Promoting Literary Products: Book Blurbs as a Genre

Süleyman DEMİR
Gümüşhane University, Turkey

Keywords

- Genre Analysis
- Advertising
- Blurbs
- Communicative Function
- Persuasive Language

Abstract

The aim of this study is to present an approach to the study of book blurbs which are short texts usually included on book-covers, and also on the Web-pages of publishing houses to supply information about a book to potential readers. This study focuses on four of the biggest publishing and bookselling companies in Turkey. The corpus of the study consists of 20 blurbs of novels from modern Turkish literature chosen by a random sampling. The findings of the study show that blurbs may be considered as a genre which have a definite communicative purpose and they include the use of specific linguistic and rhetoric conventions. In parallel to this, there is a cognitive move structure in blurbs designed by the editors for a specific aim. Blurbs, in this regard, perform an informative function based on the description of the contents of a book. But this function is secondary to their persuasive purpose which is also a characteristic of advertising discourse. It can be suggested that blurbs are attempted to sell the book to the readers, the customers of a publishing company. To reach this communicative purpose, blurbs employ a wide variety of linguistic and rhetoric features similar to advertising genres: complimenting, elliptical syntactic patterns, the imperative, as well as puns, hyperboles, rhetorical questions and excerpts from the book to attract the attention of readers.

1. Introduction

In today's modern world publishing houses need to spend more energy, time and money on designing book covers to attract the attention of their prospective customers. It can easily be suggested that the number of publishing houses are getting bigger year by year. Thanks to the developments in technology, publication processes are also becoming easier and as a consequence of this, the market of books is also evolving into a global trade field. This situation inevitably creates a kind of competition among publishers. Publishers have to find ways and means to be more interesting, engaging, and persuasive to their readers. Book covers are where these methods and strategies are seen most prominently. Because when a reader intends to buy a book, s/he will first look at the cover of the book. It can easily be said that the elements such as the font, colors, images and title used on the cover are designed to attract the attention of the reader. However, all this may not be enough to sell the book. As a matter of fact, the other part that can be looked at to learn more about the book is the back cover of the book which includes brief texts about the content of the book to arouse attention.

On the other hand, considering that today's society is an internet society, it can be said that publishing houses also operate in the internet environment. In this way, publishers, like any other companies, can market their products and reach their target audience more easily. In this regard, it is possible to find the texts on the back cover of the books as well as the book covers themselves on the internet pages of the publishers. Whether on the internet or on the back cover of the actual copy of the book, these brief informative texts are called blurbs.

The word "blurb", according to the Cambridge Dictionary, means "a short description to advertise a product, especially a book". When it comes to promote or advertise a product, it is inevitable to find various strategies to affect the psychological perception of the target group of people. Hence, one can suggest that Blurbs function as a kind of strategy to sell the products, books in this context.

In this vein, the main aim of this study is to present an approach for the analysis of blurbs in an attempt to show that the language in such texts have some similar characteristics with that of the advertising discourse. In other words, the communicative purpose of blurbs and advertising materials are the same: to persuade people to buy their products. In parallel to this, such products can be considered as a particular genre with a specific communicative purpose and they can be the central point of specific linguistic analysis. To this end, the present study aims at answering these research questions;

1. What is the communicative purpose in book blurbs?
2. What is the move structure in book blurbs?
3. What are the common points of the discursive features in advertising texts and blurbs?

2. Literature Review

When the related literature is taken into account in terms of genre analysis, it can be stated that book blurbs have attracted little attention. One of the most prominent of the related studies belongs to Bhatia (1997). He tries to explore how generic conventions are manipulated for promotional purposes in academic introductions. In the related study, Bhatia focuses on introduction, foreword and preface sections and states that "genres

traditionally considered non-promotional in intent, including book introductions, are becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish from publishers' blurbs (Bhatia, 1997: 190)." In this excerpt, Bhatia refers to the promotional nature of blurbs but his central focus is to find out the conventional aspects of academic introductions.

Similarly, Bhatia (2014), states that there are several closely related genres with an overlapping communicative purpose of promoting a product or service to a potential customer and book blurbs are one of these genres together with advertisements or promotional letters. However, these genres are different in terms of the specificity of the product they promote. For instance books may differ according to the selection and size of the market or audience they target, and also the nature of the strategies. Therefore, lexico-grammatical features also differ depending on the subject discipline of the book.

Today, advertising is an indispensable part of human life. It is possible to see advertisements in every field as it is a very big industry. In this respect many studies have been conveyed to find out the nature of advertisements from different aspects. In terms of linguistics, it is necessary to decode the message which is coded in linguistic dimension thanks to the use of linguistic elements in addition to the images, sounds or colors. Fairclough, as a leading figure in discourse studies, defines the discourse of advertising as purely strategic and states that it is "oriented to instrumental goals, to getting results (Fairclough, 1994: 198)". Bhatia (2013) states that, "the main communicative purpose of advertising is to promote a particular product or service to a specific group of potential customers". In one of the major types of advertisement, this is done by an adequately attractive description of the product or service, which is positive and convincing." He also asserts that advertising relies on persuading readers that they have a problem or need, and the product or service being offered is not just a solution but is also the best solution (ibid).

Gea-Valor, (2005), in the same vein, state that the discourse of advertising is characterized by two main communicative elements: information and persuasion latter of which is the ultimate goal while the former has a secondary role. They also suggest that advertising texts persuade people by being informative. Therefore, it can be inferred that these two interrelated concepts are the preliminary aspects of advertising discourse.

Cook (2001) on the other hand, describes advertising as a prominent genre by analyzing their main features or components. He states that advertisements can be categorized according to their medium, service or product, technique or customer. In other words, all these components should be taken into account for the frame of advertisements. In this context, it is important where the advertisement is located, how it is created, and which target community it is intended for.

Ryan (2019) states that, "a blurb is the hub around which all buying decisions revolve." Terra (2013) suggests that a book blurb serves a single purpose "to compel a would-be reader to add (your) book to their shopping cart." Bhatia (2017) states that blurbs offer a variety of choices to authors depending on their nature, the audience and the communicative nature of the genre which is essentially selling the book.

Depending on these discussions one can claim that books are among the service or products in our world and they are produced by companies which aim to sell them and earn money. In this respect, people in a community are the target audience for these companies and they should be informed about the product and be convinced in the need of the so-called product. When they feel that they need that service or product, they will feel obligatory to

buy the product. In this regard companies should reach the target audience and control their minds in a sense through some channels. Advertisements are the first channel to convey such messages.

Vestergaard and Schröder (1985) classify advertisements into two broad types: commercial and non-commercial. For commercial advertising they offer three sub categories as prestige, industrial and consumer advertising. According to them, the last one is the most pervasive one on the society which requires promoting the service or product to the potential customers. Additionally, they underline the fact that people may have different kinds of needs to buy a product. This need might be related to the need of a material like food, drink or cloth as well as a social need like being a member of a certain community, friendship, or being recognized by others. In order to claim any social use value for a product, the advertiser should enter the circle of persuasion rather than giving information (Vestergaard & Schröder, 1985: 9). In this way, the original use value of a product is disregarded, and emphasis is placed on the achievement of social aims.

Considering all these discussions on advertisements, one can conclude that books are also among the products that are produced to earn money. In other words, books also have a share in the market and such products also have some certain people as prospective consumers. However, while categorizing books as a kind of product, it will be reasonable to classify them as a luxury rather than satisfying a material need like a pair of shoes, cars or furniture. It is certain that the use value of a book is directly related with the intellectual and emotional requirements of people. This use value is highlighted in book blurbs by the publishers to attract the attention of possible readers and convince them about the benefits of the book. To this end, blurbs include some strategies to advertise the book like highlighting the thoughts of famous critics or authorities as well as giving some striking quotations from the book itself. Therefore, this study examines book blurbs as a kind of a promotional genre and aims to find out the move structures and discursive features employed in such texts.

3. Research Methodology

It can be said that the advertising industry has also been re-shaped in the last few decades. Thanks to the developments in internet technologies, it has become easier to access products and services as well as information. Similarly, companies use websites and pop-up advertisements to promote their products as well as selling these services through their websites. This new advertising channel provides some advantages like universal reach, interactivity, non-linearity, bidirectional or two-way communication, and obviously the opportunity for the customer to order and buy online (Gea-Valor, 2005).

This current paper explores book blurbs designed by four well-known publishing and bookselling houses in Turkey. These companies are Can Publishing House (https://canyayinlari.com/), İletişim Publishing House (https://iletisim.com.tr/), Sel Publishing House (https://www.selyayincilik.com/) and Doğan Kitap Publishing House (https://www.dogankitap.com.tr). These publishing companies are among the most outstanding companies in Turkey market where one can find best-sellers, famous writers and award winning books from different disciplines. In this regard, these publishing companies are considered as prestigious in Turkish market. Therefore, any author whose

book is published by such publishing companies is thought to be a competent, talented, famous or a promising one.

For the sake of the study a corpus was compiled from 20 different blurbs taken from the websites of the companies. In other words, five book blurbs were selected randomly from each publishing house and in total 20 blurbs were included into the study corpus. These books were taken among the novels written in Turkish language. In order to get a homogenous corpus, only novels belonging to modern Turkish literature were included into the study and works translated from another language into Turkish were not used. Table 1 shows the nature of the study corpus of the present paper.

Table 1: *Corpus of the study*

	İletişim Yayınları		*Sel Yayıncılık*		*Can yayınları*		*Doğan Kitap*	
	Writer	*Book*	*Writer*	*Book*	*Writer*	*Book*	*Writer*	*Book*
1	Hatice Meryem	İnsan Kısım Kısım Yer	Esra Pekin	Bir Katilin Tükenmez Kalemi	Feride Çiçekoğlu	Uçurtmayı Vurmasınlar	Gülşah Elikbank	Aşıklar Gece Ölür-
2	Burçin Tetik	Annemin Kaburgası	Berrin Karakaş	Çukur	Adnan Binyazar	Ölümün Gölgesi Yok	Nilgün Öneş	Ağlamak Yok-
3	İlhami Algör	Fakat Müzeyyen Bu derin	Deniz Gezgin	Yer Kuşağı	Selim Bektaş	Ve Diğer Kutsal Şeyler	Zafer Köse	Neydi O Gelecek Bayramlar
4	Barış Bıçakçı	Bir Süre Yere Paralel	Birgül Özcan	Ev Anası	Hamdi Koç	Çiçeklerin Tanrısı	Günhan Kuşkanat	Aşk Bir Kar Tanesi
5	Şule Gürbüz	Kambur	Esra Pekin	Babaannemin Usturası	Ferzan Özpetek	Bir Nefes Gibi	Tarık Tufan	Kaybolan

As seen in the Table 1 20 book blurbs were included into the study five of which belong to a publishing house respectively. The corpus of the study consisted of nearly 3000 words and the items were analyzed manually through close and purposeful readings by the researcher. In other words, the texts were read several times and lexico-grammatical features were selected for discussion.

As for a corpus based linguistic study which requires dealing with computerized sets of data, the data organization is equally important. MacMullen (2003:4) states, "there is a need for consciously created and organized collections of data and information that can be

used to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of knowledge discovery tools." He highlights the significance of this data creation process by stating that "all corpora need to be "designed" to a certain extent in order to be useful and valid (2003:12)" indicating the testability and relevance of the data. In parallel to this, Atkins et al (1991:13) note that "a corpus is a body of text assembled according to explicit design criteria for a specific purpose, and therefore the rich variety of corpora reflects the diversity of their designers' objectives."

Biber et al (1998:246) for instance, emphasize the fact that "representativeness of a corpus determines the kinds of research questions that can be addressed and the generalizability of the results of the research" underlining the size and the content of a corpus. However, very large corpora may not be more representative. MacMullen (2003: 14) states that "a corpus must be large enough to yield statistically significant results" while Biber et al (1998: 249) say that "size cannot make up for lack of diversity." Biber (1994) suggests that "there is no possible way to evaluate the adequacy or representativeness of a corpus" as "there is no well-defined conception of what the sample is intended to represent." Thus, according to him, "representativeness depends on a prior full definition of the population that the sample is intended to represent."

As it can be inferred, the size of a corpus is another significant parameter. Hunston (2006) states the compilation of a corpus "is a key step in the study of languages." As aforementioned representativeness, size, sample and diversity are basic elements in a strict corpus design. Caruso et al. (2014) offer a statistical formula to calculate the necessary number of tokens that should be available in a corpus. In the same vein it can be claimed that the bigger the size of a corpus is the more representative data it can present.

4. Data Analysis

Depending on such discussions, the corpus of the study was compiled by using different writers as well as different publishing houses to be representative enough. For similar intentions, the blurbs were chosen from the same genre, novels from modern Turkish literature. To decode the poetic function of the texts, sentences and word preferences were analyzed in detail. According to Jacobson (1958: 2) the poetic function of a text is what encodes the meaning or, in other words, the intended message of a particular text. Exemplifying this point of view, Halliday's (1971) study can be considered as a good example in terms of analyzing lexico-grammatical features and their discursive influence on creating the meaning. He analyzed the use of transitive and intransitive verbs in William Golding's work, The Inheritors, where he showed how the ability of using transitive or intransitive verbs in a Neanderthal tribe affected their evolution.

In sum, linguistic features encode the meaning or the message in a text and for a linguistic analysis these items should be decoded. Therefore, this study intends to find out the move structure of book blurbs to show their communicative purpose in terms of a promotional genre and underline the discursive features hidden in texts for a specific purpose.

5. Results and Discussion

According to Bhatia (1993) the most significant qualification which defines the nature of a genre is the communicative purpose encoded in the discourse of the text. Swales (1990: 10), for instance underlines the importance of this issue and suggests that "It is communicative purpose that derives the language activities of the discourse community… operates as the primary determinant of task." As it can be inferred, communicative purpose is a key element in the analysis of genres and it is highlighted in the rhetorical aspects of the genre structure. Furthermore, the use of specific linguistic features can also underline the communicative purpose of a genre.

In this present study on book blurbs, both the rhetorical structure of the blurbs in the corpus and linguistic features available show that these two notions are relevant. In other words, the most prominent communicative purpose in book blurbs is to promote books and persuade its possible buyers by providing both compliments and positive evaluations to give information. Additionally, some certain strategies are used to fulfil this purpose in the related texts. Hence, one can claim that book blurbs can be considered as specific genres which have their own communicative purposes, rhetorical organizations and linguistic features. The analysis of blurbs in this study had a two-phased approach. In the first phase, the cognitive move structure of blurbs was decoded and in the second part, the rhetorical conventions were discussed in relation to the communicative purpose of the related texts.

5.1. Cognitive Move Structure in Blurbs

Cognitive move structure aims at deciding on the global move strategies that show the regularities between genres. Therefore, the identification of organization in a text is significant to find out the rationale behind the text.

Bhatia (1993) suggests that writers of a specific genre seem to be fairly consistent in the way they organize the text to send their message and assumptions in a coherent way. In other words, there is a strict cognitive structure in such texts to be clear and communicative enough. In terms of cognitive move structure of blurbs in the current study three major moves with specific purposes can be seen:

> Move 1: Representation of the content

> Move 2: Appreciation of the product.

> Move 3: By-line

5.1.1. Move 1: Representation of the Content

In this study, representation of the content move is seen as the obligatory element in the corpus of the study. This move is linked with the so-called summary of the story which gives some clues about the content, characters or the plot of the book. Here in this move, the samples of the study include an intentionally chosen part from the text which is considered to be the most representative part of the text in terms of the authorial style as well as the context of the book. Accordingly, it can be suggested that this part mainly describes the book and consists of literary representations of the book as in the following examples;

Kozluk, işsizin güçsüzün, çulsuzun uğursuzun, arsızın hırsızın, fakirin fukaranın, itin kopuğun, sefilin baldırı çıplağın yurt tuttuğu bir yer.(İnsan Kısım Kısım Yer Damar Damar- Hatice Meryem)

"Kozluk is a place where the idle, the drunkard, the bad-tempered, the thief, the poor, the wretched settled in."

Hikâyeye göre adam, kadını çok seviyor, sevdikçe ruhu büyüyor, eve sığmıyor... Bülbülün çilesi, yazarın zulası... İnceden sarma bir sigara, inceden bir bardak... Jak Danyel isimli bir şişe, Hicran isimli bir yara, tuhaf isimli bir roman. Kafamız iyi, açmayın kapağı, biz böyle iyiyiz. (Fakat Müzeyyen Bu derin bir tutku- İlhami Algör)

"According to the story, the man loves the woman very much, his soul grows as he loves it, it does not fit into the house ... The nightingale's ordeal, the writer's cache ... A thin cigarette, a thin glass ... A bottle named Jak Danyel, a wound named Hicran, a strangely named novel. We are high, don't open the lid, we're fine like that."

Burnun büyüdü mü İnci? Hani Pinokyo'nunki gibi... Sen anlatmıştın, Pinokyo diye bir kukla varmış. Yalan söyleyince burnu uzuyormuş. Yalan söylersen senin de burnun büyür demiştin bana. Sen de yalan söyledin. (Uçurtmayı Vurmasınlar- Feride Çiçekoğlu)

"Did your nose get bigger, İnci? Like Pinocchio's ... You told me, there was a puppet called Pinocchio. His nose got longer when he lied. You said to me that if you lie, your nose will grow too. You also lied."

Son bölümü eksik bir kutsal kitap, tren yolculuğu ve karmakarışık ilişkiler. Veysel Zebub, Şey'i tamamlamak için çıktığı yol boyunca kutsal şeyler görüyor, yaşıyor ve yazıyor. (Ve Diğer Kutsal Şeyler- Selim Bektaş)

"The last chapter is an incomplete scripture, train journey, and chaotic relationships. Veysel Zebub sees, lives and writes sacred things along the way he sets out to complete the Thing."

5.1.2. Move 2: Appreciation of the Product

Together with the representation of the content move where the ideas about the content of the book are implied, in this move called appreciation of the product, the main aim is to evaluate the book with a positive emphasis. This positive implication or compliment is sometimes linked with another person who is known as an authority in the field. In other words the publishing house benefits from the remarks of a well-known person to persuade the potential reader. The purpose of these short reviews is to evaluate the book as well as recommending it by highlighting its qualities and the authorial talent of its writer. However, it should be noted that in the excerpts used in this current study the positive comments about the books mostly belong to the publishing house itself. Still, there are some examples where the comments of another literary expert are also included. Therefore, evaluative language is a very dominant aspect of this move. Some examples of this move are as follows;

Çiçeklerin Tanrısı, "Yaşayan en güzel kadından da güzel bir kadın" ile belki de en yalnız şairin aşkını anlatıyor." (Çiçeklerin Tanrısı- Hamdi Koç)

"Çiçeklerin Tanrısı tells the love of perhaps the loneliest poet with "a woman who is even more beautiful than the most beautiful woman alive".

Kaybolmanın döngüsüne sıkışmış bir adam ve iki kadın. Kendilerini bulabilmek için çıkışı ararlarken ödeyecekleri bedel gitgide büyüyor.(Kaybolan- Tarık Tufan)

"A man and two women stuck in the cycle of disappearing. The price they will pay as they seek the exit to find themselves is getting bigger and bigger."

Babaannemin Usturası tüm bu soruların cevabını arayan iki kişinin hikâyesini anlatıyor; Esra Pekin'in kendine has diliyle, sinema ve müzikle yoğrulmuş anlatısı sürpriz sonuyla okuru derinden etkileyecek… (Babaannemin Usturası- Esra Pekin)

"Babaannemin Usturası tells the story of two people seeking answers to all these questions; Esra Pekin's narrative, blended with cinema and music, will deeply impress the reader with her unique language."

"Zafer Köse, Neydi O Gelecek Bayramlar'da yitirdiklerimizi ve hâlâ önümüzde uzanan umutları neşesini kaybetmeyen bir hüzünle anlatmış. Zeynep'in yılları gibi akıp giden, sorgulayıcı, keyifli,okunması gereken bir roman." Zülfü Livaneli (Neydi O Gelecek Bayramlar- Zafer Köse)

"Zafer Köse, in "Neydi o Gelecek Bayramlar" has told what we lost and hope that lays in front of us with a sorrow without losing its joy. A novel flowing just like Zeynep's years, which is questioning and enjoyable, it should be read." Zülfü Livaneli"

5.1.3. Move 3: By-line

By-line part is another significant move in the excerpts of the corpus of this study. The name by-line suggests that this part inevitably includes the name of the writer and some compliments referring to the professional background of the writer as well as her/his other publications, awards, style and some significant details about her/his life. The reason why this study calls this move as by-line is that the term is mainly used in media texts suggesting the idea that the writer puts her/his name at the very bottom of her/his article, essay etc. It should be noted that, including the author's name is not the only characteristic of this move, but it also shows some positive remarks too. Therefore, appreciation of the product move and by-line move are sometimes interconnected and interrelated. In other words, the appreciation of the author is sometimes given in the appreciation of the product move and it is sometimes given in a different move which is called as By-line in this study. Some potential examples are listed below;

Belleklerimize kazınmış pek çok ünlü dizinin senaryo yazarı, grafik tasarımcı Nilgün Öneş, Ağlamak Yok!'ta içe dokunan bir hikâye anlatıyor bize. Son sayfasını kapattığımız anda özlemeye başladığımız bir kahraman yaratıyor. Sahici duyguları olan, bizde de sahici duygular uyandıran bir roman... (Ağlamak Yok- Nilgün Öneş)

"Nilgün Öneş, the screenwriter and graphic designer of many famous TV series engraved in our memories, tells us a touching story in Ağlamak Yok! She creates a hero that we start to miss as soon as we close its last page. A novel with genuine emotions and arousing genuine feelings in us ..."

Gülşah Elikbank'tan henüz çocukken kalpten alınan yaralara, o yaraların yol açtığı yanlış kararlara ve şefkatin değmediği hayatlara uzanan etkileyici bir roman. "Vaktinde tutulmayan her matem yüreğinize geri döner" diyen Elikbank, aşkın iyileştirici gücüne ışık tutan, sarsıcı bir sevda hikâyesiyle çıkıyor okurun karşısına. (Aşıklar Gece Ölür- Gülşah Elikbank)

"It is an impressive novel that stretches from Gülşah Elikbank to the wounds taken from the heart when she was a child, to the wrong decisions caused by those wounds, and to lives where compassion is not worth it. Elikbank, who says "Any mourning that is not kept in time, returns to your heart", appears before the reader with a shocking love story that sheds light on the healing power of love."

Adnan Binyazar'a 2005 Orhan Kemal Roman Armağanı'nı ve 2011 Ebubekir Hazım Tepeyran Ödülü'nü getiren Ölümün Gölgesi Yok, sevgiyi, aşkı, tutkuyu ve bunların ardından gelen yoğun acıyı ölümsüz kılan bir kitap. (Ölümün Gölgesi Yok- Adnan Binyazar)

"Bringing Adnan Binyazar the 2005 Orhan Kemal Novel Gift and the 2011 Ebubekir Hazım Tepeyran Prize, Ölümün Gölgesi Yok is a book that makes sympathy, love, passion and the intense pain that comes after them immortal."

Table 2 below shows the statistical findings regarding the move structure of blurbs used in this study.

Table 2: *Cognitive moves in book blurbs*

Move Name	Number	Frequency	Percentage
Representation of the content	20	20	%100
Appreciation of the product	20	16	%80
By-line	20	17	%85

In short, the blurbs in the corpus of this study shows that there are 3 cognitive moves employed by the publishing houses and these moves are called as representation of the content, appreciation of the product and by-line respectively. The first move concerns the description of book by referring its content-related features like characters, setting or plot while the second cognitive move includes compliments about its positive aspects to imply the fact that it is worth buying. The last move mainly mentions the name of the writer together with her/his previous achievements and praises her/his authorial style. It should be kept in mind that these moves are not available in a strict order in blurbs. Their order might change or they might be provided interrelatedly. For instance, in some blurbs by-line move is used first while in others representation section comes first. On the other hand, although in some blurbs there are two moves on the surface structure of the text, these blurbs employ by-line and appreciation moves interrelatedly. However, in each blurb it is possible to see these moves as a basic feature of the genre.

As seen in Table 2 above, the representation move seems as the obligatory element of a blurb (f: 20; %100). This is plausible because the main aim is to sell the text itself and it is reasonable to present a very concrete sample of it to affect the customer. This move employs the very core example of the whole text with respect to the literary style of the author and her/ his narrative abilities. In this sense, the name of some characters,

description of the time and setting of the story and some rhetorical questions are employed in this part. It should also be mentioned that, this part is organized with cooperation between the editors and the authors themselves. To get an idea about the organization of blurbs, the researcher asked the publishing houses about the process of the preparation of blurbs and the related departments of the companies replied that such texts are generally organized by the editors but such quotations are determined by the authors.

Appreciation of the product move, on the other hand, is another move where positive remarks of either the publication house editors or other authorities are employed to arouse curiosity. Apart from describing the text itself, which is mainly done in the representation of the content move, the central focus of this move is to convince the reader about the quality of the book through exaggerated compliments or commentaries. Such positive remarks are also included into the by-line move which sometimes reduces the number of moves. Still, many of the blurbs employed here included this move (f: 16; %80)

As for the by-line move, it is the second most frequent move (f: 17; %85) in blurbs where the name of the writer is mentioned sometimes referring to her/his previous works or successes. Although this move is observed mostly in the third place, in some blurbs it is employed as the first move. The main aim here is to introduce the writer who is the creator of the product and praise her/him. In this sense, the appreciation of the product move and by-line move show similar characteristics. Both include compliments and positive remarks, comparative and superlative adjectives, relative clause constructions and hyperboles together with puns to indicate this positivity.

Table 3: *Cognitive moves in a book blurb*

Move 1 **Representation of the content**	Burası size layık değil. Burası Allah'ın sadece unuttuğu değil aynı zamanda ilelebet defterden sildiği bir yer. Kimsenin gelip sizi rahatsız etmeyeceği bir yer istiyorsanız ben size bulurum, hatta buldum bile, dün gece bunu düşündüm. Her şey hazır. Ben de hazırım. Size ben bakarım. Ben bakacağım. Ne Lale'nin, ne babasının, ne kocasının, hiç kimsenin sizi, bizi, rahatsız etmemesini sağlayacağım. Ben de rahatsız etmeyeceğim sizi, soru sormayacağım, sizi seveceğim ama aşık olmuş numarası yapmayacağım. Madem öleceksiniz, adam gibi öleceksiniz. Bunu sağlayacağım.	This place is not worthy of you. This is a place that God not only forgot but also erased from the notebook forever. If you want a place where no one will come and bother you, I will find it for you, I even found it, I thought about it last night. Everything is ready. I am ready too. I'll take care of you. I will look. I will make sure that neither Lale, nor her father, nor her husband, nobody bother you, us. I will not bother you either, I will not ask questions, I will love you but I will not pretend to be in love. If you will die, you will die like a man. I will provide this.

Move 2 **Appreciation of the product**	Çiçeklerin Tanrısı, "Yaşayan en güzel kadından da güzel bir kadın" ile belki de en yalnız şairin aşkını anlatıyor. "Yaşayan en güzel kadın" ölümcül bir hastalığa yakalanmıştır. Günlük hayatın yüzeyselliğinden kaçan, sadece serasında, çiçeklerinin arasında nefes alabilen şair ise, her şeye karşın yalnızlığından sıyrılıp tutkusunu sahiplenmeye, sevdiği kadını yaşatmak için elinden geleni yapmaya karar verir.	Çiçeklerin Tanrısı tells the love of perhaps the loneliest poet with "a woman who is even more beautiful than the most beautiful woman alive". "The most beautiful woman alive" has a fatal disease. The poet, who escapes from the superficiality of daily life and can breathe only in his greenhouse, among his flowers, nevertheless decides to get rid of his loneliness and embrace his passion and do his best to keep the woman he loves alive.
Move 2 **Appreciation of the product** Move 3 **By-line**	Hamdi Koç aşk, cinsellik ve ölümün iç içe geçtiği, kadın ve erkek arasındaki en temel bağların sorgulandığı sıra dışı bir hikaye anlatıyor.	Hamdi Koç tells an extraordinary story in which love, sexuality and death are intertwined and the most basic ties between men and women are questioned.

Table 3 shows these three moves in a particular book blurb which includes representation of the content, appreciation of the product and by-line moves in order. As stated before, these moves may not be employed in the same order in each blurb. However, the significant point here is not to find a strict order in terms of cognitive moves but their availability in regard to promotional communicative purpose and persuasive language strategies.

5.2. Lexico-grammatical Features and Rhetorical Elements in Blurbs

As mentioned before, the communicative purpose of book blurbs is to promote books to attract the attention of possible readers. In this sense, they include so many linguistic elements in terms of persuasive language to, as the saying goes; get the customer to buy the book by emphasizing and praising its qualities as well as its writer. These elements can be exemplified as follows;

5.2.1. Compliments

Compliments are probably the most dominant feature of book blurbs suitable to their communicative purpose. As the aim is to sell the product, the seller should praise its product. This idea can easily be seen in each blurb and such compliments are constructed

by using positive adjectives which evaluate the book's content and superlative forms as well as relative clause constructions to imply its quality. Some examples are as follows;

O meşhur şarkıdaki gibi, gökkuşağının üzerinde bir yerde, ta yukarıda…

"Like in that famous song, somewhere above the rainbow, far above ..."

alelacayip aşkların ve oyunbazlığın, hüzünlü dolambaçların yazarı.

"the author of mischievous loves and playfulness, sad meanders."

"Barış Bıçakçı'nın dingin, gösterişsiz, suskusundan güç alan öykülerinin son zamanlarda okuduğum en güzel öyküler arasında olduğunu söyleyebilirim.

"I can say that Barış Bıçakçı's quiet, unpretentious stories, which are strenghtened by its silence are among the most beautiful stories I have read recently.

Olgun bir yazarın elinden çıkmış, acemiliği, sakarlığı olmayan, olgun bir metindi.

"It was a mature text by a mature writer, with no clumsiness or inexperience."

Yalnızca okurun sürekli ilgisi nedeniyle değil, yalınlığı, içtenliği ve evrenselliğiyle de...

"Not only because of the reader's constant interest, but also because of its simplicity, sincerity and universality."

Çiçeklerin Tanrısı, "Yaşayan en güzel kadından da güzel bir kadın" ile belki de en yalnız şairin aşkını anlatıyor.

"Çiçeklerin Tanrısı tells the love of perhaps the loneliest poet with "a woman who is even more beautiful than the most beautiful woman alive".

There are excerpts which simply underline the previous works or awards won by the book as a guarantee of its quality. Such excerpts also include positive adjectives and relative clause constructions to give information as in the following examples:

Lilith ve Babaannemin Usturası isimli kitaplarıyla okurların beğenisini kazanan, özgün üslubuyla beklenti yaratan Esra Pekin'in yeni romanı

"Esra Pekin's new novel, who won the readers' appreciation with her books Lilith and Babaannemin Usturası and created anticipation with her original style."

İlk romanı Ahraz'la dikkatleri üzerine toplayan Deniz Gezgin'den

"From Deniz Gezgin, who drew attention with her first novel Ahraz"

İlk basımı 1986 yılında yapılan Uçurtmayı Vurmasınlar, çağdaş Türk edebiyatına damgasını vurmuş romanlardan biri.

First published in 1986, Uçurtmayı Vurmasınlar is one of the novels that left its mark on contemporary Turkish literature.

Adnan Binyazar'a 2005 Orhan Kemal Roman Armağanı'nı ve 2011 Ebubekir Hazım Tepeyran Ödülü'nü getiren Ölümün Gölgesi Yok

"Ölümün Gölgesi Yok that brought Adnan Binyazar the 2005 Orhan Kemal Novel Prize and the 2011 Ebubekir Hazım Tepeyran Award"

5.2.2. Ellipsis

Blurbs, especially in representation of the content move and appreciation of the product move, tend to use elliptical syntactic patterns, especially in nonverbal sentences. The aim here is to impact the reader and attract his/her attention. By doing this, blurbs turn out to be readable, interesting and striking as they are simple and short it becomes easier to catch the reader's attention. In literature, non-verbal sentences or elliptical sentences are frequently used to raise the effectiveness of the text. Such sentences are more remarkable than longer ones and they create a kind of slogan-like structures to be catchy.

Carter et al. (1997: 211) state that ellipsis can be used deliberately to create an illusion of closeness [...]. Elliptical sentences function as a binding factor because they are used as a link between the writer and reader and they strengthen the relationship between them. The case is also similar in advertising, where the effectiveness of the message is based on the decoding by the receiver. In other words, in terms of poetic function of a text elliptical sentences are useful to encode the intentional meaning. As the corpus of this study is consisted of novels, a literary genre, it is not surprising to find such elements in blurbs. Some examples of elliptical sentences are as follows;

Bülbülün çilesi, yazarın zulası... İnceden sarma bir sigara, inceden bir bardak...

"The nightingale's ordeal; the author's stash ... A thinly wrapped cigarette, a thin glass ..."

Bir intiharın çevresinde, insanlar...

O kızın intiharıyla birbirlerine yaklaşan...

Kendi içlerine ve geçmişe dalan...

Onu kaybetmenin acısıyla başka sevdiklerine eğilen...

"Around a suicide, people ...

Approaching each other with the suicide of that girl...

Plunge into themselves and into the past...

Tending to other loved ones with the pain of losing him ..."

Lucien'i ve onun delicesine âşık olduğu mavi gözlü kızı…

Lucien and her blue-eyed daughter that she is madly in love with ...

Sahici duyguları olan, bizde de sahici duygular uyandıran bir roman...

A novel with genuine emotions and arousing genuine feelings in us ...

5.2.3. Imperatives and Necessity

Another characteristic feature employed in blurbs is the use of imperative sentences or necessity models which highlights the product as a requirement. This idea can also be found in advertisements. Gea-Valor (2005) suggest that by using the imperative constructions, the persuasive function of the blurb is made clear since it is used to address the potential customer in a direct way. In this sense, the imperative form plays the function of an invitation or recommendation. It cannot be considered as a command or an

imposition. However, when it comes to the corpus of this current study, the examples of this element are rare.

Zeynep'in yılları gibi akıp giden, sorgulayıcı, keyifli, okunması gereken bir roman.

"It is a novel that flows like Zeynep's years, is questioning, enjoyable and should be read."

Ne anlattığı sanki önemli değilmiş, ama anlatım biçimi ve diliyle de sıradanmış gibi görünüyorsa size, okuma alışkanlıklarınızı adam akıllı gözden geçirmeniz gerekir.

"If what she's telling doesn't seem to matter, but her way of expression and language seems ordinary to you, you need to review your reading habits in a smart way."

5.2.4. Quoted Elements

Another significant strategy used in book blurbs is to present some significant quotations from the related text in terms of rhetorical conventions. The main aim here is to attract the readers' attention and give some clues about the authorial style of the author as well as the content of the book. These quoted parts are chosen among the parts which are considered as literary and intriguing. Any potential buyer who has a look at these specific passages gets some insights about the authorial capacity of the writer and the attractiveness of the story. In these quotations there are mainly some poetic, slogan-like sentences or aphorisms to be catchy. Some relevant examples are listed below;

… hayat bir nefes gibi akıp gidiyor. Ve geride yalnızca, isteyip de yapamadıklarımızın özlemiyle, bizi biz yapan tüm yaşanmışlıkların farkındalığı kalıyor. (Bir Nefes Gibi- Ferzan Özpetek)

"… Life flows like a breath. And only the awareness of all the experiences that make us who we are, with the longing for what we wanted but couldn't do."

"Kendinebir hayat edinmen gerekiyordu. Edindin. Edindiğin hayata tahammül gösterebileceğini sanmıştın. Yanılmışsın." (Babaannemin Usturası- Esra Pekin)

"You had to get a life for yourself. You got it. You thought you could put up with the life you had. You were wrong. "

Utanmayı bir kenara bırakıp gerçeği itiraf ettiğim bugün bile hâlâ kendi hayatımı değil, başkalarının hayatını yaşıyorum. Fason hayat. (Kaybolan- Tarık Tufan)

"Even today, where I put aside embarrassment and confess the truth, I still live the lives of others, not my own. Outsourcing life."

Bazı insanlar susar. Söylemedikleri bütün o nefessiz –kendine yasaklı– kelimeler, içlerinde yalnız onların bildiği bir boşlukta asılı kalır. Ne etsen çıkmaz. (Aşk Bir Kar Tanesi- Günhan Kuşkanat)

"Some people keep quiet. All those breathless words that they don't say — forbidden to themselves — hang in a vacuum that only they know. They do not come out no matter what you do."

5.2.5. Rhetorical Questions

Questions or interrogative formed sentences are also very dominant in book blurbs. These questions are mostly used as curiosity arousers about the text. The main aim of questions is to lead the reader to think about the probable answers and wonder how the given issue is resolved by the writer in the related text. This curiosity is created to support the communicative purpose of the blurb which is to promote the product. These curiosity arousing questions can be exemplified as follows;

Yoksa geçmişteki o hayat, Zeynep'in hayalinde yaşattığı gibi değil midir? Sonradan yazdığı günlükleriyle kendini mi kandırmaktadır? (Neydi O Gelecek Bayramlar- Zafer Köse)

"Or is that life in the past not like Zeynep's dream? Is he deceiving himself with the diaries he wrote later?"

Beni ben yapan bir öz var mıydı sahi? Bedenim, sesim, dilim, evim dediğim yer değişmişti ya, başka bir insan mı olmuştum artık? (Annemin Kaburgası- Burçin Tetik)

"Was there an essence that made me who I am? My body, my voice, my language, the place I call home had changed; did I become another person now?"

…kadim bir sorunun cevabını arıyor: maktul kim, katil kim? (Bir Katilin Tükenmez Kalemi- Esra Pekin)

"… Looking for an answer to an ancient question: who is the victim, who is the murderer?"

Ayakların altında olduğu rivayet edilen cennet ile burnumuzun dibindeki sahici cinnet arasındaki mesafe nedir? (Ev Anası- Birgül Özcan)

"What is the distance between Paradise, which is rumored to be under our feet, and the genuine insanity right under our noses?"

6. Conclusion

In this study which tries to employ a genre analysis perspective, book blurbs are taken into account to find out if these short texts could be seen as a specific genre with their particular characteristics. The findings of the study show that book blurbs are one of the types of promotional genres where the main purpose is to promote a service or a product. In this regard, publishing houses present published books as a product which needs a kind of advertisement for prospective customers and convince them about the quality of the product. To this end, the linguistic features used in blurbs are clearly in line with the language used in other promotional genres like advertisements. Thus, it can be stated that the communicative purpose in book blurbs is to promote the book to sell it.

Additionally, there seems a specific cognitive move structure in blurbs which is quite strictly designed by the publishers. According to this, three different moves are used in blurbs. Of these moves, representation of the content move is seen obligatory. Although the other two moves, namely appreciation of the product and by-line, are mostly employed in the corpus samples of the current study, they are sometimes presented interrelatedly. Therefore, the frequency of these moves is a bit lower than the first move. However, this

does not mean that these moves are totally absent in blurbs. Contrarily, they are interdependently available.

When it comes to the lexico-grammatical and rhetorical features employed in blurbs, it is apparent that compliments, elliptical sentences, rhetorical questions, adjectival phrases and quoted elements, relative clause constructions, hyperboles and puns are frequently used to convey the message encoded in this very specific text type.

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