomerantsev & Weiss (2014) underscored that the Kremlin authority campaigns were fostering “an anti-Western, authoritarian Internationale that is becoming ever more popular in Central Europe and throughout the world”.

Furthermore, Russian political communication experienced a separate characteristic during the wars that the country started against other nations. Thus, one of the Russian Federation’s methods of waging war has always been information warfare. A conglomerate of Russian state institutions, pro-state media and individuals has been using propaganda methods to achieve their goals for a long time. This special information policy, which is aimed at misleading, disinformation and influencing the opinions of the masses, is carried out on various target audiences: from citizens of Russia, the population of Ukraine and other post-Soviet countries to the foreign-speaking population of the American continent, the Arab world, the Middle East and the countries of the European Union. But despite the comprehensive manipulation of opinion when waging wars against other countries and justifying its actions, Russian propaganda also left its trace during the elections in the USA in 2016 and the exit of Great Britain from the EU (Brexit) (Alieva et al., 2024). Moreover, representatives of the Russian government resort to constant falsifications during presidential elections held within the state (Fischer, 2024).

However, Russian propaganda received an even greater twist in its development and spread with the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. “The inception of the invasion also marked

a new period of Kremlin narrative warfare” (Osadchuk, 2023). The information operation of the Kremlin was aimed at justifying the start of the war against Ukraine, shifting the blame to the opponent and denying responsibility for its actions. Later, being convinced of the ineffectiveness of the narratives that were spread, the Russian Federation directed its propaganda activities to undermine the morale of Ukrainians and discredit the Kyiv authorities. They also used the tactics of intimidation of the society, applying psychological information operations, in order to demoralise the Ukrainian people and ultimately force them to surrender and accept Russia’s conditions. Being characterised by multiplicity, complexity (Mandić & Klarić, 2022), heterogeneity, inconsistency (Alieva et al., 2024) and emotional sentiment (Park et al., 2021), Russian propaganda aroused even greater interest and need for scrutiny among political scientists. Although some of them write about the similarities they broadcast from the propaganda used by the Soviet Union (Horbyk et al., 2023), with time, changing target audiences and digital developments, the propaganda of Russian Federation messages and narratives have changed. Ultimately, changes in propaganda messages encompass a change in the techniques used by Russian propagandists to achieve their political goals.

The literature that I include for my research contains a diverse spectrum of Russian propaganda characteristics and its techniques. Hence, Park et al. (2021) analysed emotional sentiment in the Russian campaign in the 2016 election that was aimed to influence public opinion, as well as its dynamic. They emphasise that propaganda narratives, which are built on emotional techniques, are a significant factor of society’s cleavage. While the research of Volkova (2024) focuses on a broader study of Russian propaganda techniques in social media news. The findings emphasise that the studied text was imbued with “doubts” that propagandists tried to cause among the Ukrainian population towards the Ukrainian government, army, partners and media, as well as the “black-and-white fallacy” technique and “loaded language”. Moreover, they contain the “appeal to fear” method, the “appeal to anger” technique and the “appeal to hate and disgust”. In contrast to this, Alieva et al. (2024), elaborating on Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, scrutinised the “fascism/nazism” narrative, that can be referred to the “reductio ad Hitlerum” technique. They point out that one of the main goals of Russian propaganda is to undermine the authority of Ukrainian institutions and destabilise the Ukrainian population. Besides, it is full of “misleading information”, “disinformation” and “confusion”. However, what it lacks is consistency. Because

it uses diverse propaganda approaches and techniques to different target audiences, sometimes confusing its arguments and contradicting itself. The authors also mention the “repetition” that the Russian Federation uses to make people who interact with a propaganda message tend to remember it more quickly.

But a separate method used by the Kremlin authority is the historical and cultural narratives (Horbyk et al., 2023), through which it “denies ethnic diversity and portrays Ukraine as an integral part of Russia, using national imperialistic identity narratives” (Alieva et al., 2024). Russian nihilism, which consists of denying the existence of Ukraine as a state and its population, is the basis of historical disinformation by the Kremlin and an example of hate speech, which Snyder (2022) calls “genocidal”. Moreover, by using the “fake history of Eastern Europe”, Putin tries to justify his imperialist sentiments and actions in the war with Ukraine. Seeking to colonise Ukrainian lands, in his techniques of historical propaganda, Putin turns to “glittering” to glorify Russia on the geopolitical platform and frames it in the eyes of Russian society as a saviour state that is supposed to “restore” order and “save” Ukrainians from the Kyiv regime (Snyder, 2014). And another prominent technique inherent in Russian propaganda is the “black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship”. In his paper, Snyder (2022) notes that Putin “extends the sadistic tradition of interrogators: nothing is true, nothing is worthy of sacrifice, everything is a joke, everyone is for sale. Might makes right, only fools believe otherwise, and they should pay for being fools.”

A broader example of the methods used by Russian propaganda in its activities can be found in the work of Pomerantsev & Weiss (2014). Among “obfuscation, intentional vagueness and confusion”, the Kremlin often resorts to the rhetorical method of using a counter-argument against criticism on its side with a counter-accusation to divert attention from the main topic. Using the “whataboutism” technique, it tries to abstract the recipients’ attention from itself to the actions or behaviour of another object. For example, Russia often discredits the US and NATO in its narratives (Oleinik, 2023), saying that they are the reason why it made a decision to launch the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. That is, in this way, the emphasis shifts, and Russia relays the responsibility for its actions to other geopolitical actors instead of giving concrete answers to the causes of war and responsibility for it. Russian propaganda also follows the approach of the

enemy's demoralisation, tries to excuse its own military defeats and creates conspiracy theories to mislead people. "The Kremlin's current strategy for keeping control has created a cynical citizenry, shaped by propaganda and conspiracy theories, that is bereft of hope" Pomerantsev (2015). Culminating, Russia resorted to supporting "back far-left and far-right movements, greens, anti-globalists and financial elites" in order to "create an echo chamber of Kremlin support" (Pomerantsev & Weiss, 2014). It was supposed to help apply the "transfer" technique through them, who will promote Russian propaganda narratives. In addition, Russia employs a community of experts abroad who facilitate Russian policy and thus use the "testimonial" technique. Moreover, "apathy", "paranoia", and "distrust" are also appropriate for Russian propaganda (Pomerantsev, 2015).

Despite working with detailed examples of Russian techniques, narrowly divided studies focusing on the specific method of Kremlin's rhetoric can also be found. Hence, the authorities of the Russian Federation also play on the opinions of their citizens based on nationalist sentiments (Frye, 2018). In order to supposedly rally its population, Russia uses the "flag-waving" technique. Resorting to a strong nationalist rhetoric, Putin tries to justify his actions and gain support among citizens. Osadchuk (2023), in turn, assures that Russian propaganda, specifically in the war with Ukraine, aims more to undermine Ukrainian authorities, politicians and people as well in the eyes of foreign partners. Thus, misrepresenting the Ukrainian position, Russian propaganda applies a "straw man" technique.

A distinct delimitation of Russian propaganda methods are also analysed in the work of Mandić & Klarić (2022), where they excrete four methods that Russia uses in the information warfare with Ukraine. They are "dismiss", "distort", "distract", and "dismay". In this way, Russian propaganda exploits slandering the opponent, a "red herring" technique that helps to present irrelevant information that is not a subject of a certain topic, as well as emotional appeals or "loaded language" to influence its audience.

Promoting the narrative about the danger of NATO expansion and the irreversible "salvation" of the Ukrainian population in the form of so-called "denazification", Russian propagandists soften their actions and mask their aggressive policy. Therefore, they resort to "euphemisms", calling

the “rescue” of Ukrainians “denazification”. Moreover, they call those who support Ukraine’s accession to NATO “neo-Nazis”, thereby appealing to terms that cause disgust and hatred in society. And so this shows the use of the “thought-terminating cliché”. Such masking is also imposed on the use of the term “special military operation”. “Any reference to the “special military operation” in Ukraine as a “war” is deemed to be “deliberately false information” (Oleinik, 2023).

However, a more diverse spectrum of Russian propaganda techniques and their multilateral characteristics can be traced back to the sophisticated researches by Da San Martino et al. (2019) and Dimitrov et al. (2021). If the former investigated examples of propagandist messages based on news articles, the latter identified propaganda in memes (images with humorous undertones), presenting empirical findings of the twenty-two techniques of deception and influence on the masses’ opinion, which are used by Russian propaganda. Among them are “loaded language”, “name calling or labelling”, “doubt”, “exaggeration or minimisation”, “appeal to fear or prejudices”, “slogans”, “whataboutism”, “flag-waving”, “misrepresentation of someone’s position (straw man)”, “causal oversimplification”, “appeal to authority”, “thought-terminating cliché”, “black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship”, “reductio ad hitlerum”, “repetition”, “obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion”, “presenting irrelevant data (red herring)”, “bandwagon”, “smears”, “glittering generalities (virtue)”, “appeal to (strong) emotions”, “transfer” (Dimitrov et al., 2021). As I have noted above, it is the set of techniques that I will use in my research, since the broad classification of techniques makes the investigation of propaganda more reasonable and reliable (Da San Martino et al., 2019).

However, one of the research problems I see is that despite various studies of Russian propaganda, the proportion of the use of propaganda techniques by the Russian government has not been established. While previous researchers focused on a single technique or several methods, the latter contains more extensive investigation. However, to make the study of Russian propaganda more systematic and orderly, I consider it necessary to classify their techniques into narrower groups and look at their proportion. By creating such a methodological approach, I illustrate the depiction of Russian propaganda dissemination over time. Thus, knowing what techniques Russia more uses in its propaganda activities and their ratio will help create more

structured and clear methods of prevention or opposing propaganda, as well as methods of combating it in the future.

There is one more research problem that manifests in few empirical works that have observed the dynamics and change of Russian techniques over time. Investigating the emotional sentiment of Russian propaganda, which interfered in the US elections in 2016, Park et al. (2021) note the same literature gap: “little empirical work examines the strategic uses of emotion in social media over time or compares their temporal patterns”. The comparative analysis of two periods: the Soviet Cold War and the time of contemporary Russia, by Horbyk et al. (2023) also emphasises the importance of examining how propaganda changed over time and investigates which narratives and techniques the Russian Federation uses in its current propaganda activities since the time of the Soviet Union. It establishes how Soviet propaganda was transformed into the Russian information war and acquired more complex methods of conducting it. Among the techniques similar to the Soviet ones, “conspiracy theories”, appeals to “thought-terminating clichés” (narratives about “fascism”) and “disinformation” (“an obsession with biolaboratories” where biological weapons are allegedly being developed) were found.

Due to the research by McGlynn (2024), it is evident that the propaganda that Russia used during the annexation of Crimea was also used by propagandists during the full-scale escalation in 2022. In 2014 in Crimea, and 8 years later in the occupied Ukrainian territories, the Kremlin authorities used the techniques of “glitters” and “euphemisms”, due to which it spread the narrative about the liberation of the citizens of Ukrainian lands, as well as “straw men” and “doubts” in order to discredit the Ukrainian authorities among the population they occupied. But over time, the comparison proved that Russia began to resort more to emotional methods and intimidation. Forcing the Ukrainians in the occupied territories in the liberation mission of the Russian Federation from the Kyiv regime and conducting the so-called “special operation” transformed in historical disinformation techniques due to the failure of their propaganda activities at the beginning of the full-scale invasion. The researcher stated that “after September 2022, Russian-installed officials mentioned the “special military operation” and events on the front less and less, acting as if the occupied territories had not simply been returned to Russia, but had always been Russian.”

There are some works that briefly mentioned the modification of Russian propaganda. For example, Osadchuk (2023) emphasised the Russian rulers' strategy of disguising the war at the start of the full-scale invasion to more overt propaganda techniques aimed at undermining Ukraine's authority in the world in order to prevent aid from its partners. Polyakova & Spencer (2018), on the other hand, underlying Russian predisposition to "disinformation campaigns, the cultivation of political allies in European democracies, and cyberattacks" said that the tactics of Russian information activities regarding the countries of the democratic world have evolved into psychological operations, discreditation of European leaders and destabilising methods of dividing societies. And Gerber & Zavisca (2016), in their work, draw a timeline of the anti-American and anti-NATO narrative in Russian propaganda, which Russia currently absorbs in its propaganda activities, that it used even in the 2000s.

Therefore, as can be seen, despite some spot studies of Russian propaganda and its changes in the rhetoric over time, there is a need for systematic empirical study that would show how the techniques of Russian propaganda changed proportionally over time: starting with the war in the east of Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea to the beginning of the full-scale invasion. Such chronological tracing can make it possible to predict future information techniques in the Russian Federation warfare and develop methods of countering them. Consequently, to address this and the preliminary research problem I create my comparative analysis of Russian propaganda techniques and their proportion and how it has changed over time. I reveal this in the next part of the theory.

### **1.3. Milestone of analysing Russian propaganda**

Based on the research problems that I highlighted above, I formulate the goal of the work, which is the following. *The aim of this master's thesis* is to examine the proportion of techniques that the Russian Federation has used in its activities regarding Ukraine in a coherent and synthesised way and look at how these proportions have changed over time. This will help me make an academic contribution to the solution of the research problem, as well as elaborate a systematic basis for further research, which will be aimed at determining the methods of combating and preventing the spread of Russian propaganda.

In order to do this, I study two periods of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Taking into account that at the time of writing the master thesis the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation of Ukraine has been lasting for three years, for comparison, a similar time span of the hybrid war 2014-2015 is taken. Hence, the first covers the years 2014 and 2015, which is characterised by the beginning of Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, during which it annexed Crimea and started a war in the eastern territories of Ukraine. I conceptualise this period as a hybrid war because it was built on a variety of warfare forms (Hoffman, 2007) — from usurpation of power by Russian representatives in the eastern parts of Ukraine, terrorist activities, an unspoken agreement between representatives of that area regarding partisan practices against Ukrainian authorities, to information operations that “are an integral part of hybrid warfare used to form narratives and, generally, to influence political opinion-making among the target population” (Giegerich, 2016). Instead, the second period refers to the beginning of the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, when Russia carried out massive missile strikes on the entire territory of Ukraine (Maidanik, 2023; Snyder, 2024; 2024a). It embraces the timeline of 2022 and 2023. This will help determine what propaganda techniques the Kremlin used about Ukraine, as well as their proportion and how this ratio changed over time. I will carry out such research through the content analysis of the interview of the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, who remained the head of state of the country during these years. According to this, *my research questions* are the following: (1) What is the profile of Russian propaganda techniques about Ukraine in the Russian hybrid war and the full-scale invasion? (2) How has this profile changed over time?

To answer the research question, I will rely on such a conceptual framework. I define *propaganda* as a deliberate information activity by individuals, groups of people or state governments that aim to plant certain statements, arguments, ideas or perceptions of specific objects in order to influence public opinion, values and beliefs of the masses to achieve their own goals. Regarding the typology, I focus on *war propaganda*, which is used during warfare to achieve military and political goals, among the tactics of which can be both discrediting and demoralising the enemy, intimidation and psychological operations, manipulation, etc., and rallying the masses on the basis of a certain conviction. *Techniques of propaganda* are identified as methods or ways to achieve a specific goal of propaganda. As for *the profile of propaganda*

*techniques*, it is a proportion or ratio of propaganda methods that shows a mutual relation of quantity among themselves.

The techniques that I will identify and analyse in the sample of interviews of the President of the Russian Federation regarding Ukraine will contain methods that were developed by Dimitrov et al. (2021). They are “loaded language”, “name calling or labelling”, “doubt”, “exaggeration or minimisation”, “appeal to fear or prejudices”, “slogans”, “whataboutism”, “flag-waving”, “misrepresentation of someone’s position (straw man)”, “causal oversimplification”, “appeal to authority”, “thought-terminating cliché”, “black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship”, “*reductio ad hitlerum*”, “repetition”, “obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion”, “presenting irrelevant data (red herring)”, “bandwagon”, “smears”, “glittering generalities (virtue)”, “appeal to (strong) emotions”, “transfer” (Table 2). This set of techniques was chosen because of their obtainable identification. I do not consider propaganda techniques such as “disinformation”, “conspiracy theories”, etc. because they require more sophisticated analysis, as well as fact-checking, argumentation and refutation. However, examples of prior techniques can be detected based on their general characteristics and conceptualisation. It is also important to note that if Dimitrov et al. (2021) do not include the last two techniques as ones that can be used in textual analysis, I preserve them in my research. This builds on the deeper conceptualisation that I managed to reveal in subchapter 1.1, where I explain that “transfer” association can also be created by projecting a propaganda message onto another authority figure followed by the masses. And “appeal to (strong) emotions” can be built on feelings of love, hate, disgust, etc., which is transmitted through a text message.

Afterwards, I group this capital selection into three narrower categories — emotional techniques, rational and social, which I discuss in detail in the methodological chapter. By basing my research on such principal benchmarks, I set expectations for my work, which should show what the proportion of Russian propaganda techniques was in two different periods of the time, what techniques were more common, and how they have changed over time.

## **Chapter 2: Methodology of propaganda techniques' analysis**

### **2.1. Case and time frame selection**

For many years, Ukraine was one of the key geopolitical vectors of the Kremlin's foreign policy, against which the Russian Federation directed propaganda with anti-Ukrainian sentiments even before the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. Increasing its potential, Russian information policy turned into war propaganda, the threat of which increased with the beginning of the full-scale invasion in 2022 (Karpchuk & Yuskiv, 2021; Geissler et al., 2023; Johansson-Nogués & Şimanschi, 2023). Despite the participation and intervention of Russia in a number of other wars in certain countries, Russia's war against Ukraine acquires special significance due to the following reasons, which argue the choice of cases and the importance of studying Kremlin propaganda regarding the Russia-Ukraine war.

Hence, the case in the master thesis was chosen because of the duration of the war, which is still ongoing at the time of writing this work. After launching the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Russia has been still conducting disinformation and manipulative attacks to promote its propaganda. Accordingly, there is a need to continue investing in research into the Kremlin's information policy. By studying Russian propaganda in the context of its war with Ukraine, it allows to determine what propaganda techniques Russia uses and their segment, which will empower for the development of more systematic and concrete means of combating it.

Secondly, the full-scale invasion, as well as Russian aggression in 2014, were imbued with an unprecedented and high level of information attacks, manipulation, the spread of propaganda narratives, as well as the intensity of information warfare (Paul & Matthews, 2016, p. 2; Kaye, 2022; Alieva et al., 2024; Roozenbeek, 2024). Despite the fact that the long-term campaign is directed by Russia against Ukraine, the Kremlin's propaganda efforts in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war are also directed at the international community, world political leaders and citizens of various countries. In order to effectively conduct military operations on the battlefield, Russia uses propaganda against the enemy, which is operated not only at its internal society or Ukrainians but also at representatives of other states (Osadchuk, 2023). In this way, it tries to

gain support, discredit Ukraine and justify its military actions. Accordingly, these reasons make Ukraine the central subject of research on Russian propaganda, as well as the understanding of modern political strategies of the Russian Federation.

The last, no less important reason is the impact of Russian propaganda regarding the war in Ukraine on regional and global stability. Russian propaganda seeks to influence not only public opinion but also undermine the authority of international democratic unions. By conducting information campaigns to erode trust in democratic institutions, the Kremlin undermines national unity, reinforces cleavage and societal divisions and, as a result, makes countries less resilient to diverse external threats. Russian propaganda in the context of the war with Ukraine often appeals to anti-Western narratives (Alieva et al., 2024, p. 3) about the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), trying to erode solidarity and the effectiveness of the organisations. An information campaign aimed at deceiving the masses leads to the weakening of democratic norms and ultimately creates a favourable environment for authoritarian influence where democracy is levelled. Such actions can be especially vulnerable for developing democracies or countries with weaker political regimes. Ultimately, through extensive propaganda activity, Russia creates opportunities for the escalation of other wars and conflicts. By spreading false information, the Kremlin facilitates confusion between countries about the war settlement and international antagonism. This complex information approach, which is beneficial for the geopolitical interest of the Russian Federation, endangers the established international order and the democratic environment.

Emphasising the arguments of the case selection, it is also worth mentioning the pillars of time frame choice. To make a comparative analysis, I take two periods of the war, during which Russia has been carrying out propaganda activities, the selection of which was made based on the following points.

The start of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine was the starting point for a new wave of information attacks and propaganda that has been spreading by the Kremlin government (OECD, 2022, p. 1; Mueller et al., 2024). Accordingly, in order to investigate what techniques of propaganda regarding Ukraine and their proportion that were used

by Russia in a full-scale war, I focus on the first year of the invasion. This time frame encompasses the period from 2022 to 2023. Although propaganda is a deliberate and premeditated activity, as I conceptualised it above, and accordingly, its manifestations precede the very beginning of warfare (Weissmann, 2019, p. 21), I eventually examine propaganda during the active phases of war. Since this phase is also permeated with information manipulation, which Russia uses to justify its military actions. However, the study of pre-war propaganda is a separate academic question that may be beneficial for subsequent scrutinising of Russian political actions.

In order to make the sample of the second period equivalent to the first cycle, I start the analysis of events from the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. This time slot embraces dates from 2014 to 2015. I also consider a consequential point during the selection of years, which is related to the duration of the active phase of the hybrid war, which lasted until the signing of the Second Minsk Agreement (Kolesnykov, 2023). Thus, the timeframe of the second period will end on February 12, 2015 (358 days total). However, I describe the sample of articles and specific time frames, which it is based on in subsection 2.3.

Considering that the two varied periods mark different types of warfare, Russia has been using diverse methods of conducting it. Accordingly, changing the approaches to the war, the tactic of carrying out information campaigns also has been altered. This affects the propaganda of the Russian Federation itself and, as a consequence, its techniques and amount. For instance, only in one year from 2021 to 2022, the strategic narratives of Russian propaganda used by Vladimir Putin changed and had different meanings (Oates & Neil Ramsay, 2024). And the research of OECD (2022, p. 2–3) generally showed how Russian propaganda in the full-scale invasion progressed from disinformation narratives and speculation about history to conspiracy theories and lies about “neo-Nazis” in Ukraine. Hence, there is significance to establish what techniques and their proportion Russia used in the hybrid war in 2014–2015 and how the approach changed in the full-scale invasion during 2022–2023.

## 2.2. Categorisation of propaganda techniques

As it was noted in the theoretical part, I rely on twenty-two techniques of propaganda (Dimitrov et al., 2021), which are characterised by previous identification and detection in the text, unlike other methods that can be applied in propaganda activities, but which require factual refutation or confirmation. However, to make my study more structured and the analysis of the proportion of techniques more systematic and quantitatively feasible, I categorise the set of these methods into three narrower groups — *emotional*, *social* and *cognitive*. This attribution is related to the characteristics of each of the techniques, which I discussed in detail in subchapter 1.1. In addition, I define each of these groups for a broader understanding of how and why certain methods will fall into a certain category. This distribution by category is shown in Table 3.

Hence, *emotional techniques* are propaganda methods that are based on emotions and strong sentiments, like anxiety, panic, fear, etc. The category includes “loaded language”, because they are strong emotional words with positive or negative meaning; “name calling or labelling” that are based on love and feelings of hate; “exaggeration or minimisation” which is used to intentionally enhance or reduce the expressiveness of the presentation of certain information; “appeal to fear or prejudices”; as well as “appeal to (strong) emotions”. Moreover, I also add three more propaganda techniques to this group, where emotional colouring and characteristics of other categories may be presented. Thereby, “slogan” can contain the characteristics of another group, which will be described separately. However, with regard to emotions, “slogan” is inherently aimed at evoking an emotional attachment that will resonate with the preferences of a target audience. Dimitrov and colleagues (2021) note that “slogans tend to act as emotional appeals”. “Flag-waving” is also based on striking national feeling, that is why it can be referred to emotional techniques of propaganda as well. “Glittering generalities (virtue)” is aimed at evoking a positive feeling and pleasant image of a certain source so that people admire it. And “transfer” may also contain elements of emotions due to a negative or positive association that can be attached to an object to discredit or glorify it.

*Social techniques*, in turn, are messages related to belonging to a certain group, resonating with a specific audience because of their similarity, as well as providing information in order to get

people's favour. As I mentioned earlier, "slogan" can contain not only an emotional sentiment. In order for a person to perceive and remember a particular slogan, it is necessary that such a short phrase is well-aimed and resonates with the preferences of a certain audience to which it is directed. Per se, people who are supporters of a certain product, for instance, are united on the basis of the values and meaning that this product carries. And these main peculiarities are included in the slogan that unites buyers over the commodity. Accordingly, I categorise "slogan" as a social technique as well. "Flag-waving", which aims to unite people based on nationalist sentiments, is included in this group too, as well as "reductio ad hitlerum" that is build on persuading a group of people to not approbate a certain object, person or idea, affirming that it is popular or approved of by another group that the first audience hates or is hostile to. "Bandwagon" is also characterised by a social feature that aims to force people to join a particular group because others or most individuals do the same. Additionally, I comprise "glittering generalities (virtue)" in the following group as well, because they are words or phrases that coincide with the valuables of a particular group of people whose favour the propagandist tries to win. Likewise, "transfer", the purpose of which is to create an association that will force the receiver of information to support or reject the opponent's idea, aims to unite for or against him.

The group of *cognitive* characteristics can be determined as methods that are connected with thinking, argumentation, remembering or vice versa, but using argumentation tricks that are often incompatible with formal logic and providing messages that do not require deep analysis of certain things. In this very case, the propagandist's main task is not to gain the masses' favour but only to instil a certain idea, mindset, or belief. "Doubt", which is questioning of an opponent's position or idea, complements the following group. "Whataboutism" is also a cognitive technique of propaganda because the discreditation of an opponent that is used by a propaganda source is applied without reasonable refutation of the opponent's arguments. Instead it seeks to shift focus to the opponent by counter-accusation. "Misrepresentation of someone's position (straw man)", which is built on twisting an opponent's argumentation to refute and distort it for further misperception, can also be used as a cognitive method of propaganda. The same applies to "causal oversimplification", where the information is presented superficially and simplified, which does not require sophisticated reasoning on the part of the recipient. "Appeal to

authority” that is characterised by the fact that people, receiving a message that certain information is reliable, because it was confirmed by an expert or an influential person, also belongs to cognitive methods. In this case, the recipient tends to rely on a supposedly valid source or expert without further searching or verifying the information. “Appeal to authority” removes the analysis of the information from the recipient because he shifts the responsibility to an expert or authority that the individual trusts. As it was already noted in the conceptual part of the thesis, “thought-terminating cliché” is aimed at nullifying critical thinking with short phrases that do not correspond or provide a complete and reasonable answer to the question. Or it could be a phrase that is named in its own way to establish a fixed form of a definition that will then be used in a permanent form. “Black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship” is intended to mislead a person and not provide a full range of possible options. Such concealment leads to distorted analysis and decision-making based on incomplete information. “Repetition”, in turn, is based on remembering, that occurs to the recipient who often hears the same message many times. “Obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion” are aimed at misleading people so that in the end they have their own (distorted) explanations and interpretations for a certain course of events. The same applies to “presenting irrelevant data (red herring)”, where irrelevant information is provided that distracts from the main messages of the general context in order to change the topic of the conversation. And “smears” are used for distorted information to tarnish the opponent’s reputation.

**Table 3.** *Categorisation of propaganda techniques by three groups*

<b>Emotional</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Cognitive</b>
“loaded language”	“slogan”	“doubt”
“name calling or labelling”	“flag-waving”	“whataboutism”
“exaggeration or minimisation”	“reductio ad hitlerum”	“misrepresentation of someone’s position (straw man)”

<p>“appeal to fear or prejudices”</p> <p>“slogan”</p> <p>“flag-waving”</p> <p>“glittering generalities (virtue)”</p> <p>“appeal to (strong) emotions”</p> <p>“transfer”</p>	<p>“bandwagon”</p> <p>“glittering generalities (virtue)”</p> <p>“transfer”</p>	<p>“causal oversimplification”</p> <p>“appeal to authority”</p> <p>“thought-terminating cliché”</p> <p>“black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship”</p> <p>“repetition”</p> <p>“obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion”</p> <p>“presenting irrelevant data (red herring)”</p> <p>“smears”</p>
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**2.3. Data and selection of articles**

In this research, the data in the form of speeches given by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, in the predetermined time frames of 2014–2015 and 2022–2023 is analysed using qualitative comparative analysis. However, in order to count and output the final amount of propaganda techniques at the end of the analysis, I use a quantitative approach.

I selected articles from the Kremlin’s official website that is called “Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia”<sup>5</sup>, where I evaluate the content in order to identify the propaganda techniques. To find the relevant articles, I use the following algorithm: President of Russia —

English — Documents — Transcripts — All Publications. The resource was chosen for two main reasons, the first of which is that the website is an official source that represents all interviews given by the President of Russia since 2000 till nowadays. And the second point is the possibility of viewing articles not only in the original language of the country, but also transcripts in English, which saves time for analysing propaganda.

The work is based on the speeches of Vladimir Putin since he is an official representative of the country, whose rhetoric and speeches are quoted not only by local but also by foreign media. This contributes to the wider spread of Russian propaganda and, as a result, it creates a danger for vulnerable members of society. Secondly, Russian media outlets operating in Russia and abroad are controlled by the Russian leader and promote his narratives (RSF, 2024).

In order to extract relevant articles for my analysis, I focus on two main pillars. Primarily, I selected speeches that Putin gave between 2014 and 2015, as well as articles that were published from 2022 to 2023. The specific reference point from which I begin to select articles for the first period is February 20, 2014, when the Russian Federation started occupying the Crimean Peninsula. Regarding the second period, the countdown time starts from the day of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. As it was mentioned before in the time frame selection, the endpoint for the analysis of the first period is the signing of the Minsk conditions, i.e. February 12, 2015 (358 days total inclusively). To have a comparable time period for analysis, the last date of the article that I analyse from the second period is quantitatively equivalent to the first — February 9, 2023 (358 days total inclusively). However, during the selection of articles in 2014, the first relevant article with mention of Ukraine was published on March 4, 2014. Therefore, the sample of the first period will begin with the article released after the starting day of the Crimea occupation. I note this in Table 4 to avoid further confusion.

**Table 4.** *Number of articles with factual time frame of the relevant articles*

	<b>2014–2015</b>	<b>2022–2023</b>
<b><i>Number of articles</i></b>	81	71

<i>Time frame under examination</i>	February 20, 2014 — February 12, 2015	February 24, 2022 — February 9, 2023
<i>Actual time frame of the relevant articles</i>	March 4, 2014 — February 12, 2015	February 24, 2022 — February 9, 2023

Secondly, I found relevant articles to elaborate on Russian propaganda related to Russia-Ukraine hybrid warfare and full-scale invasion through the search engine “control F” by typing the word “Ukrain”. I did not add the ending “e” to the word in order to identify not only “Ukraine” but also the presence of such words as “Ukrainian” and “Ukrainians”. If the article, in this case, contained mentions of the latter, then such an interview was included in the selection of articles. If the article did not encompass any information about Ukraine, such materials were not included in the list of interviews for analysis. It is also important to clarify about individual cases when the word “Ukrain” was mentioned less than three times. Such interviews were also taken into account, and if one of the propaganda techniques was identified there, the article was included in the sample list.

Hence, the period from 2014 to 2015 counts 81 articles where Ukraine was mentioned. The relevant articles that contain information about Ukraine in the time frame from 2022 to 2023 encompass 71 articles. Therefore, summing up the articles for two periods, I received 152 materials where I polished the content of the Russian Federation President’s speeches. The articles with references, dates and mentions of Ukraine are presented in Table 5 (Appendix 1). The volume of the articles in the number of sheets for the first period was 946. The total number of pages of 71 articles for the full-scale period was 950. A vast sample facilitated to cover various kinds of speeches and addresses by the President of the Russian Federation, which makes this work, as well as the results, reliable and comprehensive. In addition, the samples are representative because the articles cover different topics and discourses that are not only about

Ukraine but could contain information about it. The selected articles were on political, economic, social, cultural and other themes. These were meetings with other heads of state, where the topic of discourse could be on Ukraine, which included information about the war, Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk regions, the authorities in Kyiv, and Ukrainians in general, or not be a theme of a meeting. They were interviews that the President gave to local and foreign media, where the Russia-Ukraine war was not the subject of conversation, but was sometimes mentioned in his rhetoric, or vice versa. These were also speeches by Vladimir Putin, where he addressed the residents of eastern parts of Ukraine or had a direct dialogue with them, who openly agreed with his statement. The analysis took into account the messages Putin used to try to create a positive image of Russia in the context of the war with Ukraine, as well as phrases with which he attempted to justify the Kremlin's military actions. The work also included anti-Western narratives applied by the President to discredit Ukraine or intimidate with an alleged NATO escalation.

#### **2.4. Methodology of the analysis**

In my investigation, I focus on content analysis of Russian propaganda techniques, which helps me make a further comparative evaluation of two distinct periods. Elucidating the methodology of my analysis is divided into three main parts: (1) an explanation of how I identified the techniques in the texts, (2) how the proportionality of each period was ordered, and (3) the description of the comparative analysis. I comprehensively open each of them below. However, before that, two main reasons why I do manual analysis are explained.

Foremost, Fridman (2018), citing George Orwell in his work, underlines the power of words: “if the thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought. A bad usage can spread by tradition and imitation even among people who should and do know better.” That is, the words have a significant influence on the masses and may contain hidden meanings. Second, manual benchmarking analysis contributes to depth and understanding of context. This helps to find the deeper propagandist differences in techniques and take into account contextual nuances.

As for the methodology itself, it is significant to emphasise that while extracting techniques from the articles, I paid attention to the speeches of Putin but the answers of an interviewer or an interlocutor were supplementary. They served as additional elements in order to understand the meaning and the context of the overall text. That is, I do not identify propaganda methods from the sentences of people who participated in the conversation with the President of the Russian Federation. Table 6 shows an example of the articles, which identifies certain propaganda techniques used by Putin, how I analysed it and which classification I refer it to. The following instance depicts the year to which a certain article relates, the number of the document (which refers to Table 5), what propaganda techniques were identified in it, as well as a brief explanation of how the appropriate snippet corresponds a certain technique and to which of the three categories (emotional, social or cognitive group) it belongs.

**Table 6.** *Examples of Russian propaganda techniques analysis*

Interviews in 2014–2015:

<i>Doc №</i>	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Snippet</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Categorisation</i>
6	<b>Glittering generalities (virtue)</b>	<i>“Russia gave them [the residents of Crimea and Sevastopol] its warmth, turned towards them and opened up its heart to them.”</i>	Attempt of creating a positive image of Russia	Social

30	<b>Thought-terminating cliché</b>	<i>“And those who started the coup in Kiev – if they are indeed experts – should have thought about the consequences of their unlawful ambitions.”</i>	Calling a free express of will of the Ukrainians as a “coup”	Cognitive
	<b>Repetition</b>	<i>“And those who started the coup in Kiev... Supporting a coup that is against the Constitution is exactly what I see as using force.”</i>	Repetition of the term “coup” that tries to replace the name of a Ukrainian free express of will — Euromaidan	Cognitive
73	<b>Loaded language</b>	<i>“Against this background, there was no way we could support this armed coup, the violence and the killings. Just take the bloody events in Odessa, where people were burned alive.”</i>	<i>“Violence and the killings”, “the bloody, burned alive”</i> aim to evoke emotions	Emotional

Interviews in 2022–2023:

<i>Doc №</i>	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Snippet</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Categorisation</i>
120	<b>Transfer</b>	<i>“Behind the choice of millions of residents in the Donetsk and Lugansk people’s republics, in the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, is our common destiny and thousand-year history. People have passed this spiritual connection on to their children and grandchildren... they carried the love for Russia through the years.”</i>	Attempt to make an association that is evoked in people’s mind regarding the belloning to Russian society	Social
127	<b>Appeal to fear or prejudices</b>	<i>“But in any event, sending troops into direct engagement, a direct clash with the Russian Army is a very dangerous step that could lead to a global</i>	Attempt to intimidate by potential of Russia and its power	Emotional

		<i>catastrophe. I hope those who talk about this will be smart enough not to undertake such dangerous steps.”</i>		
128	<b>Smears</b>	<i>“As we know, the Kiev regime refused to recognise the will and choice of the people, declining any proposals for talks.”</i>	Attempt to discredit Ukrainian authorities	Cognitive

In order to identify a particular propaganda technique, I applied three core criteria. They are the characteristics of propaganda techniques, the aim of the propaganda message, as well as a target audience to which a narrative was aligned. Peculiarities and definitions of propaganda techniques allowed me to more easily find propagandist content in the text. Having found a particular phrase, I determined its purpose and what the leader of the Russian Federation was trying to achieve with it. If the message sought to evoke emotions, it was classified as an emotional message. If the message was aimed at gaining favour and support from the target audience, it was coded as social. Finally, statements that were aligned to instil a certain belief or a specific perception of events, were attributed to a cognitive group. In addition, the approach to designating the target audience also helped me in detecting propaganda messages. Due to the determination of which group of people the message could be directed at, I could more accurately define the purpose of the information. I paid attention to three main groups at which propaganda was directed — the population of Russia, Ukrainians, and residents abroad. In Table 6, it can be observed that each propaganda technique was automatically assigned to a specific

category: cognitive, social, or emotional. A more detailed example of my analysis of all techniques according to the three categorisations is also presented in Table 10 (Appendix 2).

The coding of each propaganda example was carried out in two separate documents, where the first work reflected the propaganda of 2014–2015, and the second document contained the analysis of the actual propaganda techniques that Vladimir Putin used during 2022–2023. After analysing the sample of 152 articles through the search engine “control F”, I counted the number of propaganda methods used that were assigned to the three groups, in order to establish their numerical difference. Once I had all the numbers, I converted the data into percentages to see the proportional relationship between the three categories of propaganda techniques among themselves and the difference between the two periods. To convert the numbers into percentages, I added the cognitive, social, and emotional methods for the first period to get their total number. Then, I multiplied each number by 100 and divided it by the previously received total. The formula, which was also applied to the second period as well, is represented below:

$$Total = c + s + e$$

$$a = (b \times 100) : total$$

Where “c” is cognitive methods of propaganda, “s” is social techniques and “e” is emotional. The character “a” is a percentage, “b” is one of three categories of propaganda techniques. And the “total” is the sum of cognitive, social, and emotional methods of propaganda per one period.

By calculating the separate amounts of three categories for each period in percentage, I compared which category was most used by the Russian President during the hybrid warfare and the period of the full-scale invasion. Based on this, I conducted a further comparative analysis for the two periods, describing which group of techniques was the most popular during 2014–2015 and the period of 2022–2023, as well as which category of propaganda methods was used the least. I compared the ordinal scale of propaganda techniques over the two-time frames, as well as the metric difference in terms of how much percent each technique changed in contrast to its similar method in the other sample year. After that, I underlined how the approach to the use of various propaganda methods has changed and answered the research question.

## Chapter 3: Comparative analysis and results

### 3.1 Russian techniques of propaganda in 2014–2015

Analysing a sample of articles for the first period, which covers Russia’s hybrid war against Ukraine, certain characteristics were observed, and the following results were obtained. From 2014 to 2015, Russian President Vladimir Putin used all 22 propaganda methods in his speeches and interviews. Accordingly, this time slot contains cognitive, social, and emotional propaganda techniques.

However, despite the diverse use of propaganda techniques, the general group of cognitive methods has the largest set of techniques that the official Kremlin representative has applied in his addresses. The total number of cognitive techniques of Russian propaganda is 381 cases. These numbers are presented in Table 7.

*Table 7. Number of propaganda techniques’ cases in two periods and their total sum*

<i>Period</i>	<b>Cognitive</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Emotional</b>	<i>Total</i>
<i>2014–2015</i>	381	191	160	732
<i>2022–2023</i>	581	203	325	1109

Among the cognitive techniques of propaganda that were used most by the official representative of the Kremlin were “repetition”, “causal oversimplification”, “smears”, and “thought-terminating cliché”. In his rhetoric, Putin oversimplified statements and highlighted

them without reasonable argumentation. Additionally, he mentioned that the war in Ukraine was allegedly “primarily a domestic Ukrainian crisis”. Thus, he emphasised that it was only a Ukrainian issue, and Russia was not related to it. Using the phrase “Ukrainian crisis”, the Russian President resorted to “thought-terminating cliché”. In this way, he tried to hide the seriousness of the events and refused to recognise and call the war a war. Through the technique of “smear”, Russia discredited its opponents in order to disgrace their authority. It used this method to accuse and undermine the authority of the Ukrainian representatives, its government, the European Union, as well as the United States in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war. However, to firmly establish these and other narratives in the minds of the masses, which were promoted using propaganda techniques, Putin resorted to “repetition” the most. This made it the most widely used among other cognitive methods of Russian propaganda.

Fewer cases of “black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship”, “appeal to authority”, “obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion”, and “presenting irrelevant data” were found in the sample of articles. Russia insisted that the start of the war in the eastern territories of Ukraine, as well as the annexation of Crimea, were the only one option that could guarantee Russian security. Hence, through the method of “black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship” the Russian authority sought to justify their military actions. Putin also used “obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion” to convince Ukraine not to join NATO, emphasising that if this is not achieved, it will mean a “partial loss of sovereignty” for the Ukrainian people. Thus, it could provoke confusion among the population, which was not well acquainted with the provisions and advantages of the military-political alliance. Moreover, to justify Russia’s actions, Putin resorted to the “appeal to authority” technique. He presented statistics with numbers that supposedly show the results of the elections in Crimea and emphasised that it was impossible to force more than 80 percent of voters to give their vote for the unification of the Crimea peninsula. Thus, Russia tried to ensure that the information was true because there was statistical data. And few examples of the use of presenting the “irrelevant data (red herring)” method were also coded. For instance, by evading the question of whether Russian military personnel were in Crimea, the President began to speak about military uniforms to divert attention from the essence of the conversation.

As for the least used propaganda techniques applied by Vladimir Putin in his speeches, they are “doubt”, “misrepresentation of someone’s position (straw man)”, and “whataboutism”. In order to raise a dubious question and sow doubts, the official Kremlin representative tried to discredit the Ukrainian government and asserted its illegitimacy. He also questioned the manifestations of democracy in European countries. Underlining this Putin wanted to erode the image and trust of his opponents among their populations. Regarding the “straw man” technique, Russia tried to discredit the Kyiv authorities, misinterpreting their position by saying that Ukraine did not want to solve the war peacefully. Or, by resorting to “whataboutism” several times, Putin tried to undermine Ukraine’s position, diverting attention from Russia, and shifting responsibility to the former.

The social group ranks second in the number of techniques used among the three propaganda categorisation groups. The total number of social techniques of Russian propaganda in the first period is 191 cases. These numbers are depicted in Table 7.

During official meetings and interviews, Putin rarely used “slogan”, “flag-waving”, “reductio ad hitlerum”, “bandwagon” technique, “glittering generalities (virtue)”, as well as “transfer”. There are only few examples of them. Hence, using a short phrase, that is, a slogan, the politician emphasised that the future of the Crimeans is in their hands. Resorting to nationalist phrases, Putin also used the “flag-waving” approach, stressing that Russia will always defend its national interests, strength, and spirit of the people. As for “reductio ad hitlerum”, there was one occurrence, where the intention was to force the audience to disapprove of the position of the Ukrainian authorities due to their distant connection with Adolf Hitler. This is how the head of state tried to tarnish Ukraine, knowing that Hitler went down in history as a politician who committed crimes against humanity, and therefore is unacceptable to the majority of society. As a result, Ukraine will also not be supportable. There were a couple of examples where Russia used phrases that initiate a minority of people to join the rest of the population, which makes up the majority. In this way, the Russian authorities tried to direct the masses to support the Kremlin’s political actions regarding the war with Ukraine. Besides, Vladimir Putin repeatedly tried to create an association of belonging in his speeches. Thus, in order to make some Ukrainians feel supported by the Russian Federation, he was making a connection and phrase conjunctions that

Ukrainians have a lot in common with Russia and are a part of its society and culture. In this way, the President tried to sway part of the Ukrainian population to support Russia and get their favour.

However, the technique of “glittering generalities (virtue)” requires separate attention and presentation of its peculiarities. Its distinction is based on the point that this method was used by the representative of the Kremlin the most. Applying it in the rhetoric, Putin attempted to make a positive image of Russia as a saviour, in some cases a friendly state that allegedly cares about Ukrainians or a peaceful country that strives to solve the war in a peace-keeping way. It facilitated Russia to get adherence and sympathy from different target audiences which these messages were aimed to. Thereby, the large number of such examples of “glittering generalities” application helped the social group of propaganda techniques take the second position among the other two categories.

Regarding the propaganda group of emotional methods, the Kremlin officials used them the least. In contrast to the large presence of examples of “glittering generalities (virtue)” in the social group of propaganda, this technique was never used in an emotional aspect. Similarly, Putin did not use any emotional “slogans”, despite the short, not emotionally expressive phrases, which I attributed above to the social group of Russian propaganda techniques.

However, few examples of “name calling or labelling”, “flag-waving”, “exaggeration or minimisation” and “transfer” were found. For instance, in order to tarnish the image of the Ukrainian authorities, Putin repeatedly name-called them and labelled their decision as “foolishness.” He also called Ukrainians “thieves” and oligarchs “crooks”. In order to inoculate a certain idea, Putin also attempted to evoke national emotions and attitudes through “flag-waving” phrases. The “exaggeration or minimisation” technique was no exception too. He assessed events, calling what was happening in Ukraine (without acknowledging that it was a war) “the worst thing” or “nonsense” in order to depreciate the opponent’s positions. To create a negative association that would tarnish the image of Ukraine, Putin resorted to the technique of “transfer”, saying that the war in Ukraine reminded him of the events of World War II. Thus, the politician tried to make the conjunction between the Nazis and Ukrainians.

The most widely used methods among the emotional propaganda techniques applied by President Putin were “loaded language”, “appeal to fear or prejudices” and “appeal to (strong) emotions”. Exploiting words with emotive implications, he strived to evoke emotions and certain feelings. By “appealing to fear or prejudices” Putin endeavoured to scare diverse target audiences. Thus, he attempted to scare by the US, their military activities and the relations that they have with Ukraine. He frequently mentioned “OUN-UIA” to intimidate and evoke fear by naming it as a “nationalistic, pro-fascist organisation”. Moreover, he used the narrative about “extremists, nationalists and right-wingers including neo-Nazis” who are allegedly among Ukrainian society. Putin also sought to evoke another range of emotions through “appeal to (strong) emotions” methods. By mentioning the shelling of civilians, armed militants in Ukraine, the killings and rapes, etc., the head of state tried to arouse anger and disgust towards the Ukrainian side. In addition, in his rhetoric, he also used narratives that were aimed at evoking sadness, grief, regret and empathy. For example, by mentioning children, mothers and families who were left without their homes or people who can no longer live in peace and tranquillity.

Considering that the Russian official used emotional techniques less often than cognitive and social ones, their total number of uses is 160 times. These numbers I also present in Table 7. The general data were also converted into percentages, as shown in Table 8, to illustrate the figures’ proportion that was obtained for the first period of the analysis. Thus, from 2014 to 2015, Vladimir Putin used 52% of cognitive propaganda techniques. Social propaganda methods made up 26%, and emotional techniques — 22%.

**Table 8.** *The proportion of propaganda techniques in two periods by three categories*

	<b>Cognitive</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Emotional</b>	<i>Total</i>
<i>2014–2015</i>	52 %	26 %	22 %	<i>100%</i>

<i>2022–2023</i>	53 %	18 %	29 %	<i>100%</i>
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**3.2 Russian techniques of propaganda in 2022–2023**

The second period of analysis, which covers the period of a full-scale war from 2022 to 2023, is also permeated with three categories of propaganda techniques: cognitive, social, and emotional. Unlike the first period, the priority of using these methods by the Russian President is different. Additionally, during this period, only 20 of the 22 techniques that Vladimir Putin used in his speeches and interviews were found and encoded. I focus on their characteristics and distinctions below.

Among cognitive propaganda techniques, the Russian representative did not use the “appeal to authority” and “presenting irrelevant data (red herring)” method during the period of 2022–2023. Despite this, the set of cognitive techniques remains the most widely used and most frequently used by Putin in his speeches. The number of cases where cognitive propaganda techniques were identified is 581 examples. This numeric is presented in Table 7.

The least number of “whataboutism”, “black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship”, “misrepresentation of someone’s position (straw man)”, and “doubt” techniques were traced in the rhetoric of the Russian President. Resorting to the “whataboutism” method, the President, in order to whitewash Russian actions or divert the focus from Russia, shifted the emphasis to their enemy. For example, in order to justify himself and the economic difficulties that other countries are experiencing due to the war in Ukraine, Putin appealed to the sanctions of Western countries. Responding to the argument that there are radical nationalists in Russia, he also altered the focus to Ukraine and emphasised that nationalist sentiments are allegedly gaining greater popularity and support in the neighbouring country. The Kremlin representative’s arguments regarding launching the full-scale invasion remain unchanged, where he constantly underlined that Russia had “no other choice”. He highlighted that “there was no other way than to do what we are doing now”. Thus, the politician presented an option as the only one possible, while others could exist.

This approach “black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship” allows Putin to justify his military action on the Ukrainian territories. Additionally, two examples of “misrepresentation of someone’s position (straw man)” and “doubt” were found in his rhetoric. Hence, in order to misinterpret the position of the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Putin manipulated the facts and noted that the head of the state “is not ready and does not want to talk to Russia.” In this way, Putin tried to claim that a “peaceful” Russia wants to resolve the issue regarding the war through dialogue, but Ukraine does not want this. By using such a technique, people are deluded, as they perceive that Ukraine is allegedly not interested in ending the war. As for the “doubt” technique, in two cases, Putin tried to question the credibility of the legal basis used by Western countries.

In his propaganda messages, Putin used more “causal oversimplification” and “obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion” techniques. The Russian leader constantly applied manipulation, talking about a duel between Western countries, which are on the side of Ukraine, and Russia. The head of state emphasised that representatives of the West allegedly sought to “weaken and divide” Russia and that this has supposedly remained their goal for centuries. However, Putin did not note that such an opposition continues because Russia has been waging wars and making interventions, and the states of the Western world, within the framework of protecting democracy, are trying to resist this. This is how he, through “causal oversimplification”, tried to convince that the main reason for the war is allegedly the desire of the EU and the US, when in fact other real reasons are hidden. Similar to the following method is “obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion” which works effectively for an audience that is not familiar with the topic or has not sufficient knowledge of the course of events regarding the Ukrainian-Russian war. By deliberately distorting information and presenting it in its own way, Russia promoted its narratives and propaganda. Sowing confusion, the Kremlin has repeatedly stated that their military actions on the territory of Ukraine are aimed at ensuring peace, for the salvation of Ukrainians, for Russia and avoiding “anti-Russia”. By manipulating information in this way, Russia tried to justify its actions so that people who do not follow the course of events can easily believe in such narratives. The very structure of these messages was built in the way that if Russia intends to protect, then there is a reason for this, which is subconsciously perceived as truth.

However, twice often used techniques in Vladimir Putin’s speeches among cognitive methods are “smears”, “thought-terminating cliché” and “repetition”. The two main targets that were discredited by Putin were Ukraine and Western countries. The rhetoric was aimed to undermine the trust and image of Ukrainian representatives, as well as civilians among other countries, or to stain the authority of the EU and the US in the eyes of the Ukrainian people. The dialogue or address of the Russian President was also built on a significant number of “thought-terminating cliché” examples. In 2022–2023, Putin continued to name the Russian-Ukrainian war of that period as a “crisis.” He also followed the conceptualisation of a free expression of Ukrainian will — Euromaidan, as a “coup d’etat”. Regarding the Western countries, the Kremlin representative named them “the collective West” in order to underline that they allegedly cooperate together against Russia. Ultimately, he defined the full-scale invasion as “a special military operation”. All of these words or their short conjunctions, intended to mislead or justify Russia’s military actions, have been repeated permanently in Putin’s speeches. In addition, he has constantly repeated the propaganda phrases with specific narratives, which were mentioned above.

In total, for the period of 2022–2023, he used 581 examples that belong to the cognitive group of propaganda techniques. They are highlighted in Table 7. In percentage terms, this figure is 53%. This is depicted in Table 8.

Analysing social and emotional techniques, in this period, the most used after cognitive were emotional methods of propaganda. While reviewing articles from the period of the full-scale invasion, I observed a significant hop in the use of emotive techniques by which Putin attempted to intimidate or evoke a certain range of emotions in the masses. The most common approaches in his rhetoric remained “appeal to (strong) emotions”, “appeal to fear or prejudices” and “loaded language”. And few cases were coded in the form of “glittering generalities (virtue)”, “name calling or labelling”, “transfer”, “flag-waving”, “slogan” and “exaggeration or minimisation”.

As for the most applied, the head of the state deliberately appealed to the “(strong) emotions” technique. For example, to arouse indignation and rejection, Putin provided information about the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, pointing out the bloody and ruthless actions allegedly being carried out by the Ukrainian authorities. He stressed that because of this, people are forced to

become refugees, they leave homes, their relatives die, etc. However, to instil fear, Vladimir Putin based his speeches on the “appeal to fear or prejudices” method. To intimidate his opponents, he repeatedly designated Russia’s responses to Western representatives, emphasising its military potential: “Russia’s response will be harsh and commensurate with the threats posed to the Russian Federation.” Even more cases were found among the approach of “loaded language”. Using words with emotive undertone or implications (e.g., “ethnic purges” “crackdowns on civilians”, “tragic”, etc.), Putin sought to influence the audience through the selection of words with a negative context.

The remaining emotional propaganda techniques were a minority. Rare cases were encountered from “exaggeration or minimisation”. Applying this propaganda technique, the Russian leader tried to minimise and belittle Russia’s military actions, assuring that the several strikes it carried out on Ukrainian territory were just “warning shots” and they did not carry any threat. Also, impulsively expressing his opinion about Ukrainian aircraft manufacturing, Putin tried to assure that no one except Russia needed it. Moreover, he also added that other countries were only interested in Ukraine as an exporter of wheat and corn. In this way, the President installed in Ukrainians a narrative of “low-value”. Through “slogans” he attempted to encourage the morale spirit of Russian society, as well as playing on national attitudes and emotions Vladimir Putin resorted to “flag-waving” techniques, where he noted that Russians must defend their homeland to prevent the destruction of Russia by its opponents. During the full-scale invasion, as during the hybrid war, Russia also used the emotional “transfer” creating an association that Ukrainians were allegedly closely linked to the Nazis and Hitler. He expressively said: “And who are they [Ukrainians]? Bandera followers. And what are Bandera followers? Neo-Nazis. Bandera was Hitler’s follower, he shot Russians, and by the way, Poles, Jews, everyone in a row on Hitler’s orders. And today they have raised these people to the rank of national hero”. It was not without some cases of “name calling or labelling”. A vivid example was when the Russian leader called some Ukrainians “stray dogs”, “the people in military uniform with SS Division Galicia stripes” were named as “scum” or representatives of international institutions as “blind” and “deaf”. However, despite Putin’s negative rhetoric towards others, he also attempted to create a positive image of Russia by glorifying Russian soldiers that was based on emotive undertones. In this

way, the official representative used “glittering generalities (virtue)” in order to create a positive image of Russian militants.

Accordingly, the entire set of emotional techniques polished above amounted to 325 cases. The figure is recorded in Table 7. As for the converted percentage of this number, its indicator is 29%, which is given in Table 8.

The least used of the three classifications of propaganda were social methods. Among them, there were isolated cases of “slogan”, “flag-waving”, “bandwagon”, “reductio ad hitlerum” and “transfer”. While uttering the phrase “The truth is with us, and behind us is Russia!”, which was intended to unite people on the basis of “truth” and “virtue”, Putin resorted to “slogans” several times. Continuing the theme of honesty, Putin emphasised that Russia’s position is “honest and open” and allegedly an increasing number of the population agree with it and support it. That was the case when through the technique of “bandwagon” he resorted to forcing people to support Russia because others do the same. Or, for example, he called on Ukrainians to lay down their arms and weapons, as soldiers who surrendered did. To force people to join the ranks of the Russian armed forces, the head of the state played on nationalist sentiments and pointed out that everyone should support their homeland and stand up for its defence. That was an example of “flag-waving” techniques of propaganda. Once during an indicated period, Putin used the “reductio ad hitlerum” and “transfer” methods. Hence, to discourage Ukraine from joining the European Union, presenting assumptions about future losses from this, as well as the fact that Ukraine would allegedly become a “semi-colony”, the Kremlin representative used a “reductio ad hitlerum” method. Such a technique was purposefully aimed at a part of society that could be critical of the economic union. By trying to create an association that evoked perception in the minds of people from Donetsk and Luhansk regions regarding “spiritual connection”, common history and culture with Russian society, Putin aimed to arouse in these people a sense of belonging to Russia and compel them to take its side. That was an example of the “transfer” technique.

However, a characteristic feature of social techniques during the period of full-scale invasion was that Putin’s speeches were built on a large number of messages that sought to create a positive

image of Russia. The technique of “glittering generalities (virtue)” was the most widely used among the rare cases of techniques that I mentioned above. Due to this type of social technique, he tried to convince audiences of the power and strength of the Russian Federation, in order to make them take its side, of friendly and peaceful intentions, to make people approve Russian military actions, as well as to present the Kremlin’s decisions in the best possible frame in order to gain favour among the Russian population.

According to the large number of “glittering generalities (virtue)” and other rarely used techniques, social methods received 203 mentions. This numeric is represented in Table 7. As for the presentation of the figures in percentage equivalent, this number is 18% among the remaining categories of propaganda techniques. This is separately shown in Table 8.

### **3.3 Comparative analysis of two periods**

By analysing two separate periods, I obtained data that distinguished the number of propaganda techniques that were used by the Russian Federation’s President Putin, as well as their priority distribution. This data showed that the proportion of the three categories of propaganda techniques — cognitive, social and emotional, is different for two periods. Table 7 shows that during the hybrid war period, as well as during the full-scale invasion, cognitive propaganda techniques remained the most used among the other two categories. However, the difference lies in the number of social and emotional techniques used. I explain analogy and divergence in detail below.

Revealing the findings, I underline the research questions that I outlined at the beginning of my work. (1) What is the profile of Russian propaganda techniques about Ukraine in the Russian hybrid war and the full-scale invasion? (2) How has this profile changed over time?

Hence, Vladimir Putin used cognitive propaganda techniques the most in both the first and second periods. In 2014–2015, the number of cognitive methods of Russian propaganda was 381 cases. As for social techniques, they took second place in terms of usage, and their numeric was 191. And the least applied group was the categorisation of emotional methods. Converting this

data into percentages, I got the following ratio. The use of cognitive techniques accounted for 52%, social techniques shared 26% of the total number of methods during the hybrid war, and the remaining 22% were designed for emotional propaganda techniques.

As for the second period of my analysis that embraced the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, the statistics were similar, but there was a drastic difference in the techniques' approach. Among cognitive, 581 cases were coded, social techniques were identified in 203 examples, and emotional propaganda methods accounted for 325 cases. Consequently, the proportional equivalent was different in the second period, comparing it to the first, where the sequence of three techniques was the following: cognitive, social and emotional, where cognitive was the majority and emotional formed the minority. In 2022–2023, this order was different, the proportion of which was 53% cognitive, 29% emotional and 18% social techniques of propaganda that were used in the Russian President's speeches.

In addition to the change in the ordinal scale, the difference can also be traced in metric data. Thus, Table 9 shows the difference between the two periods per propaganda technique. In the second time frame, Vladimir Putin began to use cognitive techniques 1 % more than in the period of hybrid warfare. The number of social methods decreased by 8 % in 2022–2023 compared to the first period. And emotional techniques, on the contrary, became more used with the beginning of the full-scale war, increasing by 7% than during 2014–2015.

Differences were also observed in absolute values. The volume of pages of the document, where examples of Russian propaganda were coded with its attribution to a specific propaganda technique and its category, for the first period of analysis was 233 pages. While the coding of the second period received more examples of propaganda since it has 137 pages more, i.e. the total number was 370 sheets. This difference suggests that the amount of Russian propaganda at the beginning of the full-scale invasion increased compared to the period of the hybrid war. This increase can also be seen in Table 7 in the total values: 732 cases of propaganda techniques were coded in the first period, and 1109 in the second period.

**Table 9.** *The difference in proportion per propaganda technique between two periods*

	<b>Cognitive</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Emotional</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>2022–2023</i>	53 %	18 %	29 %	100%
<i>2014–2015</i>	52 %	26 %	22 %	100%
<b><i>Difference (2022–2023 — 2014–2015)</i></b>	+1 %	-8 %	+7 %	0%

Therefore, answering the research questions of this master’s thesis, the following results should be elucidated. (1) The profile of Russian propaganda techniques about Ukraine in the Russian hybrid war encompasses 52% cognitive methods, 26% social and 22% emotional propagandist techniques. The profile of Russian propaganda techniques about Ukraine that was traced in the rhetoric of President Vladimir Putin during the full-scale invasion period consisted of 53% cognitive methods, 29% emotional and 18% social techniques of propaganda. (2) According to these data, the profile changes of each separate period are that during the hybrid war, the official representative of the Kremlin gave more preference to cognitive and social techniques of propaganda, applying less to emotional ones. However, with the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Vladimir Putin began to resort more to emotional methods, which eventually took second place after cognitive techniques. While social methods of propaganda were less followed in his speeches and interviews during 2022–2023. The Russian leader used 1% fewer cognitive techniques in the first period than in the second. In 2014-2015, he used 8% more social techniques than in 2022-2023. However, his rhetoric was 7% less emotional during hybrid warfare than at the start of the full-scale invasion. In the second period as a whole, Putin also resorted more to propaganda methods of all types and categorisation than in the first time frame.

This verifies the theory I discussed at the beginning of the paper, which noted that with the start of the full-scale invasion, the intensification of Russian propaganda activities increased.

The data obtained, and the coverage of scientific questions suggest that the Kremlin leader had different approaches to promoting propaganda narratives. Given that the two periods cover diverse types of wars, the difference in propaganda methods is apparent. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, attacking all regions of Ukraine, Vladimir Putin resorted to more acute military actions. The same was reflected in the propaganda techniques. Having processed a sample of 152 articles, 81 works covering the first period, and the remaining 71 articles were related to the full-scale invasion, I traced the increase in emotional propaganda techniques, which were identified in the majority of his speeches. However, this depended on the context and the interlocutors with whom he spoke or had an interview. Finally, I note that unlike hybrid warfare, where emotional methods ranked third among cognitive and social techniques, during the full-scale invasion, their use and proportion were different. During the second period of this analysis, Vladimir Putin, in order to scare or convince his audience, as well as to justify Russia's military actions against Ukraine, used emotional rhetoric more than social techniques of propaganda. The aggravation can also be explained by the Russian attempt to quickly conquer Ukrainian lands and force Ukrainians to surrender to the Kremlin's power. Also, the data may indicate that Russia may have had some setbacks on the front, and to compensate for this, it tried to gain support on the information front. However, testing such hypotheses can be used for future research, recommendations for which I give in the next subchapter.

Changes in metrics also suggest that the Russian Federation has altered its tactics in waging information warfare since the start of the full-scale invasion. To reinforce persuasive narratives, the Kremlin has begun to rely more on cognitive methods than it did during the hybrid war with Ukraine in 2014-2015. Having identified that calls to side with Russia, which are spread through social propaganda techniques in order to ultimately gain support among the masses, are not as popular as cognitive and emotional approaches to propaganda, the Kremlin authorities have changed their approach to their dissemination. Thus, with the start of the full-scale invasion, Russia began to use social methods less than in the first period of the war. The change in strategic approach can be explained by the fact that the hybrid war was aimed at distinct

Ukrainian southeastern territories, where a certain part of the population consumed Russian content and was exposed to information influence before the start of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation. The social techniques of promoting the valour of Russia and highlighting it in the best possible light in order to gain favour among the masses could work effectively and influence this audience. However, the full-scale war was targeted at the entire population of Ukraine, which included groups of people with a pro-democratic and European political vector. Accordingly, the technique of glorification of Russia would not work for this audience, who does not support Russian political values in general. Consequently, this pattern may explain to some extent why Vladimir Putin used fewer social techniques of propaganda in 2022–2023 than in the period of 2014–2015.

The findings were different with emotional propaganda methods. Since the official Kremlin representative resorted to them more during the full-scale invasion than during a hybrid war, this characteristic can be explained by the fact that the war was not conducted by a covert method, and Russia tried to conquer as much territory as possible in a short period of time. Emotional techniques would contribute to this and help to better apply other types of propaganda among an already frightened society that is easily influenced by emotions. In this way, cognitive propaganda techniques will be more quickly absorbed and accepted by people, since the symbiosis of messages with emotional overtones and cognitive methods will better discourage critical thinking. And this synergy of techniques' combinations is a characteristic feature of Russian propaganda, which I write about in more detail in the next subchapter. However, such a characteristic can also be explained by the theoretical part of my thesis regarding the complexity of Russian propaganda and its diversity of target audiences.

Acquired proportional results also present substantial sums of individual techniques. Hence, the similarity between the two periods is that the deviation in cognitive techniques between the first and second periods was not significant and remained relatively equal across the two-time frames, compared to the added sum of social and emotional propaganda methods. The total number of social and emotional methods in percentage was 48 % during 2014–2015. The ratio of this amount to cognitive methods was 52% and 48 %. While the general sum of social and emotional techniques of propaganda in 2022–2023 was 47 %. Thus, the ratio of the sum and cognitive

techniques for the second period of analysis was relatively the same — 53% and 47 %. Such data indicate that cognitive methods of propaganda remain the priority set for persuasion in the rhetoric of the Kremlin leader, unlike social and emotional ones, which together in sum make up approximately the same number in each period but individually have different proportional values. This confirms the theoretical part of this thesis, where, referring to propaganda researchers, one can trace the claim that Russian propaganda rhetoric is more imbued with cognitive methods of propaganda, which are aimed at delusion, confusion, and persuasion.

### **3.4 Discussions and recommendations**

Given that the study covered two different periods of the war that Russia waged against Ukraine, the different results obtained may indicate that depending on the type of war, the strategies and approaches to its conduct are also different. Also, the way the war was waged — covert, which was characteristic of the first period, or open military attack, which is attributed to the second period, may be one of the factors influencing the rhetoric of its leaders. Similar assumptions can also be made regarding the course of events during the war, which could be reflected in the speeches of the Kremlin leader.

Thus, analysing articles from 2014 and 2015, I noticed that at the beginning of the military actions, a large number of cognitive methods of propaganda were present. Then, there was an increase in social techniques. As for emotional ones, their proportion was low at the beginning, compared to the other two. However, within the sample period, their use became barely noticeable, with further activation at the end of the first time frame. Accordingly, such a curve in the use of three categories of propaganda techniques may reflect the military actions of the Russian Federation. For example, it can be assumed that when Russia seized land, they tried to discredit their enemy more among the Ukrainian population so that people would change their trajectory and renounce their domestic power. In order to achieve this, it needed to apply more cognitive methods of propaganda. Later, when the Kremlin representatives managed to seize and annex certain territories of Ukraine, Russia began to play the role of a sycophant in order to somehow work with the people in the occupied territories, change the minds of dissidents and enlist their support. To force people to support the actions of the Russian Federation, they would

need social propaganda techniques, which can be traced in the rhetoric of Vladimir Putin, that I mentioned above.

As for the second period of my comparative analysis, the trend was radically different. With the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Russia built its rhetoric on emotional propaganda techniques. Their number at the beginning of the second period was significantly greater than cognitive ones, which eventually overtook emotional methods later in a proportional ratio. This approach can also be explained by the fact that Russia sought to conquer certain territories of Ukraine in three days. Moreover, military actions were directed at all Ukrainian regions, covering the entire population of the country. Accordingly, if cognitive and social techniques work on specific audiences and require a certain time to impose a particular message, narrative or idea, then emotional ones are able to influence the majority of the population and in a short period of time. Thus, in order to intimidate Ukrainians, evoke strong emotions, and also to achieve the set of Russian political goals in a short period of time, it was necessary to use emotional propaganda techniques. That was observed during my work with a selection of articles for 2022–2023.

Another feature that was inherent in this period was the specificity of the combination of cognitive and social techniques, which went together in pairs. Or there were enough cases when Putin could apply several propaganda techniques in one phrase, making it multi-complex. The President, discrediting Ukraine or Western countries, often reinforced messages with the glorification of the Russian Federation. Using the “glittering generalities (virtue)” technique, he tried to create a positive image of his country. The synergy and combination can be explained by one of the possible options. For instance, the Kremlin leader, seeing that tarnishing the trust and authority of his enemy (the cognitive method) did not work in full measure, resorted to messages that glorified Russia and showed it from a positive side in order to get public support and favour. However, this hypothesis and the assumptions are transformed into new research questions that can be explored in subsequent studies of Russian propaganda and its military actions.

The next considerable and more practical point about what my results say is the approach to confronting and resisting Russian propaganda. Given that, with the beginning of the full-scale

invasion, Russia began to use more emotional methods of propaganda, the question of protecting citizens in the information field arises. Propaganda emotional approaches, which may include psychological operations, manipulation, intimidation, etc., can have serious consequences for the population. Because when society is scared or under the influence of emotions, it is paralysed. And if the population is paralysed, any political and military actions can be taken against it. To avoid this and prepare the country for emotional and psychological attacks, it is important to develop specific approaches to confrontation and the use of critical thinking among citizens. The countermeasures may include media education, early prevention and informing by representatives of the authorities about the use of emotional tools, establishing close communication and trust between political leaders and the population of the country, where the officials will be able to help citizens not to be led by manipulative threats, as well as educational activities aimed at developing a critical mind. Moreover, taking into account that both in the first and second periods of this analysis, cognitive methods remained the most priority approach to conducting propaganda by Russian officials, it is worth continuing to conduct activities aimed at developing critical thinking, increasing education and awareness of political topics in order to avoid confusion, the use of propaganda narratives, and deception among society.

Having concluded the question of what the data I obtained say and explain, it is also significant to outline a few recommendations that I gleaned during the analysis, which may be useful for future scientific research. The most momentous are the following.

The first important point to consider when analysing propaganda is its conceptualisation. As it was noted in the theoretical part of the thesis, propaganda is often viewed through a negative prism of definition, which is associated with the use of false narratives. However, propagandists can also use veridical messages with which they seek to convince the target audience. Having processed a large sample of speeches by the President of Russia Vladimir Putin, I noticed that among his messages there were also true facts. However, with the help of propaganda techniques, he twisted information and presented it in his own way in order to deceive and delude the listeners or concrete masses. For instance, the President distorted the true information about the fact that the US was helping Ukraine and presented it as the war between Ukraine and Russia was being allegedly waged by American representatives.

Also contributing to the literature regarding the conceptualisation of the propaganda term, during the analysis I came to the conclusion that propaganda is not always about the goal of gaining support from the population (i.e., the social method of propaganda). It can also be a separate cognitive approach to propagate, where the propagandist will try to inoculate a certain message in the population but will not need support from the target audience. For example, Putin, in the first and second periods, did not stop calling the events in Ukraine a “crisis”, “civil war” and “coup d’état”. His goal was to sow this narrative among people, to instil it so that they would have a distorted perception of events in Ukraine. This method carries only cognitive conviction and persuasion, but it lacks the desire to force the masses to support the source of propaganda. That is, a specific group of people could believe that the war in Ukraine is supposedly a “crisis” but at the same time not support Putin’s military actions. Similar cases can also be found among academic works, when scholars use incorrect terminology, classifying the Russian-Ukraine war as a “crisis.” In doing so, they pick up on propaganda narratives, but at the same time, for example, cannot support the Kremlin’s aggressive actions.

A corollary to the above can also be noted in the following argument. Propaganda is not just about deceiving people. This term can also be classified as a way of gaining trust and a positive image, as well as favour among the masses through social techniques of propaganda. That is why my previous division into three groups of techniques emphasises the difference between methods and approaches to propaganda, which ultimately facilitates better determining what goal the source of propaganda is aiming for. Moreover, this different approach to propaganda explains the diverse conceptual basis among political scientists in their works that were examined in the theoretical part.

The next momentous component that should be considered when scrutinising propaganda and its methods is the target audience. Once a group of people who the propaganda message is aimed at is determined, it profoundly allows to identify what techniques were used. For example, the head of the Kremlin, in one of his speeches, mentioning Ukrainians and children who were forced to leave their homes, lost their documents, and needed medical and social assistance, called on the Prosecutor General’s Office to provide them with “legal assistance and protect their rights”, adding that “it is hard for these people, help them”. If this technique is applied to people in the

occupied territories who support the Kremlin regime, then in relation to them such a method will be classified as “glittering generalities (virtue)”, that is, a social propaganda technique. In this way, Russia, which in its message shows how it supposedly cares about the victims, tries to win their favour and force people to take its side. If the method is applied to a foreign audience, then, in this case, the phrase will be classified as a cognitive approach of propaganda, since Putin attempts to instil the idea that Russia is allegedly the saviour. Eventually, looking at the possible theoretical perception of the following technique through the prism of Ukrainians who support Kyiv authorities, the method can work among mothers who are not indifferent to the well-being of any children. Using emotional colouring at the end of his message, Putin thus resorts to an emotional propaganda technique. Therefore, depending on what the target audience of the propaganda is, its purpose and ultimately its classification to type will be determined.

When indicating the groups towards which propaganda is aimed or through whom the set goals are achieved, it is also worth noting that the technique may depend on who the propaganda source is addressing. For instance, in one of the articles, where Vladimir Putin addressed UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, his rhetoric was calm and built mostly on cognitive propaganda techniques, unlike the emotional statements and messages in other articles that he made towards Ukrainian society in order to intimidate them. Thus, the target audience determines what techniques the propagandist will use, as well as how these methods will be characterised.

In addition to the target audience, the purpose of the propaganda also helps to determine the type of propaganda. Therefore, by establishing the purpose of a particular propaganda phrase, it is possible to determine which of the methods it carries — cognitive, social or emotional. A message that seeks to instil a certain belief or make a particular audience remember a narrative will be attributed to cognitive. Phrases that try to attract support among the masses are identified as social methods. And statements that seek to scare or evoke strong emotions among the population will be classified as emotional types of propaganda techniques. Accordingly, having such an expanded set of explanations, how to counter propaganda narratives can be easily determined.

Concluding the reflection on the comparative analysis of this thesis, it is also worth mentioning the limitations of propaganda analysis and the recommendations for its minimisation. One of them is, as it was previously mentioned, phrases that contain multiple types of propaganda. The multi-approach allows propaganda to more effectively persuade the masses and act on different target audiences. At the same time, such messages are difficult to identify, since certain techniques may overlap with others. In addition, complex propaganda narratives require more time to encode and justify certain propaganda techniques. To avoid this, it is worth conducting a thorough analysis and involving individuals for additional verification of coding similarity.

By studying various articles and speeches delivered by Vladimir Putin at various meetings, I covered a wide range of topics that were discussed during them. However, given that the material was in text format, it was not possible to trace phrases that did not have an emotional connotation but were actually expressively presented by the Russian leader. In this case, video footage of a specific dialogue comes in handy, which allows to trace all the emotional aspects that may not be identifiable in the text version. Combining text materials with video format can contribute to better coding of propaganda techniques and, as a result, increase the reliability of the research.

The last but foremost limitation that I encountered while writing the master thesis is related to the propaganda technique of “repetition”. Identifying that Vladimir Putin could repeat stable narratives during different meetings with a sufficient time interval between them, I had problems with how to classify them. For instance, the Kremlin leader often conceptualised the full-scale invasion of Ukraine as a “special military operation”, justifying his actions and trying to reduce the seriousness of the situation. He used this “thought-terminating cliché” repeatedly in his statements. The question arose whether to code the technique in each new article where this calling was mentioned as a “thought-terminating cliché” or as a “repetition” method. In a particular article, the phrase could be used for the first time, however, this was not the first time that Putin resorted to the distorted definition during the analysis of 2022–2023. Taking into consideration that I classified the two techniques as cognitive, this nuance did not significantly affect the results of my study. However, the confusion can significantly change the outcome of studies that focus on a single technique (one of the 22 that I used in my paper) or seek to establish its impact on the audience.

## Conclusions

The objective of this thesis was to investigate what propaganda methods Russia used during the hybrid war and at the beginning of the full-scale invasion. It was aimed to find out how the ratio of their use changed over time. According to the purpose of the work, I had the following research questions: (1) What is the profile of Russian propaganda techniques about Ukraine in the Russian hybrid war and the full-scale invasion? (2) How has this profile changed over time? To answer them, I processed a sample of 152 articles that covered a separate period of analysis: 81 works related to 2014–2015, and the period 2022–2023 covered 71 articles. I analysed the rhetoric of the President of the Russian Federation regarding Ukraine during two time periods, coding propaganda phrases and messages. A specific statement was identified as a separate propaganda technique from 22 methods that I use from previous scientific works. These methods were grouped into smaller techniques, which I classified as cognitive, social, and emotional propaganda techniques. After doing a manual analysis and scrutinising a sample of articles, I received the results that showed the following.

Both in 2014–2015 and in the period from 2022–2023, Vladimir Putin resorted to cognitive propaganda methods more. However, the difference between the two periods was in social and emotional techniques. In the first period, the ratio of the methods was the following: cognitive, social, and emotional, where cognitive received the largest proportional equivalent, and emotional — the smallest. However, during the full-scale invasion, the official Kremlin representative applied emotional techniques more than social methods. Hence, the ratio for 2022–2023 was the following: cognitive, emotional, and social. The metric data also showed the difference between the two periods, where I found that the Russian leader used more cognitive techniques in the second one than cognitive methods in the first time frame, as well as emotional methods in 2022–2023 that increased in percentage terms compared to emotive methods in 2014–2015. But his rhetoric was more imbued with social techniques during the hybrid war period, comparing them to the social methods of the second time frame. Overall, to justify the full-scale invasion, Vladimir Putin used more propaganda, making it more emotional and maintaining its multiplicity and diversity.

The findings suggest that the differences may lie in the various types of war that Russia has waged on the territory of Ukraine and the strategic approach of warfare. At the end of the work, I also assumed that the individual approach to the use of techniques may coincide with the military actions that were carried out on the battlefield. In addition, the data also highlight the importance of continuing to study Russian propaganda in order to predict its further actions and consequences. The analysis confirms the complexity and multi-orientation of Vladimir Putin's informational policy, thereby contributing to the literature that studies Russian propaganda. It opens up new topics and scientific questions for further research.

As for the practical relevance of the results, it is considerable to underline that they allow not only to determine the characteristics, goals and features of the political strategy of the Russian Federation but also what means should be used to counter propaganda activities and how to protect society from manipulation, persuasion, deception and targeted influence. Considering that with the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Putin began to use more emotional propaganda techniques in his rhetoric, there is an actuality in developing mechanisms that would help counter psychological operations, as well as narratives that aimed at evoking emotions or creating chaos among the population. These countermeasures will promote a durable and resistant to propaganda society. It also remains relevant to develop media literacy and education among society in order it can detect cognitive persuasion spread by a propaganda source.

Propaganda, like other scientific subjects of study, is a compound concept that can entail certain challenges when scrutinising it. In my work, I encountered three distinct limitations. The first point is connected with the insight that a propaganda message or phrase can be built not only on one propaganda technique but also on several methods, which complicates its research. The second is the limitation of textual materials, which do not allow to see the full range of emotions that could accompany the propagandist's speeches. Thus, the identification of emotional propaganda techniques becomes more complex. Ultimately, confusion over the classification of techniques was not an exception during the analysis of Russian propaganda which may pose certain barriers to the final results. Considering the identified limitations that were observed during the practical part of the analysis and proposed approaches to overcoming them, it will facilitate the creation of more reliable studies in the future.

The work also contributed to the literature and opened up more systematic views on the concept of propaganda and its better understanding. In particular, I conceptualised the definition of propaganda, analysed its types, with which terms it is usually confused, and its peculiarities. Having carried out a comparative analysis, I looked at the concept from a practical point of view and came to the conclusion that propaganda is not only the act of spreading false information. As well as propaganda is not always oriented towards the desire to gain favour among society. In addition, as I mentioned above, I provided recommendations for further research on Russian propaganda, which should be taken into account when investigating it.

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## Appendix 1

**Table 5.** Selected articles for analysis with mentions of Ukraine in 2014–2015 and 2022–2023

<i>Doc №</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Date of publication</i>	<i>How many times “Ukrain” is mentioned (approx.)</i>
<b>2014–2015</b>				
1	Vladimir Putin answered journalists’ questions on the situation in Ukraine	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20366">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20366</a>	March 4, 2014	109
2	Meeting with Government members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20376">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20376</a>	March 5, 2014	20
3	Meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20377">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20377</a>	March 5, 2014	6
4	Meeting with permanent members of the Security Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20523">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20523</a>	March 13, 2014	5
5	Address by President of the Russian Federation	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20603">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20603</a>	March 18, 2014	65
6	Meeting in support of Crimea’s accession to the Russian Federation “We are together!”	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20607">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20607</a>	March 18, 2014	3
7	Meeting with permanent members of the Security Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20623">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20623</a>	March 21, 2014	26
8	Presenting officers	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20623">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20623</a>	March 28, 2014	8

	appointed to senior command positions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20650">ru/events/president/transcripts/20650</a>		
9	Meeting of the Federal Security Service board	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20724">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20724</a>	April 7, 2014	1
10	Meeting with Government members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20746">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20746</a>	April 9, 2014	50
11	Meeting with core members of the Russian Popular Front	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20753">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20753</a>	April 10, 2014	4
12	Message from the President of Russia to the leaders of several European countries	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20751">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20751</a>	April 10, 2014	40
13	Meeting with Security Council members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20763">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20763</a>	April 11, 2014	16
14	Direct Line with Vladimir Putin	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20796">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20796</a>	April 17, 2014	134
15	Answers to journalists' questions following Direct Line	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20799">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20799</a>	April 17, 2014	6
16	Interview to Vesti v Subbotu programme	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/20813">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/20813</a>	April 19, 2014	10
17	Media Forum of Independent Local and Regional Media	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20858">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20858</a>	April 24, 2014	10
18	Meeting of the Commission for Military Technology Cooperation with Foreign States	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20865">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20865</a>	April 25, 2014	5
19	Meeting with Council of	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/</a>	April 28, 2014	6

	Legislators	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20869">ru/events/president/transcripts/20869</a>		
20	Answers to journalists' questions following the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council summit	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20880">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20880</a>	April 29, 2014	11
21	Meeting with President of Switzerland and OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Didier Burkhalter	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20972">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20972</a>	May 7, 2014	2
22	Press statements and replies to journalists' questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20973">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20973</a>	May 7, 2014	26
23	Meeting with Presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20980">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/20980</a>	May 8, 2014	16
24	Message to the leaders of European countries regarding the supply and transit of Russian gas across the territory of Ukraine	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21025">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21025</a>	May 15, 2014	12
25	Meeting with Crimean Tatar community representatives	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21028">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21028</a>	May 16, 2014	4
26	Interview to China's leading media companies	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/21031">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/21031</a>	May 19, 2014	1
27	Replies to journalists' questions following a visit to China	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21064">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21064</a>	May 21, 2014	17
28	Meeting with participants in the CEO Global	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21064">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21064</a>	May 23, 2014	5

	Summit	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21078">nscripts/21078</a>		
29	St Petersburg International Economic Forum	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21080">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21080</a>	May 23, 2014	41
30	Meeting with heads of leading international news agencies	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21090">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21090</a>	May 24, 2014	51
31	Meeting with Government members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/34086">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/34086</a>	May 28, 2014	21
32	Vladimir Putin's interview with Radio Europe 1 and TF1 TV channel	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/45832">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/45832</a>	June 4, 2014	28
33	Answers to journalists' questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/45869">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/45869</a>	June 6, 2014	25
34	Meeting with Government Cabinet members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/45896">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/45896</a>	June 11, 2014	13
35	Response to a journalist's question about the peace plan in Ukraine	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/45955">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/45955</a>	June 22, 2014	8
36	Press statements and answers to journalists' questions following Russian-Austrian talks	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46060">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46060</a>	June 24, 2014	30
37	Meeting with Didier Burkhalter	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46065">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46065</a>	June 24, 2014	2
38	Meeting with Government members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46072">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46072</a>	June 25, 2014	8
39	Presentation of letters of credence by foreign ambassadors	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46083">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46083</a>	June 27, 2014	6

40	Conference of Russian ambassadors and permanent representatives	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46131">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46131</a>	July 1, 2014	24
41	Meeting with Government members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46187">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46187</a>	July 10, 2014	10
42	Interview given to Russian news agency ITAR-TASS	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46218">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46218</a>	July 15, 2014	1
43	Answers to journalists' questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46236">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46236</a>	July 17, 2014	22
44	Meeting on economy began with a moment of silence in honour of victims of plane crash over Ukrainian territory	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46243">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46243</a>	July 18, 2014	5
45	Meeting with members of the Holy Synod and representatives of local Orthodox Churches	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/page/240">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/page/240</a>	July 18, 2014	11
46	Statement by President of Russia Vladimir Putin	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46262">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46262</a>	July 21, 2014	6
47	Security Council meeting	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46305">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46305</a>	July 22, 2014	2
48	Working meeting with Chairman of Human Rights Council Mikhail Fedotov	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46372">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46372</a>	July 29, 2014	9
49	Meeting with members of political parties represented in the State Duma	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46451">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46451</a>	August 14, 2014	6
50	Press statements	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru">http://www.en.kremlin.ru</a>	August 15, 2014	7

	following meeting with President of Finland Sauli Niinistö	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46458">ru/events/president/transcripts/46458</a>		
51	Speech at the meeting of the Customs Union Heads of State with President of Ukraine and European Union representatives	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46494">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46494</a>	August 26, 2014	28
52	Answers to journalists' questions following working visit to Belarus	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46495">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46495</a>	August 27, 2014	24
53	President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiia militia	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46506">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46506</a>	August 29, 2014	4
54	Seliger 2014 National Youth Forum	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46507">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46507</a>	August 29, 2014	31
55	Reply to a journalist's question during a visit to North-Eastern Federal University	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46524">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46524</a>	September 1, 2014	3
56	The 'Putin Plan' for settling the conflict in Ukraine	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46554">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46554</a>	September 3, 2014	6
57	Answers to journalists' questions following a working visit to Mongolia	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46555">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46555</a>	September 3, 2014	8
58	Meeting on drafting the 2016–2025 State Armament Programme	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46589">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46589</a>	September 10, 2014	2
59	Answers to journalists' questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46612">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46612</a>	September 12, 2014	17
60	Working meeting with VTB Bank Chairman and	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46612">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46612</a>	September 22, 2014	8

	CEO Andrei Kostin	<a href="#">nscripts/46658</a>		
61	Russia Calling! Investment Forum	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46713">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46713</a>	October 2, 2014	10
62	Meeting of the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46786">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46786</a>	October 14, 2014	21
63	Interview to Politika newspaper	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/46806">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/46806</a>	October 15, 2014	19
64	Answers to journalists' questions following visit to Italy	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46827">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46827</a>	October 17, 2014	26
65	Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46860">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46860</a>	October 24, 2014	78
66	Meeting with young academics and history teachers	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46951">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46951</a>	November 5, 2014	2
67	Meeting of the Commission for Military Technology Cooperation	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46961">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46961</a>	November 5, 2014	3
68	Meeting with Prime Minister of Malaysia Najib Razak	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46991">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/46991</a>	November 10, 2014	4
69	Excerpts from interview to German TV channel ARD	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47023">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47023</a>	November 15, 2014	13
70	Press statement and replies to journalists' questions following the G20 summit	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47027">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47027</a>	November 16, 2014	12
71	Interview to German TV channel ARD	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47027">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47027</a>	November 17, 2014	51

		<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47029">nscripts/47029</a>		
72	Interview to TASS News Agency	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47054">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47054</a>	November 24, 2014	15
73	Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47173">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47173</a>	December 4, 2014	19
74	Answers to journalists' questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47186">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47186</a>	December 6, 2014	7
75	News conference of Vladimir Putin	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47250">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47250</a>	December 18, 2014	42
76	Meeting with Federal Assembly members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47276">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47276</a>	December 22, 2014	3
77	Meeting with permanent members of the Security Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47505">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47505</a>	January 23, 2015	3
78	Meeting with students at the Mining University	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47519">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47519</a>	January 26, 2015	8
79	International Holocaust Remembrance Day	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47529">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47529</a>	January 27, 2015	2
80	Interview to Al-Ahram daily	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47643">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47643</a>	February 9, 2015	14
81	Normandy format talks	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47664">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/47664</a>	February 12, 2015	8
<b>2022–2023</b>				
82	Talks with President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67830">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67830</a>	February 22, 2022	3

83	Vladimir Putin answered media questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67838">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67838</a>	February 22, 2022	15
84	Address by the President of the Russian Federation	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67843">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67843</a>	February 24, 2022	21
85	Meeting with Security Council permanent members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67851">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67851</a>	February 25, 2022	5
86	Meeting with Security Council permanent members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67903">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67903</a>	March 3, 2022	10
87	Meeting with female aircrew members of Russian airlines	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67913">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67913</a>	March 5, 2022	19
88	Meeting with permanent members of Security Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67960">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67960</a>	March 11, 2022	5
89	Meeting with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67963">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67963</a>	March 11, 2022	2
90	Meeting on socioeconomic support for regions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67996">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67996</a>	March 16, 2022	11
91	Meeting on socioeconomic development of Crimea and Sevastopol	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68004">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68004</a>	March 17, 2022	1
92	Concert marking the anniversary of Crimea's reunification with Russia	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68016">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68016</a>	March 18, 2022	1
93	Address on National Guard Day	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68070">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68070</a>	March 27, 2022	1
94	Ceremony for presenting state decorations	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68179">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68179</a>	April 12, 2022	1

95	Conversation with Vostochny Cosmodrome employees	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68180">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68180</a>	April 12, 2022	3
96	Joint news conference with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68182">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68182</a>	April 12, 2022	28
97	Meeting on metallurgical complex development	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68251">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68251</a>	April 20, 2022	1
98	Meeting with Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68254">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68254</a>	April 21, 2022	8
99	Expanded meeting of the Prosecutor General's Office Board	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68274">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68274</a>	April 25, 2022	6
100	Meeting with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68287">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68287</a>	April 26, 2022	16
101	Meeting with Council of Lawmakers	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68297">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68297</a>	April 27, 2022	10
102	CSTO summit	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68418">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68418</a>	May 16, 2022	17
103	Meeting on oil industry development	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68434">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68434</a>	May 17, 2022	2
104	Security Council meeting	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68451">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68451</a>	May 20, 2022	1
105	Meeting with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68460">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68460</a>	May 23, 2022	5
106	Interview with Rossiya TV	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68571">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68571</a>	June 3, 2022	17

107	St Petersburg International Economic Forum Plenary session	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68669">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68669</a>	June 17, 2022	56
108	Vladimir Putin answered journalists' questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68783">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68783</a>	June 29, 2022	17
109	Vladimir Putin congratulated current staff and veterans of the Foreign Intelligence Service on the centenary of illegal intelligence	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68790">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68790</a>	June 30, 2022	1
110	Meeting with State Duma leaders and party faction heads	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68836">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/68836</a>	July 7, 2022	10
111	Meeting with Government members	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/page/52">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/page/52</a>	July 8, 2022	2
112	Vladimir Putin answered media questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69036">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69036</a>	July 19, 2022	8
113	Address to participants and guests of the 10th Moscow Conference on International Security	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69166">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69166</a>	August 16, 2022	3
114	Talking of What Matters open lesson	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69245">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69245</a>	September 1, 2022	9
115	Eastern Economic Forum plenary session	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69299">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69299</a>	September 7, 2022	30
116	Meeting with permanent members of Security Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69324">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69324</a>	September 9, 2022	4
117	Meeting with Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69362">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69362</a>	September 16, 2022	5

118	News conference following visit to Uzbekistan	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69366">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69366</a>	September 16, 2022	16
119	Address by the President of the Russian Federation	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69390">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69390</a>	September 21, 2022	9
120	Signing of treaties on accession of Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics and Zaporozhye and Kherson regions to Russia	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69465">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69465</a>	September 30, 2022	6
121	People's Choice: Together Forever concert rally	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69470">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69470</a>	September 30, 2022	2
122	Meeting with the winners and finalists of the Teacher of the Year contest	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69519">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69519</a>	October 5, 2022	12
123	Meeting with Chairman of the Investigative Committee Alexander Bastrykin	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69565">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69565</a>	October 9, 2022	3
124	Meeting with permanent members of the Security Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69568">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69568</a>	October 10, 2022	5
125	Meeting with President of the UAE Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69574">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69574</a>	October 11, 2022	2
126	Russian Energy Week International Forum plenary session	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69584">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69584</a>	October 12, 2022	3
127	Vladimir Putin answered media questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69604">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69604</a>	October 14, 2022	25
128	Meeting of the Security Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69604">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69604</a>	October 19, 2022	1

		<a href="https://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69636">nscripts/69636</a>		
129	Meeting with heads of CIS security and intelligence agencies	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69681">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69681</a>	October 26, 2022	3
130	Valdai International Discussion Club meeting	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69695">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69695</a>	October 27, 2022	43
131	Answers to media questions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69730">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69730</a>	October 31, 2022	11
132	Meeting with permanent members of the Security Council	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69744">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69744</a>	November 2, 2022	10
133	President laid flowers at Kuzma Minin and Dmitry Pozharsky monument	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69761">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69761</a>	November 4, 2022	1
134	Meeting with historians and representatives of Russia's traditional religions	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69781">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69781</a>	November 4, 2022	15
135	Meeting of Pobeda (Victory) Organising Committee	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69836">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69836</a>	November 15, 2022	6
136	Meeting with mothers of military personnel – participants in the special military operation	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69935">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69935</a>	November 25, 2022	5
137	Council for Civil Society and Human Rights meeting	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70046">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70046</a>	December 7, 2022	43
138	Video address to the participants of the joint meeting of SCO and CIS defence ministers	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70057">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70057</a>	December 9, 2022	3
139	News conference following the visit to	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70057">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70057</a>	December 9, 2022	5

	Kyrgyzstan	<a href="https://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70061">nscripts/70061</a>		
140	Meeting with Acting Head of Lugansk People's Republic Leonid Pasechnik	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70154">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70154</a>	December 20, 2022	1
141	Meeting with Acting Head of Donetsk People's Republic Denis Pushilin	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70156">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70156</a>	December 20, 2022	2
142	Meeting of Defence Ministry Board	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70159">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70159</a>	December 21, 2022	25
143	Vladimir Putin answered questions from journalists	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70170">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70170</a>	December 22, 2022	16
144	New Year Address to the Nation	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70315">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70315</a>	December 31, 2022	1
145	Meeting with Great Patriotic War veterans, residents of besieged Leningrad and representatives of patriotic public associations	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70367">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70367</a>	January 18, 2023	10
146	Meeting with Belgorod Region Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70389">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70389</a>	January 24, 2023	4
147	Meeting with university students to mark Russian Students Day	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70394">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70394</a>	January 25, 2023	1
148	Meeting on restoring residential infrastructure	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70428">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70428</a>	February 1, 2023	1
149	Gala concert for 80th anniversary of defeating German Nazi forces in	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70434">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70434</a>	February 2, 2023	1

	Battle of Stalingrad			
150	Meeting with representatives of patriotic and youth public organisations	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70435">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70435</a>	February 2, 2023	3
151	Meeting with participants in multilateral consultations of secretaries of the security councils on Afghanistan	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70476">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70476</a>	February 8, 2023	1
152	Meeting with representatives of the aviation industry	<a href="http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70484">http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/70484</a>	February 9, 2023	1

## Appendix 2

**Table 10.** Examples of Russian propaganda techniques from the manual analysis of two periods of the Russia-Ukraine war

**Emotional group:**

<i>Doc №</i>	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Snippet</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Categorisation</i>
73	<b>Loaded language</b>	<i>“Against this background, there was no way we could support ... the violence and the killings. Just take the bloody events in Odessa, where people were burned alive.”</i>	<i>“Violence and the killings”, “the bloody, burned alive”</i> aim to evoke emotions	Emotional
87	<b>Name calling or labelling</b>	<i>“You see yourselves that stray dogs attack people in different regions. They injure and even kill people... Then we see how these dogs are poisoned and shot dead. But, look, people in Donbass are not stray dogs.”</i>	The usage of the phrase “ <i>stray dogs</i> ” has emotive implications	Emotional
107	<b>Exaggeration or minimisation</b>	<i>“Who needs the Ukrainian aircraft manufacturing</i>	Emphasising “below cost” that no one	Emotional

		<p><i>industry? Add to this the engine manufacturing industry. Motor Sich used to make all aircraft engines. Who needs them except Russia? Nobody needs them... But for wheat and corn, I assure you that no one needs anything else from Ukraine."</i></p>	needs Ukrainian products	
80	<b>Appeal to fear or prejudices</b>	<p><i>"We have seen how NATO's infrastructure was moving closer and closer towards Russian borders and how Russian interests were being ignored."</i></p>	Attempt to fear by mentioning that "NATO ... was moving closer" to Russia from the Ukrainian border side	Emotional
121	<b>Slogan</b>	<p><i>"I propose giving them [Russian soldiers] a triple "Hurrah." ... One, two, three, go: Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!"</i></p>	Emotive short phrase that underlines devotion to Russian soldiers	Emotional
134	<b>Flag-waving</b>	<p><i>"We will never let this [destruction of Russia]</i></p>	Playing on national attitudes and emotions	Emotional

		<i>happen. We will defend our Fatherland the way our heroic ancestors did.”</i>		
144	<b>Glittering generalities (virtue)</b>	<i>“We have never allowed anyone to do this [to weaken and divide Russia] and we will not allow it now. Russian servicemen, militiamen and volunteers are now fighting for their homeland, for truth and justice, for reliable guarantees of peace and Russia’s security. They are all our heroes and they are shouldering the heaviest burden right now.”</i>	Emotive phrases that aim to play on emotions by glorifying Russia	Emotional
62	<b>Appeal to (strong) emotions</b>	<i>“Should we simply let people die there? [in the southeast of Ukraine]”</i>	Attempt to evoke emotions	Emotional
5	<b>Transfer</b>	<i>“I heard residents of Crimea say that back in 1991 they were handed over like a sack of potatoes.”</i>	<i>“Like a sack of potatoes”</i> — evokes negative association regarding	Emotional

			Referendum on the Crimean sovereignty	
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**Social group:**

<i>Doc №</i>	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Snippet</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Categorisation</i>
84	<b>Slogan</b>	<i>“At the end of the day, the future of Russia is in the hands of its multi-ethnic people, as has always been the case in our history.”</i>	Attempt to bribe with a catchy phrase to get masse’s favour for Russian military actions	Social
93	<b>Flag-waving</b>	<i>“I want to thank you [Russian soldiers] for your stamina and your impeccable service to Russia, for your loyalty to our Fatherland, to your oath of allegiance and your duty.”</i>	Attempt to play on national attitudes and mood by glorifying Russian soldiers	Social
107	<b>Reductio ad hitlerum</b>	<i>“The structure of the Ukrainian economy requires very large subsidies and support. If Ukraine fails to</i>	Attempt to discourage Ukrainians to join the EU and and reinforce	Social

		<i>protect its domestic market it will completely turn into a semi-colony, in my opinion. But at the same time, it [the EU] will receive significant support for current expenses.”</i>	this opinion among Ukrainian Eurosceptics by presenting the consequences that EU accession could entail	
90	<b>Bandwagon</b>	<i>“And our position [in the war] is honest and open, and an increasing number of people hear, understand and share it.”</i>	Attempt to underline that people support Russia, so others will do the same	Social
98	<b>Glittering generalities (virtue)</b>	<i>“This is the case when we have to prioritise preserving the lives and health of our soldiers and officers. Of course, this is our constant priority, but even more so in this case.”</i>	Attempt to make a positive image of Russia who cares about soldiers and casualties	Social
120	<b>Transfer</b>	<i>“Behind the choice of millions of residents in the Donetsk and Lugansk people’s republics, in the</i>	Attempt to make an association that is evoked in people’s mind regarding the	Social

		<i>Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, is our common destiny and thousand-year history. People have passed this spiritual connection on to their children and grandchildren... they carried the love for Russia through the years.”</i>	belloning to Russian society	
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**Cognitive group:**

<i>Doc №</i>	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Snippet</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Categorisation</i>
1	<b>Doubt</b>	<i>“Are the current authorities legitimate [in Ukraine]? The Parliament is partially, but all the others are not. The current Acting President is definitely not legitimate.”</i>	Question for sowing doubts regarding the legitimacy of the Ukrainian authorities	Cognitive
122	<b>Whataboutism</b>	<i>“You know, I often have discussions with my colleagues, including from Europe, who tell me: “So what? They [in Ukraine] do</i>	Attempt to divert attention from Russia, but blame and discredit Ukraine instead	Cognitive

		<p><i>have elements of neo-Nazism there. Do you think we do not have them? You, in Russia, also have neo-Nazis, and we, in European countries, have them as well... so what?" ... But the difference lies in the fact that I am not aware of a single country, except today's Ukraine, where neo-Nazis are extolled as national heroes. They can be found in Paris and, probably, some neo-Nazis are holing up somewhere in Moscow too, but we are persecuting them and fighting this. In the case of Ukraine, on the contrary, they are being aggrandised and put on a pedestal."</i></p>		
117	<b>Misrepresentation of someone's position (straw man)</b>	<p><i>"Mr Zelensky has publicly announced – I do not know where exactly, but he said it publicly – that he is not ready and does not want to talk to Russia."</i></p>	Attempt to discredit Zelenskiy by misinterpreting his position	Cognitive

120	<b>Causal oversimplification</b>	<i>“We call on the Kiev regime to immediately cease fire and all hostilities; to end the war it unleashed back in 2014 and return to the negotiating table.”</i>	Attempt to transfer responsibility to Ukraine and inoculate a thinking that Ukraine is the only reason for the war	Cognitive
5	<b>Appeal to authority</b>	<i>“All these years, citizens and many public figures came back to this issue, saying that Crimea is historically Russian land and Sevastopol is a Russian city.”</i>	Reinforce the statement by referring to authority	Cognitive
117	<b>Thought-terminating cliché</b>	<i>“... we launched our special military operation to prevent events from taking this turn.”</i>	Naming the war as a “special military operation”	Cognitive
143	<b>Black-and-white fallacy or dictatorship</b>	<i>“For our part, we had also no other choice than the actions we took late last February.”</i>	Presenting one option as the only possible one regarding the war in Ukraine when there are other variants	Cognitive

30	<b>Repetition</b>	<i>“And those who started the coup in Kiev... Supporting a coup that is against the Constitution is exactly what I see as using force.”</i>	Repetition of the term “coup” that tries to replace the name of a Ukrainian free express of will — the Revolution of Dignity	Cognitive
87	<b>Obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion</b>	<i>“As you know, Crimea made a decision, people came to the referendum and voted to once again become part of the Russian Federation.”</i>	Attempt to confuse, twist information and inoculate a narrative that Crimea wanted to join Russia	Cognitive
1	<b>Presenting irrelevant data (red herring)</b>	<i>“Why don’t you take a look at the post-Soviet states. There are many uniforms there that are similar. You can go to a store and buy any kind of uniform.”</i>	The answer for the question: <i>“The people who were blocking the Ukrainian Army units in Crimea were wearing uniforms that strongly resembled the Russian Army uniform. Were those Russian soldiers, Russian military?”</i> The answer deviates	Cognitive

			from the essence of the question in order to distract attention.	
128	<b>Smears</b>	<i>“As we know, the Kiev regime refused to recognise the will and choice of the people, declining any proposals for talks.”</i>	Attempt to discredit Ukrainian authorities	Cognitive

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