

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this chapter is to familiarize the reader with the theoretical, historical and linguistic aspects that are used in this thesis. The section is divided into five main sections with subsections that accompany them: *2.1 Gender and Discourse*, *2.2 Feminism*, *2.3 Cognitive Schemas*, *2.4 Sexist Discourse and Gender Construction*, *2.5 Previous Studies on Gender Discrimination*, *2.6 Discourse Analysis*, *2.7 Critical Discourse Analysis* and *2.8 Feminist Stylistics*.

2.1 Gender and Discourse

Language and gender is a relatively new area of linguistic investigation that arose during the Second Wave Feminist movement in the 1960s (West, Lazar and Kramarae, 1997). The 1960s and 70s was a time of social change in the United States for African-Americans and women (however, 'women' here is referred those that pertain mainly to the middle-class). This social change helped to ignite the recognition of an ignored feature in the social science and linguistic disciplines: *gender*. In linguistics, language was traditionally seen as a homogenous entity that did not differentiate between male and female speech. It was assumed that language research automatically derived from male speech as if it were the norm (Coates, 2004). Robin Lakoff's (1975) book *Language and the Woman's Place* and Dale Spender's (1980) *Man Made Language* (Lakoff, 1975; Spender, 1980, as cited in Coates, 2004) can be seen as putting gender and language research into motion along with creating public awareness about how society genders spoken and written discourse (Coates, 2004). It has been thirty years and gender and language has now become its own academic discipline. It has crossed over into other academic fields such as literature, psychology, anthropology and sociology to name a few

(West, Lazar and Kramarae, 1997; Leaper and Bigler, 2004). Methods of gender and language analysis have included ethnography, questionnaires and analyses of verbal and written texts that focus on *content* and *textual analysis*. *Content analysis* is the theme of the text while *textual analysis* is the nuts and bolts of language incorporated to express that theme (Mills, 1995). Research questions in regards to gender and discourse have also evolved since the 1970s (Bergval and Bing, 1996). Many of the questions and proposals were based on how men and women speak differently. Deborah Tannen's 1990 book *You Just Don't Understand* supports the idea that men and women are raised in different subcultures: gender (Tannen, 1990, as cited by Coates, 2004). As a result, men and women *learn* to speak differently and thus are incapable of communicating with each other successfully. Nevertheless, this assumption is problematic because it reaffirms the belief that there exists that by nature there is a difference between the discourse spoken by men and women. As a result, this provides justification to continue to dominate women based upon the pretext of 'that's just the way women and men speak'. However, from a sociolinguistic and social constructionist perspective an individual *performs* a gender (masculine or feminine¹) through discourse in which society has *taught* them to perform based upon their biological sex (male or female). Thus, gender is *learned* and is not biologically inherent. In fact, there have been studies that demonstrate that men and women interact more with each other versus those of the same sex (men-men and women-women) (West, Lazar, Kramarae, 1997). As a result, Bergval and Bing (1996) suggest that gender and language researchers should focus more on *similarities* between men and women versus *differences*. Therefore this thesis analyzes how magazine discourse may construct biased gender ideologies of women *and* men. As

¹ These of course are the genders that Western society identifies.

previously mentioned in *Chapter One*, I employ the term *discourse* instead of *language* because I include *production context*, *textual analysis* (linguistic features) and *content analysis*.

Feminists are one group of individuals that have fervently criticized sexist discourse in texts as well as arguing that it is through discourse that gender is socially constructed. First, in order to understand feminists and their contribution to gender and discourse, I provide a brief introduction to what feminism is and a general idea as to what it represents.

2.2 Feminism

The term *feminism* has no one definition nor is there a single variety of feminism (Cameron, 1992; Mills, 1995). However, the all these feminist groups unite under a common political cause: “the full humanity of women” (Cameron, 1992, p. 4). Mills (1995) states that feminism has now extended its attention to defend the humanity and dignity to all groups that suffer discrimination based on their race, age, social class, religious beliefs *or* sex - not only middle-class, white women. Therefore, feminism also denounces biased discrimination of men as well. Cameron (1992) uses the term *humanity* instead of *equality* because equality implies that one gender is more highly valued than the other and this is what feminists want to eradicate. Feminists want to create a society in which all human beings are respected despite their biological sex.

Feminists are also interested in how masculinity and femininity are *socially* constructed versus being inherent of a person's biological sex, masculine and feminine which is socially constructed (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003). They research the culture, society and history in order to provide explanations as to *why* and *how* men and

women have been socially constructed as different people. They state that this has resulted in discrimination and subordination (intellectually, socially, economically and sexually) of women to men and visa versa: “*Midiendo su tamaño*” (Measuring his size) (Needham, 2008, p. 56). This is a headline of an article from *Cosmopolitan* that discusses the importance in size of a man’s phallic organ in relation to his sexual relationships with women, along with being considered more sexually attractive to women. This demonstrates how a magazine can use discourse as a device to discriminate against men based on the size of their reproductive organ. It fragments (focusing on a body part) and objectifies him as a sexual object that can be used to judge their worth. As a result, research in gender and discourse has become a central focus of many feminists as a way to elucidate gender discrimination in discourse and attempt to eradicate it. However, in this thesis I do not adopt the feminist notion of eradicating sexism. This is because I lack the perspective of habitual readers and I am not from Mexico. Thus, I do not have the right to state or promote its eradication, but rather to suggest that it is present in some of the magazines’ discourse.

2.2.1 Feminist and Gender and Discourse Studies

Feminist began to challenge sexist discrimination from both a social perspective (equal pay and opportunities for higher education for women) and a linguistic perspective (Cameron, 1992). They began to postulate that the source of discrimination derived from discourse (in this case, English discourse), which in turn also constructed gender ideologies and identities. Feminists state that gender is not biologically inherited, but rather something that people *perform* and *construct* to form part of the beliefs (ideologies) of a *society*. Ideologies are categories of identity, tasks, aims, values,

positions and interests of a society (van Dijk, 1997). Discourse is a powerful tool that maintains gender ideologies because it constitutes a part of our daily lives through verbal and written communication (Weatherall, 2002). Discourse has held a powerful position in the creation and maintenance of male supremacy. In Ancient Greece and Rome, feminists state that men have long occupied the leading positions of power as poets, orators, grammarians and philosophers to control discourse that produce gendered ideologies. The powerful members of society are those that control discourse and its production of sexist gender ideologies that has discriminated women and men.

As a result, feminists (and non-feminists academics) began to question and critically analyze various genres of discourse such as books, newspapers, advertisements and magazines that they claimed to reproduce biased stereotypes that demean women such as, “Blonde in fatal car crash” and “bitches wear furs” (Cameron, 1992, p. 6). These two examples exemplify how female identities are described via metaphor or their physical appearance instead of their names. They are merely represented as objects instead of their own person (Castañeda, 2002). If sexist discourse is frequently produced, it creates an affect that early feminists called *conditioning* (Cameron, 1992). This is when discourse representation becomes naturalized and therefore goes unquestioned and becomes apart of society's unwritten social statutes (Cameron, 1992; Castañeda, 2002). As a way to explain conditioning, feminists pondered the theory of *linguistic determinism* that states how discourse determines the way a person views the world (Mills, 1995).

Anthropological linguists Sapir and Whorf introduced the hypothesis of linguistic determinism which states that the language a person speaks constructs their world view

(Cameron, 1992; Mills, 1995; Weatherall, 2002). The hypothesis consists of the *strong version* and the *weak version*. The *strong version* of the hypothesis declares that language controls all aspects of the thought formation process. Some feminist linguists such as Dale Spender support the strong version because they believe that the only way a sexist society can change is by changing discourse because this is how individuals express, analyze and construct their world. The *weak version* sees language as having limited control in relation to how one creates and understands the world. In this thesis I adopt the weak version of the hypothesis. Feminist theory also includes the philosophy of Louis Althusser which is similar to the linguistic determinism hypothesis. It states that through discourse, individuals interpret themselves and the world around them. It is this discourse that helps to produce the ideology of a society. Often, through conditioning are the ideologies take for granted by its society members. From a cognitive perspective, ideology conditioning can be explained through the construction of mental models, also known as *schemata* (van Dijk, 1997; Foldy, 2006).

2.3 Cognitive Schemas

How are gender ideologies formed? How do people use their cognition to categorize incoming information? Foldy (2006) states that groups of incoming information received from the outside world are filtered and organized within the brain into schemata (mental models). Other terminology for schemata include: *interpretive schemes*, *theories of action* and *frames*. The notion of cognitive schemas can only be assumed for we lack data to know their true internal structures (van Dijk, 2004). Nevertheless, theories in cognitive semantics carried out by cognitive linguists such as George Lakoff, supports the existence of mental structures (Lakoff, 1988).

Schemata is a valuable cognitive device because it permits an individual to have the knowledge to decide what is 'normal' without having to re-filter and re-organize concepts that have already been established. The filtering process creates stereotypes and serves as 'short-cuts' in how one conceives the world (Dyer, 2000). These short-cuts are necessary in order to construct an individual's social reality in which discourse serves as its principal medium (Weatherall, 2002). The reproduction of stereotypical female gender ideology is evident in the discourse of women's magazines. An example of this is through the promotion of beauty products such as the latest lipstick. The cognitive schema of women + lipstick is compatible for those who are members of Western society because it is a normal and accepted practice among women. However, if men's magazines promoted cosmetics, such as foundation and lipstick, there would be no compatibility between men + lipstick because it does not have schemata in which it can be filtered (Weatherall, 2002). This is due to the absence of schemata that includes man + lipstick in Western society. As a result, the individual may judge this as unorthodox behavior.

Children form these gender schemata at a young age as early as their toddler years through clothes (blue and pink), toys, television programs and discourse with parents, daycares and education systems (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003). Schemata develop as an individual matures, shaping their world view (Leaper, C. and Bigler, R., 2004). A man's identity includes the assertiveness and practicality, while women are more emotional, sensitive and supportive individuals. Nonetheless, Dellinger (2004) introduces the concept of *hegemonic masculinity and femininity* as the "legitimate and protected versions" (p. 547) in society. In other words, they are the stereotypical

ideologies of gender identities. Hegemonic masculinity subordinates masculinities that are deemed inferior. They are the masculinities that do not conform to traditional masculine gender that Western society has created for men (Connell, 1997). Men are discriminated against if they do not fit the traditional 'alpha' male identity. One stereotype includes that all men need to have numerous sexual relations with women and as soon as possible: "*Sexo en sólo cinco citas!*" (Sex by the 5th date!) (Williams, 2008, p. 118). This also extends to women's magazines: "*¿Quieres ser su mejor amante?*" (Want to be his best lover?) (Christensen, *et al.*, 2008, p. 72). The adjective *mejor* (best) presupposes that there is more than one and you can be the best out of all of them. In Western ideology, it is socially acceptable for men to have numerous sexual relations with women. However, in some issues of *Cosmopolitan*, women are described as having only one guy because it is a social taboo for women to be sexually involved with many men: "*Tú y él*" (You and him) (Ruderman, 2008, p. 122). For example, if a woman's magazine headline states "Follow these tips and get 10 guys instantly!" this may lack schemata in which to filter and organize it as an accepted and positive gender identity for women. Thus, discourse helps to construct schemata which in turn may produce stereotypes that lead to gender discrimination. Such stereotypes include men as being sexual untamed and women being insecure based upon whether she is the best lover to attract the man (Beynon, 2002).

Foldy (2006) conducted research in a company to see if these schemata influenced male and female gender stereotypes in the workplace. She interviewed thirty-two participants to observe if they held stereotyped opinions. She noticed that both male and female participants wavered in their opinions in regards to what positions should be held

by men and women and which ones are equally shared by both sexes. She states that this is how they synthesized their “dueling schemata” (Foldy, 2006, p. 362). Synthesizing is when someone attempts to make sense of traditional stereotypes and their exceptions such as a man being a secretary versus a woman. This demonstrates that schemata can change and that the eradication of gender discrimination is possible. It supports feminists’ notions that if sexist discourse is eliminated then so will sexist ideologies. Nevertheless, discourse would only play a part in its eradication because society plays an even stronger role in the reproduction of sexism. Thus, the individuals themselves would have to change in order for sexism to truly be eliminated - and as they say - old habits die hard. However, as I have mentioned previously, I do not support the eradication of sexist discourse in these two magazines. Next, I discuss sexist discourse and gender construction in further detail.

2.4 Sexist Discourse and Gender Construction

Sexist discourse is a concept that does not only have one definition or description. Instead, it is based upon the point of view of the individual. Robertson and Parks (2004) state that “sexist language includes ‘words, phrases, and expressions that unnecessarily differentiate between women and men *or* exclude, trivialize, or diminish either gender” (p. 233). For the basis of this study, I define sexist discourse as any form of discourse that discriminates, diminishes, ridicules or separates *either* sex solely based on the socially-constructed gender identities that society has assigned. Nevertheless, there continues to be many feminists that believe that women are the only victims of sexist discrimination (Cameron, 1992). She states that although feminists have expanded their ideology by condemning discrimination of either men or women, sexist discourse

continues to only be relevant to women. She says that men are simply trying to seek sympathy by stating that they are also victims of gender stereotypes. However, she argues that their discrimination does not compare to that of women. In this thesis I argue that men can suffer gender discrimination. Instead, I adopt Mills's (1995) and Robertson and Parks's (2004) belief that women *and* men can be victims of sexism.

Women have long been the targets of sexist discourse. Derogatory terms such as *whore*, *bitch* and *slut* in English and *perra* (bitch) and *zorrra* (whore) in Spanish are often used to ascribe the identity of a woman who is sexually promiscuous. In Spanish, the *a* of a noun represents a female subject while the masculine equivalents *perro* (dog) and *zorrrro* (sly, cunning) have less degrading sexual connotations. Metaphors in English also discriminate women by comparing them as animals such as *kitten*, *babe*, *chick* and *fox* (Weatherall, 2002). These names describe the infantile stage of animals which parallels women to weakness or immaturity. *Fox*, on the other hand, is an animal that is hunted (like that of women by men). An example of this is "*Cómo ser una fiera con minifalda... Cuando alguien te provoque*" (How to be a wild animal in a miniskirt when someone provokes you) (Heitman, 2008, p. 96). Women are compared to being wild animals that dress provocatively as a method to handle disputes. Food metaphors such as *tart* and *cupcake* symbolize consumption and terms of endearment such as *dearie*, *love*, *sweetie* and *darling* identify women as being delicate (Cameron, 1992). These linguistic elements construct the female image as weak, fragile and passive object for men. In comparison to the metaphors that describe men such as *tiger* and *stallion* in English, they construct an identity that encompasses strength and bravery (Weatherall, 2002). Nevertheless, they can also be seen as discriminating men because it produces the

ideology that strength and bravery is a *biological* trait of being a man. Men may feel pressure to conform to these identities as to avoid humiliation and prejudice by their male peers and/or women. As I mentioned in *Chapter One* section 1.2 *Justification for Study*, there may be men and women that feel secure with these traditional gender ideologies and identities such as women not having to work or the fact that they enjoy being observed by men. Men may also feel satisfaction that women observe them. However, the thesis lacks the perspective of the magazine's habitual readers. As a result, I cannot state that sexist discourse that is found in this analysis should be eradicated. What this thesis does provide is a critical perspective as to how traditional gender ideology is present in some of the discourse of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health*. Providing the other perspective will hopefully allow for the habitual readers to decide for themselves if the discourse is sexist and if they would like to see it eliminated.

Next, I present sexism at the level of *discourse*. Discourse goes beyond the lexical and sentence level to form ideologies that construct gender: "Discourses are an integral part of social life, and a central activity of social life is, of course language and talk" (Weatherall, 2002, p.82), both verbal and written language. Thus, sexist discourse is the combination of the text, content and sociohistorical context to construct stereotypical gender ideologies.

The mass media has often identified women by their bodies (Mills, 1995). Objectification is manipulating the body as a sex object. Fragmentation is when an individual is described by their body parts. An example of this can be found in a *Cosmopolitan* headline: "*El escote ideal para cada ocasión*" (The ideal neckline for any occasion) (Eckert, 2008, p.90). The article is about how much of a woman's chest should

be visible based on the social occasion such as a funeral and job interview – even taking out the trash. The images in the article only portray the model's chest in low-cut blouses. In this issue of *Cosmopolitan* there is a section entitled *Cosmo Hombre* (Cosmo Man). It presents to its female readers how men would edit the magazine if they were the editors – and the above article serves as an example text that they would produce. The editors claim that the readers will “*morir de la risa*” (die laughing), however it is still discriminating women. It can even go so far to say that it is discriminating men by projecting the stereotypical male identity as “men running wild – this group of discourses expresses a fear of a rampant, untamed masculinity, of men running wild...behaving in an irresponsible way sexually...” (Beynon, 2002, p. 128). Therefore, this text may not only create body insecurities among its female readers, but also influence them to believe that men are sexually aggressive and untamed. Thus, both sexes are the victims. This demonstrates how discourse can be used as a powerful tool to produce gender stereotypes (Weatherhall, 2002).

Sexist discourse sometimes cannot be recognized to the untrained eye. This is because sexist ideologies are often conditioned in discourse. Swim, Mallett and Stangor (2004) state that sexism can be expressed in three different manners: *blatant*, *covert* and *subtle*. They state that *blatant* sexism is when an individual purposefully uses sexism and does not try to disguise it such as *women are stupid and should not be allowed to work*. The *covert* use of sexism is when it is purposefully used but is disguised by the way the text producer presents it in discourse such as “*Pelo con glamour. Tu mismo estilo, pero más sexy*” (Glamorous hair. Your same style, but sexier) (Muir, 2008, p. 176). Depending on how the individual negotiates this message, they may decide whether it is

sexist or not. Thus, a habitual reader may negotiate it as a benevolent message that is trying to help her to be more physically attractive. However, it may be negotiated as sexist because it states that her appearance is not 'good enough' and that she needs to look sexier. Thus, this quote can be seen as exemplifying covert sexism because it does not appear to be prejudice against women. On the other hand, the *subtle* form of sexism is most frequently used because people do not realize that they are using it. This reflects what I mentioned in *Chapter One* section 1.2 *Applied Linguistics* that it is possible for the individuals that form a part of the text producer that hold less power are unaware that they are producing sexist ideology. Thus, this quote may also serve as an example for subtle sexism. In this thesis I propose that the powerful positions within the text producer are the magazine companies and that they are conscious of the discourse that they are producing. Therefore, it is proposed that they are using covert sexism to sell the magazine.

Traditionally, research on sexist discourse has focused either on how men and women use language differently or how gender is represented in discourse (Speer, 2002). This thesis focuses on how discourse constructs stereotypical gender ideologies. In the social constructionist perspective of gender, discourse does not *represent* reality, rather it *produces* it. This makes gender an important social category that plays a significant role in the identity of an individual (Weatherall, 2002; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003). It forms people's knowledge of the world and the gender roles that they perform within it. Gender roles are assigned based upon one's biological sex which is used as a pretext to justify sexist attitudes. Social constructionists acknowledge gender to be social phenomenon that is performed by human beings and that discourse is a tool that is used to

construct it: "Gender can be understood as a discourse because it is an integral part of social life that is produced through everyday language and talk" (Weatherall, 2002, p.82). The gender ideologies that discourse produces helps to generate masculine and feminine gender identities in which the speakers or the readers can negotiate, endorse and/or reject within a communicative event. For social constructionists, gender is not a fixed part of a person's identity. In regards to magazine discourse, the reader negotiates the gender-ized content based on their sociohistorical background (social cognitions). An example is if a man reads an article from *Men's Health* entitled "*¿Por qué tenemos tanto sexo en la cabeza?*" (Why do we have so much sex on the brain?) (Kynaston, 2008, p. 122), he negotiates with the text producer if he believes that hypersexuality is a part of his gender (masculine) identity. Due to the fact that a lifestyle magazine's main goal is to "construct an identity that customers would want to buy" (Weatherall, 2002, p. 85), the author uses discourse features that *endorse* stereotypical gender ideologies so that the readers construct and uphold these identities in order to market their magazine. Nevertheless, the magazine's habitual readers also play an important role in the production of biased gender ideologies because they are the ones that purchase the magazine. Thus, it can be assumed that they too endorse these beliefs and want to construct themselves as members of the magazine's community (*Cosmo girl* or *the new man* for *Men's Health*). However, it is through society that an individual learns what their gender is and how it should be performed (Tolman, 1997; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003). I propose that magazines may be a key figure in promoting these ideologies so that people will buy into them. However, the habitual readers could also be aware of these sexist ideologies and continue to accept them because are used to them in that they provide a sense of security.

However, as one of the limitations to this study, I cannot ascertain how the actual readers of the two magazines negotiate their gender identity or if they accept or reject traditional gender ideology. I explain this further in *Chapter Three: Methodology*.

2.5 Previous Studies on Gender and Discrimination

There have been a number of gender and discourse studies carried out in women's lifestyle magazines, especially *Cosmopolitan*. Lately, the rise of men's lifestyle magazines, *Men's Health*, has also attracted the attention of sociologists and discourse analysts. The first book in regards to critically analyzing magazine discourse was in 1963 by Betty Friedan entitled *The Feminine Mystique* (Friedan, 1963, as cited in Walker, 2000). Friedan was a column writer for women's magazines and was forced by the higher editorial power to create articles whose discourse emphasized the ideal housewife and maternal identities. In her book she critically analyzed discourse in women's magazines during the 1940s and 1950s that reproduced a hegemonic femininity that tended solely to the hearth and home. They marketed this identity to middle and upper-class white women as a response to the consumer boom of post-World War II America. Because women performed the homemaker identity, they became the consumer targets of new domestic products. Women's lifestyle magazines not only marketed goods, but also love and romance. They served as specialists that marketed products and advice that ranged from mops to men. This implied that one of a woman's most important goals was how to find a man. Therefore, in order to fulfill this goal she needed to purchase the magazine (Winship, 2000). Friedan's work received criticism based on the fact that she generalized all women that pertained to middle- upper-class white suburbia. Critics also attested her statement that all lifestyle magazines 'glorify'

domesticity. Nevertheless, her work was groundbreaking in the sense that it opened the door to further research on critically analyzing magazine discourse. This is also the goal for the thesis because there is a lack of research that critical analyzes lifestyle magazine discourse of Mexican origin, unlike this study. That is to say that the magazines under analysis in this thesis are Mexican editions of a North American origin magazine.

2.5.1 Women's Magazines: *Cosmopolitan*

Women's lifestyle magazines have played a large role in producing stereotypical gender ideologies. Hearst Corporation owns *Cosmopolitan* and it was its first magazine to be published in 1905 (Hearst Corporation, 2009). In the 1960s Helen Gurley Brown took over as its editor-in-chief which has made it one of the largest magazine franchises in the world for women. The company produces fifteen magazine titles, twelve that are directed towards women. The Hearst Corporation management is composed of 11 individuals (only one being a woman, Cathleen Black) with about 20,000 employees. Black (nick-named the First Lady of American Magazines) supervises close to 200 international editions that are exported to over 100 countries. Nevertheless, the Chairman (George J. Green) and CEO (Duncan Edwards) of Hearst Magazine International are men. Thus, although there may be a woman that is in charge of the magazines sector of the Hearst Corporation, her superiors and those that are in charge of the international editions (of predominantly women's titles) are men and thus may be purposefully producing sexist ideology in the discourse of its most popular title, *Cosmopolitan*. However, just because she is a woman does not cancel out the fact that she too endorses sexist ideology for economic gain. In 2002 there was a reunion of the editors-in-chiefs of the international editions with Kate White, the editor-in-chief of the United States edition

(the “goddess” of *Cosmopolitan*) (Carr, 2002, para. 1). The meeting was to discuss the content that the international editions need to produce that would “bring Cosmo’s tangy fusion of sex and empowerment to their homelands” (Carr, 2002, para. 6). The chairman of Hearst International states that women around the world crave these magazines. Thus, this reverts back to my comment in the last paragraph of section 2.4 *Sexist Discourse and Gender Construction* in that if there were no demand there would be no product. Thus, the consumers of the magazine are in part responsible too for producing traditional gender ideologies.

The ideology and identity that *Cosmopolitan*’s markets gains an income that is worth millions of dollars for the Hearst Corporation. Carr (2002, para. 9) states that this suggests that “...deep cleavage and thinner thighs have global legs”. Therefore, this demonstrates that consumers themselves want to adopt this persona (regardless if they believe it is sexist or not). Even Cathleen Black supports this by stating that the editors-in-chief of the international editions of *Cosmopolitan* need to take these ideas to sell the magazine due to the fierce competition of other women’s magazine titles. Thus, this demonstrates that *Cosmopolitan* is trying to spread North American gender ideology on an international scale for the company’s economic gain. This also demonstrates how the editors-in-chief (as well as the employees with less powerful positions) are being told *what* to write and thus may not realize that what they are writing is sexist or if they do know, they have no choice. Next, I discuss a few of the studies that have been conducted on *Cosmopolitan*’s discourse.

Machin and van Leeuwen (2005) conducted a study on the review of forty-four language editions of *Cosmopolitan* to see how linguistic features shape and mold female

gender identity based upon the language and culture of the target audience. They state that *Cosmopolitan* produces five principle discourses: advertising, fashion caption, expert discourse, slang and conversation whose linguistic style adjusts based on its audience. In advertising discourse, the use of alliterative poetic is used in the Hindi version but not the Spanish (Spain) version. This is because in Indian society it is still patriarchal and women are made to believe that they should be fun, care-free and physically attractive. This ideology is transmitted via linguistic devices such as alliteration: “A sure shot way of upping your sinister sister image in showing off that *bold bod...*” (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 590). The lexical items such as “bootylicious” and “denim-ite” (p. 591) that appear in United States and Chinese versions also permeate the *fun* and *flirty* female identity. However, this is not seen in the Spain version of the magazine. Spain continues to be a predominantly patriarchal society with an attempt to eradicate sexism. Thus, in order to diminish the reproduction of sexist ideologies, the editors of the Spain version do not contain the traditional *fun* and *flirty* female stereotypes as would be seen in the versions from the United States or Great Britain. Instead, educational articles are included about how women can change the world. In regards to *how* these women are told to change the world is subject to criticism nevertheless that is another study.

Secondly, it is taboo to fuse education and entertainment together. Therefore academic repertoire is used in the Spain version versus slang and trendy language such as “Smokey eyes, pink cheeks and lips and above all: glamorous gloss” (p. 595). Instead it would be replaced with, “The skin of the lips is very fine and does not have sweat glands and so does not produce its own oils like the rest of the skin” (595). Thus, this discourse

markets an identity that Spanish women should perform: mature, serious and means business.

An earlier study done by Machin and Thornborrow (2003) discusses that *Cosmopolitan's* discourse reflects the core values of independence, power and fun that constructs the *fun* and *fearless* female identity (*apasionada, atrevida y atractiva* in Spanish). The authors state that although the magazine is translated into forty-four different languages, the majority of them are still written in the style of the United States edition. Thus, it can be proposed that the Mexican edition of *Cosmopolitan* is selling North American gender ideology and values on a global scale. Their study discovered that in the world of *Cosmopolitan*, this independence and power is contradictory because it restricts a woman's agency to her body and sexuality: "Women's magazines have been seen as damaging to women's self-image as they offer women a distorted view of themselves and the world" (p. 455). These two categories of agency fall within the categories of work, beauty, health, sex/relationships, etc. This study focused specifically on work and sex. The linguistic and discursive agents that are used to express independence, power and fun actually identify the readers as *naïve, sexually wild, pleasing the male* and *go-getting*. The woman's power and independence continues to be filtered on how she can please the man through her two agencies: body and sexuality. Thus, female independence and power are expressed by using sexism. As a result, the empowering ideologies that *Cosmopolitan* wants to transmit are contradicted by the sexist discourse that is used to express them.

Their study demonstrates how *Cosmopolitan* can contradict its ideology. Sexist discourse helps to create this contradiction in which women never find a real solution and

the only way to 'find' that solution is by purchasing the magazine. That is to say, if the magazine solved all the problems that young women face, then there would be no need for its further production. Therefore, the consumer will always need advice to fix a problem that will then be contradicted by other advice and that contradiction will serve as another problem that needs to be fixed. That is to say, it creates a never-ending cycle without a solid and steady solution. It can be proposed that in the name of consumerism young women around the world are negotiating their identities based on the gender ideologies that *Cosmopolitan* society markets (Winship, 2000; Weatherhall 2002). I state that *Cosmopolitan* is a society because it dissipates specific ideologies through its texts that attract specific readers as its followers – that become members of its community. The magazine allows young women to feel apart of this community by labeling them a *fun* and *fearless female* and a *Cosmo girl*.

2.5.2 Men's Magazines: *Men's Health*

There is no text which systematically advises men on their personal conduct and appearance in the same way as women, or which implicitly carries the message that they have problems which need to be resolved (Mills, 1995, p. 194).

For many years magazines directed towards men did not consist of lifestyle topics such as advice for fashion, beauty, health and sex/relationships. The majority of the magazine literature directed towards men was based on hobbies and soft porn (Winship, 2000). However, recently there has been the rise of a new male identity known as the *new man* that takes a greater interest in health, sex and physical appearance (Beynon, 2002). As a

result, men have also fallen target to consumerism which has aimed towards women for more than half a century. In 1987 in the United States, a magazine that is similar to the style of women's lifestyle magazines emerged: *Men's Health*.

Men's Health is owned by the Rodale Incorporation (Rodale Incorporation, 2009). The Rodale Incorporation, founded in 1930, publishes 8 titles that are related to health and environmental topics. The management includes 18 individuals, 8 women and 10 men. The CEO is Steven Pleshette and MaryAnn Bekkedahl is the executive president and group publisher. Bekkedahl controls the advertising and marketing in relation to *Men's Health* as well as serving as the senior vice president and global brand director of its international editions where she has also been its assistant publisher. Therefore, she may be directed by the male CEO as to what content is permitted or because she is a woman she may be exerting her own sexist attitudes towards men (in regards to fashion, physical image and sexuality) so that women are attracted to them. However, I cannot support these proposals. I can only suggest them in regards to which individual(s) control(s) *Men's Health's* discourse and how their gender may influence this. As I mentioned in the discussion of *Cosmopolitan*, the editors-in-chief (as well as the employees with less powerful positions) are being told *what* to write and thus may not realize that what they are writing is sexist or if they do know, they have no choice. In addition, it is possible that *Men's Health* is trying to produce North American ideology to its (predominantly) male readers outside of the United States. Thus, where there is demand there is profit and it is possible that *Men's Health* is marketing these North American gender ideologies for their own economic gain.

In regards to *Men's Health México*, Alejandro Serrano, one of the editors of the magazine, informed me that magazine's objective is to help the reader better his health and well-being in the areas of fashion, nutrition, health, sexuality, lifestyle, entertainment, work, relationships and "masculine wisdom" (personal communication, February 4, 2009). Serrano does not directly mention the sub-category of 'muscle building'. However, I assume that it falls under the category of *nutrition, health or fashion*. These are frequent topics that the text producers discuss and they may provoke the reader's preoccupation of his physical appearance. As had been done with women in the past (and present), men are now under the pressure to conform to a certain body type that is 'ideal' for men: big muscles and flat stomachs. This makes them sexually desirable which is a part of the new identity that makes men "cool, sophisticated and smart" (Beynon, 2002, p. 125). This also includes how many women they should have and how quick they should obtain them. Men have now become targets of lifestyle magazine ideology in which headline covers such as "*¡De gordo a flaco en 4 semanas!*" (From fat to flat in 4 weeks!) (Klerck, 2008, p. 112). I suggest that the message of this headline indirectly tells its readers that they are inferior and lack the qualities that make them a 'real' man. Similar to that of women's magazines, only through its purchase can they fix these ideologically based 'imperfections' that *Men's Health* states is the ideal (hegemonic) masculine physique.

A study carried out by Stibbe (2004) discusses that the discourse that is used in the North American edition of *Men's Health* promotes ideologies of hegemonic masculinity which are dangerous to the well-being of men. As I previously mentioned,

hegemonic masculinity is the dominant masculinity that exudes the characteristics of power and control over other inferior varieties:

hegemony means a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends...into the organization of private life and cultural processes...which is embedded in religious doctrine and practice, **mass media content**, wage structures...and so forth (*emphasis mine*) (Connell, 1997, p. 23).

In Stibbe's study, the discourse of the magazine (mass media content) is promoting the Western gender ideology of the hegemonic male as the *new man*. In his study, Stibbe identifies these traits to the physique that they should possess and the food they should consume. Stibbe states that feminist analysts should also critically analyze men's magazines because they also produce sexism towards men. Stibbe coded his data into six identity categories: *the bodybuilder*, *the meat eater*, *the beer drinker*, *the convenience food eater*, *the sexual champion* and *the television watcher*. In regards to the *body builder*, this can make men feel inadequate which can eventually lead to eating disorders and steroid usage; *the meat eater* states that women prefer men who eat meat, it reflects muscle and it symbolizes power and dominance, however it is detrimental to one's health if there is high consumption; *the beer drinker* promotes beer as being a healthy beverage to drink in massive quantity and also is dangerous to one's health; *the convenience food eater* promotes that cooking is for women, not for men and that food should be easily cooked no matter how unhealthy it is; *the sexual champion* promotes that men should be sexual fiends that have numerous sexual encounters with women as well as disrespecting

them; and *the television watcher* promotes the healthy side of television because it is stereotyped as a male pastime. Stibbe mentions that all of these categories manipulate discourse in order to cause anxiety within its readers for two reasons: 1) in order to be the *new man*, the reader must fulfill these requirements and 2) as a result of them being bad health choices, men do not arrive at any sexual or physical nirvana that the magazine claims. Thus, these two sources may create anxiety among the reader to embody this masculine identity that will result in the purchase of the magazine in order to 'better' himself. As seen with *Cosmopolitan*, it can also be proposed that *Men's Health* has the same goal in mind: economic gain. The following three sections discuss how to analyze discourse that pertains to the thesis.

2.6 Discourse Analysis

This thesis has a basis in discourse analysis which analyzes two texts from the magazines. Fairclough (1995) states that discourse analysis is comprised of 1) the linguistic description of the text 2) the interpretation between the production and discursive process and 3) the relationship between the discourse and social processes. In regards to the latter, discourse analysis focuses on how language is used by participants based upon the context or situation (Gee, 1999). Gee states that situations are composed of communicative interactions between speakers that contain five key components. I demonstrate how they can be related to sexist discourse and gender construction that pertains to lifestyle magazines:

- *Semiotic*: sign systems that include verbal, body language and images that create knowledge to construct what we know as the 'real world' in order to interpret the

possibility and impossibility of an event. It is through these signs that we are able to have access to reality.

- In accompanying sexist discourse, body language and images of the models that grace the pages of magazine articles also permits the reader to negotiate the message by combing the images with the text. This helps to construct their reality – or better yet, the reality of the magazine. Either the reader accepts or rejects the ideology of the content and imagery. This can be seen in advice columns for sex and relationships in both men and women's magazines. This type of discourse dictates what is correct – what the *reality* of relationships are that pertain to the society of the magazine. It states what a man or woman needs to do in order to fix, create, prolong or better the relationship with the opposite sex. The imagery that accompanies the discourse also plays a role in the negotiation between text producer and reader in the acceptance or rejection of ideology. Such as in *Cosmopolitan*, there may be an advice column that tells a young woman to provide the man with sexual pleasure because that is what will attract him to her. Alongside the text, there is an image of a woman that can be negotiated as happy and carefree that feels satisfied because she followed the advice of the magazine. As a result, the man is attracted to her. This is what makes women happy. Therefore, although this thesis is dedicated to identifying sexist discourse, the images that accompany the semiotic portion cannot be fully ignored – for they also may have some influence in the negotiating process.

- *Activity*: The situation in which the communicative activity is being performed. The activity is series of actions.
 - In an example that is provided by Coulthard-Caldas's (1999) study, *I pay men for sex*, in women's magazine narratives, she presents three steps in which the communicative activity between reader and source (the magazine) takes place based upon the transformation of headlines. 1) catch-phrase headline to reel in the target audience 2) headline is rewritten by changing the vocabulary and explaining more of what the article is about in order to further entice the individual and 3) a longer and more detailed headline above the article itself to have the individual read the article to find out 'what happens next'. This is an example of the actions that take place during the reading activity of magazine discourse. Through this 'reeling in' of sorts, the reader negotiates the gender ideology that the magazine produces and from that, she creates her knowledge, reality and gender identity based upon that ideology from the topic of the article and its content.
- *Material*: This is the place, time, individuals and objects that are composed of the communicative interaction.
 - Reading a lifestyle magazine can be done in a variety of locations, hour of the day or with certain people. Thus, this information is not as easy to pinpoint unless a case study is done with a specific magazine and participant group. Nevertheless, what we can say is that the object at hand is the magazine and topics of communicative interaction in the

magazine are among the following: narratives, advice columns, beauty, health, sex and relationships and so forth. The individuals involved are the reader and the text producer that engage in discourse as the reader negotiates what the text producer mentions in regards to the topic.

Depending on the reader, they may negotiate the meaning as being sexist such as: “*Midiendo su tamaño*” (Measuring his size) (Needham, 2008, p. 56). This title was taken from *Cosmopolitan* which fragments men by referring to their phallus and objectifies them sexually for the amusement of its female readers. It objectifies men, whose phallic size reflects their personality and worth.

- *Political*: Gee (1999) terms this as to building ‘social goods’ of power and status. This can refer to beauty, fashion, physicality, dominance, etc.
 - This can be seen in the fashion portion of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health*. In order to be a successful individual, he/she must dress according to the latest fashion trends or mimic those of celebrities. In this case of *Cosmopolitan*, one text includes success by combining sex with career: “*La blusa semitransparente le añade misterio al conjunto. ¿Anda esta chica buscando negocios o placer?*” (The semi-transparent blouse adds mystery to the collection. Is this girl looking for business or pleasure?) (Ayala, 2008, p. 48). Traditionally, women do not work and have often been identified as sex objects for men. However, now that they have become a vital part of it, women continue to be subjected to sexual objectification – relying on their bodies versus their intelligence

for success. In regards to *Men's Health*, men are addressed as incompetent when it comes to fashion: “*Si no tienes menos de 20 años y el físico de un perrito malnutrido, el look entubado no es para ti*” (If you're not younger than 20 and the body of a malnourished dog, then the tube look is not for you) (Reyes, 2008, p. 21). The text producer uses a discriminating tone and a metaphor that compares him to a malnourished animal. This is used to intimidate and coax him into adopting the muscular physique of the *new man* identity.

- *Sociocultural*: The social and cultural knowledge, values, identities, feelings and relationships that one has with the interlocutors and with those described in the communicative event. It also comprises of the knowledge of the previous four components.
 - The subject matter that the lifestyle magazine proliferates is a reflection of the culture and society of the target audience. Both *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health* promote the traditional gender dichotomy of *masculine* and *feminine*. It can be assumed that Mexican society only recognizes these two genders as being legitimate (that is not to say that transsexuals, transvestites or other gender groups are not recognized or exist within certain sectors of Mexican society). Thus, advice or self-help articles are embedded with ideological knowledge of the male and female gender that include and the roles (identities) that pertain to each within the societies (in this case Mexican and that of the magazine) of which the reader is a member. The reader uses their knowledge of the ideology(ies) that

pertain to their society(ies) as a basis to negotiate the message of the text and form it as either apart of the reality and identity or to reject it.

These five components along with the discourse that is used within them is what discourse analysis focuses on. This is how the reader constructs a communicative event via negotiation with Gee's (1999) five components. Gee refers to the language portion as specific grammatical cues or clues. Thus, in reference to lifestyle magazines, by using these discursive cues and clues, the text producer is able to create a specific situation in which the reader will be guided to interpret in a specific manner. Nevertheless this is hardly ever the case – there will always be variation in negotiating meaning (Mills, 1995). This is what makes discourse analysis subjective because each analyst or coder can negotiate the text differently.

Magazine headlines serve as examples in which the text producer attempts to guide the reader to interpret a text in a specific manner. They are usually imperatives that imply certain meanings: “*Sé la chica más lista y sexy de la ciudad*” (Be the smartest and sexiest girl in the city) (Eagleson, 2008, p. 86). The text producer uses the informal imperative of the Spanish verb *ser* which means *to be*. This implies that you should be the smartest and the sexiest girl in the city – but you are not and by reading this article you can find out how to do so. Thus, the imperative is manipulated by the author so that the reader may interpret it as a sign that they need to fix something about themselves. Identifying these five components about a text is important, however further information must be explained to critically analyze the text. I discuss this further in the following section.

2.7 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The essence of CDA is to elucidate injustices that are embedded within discourse and propose how to change it (van Dijk, 1993; van Dijk, 2001; Fairclough, 1995). CDA is a method of taking action against a society that demonstrates racist, sexist or other ideologies that discriminate a group of people (van Dijk, 2001). There have not been many discourse studies that involve gender and CDA. Thus, this thesis provides a step towards further investigation that unites sexism with CDA. In order for CDA to achieve its goals it must cover the following points:

- Focus on social problems.
- Should be multidisciplinary.
- Try to explain why certain discourse structures are used to create social interaction versus simply describing them.
- Explain how power and dominance in a society are reproduced, legitimized, performed or defied via discourse structures.

CDA does not possess a single theoretical framework. Rather, it is a method in which discourse analysts adopt to critically analyze either spoken or written text. Thus, the analysis may be different, however they share the same aims of CDA: investigation of the discourse structures that are being employed to exert social power and dominance.

Vocabulary that is typically employed by critical discourse analysts are: “dominance, hegemony, ideology, class, gender, race, discrimination, interests, reproduction, institutions, social structure and social order” (van Dijk, 2001, p. 354). I employ these terms in this thesis.

2.7.1 *Levels of Discourse*

There are two main levels of social order in which discourse is used to produce sexist and racist ideologies. There is the macro level which embodies power, dominance and inequality at the higher level of discourse production such as the production of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health* at the international level. The micro level would be the individual article that one reads to legitimize and produce sexist gender ideologies via discourse. However, in order to unite the gap that is in-between these two levels are what van Dijk (2001) calls “mesolevels” (p. 354). He lists four groups: *members-groups*, *actions-process*, *context-social structure* and *personal and social cognition*. I focus on the *members-groups* and *personal and social cognition*. *Members-groups* analyses how individuals interact in discourse as the “members of (several) social groups, organizations, or institutions” (p. 354). Thus, the readers of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health* engage in discourse as being apart of the group (society) that pertains to these two magazines as well as other groups that the readers may be involved in which may have influence over how they negotiate the meaning of the text. I suggest what their negotiations of the text because this thesis does not contain their perspectives. This category can be related to the *personal and social cognition category* in that the individuals of groups “have both personal and social cognition” (p. 354). That is to say individuals of groups have their own memories, knowledge and beliefs along with those that also pertain to the social group they belong to. Thus, the personal and social cognition may influence the interaction and discourse between the individuals (reader and text producer) and the “shared ‘social representations’ that govern the collective actions of a group” (p. 354).

2.7.2 Control over public discourse

Those that control public discourse are capable of exerting cognitive influence over the beliefs and actions of a social group (van Dijk, 2006). This power is also recognized as having control over discourse that can be used as a device to discriminate against minorities, which in the case of gender are typically women. However, in this thesis, I also mention how men are discriminated against even if they are represented as belonging to the majority group. In regards to those that control public discourse are those that have influential power. In the case of magazines, advertising agencies play an important figure in controlling the discourse that magazines produce, because they are its principal funder (McLoughlin, 2000). Thus, the advertising agencies that market fashion and beauty products would probably not agree with an article in *Cosmopolitan* that stated, *you don't need any make-up, you are beautiful just the way you are*. This maneuver is reciprocal to *Men's Health*. The majority of advertisements in *Men's Health* are products to gain more muscle. Thus, as I previously stated in section, 4. *Discourse Analysis*, the phrase “*cuerpo de un perrito malnutrido*” (body of a malnourished dog) (Reyes, 2008, p. 21) may be used on purpose as an intimidation device to manipulate men to desire a larger physique. As a result, they purchase the products that are advertised throughout the magazine. Although advertisement agencies have a large influence in regards to the control of global topics such as *beauty* and *sexual attractiveness* they may also have control of more local stylistics in which the text is written such as form and technique. Nevertheless, even though it may be true that the advertising agency exerts some form of control in regards to the type of discourse that a magazine may publish, it could also

serve as pretext for producing stereotypical gender ideologies. This may be so that the magazine company does not appear to be producing sexism at the fault of their own hand.

However, van Dijk (2001) states that the concept of a group that exerts control over public discourse is too general. That is to say, that discourse is a “complex communicative event” (p. 356) and in order to be defined fully, the *context* and *structures of text and talk* must also be presented. Van Dijk (2001) mentions that the context of a communicative event is a mental representation in which the interlocutors possess: “setting, situation, participants, goals, knowledge, opinions, attitudes and ideologies” (p. 356). He goes on to list several methods as to how context can be controlled and the one that corresponds with this thesis is control over: *which* social roles the discursive participants must perform, *what* their knowledge and opinions must be and *what* social actions need to be achieved via discourse. In regards to text and talk, *what* can and cannot be expressed, *what* is considered politically correct, etc. also has an affect on the communicative event. Nevertheless, it is the context, not the actual text or talk that influences how power relations within social groups will be modified.

2.7.3 Manipulation

The individuals that control public discourse also exert manipulation or mind control over their recipients in order to reproduce certain ideologies, in this case, stereotypical gender ideologies. Van Dijk (2006) defines manipulation as an “abuse of power” (p. 360) that coaxes its readers to do things in the interests of the manipulator. However, persuasion is not the same as manipulation. Persuasion is when the recipients are capable of making their decisions as to what to believe because they have knowledge of the subject to do so. Manipulation is when the manipulator tries to make the recipients believe and accept

ideologies in which he/she thinks to lack familiarity. Van Dijk created a tri-framework that consists of *social*, *cognition* and *discourse* areas of analysis. *Social* is the social setting; *cognition* is the mental models of the recipient's personal and social cognition to negotiate the text and *discourse* is the discourse structures that the text producer may use in a specific context to create manipulation.

Manipulation is typically successful if the discourse derives from a source that the recipient finds credible and prestigious. *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health* are two of the most popular international magazines. I argue that their habitual readers are more willing to accept the beliefs and opinions of the magazine. Also, the articles in which they provide are often supported by studies from experts that further bestow credibility to the magazine in that it provides its readers with valuable and truthful information. This information contains the ideology that the magazine wants to sell. It may also be possible that those who read these magazines do not have further knowledge in which may contradict the content of the magazine or that they possess the beliefs or opinions to want or need to contradict it. Thus, *context* and the *discourse structures of text and talk* are discursive components that take part in how the text producer uses manipulation.

Context in this thesis is between the reader and the text producer that tells the recipient what their social role is, what they can and cannot say, what they should believe and so forth. The recipient seeks advice and the text producer (who is seen as superior in the communicative event because they have the knowledge and resolution) tells him or her how to resolve the problem. In regards to *how* this is told is based upon the discourse structures that the text producer uses. Magazine discourse of the lifestyle genre typically contains content in regards to how to better oneself or to solve a problem. Therefore,

certain discourse structures such as argumentation and justification are used to influence and modify the social group as a whole versus simply the individual.

2.7.4 Criticism of van Dijk and Fairclough approach to CDA

There has been criticism in relation to the CDA approaches of van Dijk and Fairclough (Philo, 2006). Philo is apart of the Glasgow University Media Group that analyzes media discourse similar to van Dijk and Fairclough. However, he criticizes that their analyses are limited because they base their studies purely on textual and contextual aspects and not that of reception. Van Dijk and Fairclough do not include the latter component, nor does this thesis. Thus, because this thesis lacks access to the reception portion it is possible that van Dijk and Fairclough encountered similar limitations in their studies.

The following section describes how to analyze a text based on feminist stylistics, which is similar to what Philo purposes and CDA in that the theoretical base derives from critical linguistics and discourse analysis.

2.8 Feminist Stylistics

Feminist stylistics is “a form of politically motivated stylistics whose aim is to develop an awareness of the way gender is handled in texts” (Mills, 1995, p. 207). It derives from critical linguistic analysis and traditional stylistics. Traditional stylistics (also known as the *code model*) assumes that there are only two participants involved in the communicative event (the author and reader). It states that the recipient of the message interprets the text exactly as is intended by the text producer. Traditional stylistics also focuses on the message that the text producer intended. The reader is viewed as a passive participant and is not considered in the analysis. Context and metalinguistic factors are

also excluded. However, the feminist stylistics method includes two major components to create a more thorough analysis of sexist discourse (Mills, 1995, p. 31):

Context of Production	Context of Reception
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General language/discourse constraints • Textual antecedents • Literary conventions • Current literary trends • Affiliations: gender, race, political, national, classes • Publishing practices • Sociohistorical factors • Author 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended audience • Actual audience • Implied reader • Sociohistorical factors • Actual reader(s) • Publishing practices

Table 1.0 - Context of Production and Context of Reception

In regards to *production*, there are specific literary constraints such as lexicon, discourse structures, themes, etc. that allow a text to be published. If *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health* began to execute academic repertoire as a part of their discourse features, it is probable that the magazine would not sell because lifestyle magazines are not a literary genre that employs this type of rhetoric. Discourse repertoire is also important based upon the affiliations (target audience) of the magazine. If the magazine wishes to be published it must adhere to the type of discourse that its audience will enjoy reading. Lifestyle magazines is a literary genre that is typically read during periods of relaxation and thus if the discourse and its thematic nature are too dense or 'dull' then it may not have great economic success (McLoughlin, 2000). Thus, in part to fund and market the magazine (because advertising also plays an important role in financing the magazine), the editors must use specific discourse structures and present themes that reflect the identity of the *mujer apasionada, atrevida y atractiva (fun, flirty female)* of *Cosmopolitan* and the *new man* of *Men's Health*. The *sociohistorical* factors such as economic, social

and cultural background of the magazine as well as the audience to which it is marketed is important to understand how and why the magazine is produced in a certain way.

The *reception* portion focuses on the *intended audience* and the *actual audience* of the magazine as well as the sociohistorical factors that influence how the text may be negotiated (interpreted). There is always an intended audience in which the magazine markets towards and then there is the actual audience that consists of the individuals that actually purchase and read the magazine. In the case of the North American *Men's Health*, it targets middle-upper class white males in their late 20s through late 40s (Stibbe, 2004). In this thesis, which I repeat in *Chapter Three: Methodology*, I distributed a questionnaire in order to obtain a general idea as to which magazines are the most popular at an affluent Mexican university. Thus, I propose that university Mexican males also comprise as a part of the actual audience of *Men's Health* versus the intended. I also suggest (however, cannot support) that in the context of Mexico, the sociohistorical factors include the desire to be like the women portrayed in *Cosmopolitan* because it is a North American magazine that exhibit United States popular culture. Therefore, I argue that the young women that purchase the magazine belong to the middle- upper class and might interpret the discursive content of the magazine to be credible and trustworthy. This may be based on its esteemed international status.

In a similar vein of CDA, feminist stylistics also states that meaning is negotiated based upon the personal and social cognitions of the reader of what is expressed in the text. Mills (1995) mentions that in order to construct a model in which the readers may negotiate the text, the feminist analyst needs to take into account a *close textual analysis* of the literary genre and grammatical features of the text (in this case, magazines) that

serve as “cues to interpretation” (p. 35). Thus, the reader can be seen negotiating the text through the discourse structures that are used to *influence* (persuade or manipulate) their beliefs while using their personal and social cognitions to *determine* whether he or she accepts or rejects the ideological message (Mills, 1995, p. 35). As I previously mentioned in section 2.7.3 *Manipulation*, this depends on the knowledge they have of the subject to do so. The negotiation between the reader and the text is an active part of the communicative event. A limitation to this thesis is that I do not include the reception portion within the analysis due to time restrictions. I cannot determine how the audience (young adult Mexican university students) negotiates the message of the texts in *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health*. Therefore, I assume that the discourse structures that the text producer uses to construct stereotypical gender ideologies are built upon assumed personal and social cognitions of the target audience. This may persuade or manipulate the reader to believe and accept the ideology of the text. The analysis of the discourse includes three female Mexican coders whose first language is Spanish to codify the data in order to reduce bias. I discuss this further in the following chapter.

In the literature review I have provided a foundation that allows me to discuss how I carry out the thesis in critically analyzing sexist discourse of two articles from the Mexican editions of *Cosmopolitan* and *Men's Health*.