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**Language, Leadership, and Identity:
Communicative Strategies in *Fight Club***

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Abstract

This undergraduate thesis examines the communicative strategies employed in *Fight Club*, with a focus on identity formation and transformation. This analysis centres on the communication style of Tyler Durden, a charismatic leader who emerges as the alter ego of the Narrator, a clerk victim to consumerism. Tyler's rhetorical power is key to the formation and evolution of Fight Club, which starts as a space of masculine escape to a worldwide subversive organization against societal norms. This study analyses these communication strategies based on a range of communication theories related to the central themes of the film and the intricate interactive issues taking place within interpersonal communication. The findings reveal that Tyler makes an efficient use of metacommunication, verbal, paralinguistic strategies and interpersonal strategies to influence others and accomplish his objectives. Such communication extends beyond words, which shows how discourse can construct both individual identity and group ideology.

Keywords: Communication strategies, *Fight Club*, identity, leadership, communication, identity.

Resumen

Este TFG examina las estrategias comunicativas empleadas en *El Club de la Lucha*, focalizándose en la formación de la identidad y la transformación. Este análisis se centra en el estilo de comunicación de Tyler Durden, un líder carismático que surge del alter ego del Narrador, un oficinista víctima del consumismo. El peso que tiene la retórica de Tyler es crucial para la formación y evolución del Club de la Lucha, el cual comienza como una vía de escape para los hombres contra las normas sociales. Este trabajo analiza estas estrategias basadas en un rango de teorías relacionadas con los temas centrales de la película. Los hallazgos muestran que Tyler hace un uso eficiente de la metacomunicación, las estrategias verbales, paralingüísticas e interpersonales para influir en los demás y lograr sus objetivos. Esta comunicación va más allá de las palabras. Es un discurso sobre la identidad individual y la ideología.

Palabras clave: Estrategias comunicativas, *Club de la Lucha*, identidad, liderazgo, comunicación, identidad.

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1. Introduction

Most human interactions involve communication. The efficiency of such communicative acts is largely determined by the communication strategies used to bridge the gap between at least two central, complementary elements: the sender and the recipient. A sender generates and transmits a message for the particular purpose of establishing communication. The recipient, in contrast, receives and understands the message created by a sender. Therefore, a scientific approach to the analysis of the communication strategies used in various communicative contexts proves essential to comprehend, apply and optimise them. While much of the existing research on communication strategies has occurred within the domains of marketing, business, social interactions, journalism and literature (Mohr & Neven, 1990; Duncan & Moriarty, 1998; Keller, 2001; Erhard, 2022), studies on their use in the film industry remain limited. Since films are a form of communication, understanding how and why they convey their message is crucial. Analysing communicative techniques in movies can also contribute significantly to the field of communication studies and help to understand the complexities of communication in different contexts.

This research focuses on David Fincher's acclaimed film *Fight Club* (1999) to investigate the wide range and types of communication strategies used by the senders (in this case, the protagonist, Tyler Durden and, to a lesser extent, the Narrator) so that their messages can be externalised, received, and interpreted correctly by the recipients (i.e., other characters in the *Fight Club*, such as *Fight Club* members and members of Project Mayhem, as well as the very spectators of the film). Particular focus will be placed on the metacommunicative, verbal, non-verbal, and paralinguistic means of engagement, persuasion, and manipulation that the hero uses within the narrative, and also on this meta-level in a deconstructive societal critique.

This research is further developed to understand the communication in the story by identifying and analysing the recurring themes, symbols, and motifs of the communication methods used by the characters. The research methodology will do the groundwork for uncovering and understanding these communication nuances. A literary evaluation will analyse the film's text, focusing on linguistic elements, narrative structures, and character

dynamics. Such evaluation implies an examination of the literary devices, symbolism, and dialogue in light of the communication strategies employed.

This paper is organised as follows. Section 2 comprehensively reviews the definition, theoretical framework, and types of communication strategies. Section 3 describes the film under analysis. The methodology used for the analysis is explained in section 4. The results and the discussion appear in section 5. Finally, the conclusion of this study is presented in section 6.

2. Communication Strategies

Communication strategies encompass the wide variety of mechanisms senders use to attempt to convey their message to receivers (Donsbach, 2008). These strategies include linguistic (e.g., tone, vocabulary choice, syntactic structures, dialects and accents), as well as paralinguistic elements (e.g., voice modulation and non-verbal cues such as body language and facial expressions). Altogether, these strategies shape the construction, interpretation, and emotional reception of meaning (Herman et al., 2008). Senders rely on these strategies to guide perception, frame narratives and elicit emotional responses. The resulting immersive experiences are especially relevant in storytelling in theatre and cinema (Christy, 2017; Al-Alami, 2019). In theatre, communication strategies are based on live interactions—actors use clear articulation, deliberate body language and expressive facial expressions, usually within stage designed strategically crafted to captivate the audience. Meanwhile, cinema creates its narrative and plot through visual elements and tools such as editing, sound, design and special effects. All these elements combined work as communication strategies that guide viewer's perception of the story and mould their emotional and intellectual understanding (Kozloff, 1988).

Both theatre and cinema hinge on the clarity of expression and emotional resonance to ensure that themes are effectively conveyed. McKee (1997) claims that proper storytelling and visual composition not only add to the artistic effect of a production, but also to a much deeper connection with an audience, making their themes and messages fully captured. The ways in which information is revealed, characters are developed, and conflicts are resolved influence the audience's level of engagement and emotional investment in a story. Effective

communication ensures that the themes of a production are delivered with precision and that the audience is not distracted from the message the artist intends to convey.

Nonetheless, some theatres and movies lose focus on communication, with fragmented storytelling. Such performances with scarce coherence and cohesion to deliver a narrative or execute a production in proper terms could potentially lead to audience disengagement. According to McKee (1997), elements such as the director's choices, visual metaphors and dialogues are pivotal in making a theatrical or cinematic work that effectively resonates with its intended audience. The coherence among these strategies lies at the very foundation of the production's overall success.

As far as movies are concerned, communication strategies are defined as the methods writers and actors use for characters to intentionally deliver their verbal and non-verbal messages (Herman et al., 2008). Therefore, such strategies can be linguistic, such as the use of particular vocabulary and grammar, as well as paralinguistic, such as intonation and body language. These choices are primarily contingent on the characters' intentions. Nonetheless, these communicative features have been chosen by the writers depending on factors like cultural influences, social norms, and power dynamics that are represented in the film. The progression of the narrative and the engagement of the audience rely on these communication strategies, which, apart from shaping the fictional world, also affects the way viewers interpret it.

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives of Communication Strategies

This section will delve into the theoretical frameworks that were chosen for this study, namely Social Constructionism, Conversation Analysis, Cognitive Psychology, Politeness Theory, Critical Theories, and Speech Act Theory. These frameworks describe how communication strategies operate within the cinematic narratives, which will allow for a wide interpretation of the interactions among the characters and the development of the themes in the film.

To begin with, Social Constructionism states that language and discourse do not merely transmit information, but actively weave social realities (Andrews, 2012). According to this perspective, individual and collective identities are continuously shaped through

linguistic interaction. Burr (1995) highlights that concepts such as “identity” and “societal roles” are not inherent to their bearers, but a social product of the discourse itself. Mane (2023) further claims that both the messages speakers transmit and the words they use to do so influence the behaviours, beliefs, and perceptions of others, thus shaping reality itself. According to this model, language is a powerful tool able to both reinforce and challenge social norms and standards. The application of Social Constructionism to *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) highlights how the characters’ communication strategies in the film not only reflect their internal struggles, but also criticise societal constructs of masculinity, conformity and consumer culture.

Conversation Analysis focuses on the patterns, turn-taking mechanisms, and the norms implicit to a given conversation. By studying these specific interactions, Conversation Analysis reveals how communication can reinforce or challenge social hierarchies and power relationships. In *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), the structure of dialogues—whether through interruptions, silences or shifts in tone—exposes underlying tensions and conflicts, which helps to understand how the movie criticises social expectations.

Cognitive Psychology explores how mental processes, such as perception, memory, attention and thought, influence communication (Watts, 2003). This framework is particularly useful to comprehend how people perceive and internalise information, and how this shapes their interactions with others. Cognitive models, such as assimilation theories, are intended to explain how individuals access new information and incorporate it into their preconceptions, which ultimately shape their behaviours and desires. In the movie under analysis, the concept of cognitive dissonance is reflected. It refers to the psychological discomfort experienced when a person holds two or more conflicting beliefs, values or attitudes; in order to reduce this discomfort, the individual changes their beliefs, behaviours or acquires new information to restore consistency (Festinger, 1957). In *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), the protagonist’s internal conflicts, are mirrored by the way he expresses himself and addresses other characters.

Politeness Theory, developed by Brown and Levinson (1987), analyses how people use language to socialise. This theory distinguishes between positive politeness strategies, used to promote social approval, and negative politeness strategies, used to minimise societal

imposition and protect personal autonomy. These concepts allow for a thorough analysis of how individuals navigate interpersonal interactions. Particularly, positive politeness strategies include inclusive language, praise and expressions of empathy, thereby reinforcing social bonds. On the contrary, negative politeness strategies make use of indirect speech, hedging, and formality to respect the interlocutor's autonomy. How these strategies manage social identities and interaction is illustrated by Goffman's (1967) concept of face and Watts' (2003) expansion of Politeness Theory. In *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), the disruption of social niceties and face-threatening acts (demeanour of discourtesy) put emphasis on the characters' rebellion against the establishment and their search for identity. Critical Theories are analytical frameworks transform the hidden structures of power and domination that give shape to our society. These theories describes how ideologies are produced through cultural and political institutions. They are often reinforcing systemic inequalities related to class, gender and identity.

Critical Theories emphasise how language functions as a source of ideology, resistance and power. Based on Marxist principles (Marx, 1843) and Gramsci's (1971) perception of cultural supremacy, these theories delve into the role of predominant discourses controlling individual identities and maintaining a social hierarchy. Critical Theories are relevant to the communication strategies in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), as the film criticises consumerism and exposes the mechanisms through which social conformity is enforced and reinforced.

Finally, Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1975) examines the performative aspect of language. In other words, speech acts (whether in the form of assertions, directives, or vows) convey information while actively creating social realities at the same time. This essentially means that performative utterances normalise norms, affect group structure, and cement societal norms. In *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), the characters employ specific speech acts as challenges to societal norms which intend to redefine relationships. This demonstrates that language can both maintain and disrupt social order.

This undergraduate thesis will apply the aforementioned theoretical frameworks to evaluate how the communication strategies used in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) contribute to the film's narrative structure, character development and thematic exploration. Each

framework offers a distinct perspective to examine the complex interplay among language, identity and society.

2.2 Types of Communication Strategies

Communication strategies include a wide range of techniques that make the transmission, clarification and interpretation of messages simpler. This subsection outlines the key communication strategies which are relevant to the present study, namely metacommunicative, verbal, paralinguistic, non-verbal and interpersonal strategies.

Metacommunicative strategies refer to communication about the communication process itself (Feltham et al., 2017; Uchoa Blanco, 2005). They involve making comments or clarifications on a message to enhance mutual understanding between the sender and receiver (Uchoa Blanco, 2005). As Feltham et al. (2017) explain, metacommunication analyses the explicit or implicit meanings, assumptions or rules which underlie conversations to make sure that both parties in a conversation share a common understanding of the communicative context and the nuances of the conversation. These strategies improve the emission and reception of messages in a conversation, concerning both the content and intent of it, which make their study in the context of conversational cues and relational dynamics pertinent (Carlson & Dermer, 2016; Feltham et al., 2017). Metacommunication may take verbal or non-verbal forms, such as tone or body language, and often serves to regulate interaction and guarantee mutual understanding. It is linked to Politeness Theory, which is discussed in subsection 2.1: both focus on how speakers use indirect communication to manage social expectations (Sus & Drew, 2023; Garcia, 2023). It also aligns with social constructionism, also discussed in subsection 2.1, in that it helps to establish a shared communicative frame that reflects broader social norms and identities. The concept of metacommunication helps to understand how language is used in the film under analysis in order to shape the shared identity of the Fight Club members.

Verbal strategies involve the deliberate selection of words, grammatical structures and rhetorical devices to convey information effectively (Herman et al., 2008). These strategies are used to organise and articulate ideas, express emotions, communicate intentions and showcase identities (Gattig, 2023). The precision and clarity of verbal expression

contribute to the creation of relationships among interlocutors in real life situations; in the case of movies, their contribution is not limited to establishing relationships among characters but also shaping the audience perceptions of them. As Gattig (2023) notes, individuals who master verbal strategies are able to present ideas concisely and persuasively, which gives way to positive impressions and meaningful connections. Verbal strategies look at the direct use of language, especially in speeches and dialogues, which can be analysed with reference to Speech Act Theory (Nordquist, 2025; Austin, 1975) and Conversation Analysis (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990), as discussed in subsection 2.1. Verbal strategies are especially important for showing how characters express their identities and beliefs through what they say and for interpreting how characters manage turn-taking and interactions in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999).

Paralinguistic strategies, which include non-verbal aspects of speech such as pitch, intonation, volume and rhythm (Ifioque Project, 2018), also play a significant role in conveying subtext and enhancing the richness of spoken communication. According to Weitz (1974), these non-verbal vocal cues, which are concerned with “how something is said, not what is said,” influence how messages are received: they add depth and complexity to the narrative. In the film under discussion, variations in vocal delivery help to illustrate the characters’ psychological states and intensify the emotional impact of key scenes.

Last but not least, interpersonal strategies refer to the use of communicative behaviours to develop, handle, or even control interpersonal relationships. These strategies consist of several communicative features such as active listening, empathy, conflict management, interpersonal and communication assertion (Parincu, 2023), and they are essential in managing relationships and social dynamics. Sethi and Seth (2009) define interpersonal strategies as not only what is being said, but also what the sender and receiver perceive in their environment concerning their relationship. The two researchers highlight the communicational transformative power of interpersonal communication as an instrument for individuals to define and refine both their private and public personae. These strategies can be very important in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), where the evolving relationships among characters serve as a lens through which broader themes such as masculinity, alienation, and authenticity are explored. The communicative interactions in the film are not merely narrative

devices. They reflect on and assess the social norms and power structures that influence identity formation.

Taken together, these communication strategies (metacommunicative, verbal, paralinguistic, non-verbal and interpersonal) play a central role in shaping communication, and consequently in shaping human relationships and social structures. In turn, the theoretical perspectives (Social Constructionism, Conversation Analysis, Cognitive Psychology, Politeness Theory, Critical Theories and Speech Act Theory) will serve as the foundation for the following analysis. Each communication strategy explored will be linked to these frameworks to show how language, behaviour, and interaction shape the narrative structure and thematic concerns of *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999). By connecting theory and filmic communication, the analysis seeks to illustrate how identity, power, and resistance are expressed and challenged throughout the story.

3. *Fight Club*

Fight Club is a 1999 American film directed by David Fincher, adapted from Chuck Palahniuk's 1996 novel of the same name. The film presents a portrayal of the emptiness and alienation that pervade a culture deeply entrenched in materialism. In the world he illustrates, men find themselves disillusioned by consumer culture and its hollow promises. Fincher's dark narrative is brimming with striking visual techniques and sharp dialogues.

The film follows an unnamed narrator, referred to as "the Narrator," who passively conforms to consumerism. The Narrator suffers from depression and chronic insomnia, which stems from an overwhelming sense of emptiness as a result of his inability to find his place in the world.

Tyler Durden, on the other hand, is at the same time the Narrator's alter ego and his antithesis. He is charismatic and rebellious, and embodies the complete rejection of consumer culture. Tyler is the projection of the Narrator's suppressed desires. He considers that liberation is only possible through chaos and confrontation, which is why he founds Fight Club, a secret organization where men use violence to release their frustrations and momentarily escape social limitations. However, the Narrator's involvement in Fight Club

grows deeper, which makes it evolve into “Project Mayhem,” a worldwide movement aiming to forcibly dismantle corporative and societal structures.

As the film progresses, the Narrator’s confusion concerning his own identity is represented by his increasingly unstable behaviours. His journey is full of deep struggles since he shifts from a passive acceptance of social roles to a genuine search of meaning. This slow transformation manifests his urge for freedom from the fetters imposed by the commodified existence.

It is relevant to understand the historical and social context in which *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) was released in order to appreciate its themes. The film is framed in the United States during the late 1990s, when the economy was booming beside a growing discomfort with consumerism, corporate power and the loss of manhood in postmodern society. This social and economic context made the movie particularly impactful. The film either draws on or criticises the countercultural or subcultural movements that it portrays. At the same time, it explores the concepts of masculinity, consumer culture, and anti-establishment sentiments, in the light of ideas and philosophies prominent at the time, such as postmodernism, existentialism, and nihilism, reflected in the film’s thematisation of character desires to reset the world and societal norms—what Tyler Durden refers to as returning to “ground zero.” By situating the narrative within this socio-economic and philosophical backdrop, Fincher’s film (1999) examines the tensions between conformity and rebellion, as well as the search for meaning in a commodified world. Ultimately, Fincher’s narrative challenges the viewers to question the superficial values inherent to contemporary culture, thus urging audiences to rethink what truly defines personal identity and fulfilment.

4. Methodology

Taking as a point of departure the theoretical frameworks and concepts outline in section 2, the present study aims to provide a comprehensive examination of how different communication strategies contribute to the construction of characters, narrative development and thematic expression in the film *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999). This section describes the methodology adopted in this study to analyse the communication strategies applied in film.

It includes the research questions which guide the analysis (subsection 4.1) and the data selection and classification criteria (subsection 4.2).

4.1 Research Questions

Drawing upon the key concepts and the relevant theories regarding communication strategies discussed in section 2, four sets of research questions have been proposed, each of which focuses on a specific type of communicative strategy, in order to address the objective of this study.

Research questions 1: How do metacommunication strategies, particularly the Narrator's internal dialogues and his conversations with Tyler Durden, affect the narrative point of view and the creation of characters in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999)? What insights do these strategies offer regarding the psychological complexity of the characters and the social critique in the film?

Research questions 2: How do verbal strategies—specifically Tyler Durden's speeches and the Narrator's internal monologues—help to establish and develop the themes of identity, consumerism and rebellion in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999)? How do these strategies align with metacommunicative elements to enhance the film's narrative and character development?

Research questions 3: How do paralinguistic strategies, such as tone, pace and volume, contribute to the formation of character dynamics in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999)? How do these strategies relate to metacommunicative and verbal elements to gain insight into the themes of identity, power, and social critique?

Research questions 4: How do interpersonal strategies in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) shape power dynamics, identity formation, and resistance to societal norms, particularly through the evolving relationship between the Narrator and Tyler Durden?

4.2 Data Selection and Classification

The film under analysis was viewed several times, with particular attention given to scenes that involve pivotal dialogues and character interactions. In order to answer the four sets of research questions, 20 key scenes were selected from *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999)

based on their ability to illustrate how different communication strategies are implemented in the film and their potential to offer an in-depth analysis of these strategies. Moreover, these scenes are the most representative. Table 1 presents a summary of the selected scenes.

Table 1. Selected Scenes from *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999)

Scene no.	Screen time	Character under analysis	Description
1	00:12:36 – 00:13:10	Tyler Durden	Tyler introduces his philosophy on the empty nature of life as the Narrator begins to confront his insomnia and emotional numbness.
2	00:17:00 – 00:18:00	Narrator	The Narrator reveals his inability to sleep, a symptom of his psychological dissatisfaction with his routine-driven existence.
3	00:25:00 – 00:26:30	Narrator	Using impersonal phrases, the Narrator expresses suppressed anger and emotional detachment, a signal of his internal conflict.
4	00:32:40 – 00:34:00	Narrator	During a support group session, the Narrator reflects on how awareness of mortality triggers genuine human connection.
5	00:35:30 – 00:36:20	Narrator	The Narrator expresses his frustration of being unable to cry in front of someone he perceives as emotionally dishonest; he expresses a desire for authenticity.
6	00:39:00 – 00:40:15	Narrator	While looking at furniture catalogues, the Narrator questions his identity, exposing the absurdity of a consumer society.
7	00:45:30 – 00:46:20	Tyler Durden	Tyler tells the Narrator that only in losing everything can one be truly free, establishing destruction as a path to liberation.
8	00:50:00 – 00:50:45	Tyler Durden	In a provocative conversation, Tyler challenges identity structures based on career and status.
9	00:55:00 – 00:56:00	Tyler Durden	Tyler criticises modern consumer culture and its psychological impact during a casual conversation at a bar.
10	01:10:00 – 01:10:40	Tyler Durden	During a Fight Club meeting, Tyler rejects individual exceptions, reinforcing a sense of unity among the members.
11	01:15:00 – 01:15:50	Tyler Durden	Tyler articulates generational disillusionment and the lack of purpose experienced by men in a post-modern society
12	01:20:00 – 01:21:00	Narrator	The Narrator confronts Marla in a tense exchange, revealing jealousy, emotional confusion and of loss of control.

13	01:27:00 – 01:28:00	Narrator	After a violent fight, the Narrator admits to feeling the urge to destroy beauty, an impulse that comes from envy and nihilism.
14	01:33:00 – 01:33:30	Tyler Durden	Tyler mocks superficial expressions of identity, suggesting that appearances affect essence and authenticity.
15	01:36:00 – 01:37:00	Tyler Durden	In a moment of introspection, Tyler critiques the modern crisis of masculinity, questioning the traditional roles imposed by society.
16	01:38:00 – 01:39:00	Narrator & Tyler	Tyler urges the Narrator to hit him, initiating the first fight and marking the birth of Fight Club in a symbolical way.
17.	1:40:00- 1:40:12	Tyler	The Narrator mocks consumer culture and questions identity through materialism.
18	1:44:00- 1:44:14	Narrator	The Narrator realises that Tyler is a figment of his imagination—his repressed alter ego.
19	1:49:00- 1:49:11	Tyler	Tyler critiques consumerism, showing how possessions control people.
20	1:22:15- 1:22:30	Tyler	The Narrator reflects on life's monotony and looming mortality.

The scripts of the selected scenes were transcribed manually and directly from the movie and analysed according to the communication strategies they exemplify.

In the analysis, theoretical frameworks discussed in subsection 2.1 were also referred to in order to contextualise the communication strategies observed to ensure a comprehensive analysis. Furthermore, these scenes were transcribed and systematically categorised according to the four communication strategies discussed in subsection 2.2.

The analysis was contextualised within broader communication strategies resorting to different theoretical frameworks.

5. Results and Discussion of the Application of Communication Strategies in *Fight Club*

5.1 Metacommunication Strategies

The use of metacommunication strategies in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) is evident when the characters, apart from engaging in dialogue and actions, also comment on the nature, rules and significance of those interactions. This reveals an awareness of how

communication itself functions within the narrative. In *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), metacommunication operates through explicit rules, internal monologues and non-verbal rituals, each of which illustrates the underlying structures of communication that support the film's broader thematic concerns. Table 2 presents a summary of the examples where metacommunication strategies are applied in the selected scene in the movie.

Table 2. Metacommunication Strategies

Example no.	Scene no.	Character under analysis	Line
1	1	Tyler Durden	The first and second rule of Fight Club: "You do not talk about Fight Club."
2	1	Tyler Durden	Rules 3 to 5 of Fight Club: "If someone yells 'stop,' goes limp, taps out, the fight is over./ Only two guys to a fight./ One fight at a time."
3	7	Tyler Durden	"It's only after we've lost everything that we're free to do anything."
4	8	Tyler Durden	"You're not your job. You're not how much money you have in the bank."

An example of metacommunication strategies is the explicit articulation of the rules of Fight Club. As shown in example 1 in Table 2, one of Tyler Durden's most famous catchphrases, "The first rule of Fight Club is: 'You do not talk about Fight Club,'" is not merely a directive but rather a performative utterance that both establishes and enforces the communicative boundaries of the group. These rules form a meta-level common frame that holds members together by enlisting secrecy and rebellion. Tyler does this by setting the rules, which invokes group mentality and enforces a barrier between Fight Club and the outside. This framework is strengthened through repetition when Tyler asserts again, "The first and *second rule* of Fight Club: 'You do not talk about Fight Club'" (my own emphasis). The rules are repeated in a ritualistic fashion, not only to assert authority, but also to reinforce group cohesion and shared purpose. Such ritualistic emphasis enhances group cohesion and asserts the secretive identity of the club. The inherent paradox of these rules—demanding secrecy while enabling intrigue itself—highlights a critical commentary on the function of language in constructing social hierarchies and insider-outsider dynamics.

In example 2 Tyler's utterance of Rules 3 to 5 continues this metacommunicative framing. By dictating the parameter of physical engagement: "If someone yells 'stop,' goes

limp, taps out, the fight is over,” he sets a coded behaviour pattern within the group and defines how communication operates within violence. These utterances demonstrate how language does not only describe social action but also organises it, which regulates the behavioural norms that shape Fight Club’s internal logic. These rules work in a metacommunicative way as they define the conditions under which all subsequent communication—both within and about Fight Club—is to be interpreted.

The Narrator’s internal monologues are also among the metacommunicative elements on display, which reveal that he has become more and more appalled by mainstream values, and the Narrator is moving slowly (but surely) towards Tyler’s anarchistic point of view. As shown in example 3, when he reflects, “It’s only after we’ve lost everything that we’re free to do anything,” he is not only commenting on his existential crisis, but also implicitly critiquing the language of consumerist culture that promises fulfilment through material acquisition. This metacommunicative moment invites the audience to reconsider the narratives that frame modern identity and value systems.

The things that Tyler says are usually powerful rhetorical devices for changing the social norms around him. In example 4, his statement, “You are not your job. You are not what you have in the bank,” goes beyond a critique of materialism, serving as a metacommunicative act that confronts the very structures of identity shaped by consumer culture. This way, Tyler uses language to disrupt traditional forms of self-definition. All these conversational exchanges between the Narrator and Tyler illustrate Tyler as a mentor shaping the members’ beliefs. Tyler writes languages to shake out, confront and above all, revolve the Narrator’s self. These dialogues undermine the fabric of society too, questioning how language is employed in surfacing consumerist global norms. Tyler’s words seek the subversion of these norms, being the tool to his own liberation that inevitably leads only to the unforeseen tragic end. The movie also ponders how paradoxical communication can be: Tyler’s words are of freedom but are intended to subjugate. This duality encapsulates the complexities of language, which can be an instrument of liberation and of oppression at the same time.

Non-verbal metacommunicative strategies are also paramount in the Narrator’s metamorphosis. In the early stages of the movie, his silence expects to accommodate into a

world's expectations (passive compliance), but once he enters Fight Club, his body language and use of silence evolve to convey his active and strategic resistance and self-assertion. The rules themselves, such as “only two guys to a fight” in example 2, act as metacommunicative tools, regulate not only speech but also ritualise physical interaction and confrontation. In other words, these rules further embed metacommunicative norms in action.

Moreover, these rules create a framework that distinguishes the cultural identity of the Fight Club's members from the external world. According to the club's standards, physical fight involves more than mere violence: it is a sign of identity and an act of rebellion against the outside world. For the members of Fight Club, reciting the rules and engaging in fights represent a form of metacommunication. These fights are a metaphor of consumer culture (involving jobs, possessions, and status) being replaced with an ideal of revolutionary insurgence. The Narrator's first fight scene is a turning point for his mentality and triggers a transformation from his passivity towards a journey of rebellion against normalcy. Although the Narrator is initially fearful of interaction, he starts to overcome this limitation when Tyler teaches him how to portray confidence through his body language.

Finally, the Narrator and Tyler have different styles of communication; such difference becomes more evident as the film progresses and their identities begin to blur. These differing communicative styles demonstrate escalating psychological conflict through layered metacommunication. Their exchanges are full of contradiction: on the one hand, Tyler's language promotes individual freedom; on the other hand, it also leads the Narrator into psychological subjugation. This paradox reveals how language can simultaneously free and dominate, which is a tension central to the movie's thematic core.

When considered as a whole, the explicit rules, internal dialogues, and non-verbal cues depicted in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) demonstrate how metacommunication strategies (e.g., language, silence and behaviour) build and define the characters' realities and sense of self.

As mentioned before in section 2.2 , metacommunication includes both verbal and non-verbal elements when these function to comment on or mould the communication itself. While some paralinguistic cues may appear similar, their role is primarily to convey emotional tone rather than to alter communicative context. Clarifying this distinction is

essential: metacommunication is defined not by its form, but by its function in shaping mutual understanding. The analysis of this subsection addresses the first set of research questions by demonstrating how *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) uses metacommunicative strategies to drive the plot and character development as well as to explore psychological tension and the instability of social roles.

5.2 Verbal Strategies

This section explores the verbal strategies used in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), with a specific focus on Tyler Durden and, to a lesser extent, the Narrator. Both characters adopt rhetorical choices that go beyond ordinary communication and use language as a transformative, persuasive and even coercive tool. Examples of these verbal strategies employed in the selected scenes are outlined in Table 3. They help to challenge dominant ideologies, reshape identities and mobilise resistance against consumerist culture. Tyler's words and anger are inseparable from the film's broader themes of rebellion, transformation, and the call for self-discovery. In *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), language does not simply serve a communicative function; rather, it is conceived to transform the world. Through his rhetoric, Tyler interrogates the basis of identity itself, proposing an entirely different framework for understanding everyone's place in the world.

Table 3. Verbal strategies

Example no.	Scene no.	Character under analysis	Line
5	7	Narrator	"I am Jack's smirking revenge."
6	8	Narrator	"I flipped through catalogues and wondered: what kind of dining set defines me as a person?"
7	9	Tyler Durden	"It's only after we've lost everything that we're free to do anything."
8	3	Tyler Durden	"You're not your job. You're not how much money you have in the bank."
9	6	Tyler Durden	"Advertising has us chasing cars and clothes, working jobs we hate so we can buy shit we don't need."
10	19	Tyler Durden	"The things you own end up owning you."
11	20	Tyler Durden	"This is your life and it's ending one minute at a time."

Tyler's rhetorical style is built on direct, unembellished language which is meant to provoke emotional responses. His brusque, blunt-tongued delivery aims to awaken both the Narrator and the audience from the senseless and insipid dream of their existence and harness the public resentment toward consumer culture. Such delivery is in line with social experiences to build rapport with his listeners. Tyler speaks in a way that appeals to raw emotions because it erases the bitterness and fear that many feel but cannot properly identify with. When he voices these complaints, Tyler makes his words sound immediate and imperative, demanding others adopt his point of view. Moreover, Tyler's verbal strategies often hinge on paradox, reduction and ideological inversion.

One of Tyler's most potent lines is in example 7 in Table 3: "It's only after we've lost everything that we're free to do anything." This phrase articulates the paradox of liberation through loss and destruction, and encapsulates Fight Club's philosophy of radical existential rebirth. This idea is powerful because it provides an escape from the barrenness of contemporary life, suggesting detachment from consumerism. This statement also reaffirms the shared identity of Fight Club to its core members. Tyler takes followers and unites them with an obsession of propagating self-destruction as liberation. Not only does he turn into a symbol of hope for people who are tired of the world, but he is in fact a much-needed charismatic leader. In this way, language becomes an instrument of both self-annihilation and rebirth.

Tyler is able to communicate complex messages effectively through simple, straightforward language because it is clean and more accessible, making his messages impactful. His rhetoric is direct and powerful, which solidifies him as this rousing charismatic leader who could literally bring people unto the Lord. The statement in example 8, "You are not your job. You are not how much money you have in the bank," embodies his critique of identity based on material success. The use of repetition and parallel structure reinforces the message; such rhythmic, emphatic phrasing strips identity of its capitalist ornaments and compels his followers to search for an essence beyond economic markers.

Tyler's speeches are crafted not only to inform, but also to coerce a conceptual framework. Through clear and striking ideas, he challenges belief systems at their roots. His verbal warfare employs and implies the mobilisation of emotions, appeals for group cohesion

and assertion of anti-consumerism autonomy. This ideological critique is further illustrated in example 9: “Advertising has us chasing cars and clothes, working jobs we hate so we can buy shit we don’t need.” This is an immensely scathing commentary on consumer culture, capturing the absurd treadmill of modern existence. The use of blunt and profane language connects him to the audience’s unspoken frustrations and tears down the facade of polite capitalist promises.

Contrary to Tyler’s directness and authoritative rhetoric, the Narrator’s mode of persuasion is introspective, cynical and filled with self-doubt. He reiteratively explores the psychological toll this whole situation is taking on him, his battle against his society and the subsequent change. His use of irony in example 6 illustrates his deep discontent with the world around him and the endless exasperation he feels in life’s shallow authenticity. “I flipped through and wondered: what kind of dining set defines me as a person?” This rhetorical question exemplifies his growing scepticism and critique toward consumer culture at the end of the 20th century. It exposes the dissonance between marketed ideals and the Narrator’s existential emptiness. The Narrator is as disillusioned as he is aware of the consumer culture inherent to its accustomed absurdity. The line mocks the discrepancy between the inner desires of the Narrator and advertised consumer-culture driving superficial aspirations. Through his rhetorical questions, he highlights that his inner self is in a constant battle with the repressive societal pressures.

Verbal strategies are also applied to express inner conflict in the movie. In example 5, the Narrator says, “I am Jack’s smirking revenge.” This exemplifies his indirect language. The line reflects the Narrator’s internal struggle with his emotions and his desire for revenge. The Narrator assigns his feelings to a fictional persona “Jack” rather than owing them as his own. Such personification and detachment to express repressed rage mask vulnerability with sardonic distance. Such phrasing reflects the fragmented nature of the Narrator’s identity, which is a key theme in the narrative’s psychological arc.

Furthermore, apart from critiquing consumerism, Tyler also employs language as a device for deception and seduction. His words brim with performative power, urging participants to reconsider their social capital. In example 10, he states, “The things you own end up owning you,” by which the film denounces the traps of consumerism spurred by

capitalism. Belongings do not enrich a person's life, but a person's life is enslaved by such belongings. This phrase encapsulates the shift of material goods from being possessions to being possessors. It succinctly critiques the consumerist ideology and also transforms such critique into a philosophical axiom and a warning against material enslavement.

Tyler's another famous line, as shown in example 11, "This is your life and it's ending one minute at a time," is a wake-up call to the Narrator and serves as a verbal jolt. Tyler's words about the impermanence of life provoke and turn the realisation of his journey into a catalyst that starts with a spark and force both the Narrator and the listeners to confront the absurdity of consumer-driven existence. Also, this statement motivates the characters towards a change and fuels the film's central topic of self-destruction as a form of liberation. In parallel, the Narrator's transformation is a gradual process, in line with the metaphor that life is "ending one minute at a time."

Taken together, Tyler Durden's rhetoric is structured to challenge societal norms and cultivate a new, oppositional ideology rooted in nihilism, autonomy and primal masculinity. On the other hand, the Narrator's verbal strategies reflect ambivalence. His internal monologues are marked by sarcasm, repetition and self-questioning, which demonstrates a character in psychological flux. As the narrative progresses and Tyler's influence deepens, the Narrator's language becomes more assertive, which reflects a shift in his psychological state.

In conclusion, Tyler's speeches and the Narrator's internal voice create a verbal landscape where themes of identity, consumerism, and rebellion are built and challenged. These strategies, strongly tied to metacommunicative elements, give the narrative its critical tone and dynamic character development, directly answering the second set of research question.

5.3 Paralinguistic Strategies

Paralinguistic cues help us understand communication. In *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), these elements drive a large part of the emotional impact in the character's conversations and are central to the psychological profiles of the characters, as well as how they evolve over the course of the film. These non-verbal features not only inflect meaning but also provide

important insights into the characters' inner conflicts, their transformation and the ideological landscape they inhabit. The way how something is said, apart from what is said, drives much of the movie's dramatic and thematic weight. These paralinguistic cues encode emotional struggles, establish hierarchy, and call attention to change of self. Table 4 presents a summary of the use of paralinguistic strategies in the selected scenes.

Table 4. Paralinguistic Strategies

Example no.	Scene no.	Character under analysis	Line
12	4	Narrator	"When people think you're dying, they really, really listen to you."
13	11	Tyler Durden	"We are the middle children of history, man."
14	12	Narrator	"You are not real. You are a projection of me."
15	13	Narrator	"I felt like destroying something beautiful."
16	20	Tyler Durden	"This is your life, and it's ending one minute at a time."

A great tipping point of the power structure is when the Narrator accuses Tyler: "When people think you're dying, they really, really listen to you..." (example 12). This shot is incredulous and angry: since the Narrator begins to find his own voice, his vocal delivery is louder than before and no longer subdued. Infused with irony and bitterness, this line signals a pivotal moment when the Narrator shifts from passive reflection to assertive critique. Such shift in the Narrator's voice reflects his earnest struggle to take back what was left of his life and identity claiming that people only truly listen to you when you are about to die. By speaking more authoritatively, he is now ready to drive his own journey.

Tyler's own voice is a performance of ideological conviction. In example 13, "We are the middle children of history, man," his voice sounds angry, well beyond frustration at the current world. The high pitch when he utters "middle" screams his anger over a generation he views as lost, aimlessly swinging between past and future. The words Tyler says here are pure rebellion, ringing in the ears of the public who echoes his revolutionary zeal. His vocal power is part of Tyler's plan to change markings. In battle, the subversiveness of his voice becomes obvious, almost amounting to rebellion.

The psychological tension is further accentuated when the Narrator confronts Tyler with the revelation, as shown in example 14, “You are not real. You are a projection of me.” The delivery here is sharp, incredulous, and louder than his previous lines, signalling the reemergence of his suppressed self-asserting independence against Tyler’s domination. He is also hitching ever more closely to Tyler’s philosophy and sounds more assured as he begins to incorporate his earlier insecurity. It is not only a sign of the psychological distance between the Narrator and Tyler, which is valid enough in itself, but it also serves to illustrate power. While Tyler regains more and more of a foothold in the Narrator’s life, the tonal disparity between their speeches becomes increasingly visible and an archetypal symbol of how Tyler is controlling a gradually greater proportion of who the Narrator is. As the level of aggressive authority grows in Tyler’s voice, the Narrator’s becomes softer as he steadily becomes swallowed by Tyler’s perspective.

In example 15, when the Narrator confesses, “I felt like destroying something beautiful,” his tone is flat and emotionless, almost detached from the violence he has just committed. His voice here is one of surrender, showing both his weariness with life and his powerlessness to do anything about it. This absence of cadence and affect suggests that the Narrator is not invested in anything beyond his immediate discomfort. He speaks as though from a place of emotional death. This illustrates the fact that he is not aligned with himself, because of the way he learns to ignore his emotions based on societal pressures and expectations. In contrast, Tyler’s magnum opus and breath-taking delivery emphasizes the growing psychological divergence between the two characters. Such contrast is a key marker of their evolving dynamic.

Upon their first encounter, the moment the Narrator’s tone shifts is when Tyler’s philosophy starts to engulf him. He starts to sound less tentative, and, with the switch, his voice becomes more confident. The change in delivery indicates that he has started unwinding from his old self and would romanticise Tyler more. It is a very subtle, but existent evolution in his tone, as it shows the turn of mind from institutional conformity to rebellion. As the Narrator reads off-script, he gets more aware of himself, and his voice likewise changes to reflect this realisation about confronting his dark side.

Furthermore, pacing and rhythm of speech delivery are also powerful paralinguistic strategies in the movie. The style in which the characters talk, the pace of their lines, and the pauses throughout the movie change whole conversations in order to highlight major ideas or character revelations. The mastery of tempo is particularly evident when Tyler declares, “This is your life, and it’s ending one minute at a time” (example 16). The rhythm is dragging, and the subtle slowdown between “life” and “ending” creates a foreboding sense of existential urgency consubstantial to the message being conveyed—time is slipping away. This is a representative example of how the pace of dialogue in key scenes matches the emotional state of the movie. Such dragging rhythm reflects the protagonist’s awoken to life’s impermanence and that he realises that there is nothing between meaning and death, moment to moment. This slow, measured delivery brings a meditative weight to the line, which transforms it from a simple dialogue into a mantra of disillusionment. In other words, such pacing reflects the psychological state of Tyler and guides the audience’s affective response.

The paralinguistic cues in the movie do more than shape individual characters; they also help to mediate relationships between them. The dynamic between Tyler and the Narrator is partially established through vocal contrast. The use of tone becomes a powerful tool. On the one hand, Tyler Durden’s paralinguistic strategies in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) mirrors his capability of controlling and consequently influencing others. He embodies the confidently forceful person behind a mouth full of assurance. He is at his most commanding. His delivery is calm, assertive and deliberate, which is designed to exude mastery and ideological control. His diction and tempo are measured in order to solidify his status as superior in the world of *Fight Club* and, more importantly, the master of all other characters, particularly the Narrator. On the other hand, at the beginning of the movie, the Narrator is at his most uncertain. His voice is often hesitant, soft and fragmented, which reflects his emotional instability and fragmented identity. However, as he starts to internalise Tyler’s worldview and gain clarity, his tone evolves, becomes more assertive and even begins to rival Tyler’s in intensity, which marks his gradual journey from subjugation to self-realisation and also a shift in their power dynamic.

Taken together, the film’s use of paralinguistic strategies (tone modulation, shifts in pace, and variation in volume) adds emotional depth to character dynamics and highlights

power struggles and identity shifts. When combined with metacommunicative and verbal cues, these paralinguistic strategies help to build a fuller picture of how identity is constructed, contested and transformed in the movie. These non-verbal features offer key insights into the third set of research questions about the role of non-verbal communication in shaping relationships and social critique.

5.4 Interpersonal strategies

Interpersonal strategies in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) are pivotal to the plot and represent how power changes hands and relationships shift among the characters. No matter whether the intention of their use is to build rapport, assert dominance or manipulate vulnerability, these strategies form the basis for the personal conflict and much of the emotional and ideological tension that drives the plot. In the centre of all these interpersonal relationships lies the changing dynamic between the Narrator and Tyler Durden, a relationship that is marked by manipulation, complicity, earth-shattering betrayal and ultimately, psychological fragmentation.

Tyler Durden's interpersonal strategies are rooted in his acute understanding of the emotional void experienced by disillusioned men in a consumer-driven society. He knows their yearning for connection and belonging, and capitalises on this to recruit followers into his worldview. His ability to understand the common struggles, frustrations, and desires of people makes him not only an inspirational figure but also a manipulator who can command unquestioning loyalty.

Examples of interpersonal strategies in the selected scenes are shown in Table 5, which demonstrate how Tyler and the Narrator employ these strategies to explore the complex emotional interactions.

Table 5. Interpersonal Strategies

Example no.	scene no.	Character under analysis	Line
17	11	Tyler Durden	"We're the middle children of history, man. No purpose or place. We have no Great War. No Great Depression. Our Great War's a spiritual war... our Great Depression is our lives."
18	12	Narrator	"You are not real. You are a projection of me."
19	13	Narrator	"You're a faker. / You're a faker.""
20	14	Narrator	"I can't cry if there's another faker present."
21	15	Tyler Durden	"We are a generation of men raised by women. I'm wondering if another woman is really the answer we need."
22	17	Tyler Durden	"I want you to hit me as hard as you can."

A rhetorical manipulation is evident in example 17, when Tyler delivers in front of the members of Fight Club: "We're the middle children of history, man. No purpose or place. We have no Great War. No Great Depression. Our Great War's a spiritual war... our Great Depression is our lives." Tyler communicates the anger and sense of purposelessness that resonates among the men, creating a shared emotional ground to forge unity.

At its core, Fight Club mirrors a constant psychological battle between two facets of the same individual. Their relationship is measured mainly in terms of dominance (i.e., who has more power over whom). Tyler takes on the role of mentor and leader at the beginning, but through his increasingly sleazy manoeuvring of the Narrator's psyche, the dynamic becomes somewhat imbalanced. Tyler can communicate the anger of the people around him and transform their personal frustrations into a communal identity. By framing Fight Club as a response to society's failure to deliver meaning, Tyler helps to generate a Fight Club narrative of rebellion. Tyler's interpersonal strategies, which are framed as expressions of solidarity, give the members a heightened emotional of belonging to a greater cause: their shared suffering. The group shares an identity based on shared grievances and this starts to create a platform to move the group further to more radical acts.

As the relationship between the Narrator and Tyler evolves, their interpersonal strategies also change. When the Narrator says, as shown in example 18, "You are not real. You're just a projection of me," he begins to realise the extent to which Tyler has influenced him. The Narrator and Tyler become one person. Tyler manipulates the Narrator by using his

interpersonal tactics as a demonstration of power dynamics. Tyler uses his identity to control the Narrator and, through him, the entire group. However, the Narrator eventually realises the dynamics of his relationship with Tyler. At first, Tyler imposes his authority on the Narrator in various ways, but as the movie develops, his predominance is put at stake as the Narrator learns to identify Tyler's manipulative interpersonal strategies.

A formative moment in the development of the Narrator's identity occurs in example 19, when he and Marla accuse each other of being "fakers." This interaction is more than a superficial confrontation; it reveals their mutual distrust and emotional defensiveness. Both characters employ interpersonal language to protect themselves from vulnerability, which sets up the relationship foundation built on distrust and emotional tension and illustrates their shared incapacity to forge authentic emotional connections.

This struggle for emotional authenticity continues when the Narrator says, as shown in example 20, "I can't cry if there's another faker present." Here, he attempts to somehow assert a form of legitimacy over others' emotional expressions, while he still reveals his yearning for a genuine connection.

The Narrator's demeanour borders on distant, and sometimes tinged with irony, reflects both his inner turmoil and also represents his need to get away from social standards. His interactions with others are emotionally cold because he is searching to assert himself in a consumerism-dominated world. However, that is only the beginning of his internal struggle, in which he longs for meaningful, deep connections, while he is not sure how to navigate his feelings. As the Narrator dives into Fight Club doctrine more deeply, the way how he engages with other human beings becomes clearer. For instance, when he starts to bond with the other people in Fight Club—although still through Tyler's prism—he begins to show more vulnerability and willingness to face his feelings, and gets involved in relationships, in contrast to his former peripheral existence. This change serves to illustrate the sway of Tyler's philosophy on the Narrator's sense of self, and signals the beginning of his blurring of lines into the rebellion against societal rules.

Furthermore, the statement in example 21, "We are a generation of men raised by women. I'm wondering if another woman is really the answer we need," fosters a sense of male camaraderie through shared frustration while putting down in words what he considers

a loss of masculinity prevailing in previous generations. It frames Tyler's narrative of the life that the Narrator is discontent with to build the pillars of the change to which he aspires.

A defining feature of Tyler's interpersonal tactics is his ability to reads right into the Narrator's psychological vulnerabilities. By addressing his internal battles with himself, which feeds his insecurities and desires, Tyler fosters a dependency and reshape the Narrator's identity. At a crucial moment, Tyler's rapport with the Narrator initiates a transformation: Tyler initially helps the Narrator to understand his confusion and then let him grow emotionally. The rapport Tyler has with the Narrator on a personal level creates a veil of trust that later turns into total ideological submission.

While Tyler has plenty of confidence and charisma, the Narrator is mainly defined here as a despairing, bewildered and directionless soul. He uses his social tactics to try to form connections, but he is mostly an introvert and typically behaves passively rather than getting involved in a deeper way with people. His connection with Tyler, however, compels him to overlook his own needs of belonging and recognition, which ultimately catalyses a drastic internal transformation. Early in the film, the Narrator distances himself from other characters. He claims to be a "wolf in sheep's clothing," making it evident that he cannot relate to people.

A key moment occurs when Tyler tells the Narrator, as shown in example 22 in table 5, "I want you to hit me as hard as you can." While this line is said by Tyler, the Narrator's compliance with the demand marks a critical point: he becomes involved in the violent philosophy of Fight Club in a deeper way and also confronts his internal conflict that ultimately leads to his emancipation. By the time the Narrator realises that Tyler is a projection of himself, the interpersonal dynamic between them has reversed, and the Narrator begins to dismantle the psychological dominance Tyler has exerted over him up to that point.

Last but not least, the interpersonal strategies within Fight Club do not only involve individual characters and the way they relate with each other, maintaining internal cohesion; they also extend to critique the external world, viewed as a foe to be defeated. Throughout the movie, Tyler and the Narrator demonstrate the power and control of personal agency at many junctures, and interpersonal strategies are markers that manifest these oppositions or objectives. Tyler's ability to mobilise loyalty among his followers through shared

disillusionment and rage illustrates how interpersonal relations can affect collectives and be harnessed to serve ideological end. His manipulation of interpersonal bonds in *Fight Club* highlights his role as both liberator and authoritarian. Tyler can create intimacy through anger and disappointment, and in this way, mirrors the audience's reflections of society reacting against consumerism and traditional social structures.

To sum up, the interpersonal strategies shown in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), especially between the Narrator and Tyler Durden, reveal how communication defines power, identity, and resistance. These evolving interactions address the fourth set of research questions by showing how interpersonal communication drives both character transformation and the broader social rebellion in the film.

6. Conclusion

This undergraduate thesis has analysed the communication strategies employed in *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), with a particular focus on their role in shaping both personal and collective identities. Through a close examination of metacommunicative, verbal, paralinguistic and interpersonal strategies used by Tyler Durden and the Narrator, the study has demonstrated how language can not only be used as a tool of expression, but as a powerful mechanism for manipulation, persuasion and transformation.

These findings highlight the impact of language and communication in the movie at both communal and individual levels, especially in terms of constructing individual subjectivities, forming group dynamics, and resisting consumerism and societal norms. Tyler's rhetoric techniques serve as a way to liberate himself, cultivate group loyalty and create movement against the status quo.

Moreover, this study also reveals how deep and far language may impact perception, personal and collective identity, politics, behaviour, conformity and rebellion in the form of a film. *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999) is a compelling example of how such kind of media can reflect and reshape society anxieties through its deployment of layered communication forms. The use of irony, emotional detachment and psychological fragmentation in the movie offers insight into the complex relationships among discourse, identity and power. Such

findings suggest that language in media does not only mirror the reality; it can also construct it.

This research sets the stage for further inquiry into the dynamics of communication in contemporary media and social movements. Future studies should examine how non-verbal communication and visual storytelling cues in film affect audience response and behaviours, as well as discuss how media have increasingly come to inform cultural and societal norms.

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