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Persuasion in the Promotional Copy for the Manuals of the Faith Healer Vadim Tschenze

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The purpose of this article is to analyze the promotional descriptions of books written by Vadim Tschenze. These descriptions can be found on the website of the Polish publishing house *Studio Astropsychology*, which carries a wide range of esoteric literature. The publishing house presents Tschenze as a spiritual healer, who has been practicing for years; the author of the bestsellers *Russian Health Lexicon* (*Rosyjski leksykon zdrowia*) and *Secrets of the Whisperers* (*Sekrety szeptuch*); the creator of the aura-energy correction method¹. In Tschenze's publications (translated from German into Polish) one can find the healer's Web Address along with his email address. From the website, we learn that Tschenze is a Russian, born in Uzbekistan, and currently living in Switzerland where he conducts extensive healing activities. He writes manuals, organizes seminars and masterclasses (including folk medicine, self-healing, mediumism), and provides personal consultations in

¹ <https://studioastro.pl/autor/vadim-tschenze>. Here and below, my translations are from the Polish.

German and Russian². The Polish translations of Tschenze's books contain extensive passages on the complex fate of the author's family and himself – primarily the history of his career. The author writes extensively about his grandmother Valeria, who was a well-known faith healer in Russia. It was from her that Vadim was supposed to have learned the “profession”: Grandmother Valya passed on to him knowledge of folk medicine, Russian shamanism, and herbalism. And now he wishes to pass this heritage on to people, including through published manuals. The healer claims that in following the recommendations he proposes, which are a kind of compilation of methods derived from Russian folk medicine and his own experience (working with energy), numerous cleansing and self-healing processes are triggered [Tschenze 2022, 15–16; Tschenze 2021, 15–49].

It is worth noting here that over recent years, magical discourse has become more and more popular in psychological and counseling literature in Poland. In addition to reasoning based on rationality, other styles of thought and types of discourse are in vogue, such as the magical one. It seems that a belief in the power of magic (and actions based on it) effectively meets many human needs. One of the manifestations of magical thinking is using alternative (folk, herbal, energy-based) methods of treatment which often stand in opposition to science-based medicine. The popularity of the naturalistic fallacy is evidenced, for example, by the number of manuals available on the Polish market offering *natural* ways to improve one's health, and achieve success in one's professional or personal life³.

The books, the marketing descriptions of which are the subject of analysis in this paper, are a part of Polish esoteric discourse. This type of discourse, so far, has rarely been the object of interest of Polish scholars but – as Tomasz Kwaśniewski's *Investigation* has shown – the topic is certainly worthy of attention. Indeed, the reporter writes that Poles are surprisingly eager to visit fortune tellers, read horoscopes and believe in the power of amulets. They also take advantage of magical services offered

² <https://www.vadimtschenze.ch>. Tschenze in his books often encourages readers to contact him, e.g., via e-mail: vadim@vadimtschenze.ch.

³ In addition to Tschenze's books, we can also mention, e.g., Gennady Małakhov's publications and numerous books available in Polish bookstores in the “natural medicine” category. See: <https://bonito.pl/szukaj/?results=L3YxL3NlYXJjaC9wcm9kdWN0cy8/c2VhcmNoPU1hJUM1JTgyYWNob3c=>; <https://tantis.pl/szukaj?query=medycyna%20naturalna>.

on the Internet to, for example, quit smoking or drive evil spirits out of apartments [Kwaśniewski 2019]⁴.

In this paper promotional descriptions of Tschenze's manuals are presented as a type of advertising.

Advertising is a form of communication in which inducement is undoubtedly essential, and is generally defined as “any paid form of nonpersonal, mass-media presentation with the primary purpose of informing or persuading people about ideas, goods, or services”: [Manstead, Hewstone 1999, 14]⁵. The primary objective of advertising is to attract potential customers to buy products, use services, or support ideas. The objectives pursued in advertising are primarily achieved through the linguistic action of persuasion. It is usually referred to as “the activity of creating, reinforcing, or modifying beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors which is a major underlying motivation for human communication and the fountainhead of communication studies” [Littlejohn, Foss 2009, 745]⁶.

Further on in the text I shall present the mechanisms of persuasion present in the descriptions of the indicated publications⁷.

⁴ See also: Chudzik 2021; Sokół-Klein 2017; Perczak 2016; Grochowski 2017; Grębecka 2009.

⁵ According to many researchers, advertising is a form of communication intended to persuade an audience (viewers, readers or listeners) to purchase an item or take some action in relation to some products, ideals, or services. It includes the name of a product or service and how that product or service could benefit the consumer, to persuade the target market to purchase or to consume that particular brand. Advertising can also serve to communicate an idea to the masses in an attempt to convince them to take a certain action, such as encouraging “environmentally friendly” forms of behavior. Therefore, the internal differentiation of advertising does not allow it to be encapsulated into one universal formula. Moreover, advertising has long been the subject of inquiry for many scholars representing a variety of scientific fields. Thus, the terms of advertising are also different – depending on the research or legal perspectives. See: Littlejohn, Foss 2009; Jones 1998; Vilanilam, Varghese 2004; Dahlen, Rosengren 2016; Tellis 2004; Wiśniewska, Liczmańska 2011; Grzybczyk 2008.

⁶ The lack of one commonly accepted definition of persuasion and the inexhaustibility of its mechanisms result in there being many possibilities for interpretation of both ‘persuasion’ and its related notion – ‘manipulation’. My understanding of persuasion is close to those scholars who claim that it manifests itself in the conscious use of messages (verbal and non-verbal) to influence beliefs and attitudes, that it does not imply the use of coercion, and equally provides for the possibility of making a choice.

⁷ The article uses marketing descriptions from the following publications (available online): [1] *Seks i karma. Techniki odkrywania seksualności i wzbogacenia życia erotycznego oparte na rosyjskiej medycynie energetycznej*; [2] *Sekrety szeptuch w samouzdrawianiu*;

Stanisław Barańczak writes that all texts oriented towards persuasion use similar techniques to influence the reader. The researcher distinguishes four types of such mechanisms: 1. The mechanism of the emotionalization of reception, with the help of which fulfilled is the condition of thoughtless perception. This is based on a kind of induced paralysis of the recipient's intellectual-reflective abilities and an increase in their ability to feel. The use of this principle is particularly popular in advertising or propaganda, traditionally designed to exert persuasion; 2. The mechanism of community of world and language. This constitutes a prerequisite for obtaining full agreement between the sender and the recipient. The application of this rule refers to virtually all meaningful statements, because a text can only communicate something when it concerns a reality that is at least partially known to the recipient and when it operates within a language familiar to him; 3. The mechanism of simplification in values distribution, thanks to which maintained is the condition for the easy axiological orientation of the addressee. This rule is closely linked to the previous one, since the consequence of the division of the world into *we* and *they* constitutes a reduction in the infinite scale of values and the breaking of these down into our, that is, the positive, and the alien, that is, the negative; 4. The mechanism of non-alternative reception. This serves to make the recipient feel, at every moment of text reception, that there is only one solution – without an alternative and without a choice [Barańczak 1983, 33–35].

Barańczak, in writing about the principle of the emotionalization of reception, noticed that “almost all persuasive texts of culture begin to affect the recipient with a specific paralysis of their intellectual and reflective abilities and increase their ability to feel emotions” [Barańczak, 38]⁸. From the point of view of the sender of a persuasive message, arousing strong emotions in the recipient is extremely important. After all, the advertiser wants the potential customer to make certain decisions (e.g.,

[3] *Tradycyjne uzdrawianie energią. Metody rosyjskiego uzdrowiciela*; [4] *Sekrety szeptuch. Ludowe sposoby uzdrawiania*; [5] *100 rytuałów szeptuch. Wzmacniające praktyki duchowe na spełnienie, ochronę i zdrowie*; [6] *Sekrety odżywiania według szeptuch. Energetyczna kuchnia rosyjskich uzdrowicieli*; [7] *Uniwersalny kalendarz szamański. Syberyjskie rytuały na zdrowie, bezpieczeństwo i sukces*; [8] *Rosyjski leksykon zdrowia. Ludowe metody przywracania równowagi duszy i ciała*.

⁸ See also: Tymiakin 2017; Laszczak 2000; Poels, Dewitte 2019.

to buy) under the influence of emotion, rather than rational thought. There is a whole range of emotions that a skillfully constructed persuasive message can evoke: from fear, irritation, hatred – to acceptance, admiration, trust. In the descriptions promoting Tschenze's publications, the emotionality is constructed by bringing to the forefront and constantly emphasizing those dimensions of life that are important for each and every individual, i.e. health and fulfilment in one's personal and professional life. In each description we can read that people – despite the currently advanced development of medicine – have health problems. At the same time, the advertiser assures us that there is an effective remedy for many common ailments. It is the knowledge of folk medicine coming from Russian *whisperers*:

- [8] *Zioła lecznicze i medycyna ludowa okazują się pomocne w leczeniu wielu powszechnych chorób i dolegliwości. Dlatego coraz częściej po nie sięgamy, zwłaszcza w sytuacji, gdy nowoczesna medycyna nie rozwiązuje wszystkich problemów zdrowotnych.*

Medicinal herbs and folk medicine prove helpful in treating many common diseases and ailments. That's why we use them more and more often, especially when modern medicine does not solve all health problems.

- [2] *Czym jest dla Ciebie zdrowie? Z pewnością czymś, co jest najcenniejsze (...). Jednak nie zawsze jesteś zdrowy, przytrafiają Ci się jakieś dolegliwości. Jest wiele dróg do odzyskania zdrowia i aktywowania procesów samouzdrawiania (...).*

What does health mean to you? Certainly something that is the most valuable (...) However, you are not always healthy, you experience some ailments. There are many ways to regain one's health and activate self-healing processes (...).

- [6] *Gdy czujesz się zmęczony i walczysz ze stresem, Twoje problemy mogą rozwiązać bliny z twarogiem i owocami (...). Coraz więcej ludzi wykorzystuje zdrowe odżywianie i medycynę naturalną jako sprawdzoną terapię w walce z powszechnymi chorobami i dolegliwościami. Okazuje się, że jest to skuteczny, prosty i dostępny wszystkim sposób na samouzdrawianie.*

When you feel tired and struggle with stress, your problems can be solved by [Russian] pancakes (blini) with cottage cheese and fruit (...) More and more people use healthy eating and natural medicine as a proven therapy in the fight against common diseases and ailments. It turns out that this is an effective, simple and accessible way to self-healing.

- [5] *Każdego dnia dopadają nas stres (...). Powoduje to nie tylko wyczerpanie fizyczne, ale też duchowe (...). W takiej sytuacji potrzebna jest ochrona przed negatywną energią.*

Every day we experience stress, (...) It causes not only physical exhaustion, but also spiritual exhaustion (...) In such a situation, we need protection against negative energy.

The examined material also allows us to draw the conclusion that the authors of such marketing descriptions aim to induce fear and a sense of threat in their recipients, e.g. fear resulting from the possibility of losing one's health. It seems that this emotional state induced in the reader is supposed to be a motivational stimulus – for it should stimulate protective actions. The sender uses a dialogue strategy to effectively influence the potential customer and make them buy the books. This consists in a question (usually concerning health) being formulated and immediately answered (Tschenze's manuals turn out to be a universal prescription for the problems presented in the question). In addition, thanks to this strategy, the sender of the advertising message establishes closer contact with the recipient, draws them into a kind of game, evokes emotions that help prompt the decision to purchase the books:

- [5] *Niestety każdego dnia człowiek jest narażony na wiele negatywnych wpływów, które stanowią poważne zagrożenie dla jego zdrowia i rozwoju duchowego. Jak zatem stworzyć skuteczną ochronę przed negatywną energią? Odpowiedź, a nawet... 100 odpowiedzi na to pytanie przynosi niniejsza książka.*

Unfortunately, every day people are exposed to many negative influences that pose a serious threat to their health and spiritual development. So how to create effective protection against negative energy? This book provides the answer, or even... 100 answers to this question.

- [3] *Czy zdajesz sobie sprawę, że grozi Ci zanieczyszczenie energetyczne złymi emocjami lub myślami? Może ono negatywnie wpłynąć na Twoje zdrowie, będąc źródłem wielu poważnych chorób i dolegliwości (...). Na szczęście istnieją skuteczne terapie (...). Najważniejsze z nich przybliży Ci niniejsza książka.*

Do you realize that you are at risk of energy pollution as a result of bad emotions or thoughts? This can negatively affect your health, and is the source of many serious diseases and ailments (...) Fortunately, there are effective therapies (...) This book will introduce you to the most important of these.

- [1] *Czy cieszysz się pełnią życia? (...) Jaki seks lubisz? Jaka jest twoja ulubiona pozycja? Twoje zadowolenie i osiągnięcie celów są w twoich rękach – zależą od twojej karmy i seksualności (...). Z tej książki dowiesz się, jak wykorzystać horoskop partnerski i kod planetarny do urozmaicenia życia seksualnego.*

Are you enjoying life to the full? (...) What kind of sex do you like? What is your favourite position? Your satisfaction and goal achievement are in your hands – they depend on your karma and sexuality (...) From this book you will learn how to use the couple's horoscope and planetary code to improve your sex life.

Another way to emotionalize persuasive messages is to employ hyperbole – an expression in which reality is deliberately exaggerated [Szymanek 2004, 158]⁹. In the analyzed material, hyperbole is sometimes achieved through the use of universal pronouns that function as general quantifiers, e.g., *everything, everyone*. These words only appear to convey a lot, but in fact – if we examine them rationally – they do not say anything specific whatsoever. However, the sender of a persuasive text probably hopes that the mechanism of reception emotionalization will work and that the recipient will simply accept everything. Those who write these descriptions argue that the methods the shaman from Uzbekistan recommends are applicable to all situations and that in his books he expounds on all the benefits that result from the use of natural medicine:

- [2] *Skorzystaj z sekretów szeptuch w każdej dolegliwości.*

Use the secrets of the whisperers for every ailment.

- [3] *(...) Korzystając z terapii zalecanych przez medycynę energetyczną i dobrodziejstw medycyny ludowej, przywrócisz równowagę swojemu życiu we wszystkich jego aspektach.*

(...) By using the therapies recommended by energy-based medicine and the benefits of folk medicine, you will restore balance to your life in all its aspects.

- [8] *Zresztą lista korzyści wynikających ze stosowania medycyny naturalnej jest znacznie dłuższa. Czytając tę książkę, poznasz je wszystkie.*

Anyway, the list of benefits resulting from the use of natural medicine is much longer. By reading this book, you will get to know them all.

Rhetorical definitions are also useful in evoking emotions. They differ from proper definitions in that, as a rule, they are not adequate, and their

⁹ See also: Barbu-Kleitsch 2015.

main function is to highlight or expose certain content. Rhetorical definitions are often built from metaphors, which tend to appeal more easily to the audience's imagination [Szymanek 2004, 99]. In the examined material, rhetorical definitions of illness take center stage. Illness is defined as the result of an energy imbalance. The consequence of defining illnesses in this way is that readers are encouraged to use – as described in Tschenze's publications – self-healing techniques:

- [3] *Ponieważ choroba jest efektem utraty równowagi energetycznej między ciałem, umysłem i duszą (...) Dlatego Autor prezentuje wiele ćwiczeń, których celem jest skuteczne samouzdrawianie.*

Because the disease is the result of a loss of energy balance between the body, mind and soul (...) Therefore, the author presents many exercises aimed at effective self-healing.

- [5] *Gdy narządy czy psychika nie otrzymują odpowiedniej dawki energii, zaczynają chorować. W takiej sytuacji potrzebna jest ochrona przed negatywną energią. Terapia może przyjmować różne formy (...) stosowanie ziół czy magicznego alfabetu to tylko wybrane praktyki, które przybliżył Autor książki.*

When the organs or psyche do not receive the appropriate dose of energy, they begin to get sick. In such a situation, protection against negative energy is needed. Therapy can take various forms (...) the use of herbs or the magical alphabet are just selected practices presented by the author of the book.

The marketing descriptions available on the *Studio Astropsychology* website also include a mechanism for creating the impression that the sender and the recipient have common experiences. Personal pronouns (*you* and *we*) and possessive pronouns (*yours* and *ours*) are effective in building a sense of community. Worthy of note – according to Jerzy Bralczyk – is that we are dealing here with a certain advertising paradox. This consists in the fact that advertising is usually directed at the widest possible group of recipients, while at the same time it reaches out for intimacy; it pretends to be addressed to the individual: to some (reading or listening) *me* [Bralczyk, 69]¹⁰. In the descriptions examined, the advertiser addresses the

¹⁰ Without *you*, as stated by Katarzyna Skowronek, “advertising would not be successful. ‘You’ strikes directly at us, stimulates, distinguishes, recognizes us within the crowd. It suggests the presence of someone who can address us directly – so they are close and friendly in relation to us. This word allows the advertisement to speak to each and every

reader directly, using the pronoun *you* in the text. In this way, the reader's sense of agency is emphasized: it is suggested that a healthy and happy life depends solely on the reader themselves. All they need to do is follow the instructions given by Tschenze:

- [2] *Pamiętaj, że to Ty masz największy wpływ na swoje zdrowie i na cały proces uzdrawiania.*

Remember that you have the greatest influence on your health and the entire healing process.

- [7] *(...) Ty również posiadasz pewnego rodzaju energię (...). Korzystając z wiedzy zarezerwowanej tylko dla szeptuch, dowiesz się w jaki sposób odpowiednio zabezpieczyć się przed negatywnymi energiami (...).*

(...) You also have a certain kind of energy (...) Using the knowledge reserved only for whisperers, you will learn how to properly protect yourself against negative energies (...).

- [6] *Uzdrowiająca żywność szeptuch pozwoli Ci odbudować ciało i umysł (...). Po lekturze tej książki zdrowe jedzenie według szeptuch nie będzie miało już przed Tobą żadnych sekretów, a Ty wykorzystasz bogactwo medycyny ludowej w terapii służącej poprawie swojego zdrowia fizycznego i psychicznego.*

The healing food of the whisperers will allow you to rebuild your body and mind (...) After reading this book, the whisperers' healthy food will no longer hold any secrets from you, and you will use the richness of folk medicine in therapy to improve your physical and mental health.

More often, however, there are sentences in which *you* is expressed indirectly – not with the help of a personal pronoun, but with the corresponding verb ending, such as in the imperative. The presence of imperatives in advertising is quite natural, since the main function of these messages is to urge action. However, in the analyzed descriptions imperatives do not refer to this activity, which is what persuasion is all about. The book's advertisement actually tells us to take advantage of the offer, but its content is dominated by statements resembling advice or requests about taking care of one's health:

one separately and to flatter them. Using this word strengthens the sense of an individual's integrity and, at the same time, the sense of community between Sender and Recipient": Skowronek 2001, 31.

- [3] *Skorzystaj z wiedzy rosyjskich szeptuch.*
Take advantage of the knowledge of Russian whisperers.
- [5] *Uzdrow swoje zycie! (...) zastosuj proste i skuteczne rytualy szeptuch.*
Heal your life! (...) use simple and effective whisperer rituals.
- [7] *Szamanizm syberyjski – odkryj jego tajemnice!*
Siberian shamanism – discover its secrets!
- [4] *Poznaj naturalne terapie w procesach samouzdrawiania.*
Learn about natural therapies in the self-healing processes.
- [8] *Ziola lecznicze – poznaj ich uzdrawiajqcjq moc!*
Medicinal herbs – discover their healing power!

The publisher of the manuals is most eager to employ the trick of creating a commonly-shared world with the text's recipient. In this way they create the impression of having the same experiences as potential clients and sharing similar values. The concurrence between the two at this level creates hope that a bonding between the two parties will occur over the mutually positively held attitude towards the advertised product. An equally common way to identify the advertiser with the recipient is to use the verbal forms of the first person plural and forms dependent on the pronoun *we*¹¹, as well as employing the possessive pronoun *our*¹².

In the studied marketing descriptions, the advertiser often employs what is referred to as the *inclusive we*. With this construction is included the notion that recipients are a part of a community of *ordinary people*, who, living in the same reality, have similar problems. Thus, the sender of the

¹¹ Tomasz Łysakowski writes that second-person plural forms are the most persuasive. According to him, their high persuasive value results from the fact that this form is the most ambiguous and heterogeneous – just like human identity (consisting of various elements): Łysakowski 2005, 35.

¹² Łysakowski notes that in persuasion the possessive pronoun is often more effective than the simple *we*. *Ourness* – as the author claims (referring to psychologists' research) – runs quite deep in the human psyche. People who have been made to understand that something is *ours* willingly sympathize with it and are not likely to negate any community established in this way: Łysakowski 2005, 39–40.

ad speaks for themselves, but at the same time makes judgments about the feelings, states, and beliefs of the recipient, and thus gives the reader the opportunity to identify with the referenced community and its value system. Thanks to the understanding thus created, the sender influences the present and future actions of the ad's addressees and presumably hopes to arouse a positive attitude toward the advertised books and consequently lead to their purchase:

- [2] *Żyjemy w świecie złożonym z energii, których nawet nie możemy zobaczyć.*

We live in a world made up of energies that we cannot even see.

- [5] *W obecnych czasach musimy zmagać się z wieloma obciążeniami. Każdego dnia dopadają nas stres, smutek (...).*

Nowadays, we have to deal with many burdens. Every day we experience stress, sadness (...).

- [1] *Karma to suma naszych doświadczeń z poprzednich wcieleń, związana z energiami, które mogą nam dzisiaj utrudniać życie. Wszystko to wpływa na naszą obecną egzystencję, również na seks.*

Karma is the sum of our experiences from previous incarnations, related to energies that may make life difficult for us today. All this affects our current existence, including sex.

- [4] *Żyjemy w ciągłym stresie i pośpiechu. Cierpimy na różne choroby i odbieramy złe energie, ponieważ nie wiemy jak się przed nimi uchronić. Z pomocą przychodzi tradycyjna rosyjska metoda uzdrawiania (...).*

We live in constant stress and daily rush. We suffer from various diseases and receive bad energies because we do not know how to protect ourselves from them. A traditional Russian healing method comes to the rescue (...).

The use of the mechanism of simplification in values distribution is a consequence of the operation of suggesting the existence of some kind of common mutually accessible world for both the sender and the recipient. It should be emphasized that advertising is an extremely fertile ground for this principle. In its language, the persuasive function dominates, and in such texts – as Barańczak writes – “there is no room for any indirect shades between black and white – although this simplified distribution of values does not have to be explicitly and literally imposed on the recipient” [Barańczak, 35]. Applying this strategy means, in practice, creating

a black-and-white world in which individual elements are assessed. This in turn can be expressed verbally, i.e., through the use of value-adding system means (words, expressions), or non-verbally (by means of image or sound)¹³. In marketing descriptions, as well as in every advertisement, we are dealing with somehow modelling the world. However, the created reality is neither complete nor objective, because it is sometimes remodeled according to the goals of the message. The presented world is usually simplified, reduced to an uncomplicated scheme in which the values are obviously distributed: to the advertised product, the recipient of the advertisement, while the situation and states occurring after using the offer refer only to positive values. This allows the potential customer to easily realize what is good and what is bad and, consequently, to make the only right decision, which is to buy the manuals.

In the analyzed material, the sender of value messages is the advertiser (publisher), who evaluates the elements of the advertised reality from their own point of view. They talk about what is good/bad, right/wrong, advantageous/disadvantageous for a potential client, i.e. the recipient of the advertisement. In the descriptions, we can find evaluations referring directly to the offered product, which is positively valued – as unique, groundbreaking:

- [7] *Bazując na pradownej wiedzy i tradycji syberyjskich szamanów, Vadim Tschenze opracował wyjątkowy uniwersalny kalendarz (...). Autor podpowiada również (...). A to zaledwie kilka z mnóstwa korzyści zawartych w tej przełomowej publikacji.*

Based on the ancient knowledge and tradition of Siberian shamans, Vadim Tschenze has developed a unique universal calendar (...) The author also suggests (...) And these are just a few of the many benefits contained in this groundbreaking publication.

- [3] *Niniejsza książka jest kopalnią wiedzy dla tych wszystkich, którzy chcą zgłębić sekrety medycyny energetycznej i zająć się w praktyce uzdrawianiem energią.*

This book is a wellspring of knowledge for all those who want to explore the secrets of energy medicine and practice energy healing.

¹³ Following the promoter of axiological linguistics in Poland, Jadwiga Puzynina, I assume that the basic linguistic means of expressing values are words and, in turn, following Urszula Wiczorek, that valuation is at the very center of the act of persuasion, because valuation is always present in it, either on the surface or covertly. For more detail see: Puzynina 1992; Wiczorek 1999.

- [4] *Tajemnice uzdrawiania, medycyny ludowej i modlitwy szeptuch Autorowi przekazała jego babcia. W tej książce dzieli się nimi, szczegółowo opisując techniki, które pozwolą Ci z łatwością zlokalizować przyczynę Twoich problemów.*

The secrets of healing, folk medicine and whisperer prayers were passed on to the author by his grandmother. In this book, he shares them, detailing techniques that will allow you to easily locate the cause of your problems.

In the positive review of the manuals an important role is played by the flattering evaluation of Vadim Tschenze himself, who is very often advertised as an outstanding specialist in healing the body and soul. In expressing their opinion, the sender often uses sentences deprived of affectivity and subjective *insertions* (of the type: I am convinced/certain). In the descriptions of Tschenze's handbooks, valuations are definite, resembling so-called general truths¹⁴. The advertiser writes with a high degree of confidence about the professionalism of the shaman from Uzbekistan, about his successful healing activities. They also positively value his knowledge, which is multi-generational Russian heritage, a combination of ancient folk medicine practices and scientific methods:

- [1] *Rosyjski uzdrowiciel i znawca medycyny ludowej, Vadim Tschenze, podpowie (...).*

Russian healer and folk medicine expert, Vadim Tschenze, will advise (...).

- [2] *Autor w tej książce (...) podaje naturalne metody uzdrawiania, wywodzące się z rosyjskiej medycyny naturalnej (...). Autor już od ponad dwudziestu lat prowadzi wykłady, seminaria i prywatne sesje na temat duchowego uzdrawiania, parapsychologii, mediumizmu i tradycyjnych metod uzdrawiania, znanych jedynie szeptuchom.*

In this book (...) the author presents natural healing methods derived from Russian natural medicine (...) The author has been giving lectures, seminars and private sessions on spiritual healing, parapsychology, mediumism and traditional healing methods known only to whisperers for over twenty years.

¹⁴ Puzynina states that such a perception of the value-laden statements is influenced by their syntactic structure, which does not differ from that of empirically verifiable or analytical statements. The senders often use this type of evaluative statements for manipulative purposes: they express their own opinions or those of a narrow group as generally accepted, indisputable, possibly with additional expressions such as *without doubt, undoubtedly, of course*: Puzynina 1992, 133.

- [3] *Autor, korzystając z przekazywanej z pokolenia na pokolenie wiedzy rosyjskich szeptuch i bogactwa medycyny ludowej, dzieli się swoimi doświadczeniami w leczeniu energią.*

The author, using the knowledge of Russian whisperers passed down from generation to generation and the wealth of folk medicine, shares his experiences in energy healing.

Finally I will present the mechanism of non-alternative choice. It serves the advertiser to make the recipient of the message feel free from the need to make a decision, to make any choice whatsoever, and to understand that there is only one option: to buy the manuals. This operation is based on stopping the addressee from intellectually participating in the process of justifying the relevance of the choice of the product they are reaching for. Thus, it is clearly linked to the process of emotionalizing reception. The advertiser achieves the planned effect by presenting a vision of an ideal reality in which everyone – thanks to the books they have – can lead a healthy and happy life. Therefore, promotional descriptions are saturated with reports on the benefits of the everyday implementation of the advice contained in the recommended publications. Predominantly future verb forms and/or the present tense of the verbs *to find, know, learn, discover* are employed, in order to strengthen the belief that the states referred to in the offer will most surely exist:

- [2] *Z tej książki dowiesz się, jak przy użyciu całej gamy przepisów zielarskich, ćwiczeń i energetycznych metod samouzdrawiania, znanych tylko szeptuchom, usunąć blokady w ciele, umyśle i duszy (...). W tej książce znajdziesz metody, które uruchomią Twoje procesy samouzdrawiania.*

From this book you will learn how to remove blockages in the body, mind and soul, using a whole range of herbal recipes, exercises and energy-based self-healing methods known only to whisperers (...) In this book you will find methods that will trigger your self-healing processes.

- [4] *W tej książce znajdziesz wiele przykładów, w których modlitwy, zaklęcia i rytuały mogą ułatwić Twoje życie.*

In this book you will find many examples of prayers, spells and rituals that can make your life easier.

- [8] *Dzięki temu leksykonowi zdrowia odkryjesz zapomniane sekrety (...) terapii naturalnych praktykowanych przez rosyjskie szeptuchy (...). Nauczysz się wy-*

korzystywać zioła lecznicze do radzenia sobie z powszechnymi dolegliwościami (...). Poznasz skuteczne i bezpieczne sposoby, które uwolnią Cię od problemów skórnych (...). Będziesz wiedział, jak – dzięki terapiom naturalnym i rosyjskiemu ziołolecznictwu – pokonać osłabienie (...).

Thanks to this health lexicon, you will discover the forgotten secrets of (...) the natural therapies practiced by Russian whisperers (...) You will learn to use medicinal herbs to deal with common ailments (...) You will learn effective and safe methods that will free you from skin problems (...) You will know, how to overcome weakness thanks to natural therapies and Russian herbal medicine (...).

Calling to action and at the same time convincing the recipient that the books are a universal remedy for all problems (and therefore that they should be reached for) is also illustrated in the terms relating to science or para-science mentioned in the descriptions. Advertising scholars note that currently the addressees of advertising messages are educated people who expect competent information from the message. As a result, the language of advertisements often includes elements of a would-be scientific style: specialized vocabulary, research results, statistical data. *Scientification* of advertising content causes recipients to believe in the competence of the sender and the effectiveness of the advertised product [Giedz-Topolewska 2005, 125; Bralczyk, 34]. In the analyzed marketing descriptions, one can notice vocabulary related to different energies that affect our lives, the relation of various issues (e.g. nutrition) with astrology, folk medicine and science. Thanks to their introduction, the publisher convinces potential readers that Vadim Tschenze is a professional and his activity is not only miraculous:

- [5] *Aura chroni przed zewnętrznymi atakami, a czakry dostarczają życiodajną siłę i energię do poszczególnych narządów (...). Rytuały energetyczne, pieczęcie aury i cierpienia, stosowanie ziół czy magicznego alfabetu to tylko wybrane praktyki, które przybliży Autor książki.*

The aura-energy protects against external attacks, while the chakras provide life-giving force and energy to individual organs (...) Energy rituals, the seals of aura and suffering, the use of herbs and the magical alphabet are just some of the selected practices presented by the author of the book.

- [6] *Ważną rolę w zdrowym jedzeniu według szeptuch odgrywają powiązania artykułów spożywczych z kosmologią (...) dowiesz się, jak moc planet objawia się w produktach roślinnych (...) poznasz związki łączące zioła ze znakami zodiaku (...). Szamani nazywają tę wymianę informacji komunikacją matrycową.*

According to whisperers, an important role in healthy eating is played by the connections between food products and cosmology (...) you will learn how the power of the planets is manifested in plant products (...) you will learn about the connections between herbs and zodiac signs (...) Shamans call this exchange of information matrix communication.

- [4] *Dzięki tej książce poznasz: (...), retriming czyli metodę na pozbycie się nałogów, program Futzuki służący pozbywaniu się bólu, zasady oczyszczania karmicznego i uzdrawiania duchowego.*

Thanks to this book, you will learn: (...), retrimming, a method for getting rid of addictions, the Futzuki program for getting rid of pain, the principles of karmic cleansing and spiritual healing.

From the analysis of the language material above, it is clear that in the promotional descriptions of Vadim Tschenze's manuals employed are all the mechanisms typical for persuasive texts as identified by Barańczak. The advertiser influences potential customers mainly by using the technique of emotional reception. This operation is primarily designed to attract the attention of the consumer and disrupt their ability to interpret the message, and as a result impose on them the view proposed by the message sender. In the analyzed marketing descriptions, the emotional principle is closely linked to a strategy to free the addressee from any mental effort, that is, the mechanism of non-alternative reception. The sender attempts to persuade the potential reader to act in such a way that immediately after receiving the stimulus, they will go into reaction (purchase), thereby omitting the reflection stage. To this end, they present the numerous and comprehensive benefits that the client will receive when using the manuals. Profits usually concern what is important in the life of every person – health and a sense of satisfaction. By evoking in the recipient a deep conviction (based on strong emotions) about the effectiveness of the manuals, the advertiser at the same time awakens in them the desire to obtain the publication, and thus to prevent a rational approach to the advertisement and the product. Such a strategy is based on the creation of a mutual world for the sender and recipient and the application of the mechanism of simplifying the value distribution, resulting from this strategy, also serves to convince people to buy the Russian alternative medicine manuals. The intention of creating an inclusive *we* is realized both by shortening the sender-receiver distance (directly addressing the reader, using elements of colloquial speech) and

creating a situation in which the sender and recipient of the message share similar problems and values. The agreement which is *achieved* on this level allows the advertiser to influence the consumer's voluntary sphere: to persuade them to make a purchasing decision.

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PERSWAZJA W OPISACH PROMOCYJNYCH PORADNIKÓW UZDROWICIELA VADIMA TSCHENZEGO

STRESZCZENIE

Słowa kluczowe: perswazja, medycyna alternatywna, reklama, magia, poradnictwo

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest analiza opisów promocyjnych poradników, przetłumaczonych z języka rosyjskiego na polski, autorstwa Vadima Tschenzego.

W charakterze materiału egzemplifikacyjnego wykorzystano opisy marketingowe dostępne na stronie internetowej polskiego wydawnictwa Studio Astropsychologii. Opisy promocyjne (zawierające często fragmenty książek) potraktowane zostały jako rodzaj reklamy, czyli komunikat, w którym istotną rolę odgrywa perswazja. Przeprowadzona analiza dowiodła, iż aby osiągnąć pożądaną cel, nadawca tekstu (reklamodawca) wykorzystuje wszystkie kluczowe mechanizmy oddziaływania na odbiorcę: mechanizm emocjonalizacji odbioru, mechanizm wspólnoty świata i języka, mechanizm symplifikacji rozkładu wartości, mechanizm odbioru bezalternatywnego.