

ChatGPT re misleading language.docx

Query to ChatGPT at <https://openai.com> on 2/17/2023: explain how written or spoken language can be used to manipulate, mislead or misinform

ChatGPT response:

Written or spoken language can be used to manipulate, mislead, or misinform in a variety of ways. Here are a few examples:

1. Using emotive language: One way language can be used to manipulate is by using emotive or loaded language. By using words that elicit a strong emotional response, a speaker or writer can sway an audience's opinions or beliefs without necessarily presenting any logical or factual arguments. For example, a politician might use emotive language to play on people's fears or hopes in order to gain support for a particular policy.
2. Cherry-picking evidence: Another way language can be used to mislead or misinform is by selectively choosing evidence that supports a particular argument while ignoring evidence that contradicts it. This can make an argument appear stronger than it actually is, and can also be used to misrepresent the facts or distort the truth.
3. Using euphemisms: Euphemisms are words or phrases that are used to soften or mask the truth. For example, a company might use the term "downsizing" to describe layoffs, or a politician might use the term "enhanced interrogation techniques" to describe torture. By using euphemisms, a speaker or writer can make something sound less unpleasant than it actually is.
4. Using false or misleading statistics: Statistics can be a powerful tool for persuasion, but they can also be manipulated or presented in a way that is misleading. For example, a study might be presented with statistics that are cherry-picked to support a particular conclusion, or the statistics might be presented without any context that would help the audience understand what they really mean.
5. Using logical fallacies: Finally, language can be used to mislead or manipulate by using logical fallacies. These are errors in reasoning that can make an argument sound convincing even when it is flawed. For example, an argument might rely on ad hominem attacks (attacking the person making the argument rather than the argument itself), or on false dichotomies (presenting only two options when there are actually more). By using logical fallacies, a speaker or writer can manipulate an audience into accepting a flawed argument.

Art's assessment: thumb up

Art's comment: The examples are sound as far as they go. Additional examples could be given, for example those given in the Wikipedia article on "dog whistles (politics)", clickbait headlines, and purposeful misnaming ("infiltration of semantics"). These provide not only relevant information but also the labels associated with their use.