

## MANIPULATION STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF BLURBS

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*The article represents the results of research of manipulative strategy of blurbs that is realized through main tactics. Communicative goals of blurbs, designed for a certain perlocutionary effect, are analyzed.*

**Key words:** *blurbs, manipulative strategy, tactics, addresser, addressee.*

The tradition of the study of manipulation begins from the works of psychologists, political scientists, sociologists, that evaluate manipulation primarily as "the impact on people in order to force them to do something (to report the information, to perform a deed, to change their behavior) unconsciously or in spite of their own wishes, intentions" [1, p. 72]. Recently manipulation has increasingly driven the attention of linguists, who consider it through the lens of language. When speaking about manipulation, we mean "kind of speech effects used for the hidden introduction into psyche of the recipient intentions, desires, goals, attitudes or mindset, that do not coincide with those that he has at the moment" [2, p. 99]. In other words, when the hidden features of the language are used by the addresser to impose some sense of reality to the addressee, to formulate the desirable attitude towards it, to cause the necessary for the addresser emotional reaction, we talk about linguistic manipulation. In this case, the addresser is active and the addressee is passive: he is offered an already ready and verbally made-up product for considering. "We can say that any use of language involves the effect of influence" [3, p. 51]. Thus, the use of peculiarities of structure and functioning of the language with the purpose of manipulation is a language manipulation itself.

The article aims at identifying the mechanism of realization of manipulation in blurbs through the concept of strategy and tactics.

The object of the research are secondary English blurbs placed on book covers, fly-leaves and on the Internet; the subject is manipulation strategy and tactics of the above-mentioned texts.

The communicative purpose of the blurbs is the message about the release of a new book and what feelings it evokes in the reader. On one hand, blurbs in maximally shortened form give the information about the book and about the feelings it evokes in a reader, on the other hand, they give this information so that it should draw the readers' attention, to affect them.

Today "the main problem of linguistic analysis of linguistic influence policies is related to the study of the speaker's strategies and all language resources that are at his disposal, which determine the achievements of communicative goals" [4, p. 23]. Reference to concepts of "communication strategy," "communication tactics" and "communicative course (reception)" that are actively developed by the modern linguistics (A.Goriachev, I.Egorova, O.Issers, O.Popova, I.Sternin and others) is becoming necessary for modelling promotional effect of speech, as texts of promotional communication are "a product of a conscious design which purpose, planned in advance, is to influence the audience" [5, p. 14], to cause the expected actions, the so called "consumer itch" [6, p. 38].

"Communicative strategy should be understood as the "general plan" or "vector" of verbal behavior of a particular author that is realized through the choice of system of considered by the addresser gradual verbal impacts that cause reduction of narrative distance between the author and a reader" [7, p. 145], "super task that comes from the addresser, aimed at achieving communicative or practical purpose and designed for a

certain perlocutionary effect” [5, p. 16], “general furthest goal” [8, p. 53]. Thus, the following sequence of actions is determined:

Goal > Strategy > Tactics > Perlocutionary effect.

Studying strategies and tactics of verbal communication, A. Leontiev and E. Tarasov note that the defining moment in communication action is the goal [9; 14]. According to the goal, the addresser develops a plan, chooses verbal means. The goal of different promotion strategies is activation of addressee’s interest. The optimal achievement of goal is one of the typical manifestations of "good" strategy [10, p. 264]. A typical blurb is based on manipulative strategies. Less appropriate are non-manipulation strategies. Non-manipulation verbal strategies are used in those cases when the goal of the text is simply to inform the reader about the release of a new book. The best example of reviews, based on non-manipulation strategies are eReader-reviews, located in the Internet.

The ability to handle language means is crucial for the creators of advertising, as they are the tools of manipulative actions. The system of verbal means, apart from simply informing, allows introducing into the consciousness of the person who is under manipulation, the necessary for the author point of view, imposing this or that evaluation system. A necessary condition for successful manipulation is the ability to suppress the recipient’s critical perception of information [11, p. 15]. A common manipulation approach is a departure of manipulative intention to implication that creates the recipient’s illusion of independent decision-making.

Under strategies, we understand the use of certain tactics that are: specific speechpitch, means of verbal behavior aimed at solving a particular communicative task [12, p. 61]; communicators’ use of language skills to build expression [13, p. 23]; "specific nearest goal" [8, p. 53], "one or more actions that contribute to the implementation of strategy" [5, p. 16]. Tactics gain their forms due to verbal means, by which we mean "the selection and use of verbal tools for implementation of tactical and strategic plans by the addressee" [5, p. 20]. The following tactics are typical for blurs:

1) tactics of awakening of interest towards the topic of the message. Notification of unusual shape due to unusual lexical compatibility: "*Rousing ... Another pedal-to-the-metalcrowd-passer*". - *Sebastian Faulks*; or violation of punctuation rules: "*One of my favorite books in the world !!!!!!!!!*" - *By Deborah in VA "Deb" (Virginia, USA)*; or using other system inclusions that spontaneously attract attention, increase the semantic capacity of text, contribute to its memorization: "*I really recommend this book! I give it 7/10 /*" - *John Wheatley, Bulmershe*.

The importance of this tactics is explained by the fact that under the formula "AIDA: *Attention, Interest, Desire, Action*", adopted in promotion, which contains four stages of action (attention, interest, desire, activity) is assumed that the effect of advertising message always starts with drawing of consumer attention to the product [14, p. 191].

2) tactics of direct address to the reader, which is a manifestation of the address of the text. Explicit reference to the recipient (using the pronoun *you*) makes a psychological impact on the recipient, intimizing the communication process: "*It will make you laugh, cry and rethink your life*". - *Jilly Cooper*;

3) tactics of guidance / advice to the reader that is verbalized with the help of imperative or comments- advice: "*One of those rare books which come from time to time to enthral grown-up people and children at once with the spell of true romance ... A book to buy, to read, to give away - and to keep.*" - *The Times*;

4) tactics of creating the effect of oral speech: "*This book is the worst I've ever read !!!!! Just like a bad nightmare, I thought it would never end !!!!!!!!! So boring ... just blah-blah*". - *Matt K, Bulmershe*; "*WOW ... Blockbuster perfection. An exhilaratingly brainy thriller*". - *The New York Times*. The use of interjections *blah-blah* and *WOW* helps to create the atmosphere of real-life easy communication. Capitalization, elliptical constructions, multiple use of exclamation mark contributes to additional emotionality of communication;

5) tactics of attracting readers to dialogue: *"Ken Follet is one of the smoothest suspense writers around. Can you name better one?" - The Times.*

Rhetorical question involves the recipient in the conversation, as if forcing him to make a conclusion. Personnel and time deixis activate the last note;

6) tactics of author and reader solidarity: *"SIX OF ONE by Rita Mae Brown is joyous, passionate and funny. What a pleasure! ... So delightful ... she opens the seams to give us her vision of what was really there. We are shown not the seamy side of life, but a body ready for anything, especially celebration." - Washington Post Book World; "He appeals to our brains as well as waterfall in the dry season." - St. Louise Post-Dispatch.* The use of inclusive personal pronouns in the nominative and objective case *we, us* and possessive pronoun *our* combines the author of the blurb and the reader, places them on the same level in terms of interpretation of the piece of art. Time deixis expressed by verbal forms of tense helps to create the effect of reality and evidence. The use of comparison provides a high degree of vividness of a blurb;

7) tactics of honesty / openness of the author with the reader. The addressee reveals his own "I", shows his attitude towards the read: *"This book surprised me, but I was shocked, when I read the scene of the murder. It was like seeing the film of the book." - Jane Berg, sincerely tries to explain to the reader that the book is difficult, not everyone can understand it: "This book seems interesting although, the book seems to be targeted for a very specific audience." - Jack Horwill;*

8) tactics of design of addressee that allows the addresser of the message to model a person of the addressee, constructing, thus, a certain image of the consumer. Blurbs, based on these tactics are of two types:

a) the type of social categorization of addressee that defines man as a social object, specifying his gender, profession, nationality: *"A message for all thinking Americans." - Springfield Republican; "A brilliantly fresh, achingly written memoir. Thrilling and frightening on every page ... Wellum takes you into a battle with him. A book for all ages and generations, a treasure." - Daily Express; "A madcap comic mystery - Jersey - girl style" - The New York Times*

b) the type of psychological characterization where the addresser of text appears as infinite set of features, needs, motives: *"Readers who appreciate the ironies of life, a little risk taking, and quirky humor, will want to indulge in Mortal Sin" - Wall Street Journal; "The book is hardly like the kind of thing you'd take into a picnic basket on an August day ... or better yet keep handy on the bedside table in the depths of January." - New York Times Book Review;*

9) tactics of direct influence on decision-making process encourages the addressee to action, making a direct impact on the willing for regulation sphere of the recipient [13, p. 35]. Thus, the advertising message can contain a direct call to action: *"A sophisticated but damn beautiful read. Buy it!" - Roddy Doyle; "Choose the very book to have wonderful time in summer" - New York Times; "Read this book and it's no gamble" - Seattle Times or to simulate a situation of decision-making: *"It is hard to think of a better place to spend the summer than in her (Helen Hooven Santmyer's) world" - Cosmopolitan; "One of those rare books which come from time to time to enthrall grown-up people and children at once with the spell of true romance ... A book to buy, to read, to give away - and to keep" - The Times.**

The blurb research has shown that a strategy can be implemented by a variety of tactics, and many of them, in their turn, are able to participate in the implementation of several strategies.

Undoubtedly, the above mentioned communication strategies and tactics are not a closed system. As personal qualities are inexhaustible and develop dynamically along with a man, patterns of components structuring provide a variety of combinations.

We consider study and analysis of emotional, evaluative, rational, narrative strategies on which secondary blurbs are based to be prospective.

## МАНИПУЛЯТИВНІ СТРАТЕГІЯ І ТАКТИКИ ТЕКСТІВ-ВІДГУКІВ

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*У статті представлені результати дослідження маніпулятивної стратегії рекламних текстів, яка реалізується через основні тактики. Аналізуються комунікативні цілі реклами, призначеної для створення певного перлокутивного ефекту.*

**Ключові слова:** реклама, маніпуляція, стратегія, тактика, адресант, адресат.

## МАНИПУЛЯТИВНЫЕ СТРАТЕГИЯ И ТАКТИКИ ТЕКСТОВ-ОТЗЫВОВ

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*В статье представлены результаты исследования манипулятивной стратегии рекламных текстов, которая реализуется через основные тактики. Анализируются коммуникативные цели рекламы, предназначенной для создания определенного перлокутивного эффекта.*

**Ключевые слова:** реклама, манипуляция, стратегия, тактика, адресант, адресат.

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