

**PRAGMATIC ASPECT OF ENGLISH PUBLIC SERVICE  
ADVERTISING**

**N. Rudenko**, lecturer  
Sumy State University,  
2, Rymkogo-Korsakova St., Sumy, 40007, Ukraine  
E-mail: n.rudenko@gf.sumdu.edu.ua

*In the article the pragmatic orientation of English texts of public service advertising is analyzed, namely its manipulating strategies and tactics. Linguistic manipulating is especially important, because it determines the usage of language means on different levels to create the inherent influence on a recipient in public service advertising for reaching its main goal – driving to act. Nowadays the advertising message is less informative, but more manipulating and pragmatic. Verbal components in such texts activate the intellectual and emotional reactions of the addressee and cause corresponding actions. Such categories of advertising as anthropocentrism, information and influence stipulate its consideration in the aspect of linguistic pragmatics. The pragmatic analysis of public service advertising gives an opportunity to detect language means of argumentation, techniques and tactics of persuasion. The orientation on the addressee is characteristic to any type of communication, but the factor of an addressee determines the form and the content of advertising texts at a larger extent than in the texts of any other kinds of discourses.*

**Key words:** public service advertising, linguistic manipulation, linguistic strategies and tactics, language means, pragmatic orientation.

In terms of the pragmatic approach public service advertising is determined as a social phenomenon influencing the value orientations, outlook, and behavior model of the target audience. The societal mission of public service advertising is to change the society for better. The function of advertising in general is to influence and to persuade to action.

Public service advertising has the nature of values, which determines its fundamental traits: cultural, communicative and non-commercial character. The main communicative-pragmatic assignments of the advertising discourse are as follows:

- 1) to inform about a social problem;
- 2) to draw attention to the actual problems of the life of citizens;
- 3) to present all the possible views concerning certain problem and all the possible consequences;
- 4) to create common public opinion concerning certain social problem;
- 5) to stimulate the participation of people in decision of the problem;
- 6) to develop new behavior prescription of the lingual community (O. Y. Golub, M. A. Doronina).

In Ukraine and Russia the term “social advertisement” is mostly used, though in the western countries there are other terms describing this phenomenon:

- public service advertising;
- public service announcement;
- public health & safety advertising;
- public awareness messages;
- fundraising & appeals advertising [1, p. 10].

**The object** of this research is the public service advertising in English as a meaningful and specific phenomenon of our time. **The subject** of the research is the pragmatic orientation of the text of public service advertising, realized in those verbal and non-verbal components, that influence the addressee, activate intellectual and emotional reactions, cause necessary corresponding actions. Mass media are characterized by high level of

manipulation that is realized through the manipulative communication in advertising, business communication and propaganda [2, p. 4].

**The aim** of the article is the research of the public service advertising in English and determining the peculiarities of its pragmatic orientation, namely its strategies and tactics of manipulating. The material of the research is the fragments of discourses of English public service advertising from the Internet-resources.

The scientists' attention is drawn by the economical and psychological aspects of the advertising activities with certain orientation on the language specifics, mechanism of the advertising influence. In the last decade there were several tries of the systematic research of the advertisement in mass media and its role in the social space; different methods of creating the advertising texts were described; advertising technologies were analyzed. The advertising language analysis on the psychological basis was further realized in the pragmalinguistic researches (Y. B. Kornyeva, T. M. Lishvits, I. P. Moyseyenko, Y. V. Silvestrov, E. S. Terner, J. N. Lich, L. O. Barkova, L. S. Vynarska and others), also the advertising technologies were analyzed in public service advertising (M. A. Doronina, O. V. Dyachuk, L. M. Dmitrieva). Most authors agree that the influence on the addressee (the consumer) is realized with the help of the advertising text.

**The research methods** are: discourse analysis for determining the strategies and tactics of influence in the discourse of English public service advertising; functional analysis for determining the pragmatic functions of English public service advertising and means of their realization.

**Relevance.** From the point of view of linguopragmatics the realization of influence is present in any language activity. Its inherent trait is a sense of purpose. The advertisement products are made in such a way that they could influence the human's subconsciousness. Such main categories of advertisement as anthropocentrism, comprehension and influence define its reviewing in the aspect of the linguistic pragmatics. Pragmatics as a science in its general sense may be described as a correspondent usage of the language in the context. While analyzing the text activity in the pragmatic aspect the communicants are in the center of attention as the creating factors of the text, namely the researches of the advertising text correlate with the motivation characteristics of the producer and recipient of the text.

Pragmalinguistic analysis of the advertising makes it possible to define the straight connection between language means on different levels that are used in the advertising text for influence, and the action of the addressee in the direction of this influence. Hence, the analysis of the advertising texts in the pragmalinguistic aspect gives an opportunity to view the language of the advertisement in the direct connection with the addressee's action [3, p. 315]. That is why the study of the texts of English public service advertising from the point of view of linguistic pragmatics is logical and necessary for analysis of their structural elements and language means of their designing. The results of the research make it possible to use the experience of the public service advertising of the English speaking countries, namely the USA, to increase the efficiency of the social advertisement in Ukraine that plays the important part in creation the positive image of our country in the world.

**Scientific originality** of the received results: the theoretic bases of the researches of English public service advertising have been generalized in the linguopragmatic dimension taking into account the factors of the communicative efficiency. The publications concerning the phenomenon of language manipulation don't have the complex character; the number of peculiarities hasn't been described by the scientists yet. There is also the absolute absence of analysis of the strategic organization of the discourse of English public service advertising and its subtypes.

The pragmatic character of the advertising discourse makes it necessary to form the advertisement texts with the great influential potential, and beside this the influence may be realized both on the rational side of the addressee's personality (then the influence has the form of persuasion) and on the instincts, subconsciousness and emotions (then the influence has the form of suggestion). In forming the communicative model of the advertising

message as an instrument of persuasion and suggestion both the verbal and non-verbal components of the advertising text are brought into play [4, p. 23].

From the point of view of sociology, manipulation is a system of means of ideological and socially-political influence with the aim to change the way of thinking and behavior of people in contrast to their interests. At this people don't realize that their needs, outlook, interests and the way of life depend mainly on those, who manipulate them [5, p. 104].

Manipulation together with the force and economic methods gives the subject of management the possibilities to direct the activity and behavior of the masses, social groups and individuals, to control the social situation [6, p. 15]. The development of linguopragmatics, one of the leading directions of the modern philology, contributed to the creation of the notion of the communicative strategy as a part of intention program of planning and unfolding of the discourse that determines the method of organizing and representing of information in it [7, p. 95].

In philology the study of manipulations is strongly connected with the problem of efficiency of communication, the language influence on the addressee, the study of the communicative strategies. The language influence is the communicative-psychological sense of the manipulation [8, p. 256]. It is directed to the changes in the socially-psychological structure of the society or to the stimulating the direct social actions by means of the influence on the mentality of the members of certain social group or society in general.

Public service advertising has a considerable manipulative potential for it gives an opportunity for a disguised control of the subconsciousness and behavior. The strategy of influence is viewed by means of the main notions of linguopragmatics — the communicative aim, communicative competence, communicative intention, communicative experience, rules of communication. If the language strategy is considered as a number of speech actions directed to the solving the main communicative task of a speaker, then the language tactics should be understood as one or several actions contributing to the strategy realization. The strategic plan defines the choice of means and devices of its realization; hence the speech strategy and tactic are connected as sort and kind. The tactic is on the one hand a way of the speech influence, the number of language means, and on the other hand — the way of realization of the strategy. In one strategy several speech tactics can be distinguished [9, p. 7].

Within the pragmatic orientation of English public service advertising the following strategies can be defined:

1. Identification strategy, when the addressee identifies himself with the character in the advertisement. This strategy is realized by means of using such speech acts as constatives and menaces, and also the antithesis, personal pronouns *you, me, they* adverbs *now, here* and verbs in Present continuous. That should draw the addressee's attention to the problem that already exists at the present moment, break his detachment, and persuade him to think about it for a while. The message of such kind of advertisements is: it can happen to anyone, no one is an exception.

*Victims are people just like you and me.*

*Nobody is immune to breast cancer.*

*If you don't pick it up, they will.*

*It's not happening here, but it's happening now.*

*Sheepishness is stronger than you.*

*Now you see it, now you don't.*

*Bullets leave bigger holes than you think. [10]*

Also within this strategy the direct appeal to the addressee is used (in form of imperative sentences):

*Stop the violence, don't drink and drive.*

*Help, before it's too late.*

*Say no to anorexia. [10]*

2. The strategy of declaring of social norms and values, realizing in giving the positive examples and drawing attention to the problem by means of the verbs of sense perception (*see, listen, look*) in form of imperatives, the comparison constructions, adjectives with the positively-appraising meaning, modal verbs *need to, should, can*, and also the usage of precise data.

*See how **easy** feeding the hungry **can** be.*

***Slower** is **better**.*

*Women **need to** be seen as **equal**.*

*Your skin color **shouldn't** dictate your future.*

*Each time **you** sleep with someone, **you** also sleep with his past.*

*Be **patient** with people who stutter.*

*Give up your seat to someone carrying **more important**. Stand up for the pregnant.*

*Friends don't let friends drive drunk.*

***Thousands of people** owe their lives to organ donors. [10]*

Pictures in these advertisements show the difference between good and bad behavior that is especially necessary for understanding the slogans in form of elliptical sentences, when the image fills the information gaps in the text.

*Same dog, different owner. [10]*

3. The strategy of revealing the social drawbacks has an aim to make the addressee think about the negative consequences and point to the disguised threats. The given strategy is realized by means of interrogatives, constatives, directives, conditional sentences and comparison constructions. Interrogatives are used in form of rhetoric questions or riddles with the obvious answer often illustrated on the picture.

*One child is holding something that's been banned in America to protect them.*

*Guess which one?*

*If dying for your faith makes you a martyr, what does it make those whom you killed for your faith?*

*If you don't feed them, who will?*

*Censorship tells the wrong story.*

*On internet some things are not what they seem.*

*Sexual predators can hide in your child's smartphone.*

*The back seat is no safer: Belt up! [10]*

Within the given strategy pans and proverbs are also used. The understanding of these slogans is impossible without non-verbal means such as pictures.

*What goes around, comes around.*

*Are you **pouring on the pounds**?*

*Certain things **hang on** forever. Set the kids free from abuse and violence.*

*He has his mother's eyes. Report abuse. [10]*

4. The strategy of threat is meant to struggle with the drawbacks and deviant forms of behavior. Appealing to the sense of fear (social or biological), the authors of the advertising messages try to change the behavior models of the representatives of American linguoculture, which stimulates the solving of social problems that have a mass character in the country.

The given strategy is defined in the discourse of the "shocking" public service advertising by the following tactics:

– Tactic of appealing to the motif of death, that realizes the task of advertisement to cause the feeling of fear provoked by the bad habits, breaking the traffic rules, etc. [7, p. 98].

Menaced speech acts in such slogans often contain quantity data and words, connected with the concept "death".

*Plastic bags **kill**.*

*Americans are **20 times** more likely to be **murdered** with a gun, than people in other developing countries.*

*If you smoke, statistically you story will end 15% before it should.* [10]

- Tactic of the victim experience reference.

This tactic is used to visualize the consequences of bad habits, the wrong behavior, violence, car crashes, that actually provoke the fear of them [7, p. 102]. Constatative speech acts used in such slogans contain pans, comparison and negative constructions, metaphors. The negatively-appraising words serve as means of naming such a destructive influence (*neglected, invisible, homeless, premature aging*).

*Smoking causes **premature aging**.*

***The longer** a child with autism goes without help, **the harder** they are to reach.*

***Neglected** children are made to feel **invisible**.*

*For the **homeless** every day is a struggle.*

*Animals are **not clowns**.* [10]

In the advertising discourse with the negative vector of accepting direction the corresponding negative emotive vocabulary is used. When it is accumulated in such contexts, every new sentence increases the negative degree of the former, forming the emotional opinion about the given images as a necessary component of the suggestive influence.

5. Strategy of cooperation: to increase the argumentation power of the message the authors often use the tactic modes of the reference to the authority/powerful organization and giving examples, statistics, results of researches. Usage of the constative speech acts with the quantity data raises the message comprehension and influence of such slogans.

***Every 60 seconds** a species dies out.*

*The tsunami killed **100 times more** people than 9/11.*

*Air pollution kills **60 000 people** a year.*

*Cigarette butts make up almost **half of Dublin's litter**.*

*Every plastic bottle you recycle saves enough energy to power a light bulb for 6 hours.*

*Latest AIDS statistics: **40,000,000 infected. 0,000,000 cured.*** [10]

Hence the characteristic traits of the speech acts in the discourse of English public service advertising are: initiation of thoughts about the problem (questives), informing about it (constatives), appealing to act and solve or prevent it (directives), threatening to prevent the consequences of the dangerous conduct (menaces). The number of the combined types of the speech acts in the discourse defines the efficiency of the perception of the advertising messages, the success of the general communicative interaction between temporally distanced participants of the advertising discourse.

To increase the influence of the public service advertising on the target audience the scientists propose the scheme: dissatisfaction – the problem solving – the ideal result. The advertising appeal in such a form has to remind of the problem, hyperbolize it, demonstrating the negative emotions. The next accent is put on the positive emotion, connected with improving the problem situation, or on the obvious “perfect” result [11, p. 88]. Such generalized formula of influence describes the suggestive loading of the public service advertising messages, taking into account the vector direction of the suggestion and considerably widens the specter of the influential effects [12, p. 142].

Hence on the lexically-semantic level using certain negative or positive emotions actualized in the semantics of the lexemes or contextually one can positivate/negativate the vector of influence of the advertising discourse that causes the corresponding emotional state of the recipient, the background that assists the reaction on the advertising message, and as a result – the inheritance of the moral behavior.

Communicative strategies facilitate the discourse organizing orientated on the realization of influence on the addressee. Trying to implement its communicative aim and to achieve the desired result the advertisers choose the strategy that gives an opportunity to realize their intentions as successfully as possible by means of the speech influence on the addressee's behavior.

## ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОЙ СОЦИАЛЬНОЙ РЕКЛАМЫ

*Н. В. Руденко, преподаватель  
Сумский государственный университет,  
ул. Римского-Корсакова 2, Сумы, 40007, Украина  
E-mail: n.rudenko@gf.sumdu.edu.ua*

*В статье анализируется прагматическая направленность текстов англоязычной социальной рекламы, а именно их стратегии и тактики манипулирования. Языковая манипуляция занимает особое место в рекламном медиадискурсе, так как определяет использование языковых средств на разных уровнях для создания скрытого влияния на реципиента в социальной рекламе для достижения ее основной цели – побуждение к действию. Прагматический анализ рекламы позволяет выявить языковые средства аргументации, приемы и тактики убеждения.*

*Ключевые слова: социальная реклама, языковая манипуляция, языковые стратегии и тактики, языковые средства, прагматическая направленность.*

## ПРАГМАТИЧНИЙ АСПЕКТ АНГЛОМОВНОЇ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ РЕКЛАМИ

*Н. В. Руденко, викладач  
Сумський державний університет,  
вул. Римського-Корсакова 2, Суми, 40007, Україна  
E-mail: n.rudenko@gf.sumdu.edu.ua*

*В статті аналізується прагматична спрямованість текстів англomовної соціальної реклами, а саме їх стратегії і тактики маніпулювання. Мовне маніпулювання займає особливе місце в рекламному медіа дискурсі, так як визначає використання мовних засобів на різних рівнях для створення прихованого впливу на реципієнта в соціальній рекламі для досягнення її основної мети – спонукання до дії. Прагматичний аналіз реклами дозволяє виявити мовні засоби аргументації, прийоми та тактики переконання.*

*Ключові слова: соціальна реклама, мовна маніпуляція, мовні стратегії та тактики, мовні засоби, прагматична спрямованість.*

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*Received: Jenuary, 10, 2017*