ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Two kinds Of Argument In Editorials Of Women's Magazines

1. Introduction

Women's magazines, understood as a popular feminine genre (Marshment 1993) and a form of self-help (Cameron 1995), aim at instructing and entertaining women (Ballaster et al 1991; McCracken 1993). Women's world as portrayed in these publications is related to feminine social values, norms, problems, doubts and expectations within a personal, private sphere. These publications became a 'feminised space', with contradictions, asymmetry of gender differences and issues of sexuality constantly being re-worked (Beetham 1996).

Among the different genres and types of discourse found in women's magazines are the editorials, also known as editors' letters, comments or columns. These texts constitute a significant instance of advertising of the magazines, an example of 'hybrid information-and-publicity (or 'selling and telling') discourse' (Fairclough 1992:115). They are an amalgam of advertising and editorial material (McCracken 1993), since they provide information about sections of the issue but they do so stressing the *wonderfully useful* (from a *Cosmopolitan* editorial) features in the issue.

My investigation is based on principles of critical discourse analysis (CDA) which allow for the study of the bidirectional link between language use and context. Critical discourse analysis as a multidisciplinary field focuses on the complex relations between macro and micro linguistic features and different social issues, especially those concerned with ethnic, socio-economic, political or cultural inequalities. I specifically draw on Fairclough's (1989; 1992; 1995) social theory of discourse with its three interdependent levels of analysis: *text* (lexicogrammatical features), *discourse practice* (analysis of the processes of text production and interpretation); and *social practice* (institutional, societal issues; power and ideology). Halliday's (1978; 1985; 1994) systemic-functional grammar is considered an insightful linguistic tool for CDA studies, to analyze textual and contextual features.

An important aspect of discursive practices in contemporary society concerns the conversational, promotional (Wernick 1991) and confessional nature of discourse. Giddens' (1984) concept of modernity is also useful to perceive globalized discursive practices in contemporary society, with local and global habits and customs, individual and collective aims put together.
As a researcher of a text aimed at women, I also found it necessary to investigate studies on language and gender which have proved insightful for the link between the contextual features and the text analysis.

An important theoretical perspective to discourse analysis concerns studies on argumentation, since these two areas investigate aspects of discourse. In the present paper, argumentation is seen as a particular kind of social interaction, an action that tends to modify the pre-existing state of affairs (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1970). There is a relation of power between the writer and the reader, as the former tries to persuade the latter about a point of view. These power relations are linked to the discourse and semantic aspects of the text. As to argue is to try to influence the interlocutor to, for instance, reinforce convictions, dissipate doubts, persuade someone to act in a certain way, the writer, then, does establish a power relation with his/her receiver (Oliveira 1989).
Argumentation is presently understood as a dialectal engagement between a protagonist (who makes the claim) and an antagonist (who 'doubts that claim, contradicts it, or withholds assent') and its main function is 'to convince others of the truth, or acceptability, of what one says' (van Eemeren et al 1997:209, 210). In argumentation reactions are anticipated and addressed and some set of tacitly shared beliefs and meanings are taken for granted in building the arguments.
For discourse analysts the study of argumentation especially within the pragmadialectical view (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992; van Eemeren et al 1997) can be very fruitful to perceive the tactics used by text producers, or the construction of the engagement between the interlocutors. As the analyzed corpus in this paper are written texts and a kind of media discourse, the argumentation is unilateral. Argumentation in written texts differs from spoken discourse, as the protagonist must presuppose certain elements of context, anticipate counter argurments, and communicate in monologue with readers, who, in turn, do not engage in conversation the case of editorials in women's magazines, the antagonist is an imagined audience which needs to be convinced of the argument.
The theoretical rationale with which I study, briefly outlined above, consists of a

composite theoretical construct drawing on CDA and Fairclough, Halliday's functional grammar and studies on argumentation, from the pragma-dialectical view. I discuss two kinds of argument used in editorials of women's magazines to attract readers' attention and win readers' approval: the argumentum ad populum and hasty generalizations. My analysis is based on editorials of women's magazines published in England and in Brazil**[i]** (Heberle 1997). I attempt to show that, appealing to women's emotions, the editors, as protagonists of argumentation, attempt to advertise the magazine, to arouse women's enthusiasm and desires, to win women's approval of that particular issue of the magazine and of the magazine as a whole (see Willard 1989; Walton 1992). At the same time, editors make use of generalizations regarding what women feel or want. By asserting that, for example, *Every woman knows, women don't know* or *There are three things every woman wants*, editors attempt to make the statements self-evident and commonsensical, implying that that should be the case with readers too. The generalizations are, thus, part of the editors' standpoint (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992). The analysis of these forms of argumentation in the selected texts is relevant to understand the interaction between language use and contemporary social practice.

2. Features of women's magazines

Women's magazines are a very significant form of mass/popular culture, as they are 'an attractive form of commercial culture' and a 'multi-million dollar business which presents pleasurable, value-laden semiotic systems to immense numbers of women', according to McCracken (1993:1). In the Western world there are many different magazines aimed directly or indirectly at women and new titles are constantly launched. In England, the weekly magazines appeal to readers mostly as domestic consumers, whereas the monthly ones are seen as more narcissistic and individualistic, according to Ballaster et al (1991).

Women's magazines have also become an interesting object of critical sociological and/or cultural investigation (Ferguson 1983; Ballaster et al 1991; Winship 1987; McCracken 1993), as they teach women how to engage in various social processes, offering helpful suggestions and advice related to different aspects of their personal life, and providing 'recipes, patterns, narratives and models of the self' (Beetham 1996:36).

In these publications, the pictures, the colors, the sequence and combination of articles and advertisements, all comprise a semiotic system to attract women. The two main kinds of text, advertising and editoriaI texts, together form a blurred

'cultural continuum' (McCracken 1993). The topics covered are guided by the ideology of advice, beauty and information, with a superordinate form of ideology: the ideology of consumption. Women's magazines are considered 'bearers of pleasure' as well as 'purveyors of oppressive ideologies of sex, class and race difference' (Ballaster et al 1991:2).

Ballaster et al focus on these two prevailing viewpoints regarding women's magazines, showing the multiple contradictions in the representation of femininity through a historical background of these publications since the late seventeenth century. Some of the contradictory views present in women's magazines refer to women being subordinate to men, either as their partners, secretaries, mothers, cooks or wives. At the same time, the magazines tend to motivate women to be financially and emotionally independent. In their research, these authors see that:

Women's concern, according to most magazines, is with personal and emotional relationships, with husbands or partners, but also with children, family and friends. The work of maintaining healthy relationships is women's work (Ballaster et al 1991: 137).

Women's magazines appeal to readers by combining entertainment and advice, offering women *survival skills* to deal with feminine issues (Winship 1987). Femininity is seen as a difficult situation or condition, and women's magazines help women to solve the innumerable problems which they face in their everyday life. However, the solutions are usually based on individual effort and commitment, since these publications generally tend not to make women aware of their social conditions. The magazines invoke a world of fantasy, of a better life.

Women's magazines have also deserved attention in critical discourse analysis by Brazilian researchers focusing on language and gender, including studies such as those by Caldas-Coulthard (1994, 1996), Figueiredo (1994; 1995), Heberle (1994; 1996; 1997) and Ostermann (1994). As a research group, we were concerned with the construction of identities in women's magazines and analyzed specific linguistic realizations in different sections of these magazines, showing how particular lexicogrammatical items evince contradictory values of femininity and convey ideological meanings which position women mostly within the private sphere. To illustrate, here is an editorial from the Brazilian magazine *Nova* (Jan 1993), where the editor explains that the editors of *Cosmopolitan* got together in London to discuss issues related to readershipall over the world.

Translated version: We got together in London, at the end of last year, to discuss

what is happening to our readers all over the world. Do you know what we found out? That whether in Australia, in the States, in Germany or in Hong Kong, all that women want is to have success in their careers, emotional balance, lots of love, a happy family. Just like all of us here in Brazil.

In terms of critical discourse analysis, this excerpt exemplifies the fact that language use reflects, shapes and at the same time constructs, constitutes social entities and relations (Fairclough 1995).

By means of discourse, the editor of the Brazilian publication is telling her readers that the editors of *Cosmopolitan* from different parts of the world see women as having similar wishes. Even if women wish to have other plans, these become explicitly mentioned as the ones women should strive for.

I believe this seems to be the trend in Western societies, where women's magazines portray experiences shared by millions of readers, who have to cope with conflicting ideological positions in contemporary society.

3. Characteristics of editorials in women's magazines (EWM)

The main characteristics of editors' letters/comments or editorials in women's magazines are:

l. These texts are a mainstream popular culture form, representing one of the several different genres within women's magazines, which are part of one of the most powerful institutions of contemporary world, the media. This specific text type, found in the initial pages of the magazines, either focus on one topic only or on several topics;

2. They form an integral part of a broader master narrative, the magazine, in a close intertextual link with the front page and/or other texts in the magazine.

3. They are hortatory/persuasive texts which express a corporate, institutional view. EWM reflect the publishing company's ideology. The events, which refer to women's personal circumstances, are problematized. These texts have the function of persuading readers to read the magazine, to call their attention to what will be discussed in the issue.

4. They also function as promotional discourse, a form of advertising, signaling ahead, pointing to subsequent pages of the issue where women will find answers to their affective and personal problems.

5. They are usually written by women addressed to all women, but more specifically to white, middle-class, heterosexual women. In women's magazines, women and men are 'eternally in opposition, always in struggle, but always in pursuit of each other' (Ballaster et al 1991: 83).

6. EWM have a definite, explicit authorship: they contain the editor's name and/or signature and often display a picture of the editor. Readers know who the writer is. The editors speak directly to readers, as if they were talking to friends or close acquaintances.

With the contextual configuration outlined above regarding the corpus of this study, I proceed to the discussion and analysis of the ad populum argument and hasty generalizations in the texts.

4. The use of the argumentum ad populum in editorials of women's magazines: some contributing elements

The argumentum ad populum is an appeal to emotions, to popular feelings, being 'a powerful technique of argumentation… based on the speaker's capability to rouse and exploit the sentiments and prejudices of a target audience' (Walton 1992:2). Used in argumentation theory, this kind of argument is understood as 'any attempt to use 'emotively based' persuasive techniques to arouse the enthusiasm, approval, and desires of a multitude' (Ballard, in Willard 1989:230).

Van Eemeren et al (1996:69) explain that the 'argumentum ad populum', also known as *mob appeal* usually contrast we (the speaker and his/her audience) and *they* (those against whom the appeal is directed) and the rhetorical purpose of argumentation is to make a specific opinion (more) acceptable to an audience. According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, in the New Rhetoric, sound argumentation demands rapport between the speaker and his/her audience. The argumentum ad populum can be effective in the sense that it is meant to persuade a particular target audience, and as such, it is valid. As Walton (1992:70) explains, 'With an ad populum argument, what matters is not whether the premises are true, or based on good, objective evidence, but whether the audience to whom the argument is directed accepts these premises enthusiastically'.

This kind of argument invites people to accept ideas by means of emotions, by exploiting 'the bias of an audience toward its own interests' (Walton 1992:3-4; Woods & Walton 1989).

I suggest that in editorials of women's magazines, editors, as protagonists of argumentation, use argumentum ad populum, as a reasonable argument, a form of practical reasoning, as they appeal to women's feelings and thoughts, in order to win women's approval of what is being argued for. The argumentum ad populum contributes to create a positive image of not only specific features of

that particular issue but also of the magazine as a whole. In these texts, thus, this kind of argument functions as a powerful mechanism of advertisement, as a way to promote the magazine, as I have already pointed out.
By means of this kind of argument, the protagonists of argumentation, the editors, appeal to women's private affairs, to their personal and affective issues, where women are allowed to say, to think, to feel, to perceive things, to behave in certain ways, and to relate to other human beings. As a discourse analyst, I see four lexicogrammatical elements which contribute to form the ad populum argument in EWM: 1. the use of mental process verbs following Halliday (1985; 1994); 2. the use of the personal pronoun we; 3. the use of specific lexical items denoting evaluation and/or emotions; and 4. the use of mini-dramas, or personal narratives. I will refer to each of these cases now.

The category of mental verb processes is taken from Halliday's (1978, 1985, 1994) lexicogrammatical system of transitivity. Halliday (1985:101) explains that our 'conception of reality consists of 'goings-on': of doing, happening, feeling, being' and mental processes constitute verbs of sensing, that is, verbs of feeling, thinking and perceiving, such as *know, think, believe, love, feel, need, want*. The semantic concept of transitivity in Hallidayan grammar has become an important linguistic tool for the observationof 'speakers' classification of experience' (Fowler 1986: 146) and for the analysis of 'the representation and signification of the world and experience' (Fairclough 1993:136). It is generally used by critical discourse analysts to interpret and criticize the ideological implications of discursive events in relation to the linguistic choices. Fowler (1991:25) has pointed out that representation in all kinds of discourse is 'a constructive practice' and the structural features used to represent events and ideas are 'impregnated with social values' and ideological choices, constituting only one possible alternative to the representation. What is written in any text, thus, represents one side of the story, one possible portrait of reality. Some instances of mental processes in the selected editorials include:
1. Would you *like* to go through puberty all over again? Didn't think so. An adolescent milestone for all women (and men) is 'losing' their virginity. So why on earth would any woman *want* to lose her virginity for a second time? (*New Woman* – May 1994)
2. We *feel* our Great Sex supplement provides the most honest, most helpful and most relevant guide to this, the most intimate and sensitive of subjects. I *know* you'll *love* it! (*Company August*,1993).

3. The whole area of dating (no, I don't *like* the word either, but what else do you call it?) is so tricky. It seems that no matter how successful, intelligent or confident people are in other areas of their lives, everyone is uncertain about this. Men don't *know* how to behave. Women don't know how to act or react (*Cosmopolitan* – July1993).

In EWM. the Sensers, the conscious and emotional beings, 'endowed with consciousness' (Halliday, 1985:108), that is, the beings who perform mental processes, *know, feel, like*, and *want* different things, related to women/men relationship, sexual topics and activities related to women's roles in society. In the world projected in editorials in women's magazines, women's actions of sensing and of relating or classifying the world are very common. Women feel concerned about their problems, wishes, doubts; they feel society's contradictory views regarding their role. The use of mental processes, as the excerpts above show, contributes to the editors' argumentum ad populum, as they appeal to women's psychological events or states of mind. Women, thus, become members of a large discourse community, who interact with each other and become emotionally involved.

Another lexicogrammatical item which may contribute to form the ad populum argument concerns the use of the pronoun *we,* a subject which has deserved attention in critical discourse analysis (Fowler et al 1979; Fairclough 1989). *We* as a grammatica! participant represents different kinds of social participants, always referring to the editor and other people. Here is an example where women in general are represented by the pronoun *we*:

4. … Literally thrown on to the streets by the people they loved and trusted – and not, as *we*'re led to believe, homeless of their own free will (*Company* – September, 1993).

In this case, the form we suggests intimacy, solidarity and involvement – a case of inclusive *we* (Fowler & Kress 1979; Talbot 1992): readers, the editorial staff, everyone who shares these views is included as Sensers of *believe* here. Here *we*, implying all women homogeneously united, is an effective discursive and argumentative strategy for it suggests a united group against another one, probably *they*. As Fowler & Kress (1979:204) say, this use of *we* may be 'coercively eliminating any potential antagonism between speaker and addressee'.

We as Sensers of *believe* can also encapsulate editors and members of the editorial staff, as in:

5. We [here at She] look at men with affection, wry humour and sometimes anger, but always in the hope of gaining greater understanding of those with whom we share our lives. *We* believe in talking with men – not at them and listening to what they have to say (*She*– March, 1993).

The editor here is trying to create an image that her staff favors understanding between men and women, as if men were a homogeneous.group (which, obviously, they are not), in opposition to women, also seen here as a homogeneous group. *We* in this case represents a form of corporate, exclusive *we* (Fowler & Kress 1979): the editor is talking on her behalf and on the behalf of other members of her staff, not including the readers. In this group of participants, the members of the staff are presented as a unified whole, evoking an atmosphere of companionship, of staff members and editor belonging to a very interesting and close social group.

Ballaster et al (1991: 9) explain that even though women's magazines simulate a shared experience between women, creating an intimate tone, as with the use of we, 'such inclusivity is patently false'. In these publications, we generally refers to white, middle-class, heterosexual women, not to all other groups of women. I suggest that the apparent involvement implied by the use of *we* constitutes part of the ad populum argument, for it is mystified as not all women may accept what is being said. The use of this pronoun provides 'an intimate tone', 'the cosy invocation of a known commonality between *we* women' (Ballaster et al 1991:9).

Another lexicogrammatical aspect of the ad populum argument used in EWM concerns vocabulary, as it influences and indicates people's experience and the way they classify the world (Fowler 1986). The study of vocabulary plays a crucial role in discourse, since it reveals world's views, values and systems of beliefs of the participants in discourse. It is considered a fundamental tool to observe ideological, social or political issues in any given text (Mc-Carthy, 1990, Carter, 1987; Montgomery, 1986, and Fairclough, 1989, 1995).

Vocabulary concerns the 'encoding of ideas or experience' (Fowler 1986:151); it maps out 'the conceptual repertoire' (Fowler 1986:151) of a discourse community. It has to do with classification, which is basic for language and thought (Hodge & Kress 1993). The study of vocabulary needs to be carried out taking into account the specific context where the text is produced, how and in what circumstances specific words are used: their social and ideological signification in the particular text being analyzed (Fairclough 1992). As Montgomery (1986:176) puts it, there is no absolutely neutral and disinterested

way of apprehending and representing the world. Language always helps to select, arrange, organize, and evaluate experience, even when we are least conscious of it doing so.

Evaluative adjectives and adverbs constitute an important element in advertising in women's magazines, as they help to 'present the product in very positive terms' (Simpson 1993:152), in order to win women's approval or enthusiasm. Adjectives and adverbs are 'key parts of speech for advertisers' and 'they trigger words because they can stimulate envy, dreams and desires by evoking looks, touch, taste, smell and sounds without actually misrepresenting a product' (Dyer 1982:149). EWM contain several adjectives and adverbs which appeal to emotions and may contribute to form an ad populum argument.
One category of these lexical items concerns the superlative form of comparison, used to persuade readers of the benefits of what is being described, such as a specific guide or piece of advice on sex, fashion, beauty, a special course for readers, or a particular feature in the magazine. For instance:
6. Who is the *most successful* woman you know? (*Options* – April, 1993)
7. our Great Sex supplement provides the *most honest, most helpful* and *most relevant* guide to this, the *most intimate and sensitive* of subjects (*Company*– August, 1993).
8. one of the *most important and prestigious events* of the beauty year (*New Woman* – January, 1994).

The use of evaluative adjectives in these excerpts exemplifies the hortatory/persuasive aspect of EWM. Readers have no means of verifying whether what is being said is true; however, these forms become part of the argument favoring what is advertised.

Nouns appealing to positive feelings in EWM also function as part of the argumentum ad populum, again with the purpose of advertising parts of the issue and arousing readers' interest. Examples include: a *fabulous makeover, a long-lasting relationship with you, great bodies, sylphlike shape, boundless energy*, and *tireless enthusiasm*. These nominal groups appear to create a special bonding with readers, for they mark involvement and produce a positive communicative effect.
Readers' stories, personal narratives, 'testimonials' (Dyer l982) or *mini dramas* are typical in many ads (Cook 1992:47). These narratives form a kind of bonding with readers and help create what Meurer (1998) has explored as a *community-*

building device. Readers, thus, become acquainted with these different personal histories and become part of the wider community comprehending editors, their editorial staff and other readers in a friendly atmosphere. For example,

9. We all know someone who has suffered some awful personal tragedy. But what makes Hilda and June's story on page 6 so appalling is that their evil father managed to terrorise his wife and daughters for over 30 years. And none of the neighbours had an inkling. I find that absolutely terrifying (*Chat*– 13 November 1993).

10. We all hear stories about youngsters who get in with a bad crowd and end up in trouble…and we always think it will never happen to our kids. But what if it does? How would you feel if you saw your son joy-riding in a stolen car? … and ask the experts if parents are to blame for their criminal kids (*Woman's Own* – October 11, 1993).

11.This week's issue also has another riveting and extraordinary read (and so it should!). It's the story on page 12 of a young mother who didn't know that she was expecting a baby. You may think you've read stories like this before, but this particular one, I promise, is quite different. My advice is to go straight to it (once you've finished reading this, of course) (*Woman* – November 1, 1993).

Found especially in the weekly magazines, these narratives function as a form of the ad populum argument, for the editors are exploiting the feelings of the readers to persuade them to read a specific piece from the issue. In the editorials, these dramatic narratives are only hinted at, and the full stories are to be found in subsequent pages, in the articles. Notice that in the examples above, the emotional, sensational aspect is complemented with the editors' comments (*terrifying, riveting* and *extraordinary*) .

The lexicogrammatical aspects briefly discussed above function as part of argumentum ad populum used in EWM, as these cases appeal to readers' emotions. Even though I have presented specific lexicogrammatical elements, the ad populum argument can only be seen if the global effect with all the features is taken into account.

5. Hasty generalizations

Hasty generalizations, considered a modern version of *secundum quid* ('in a certain respect'), are based on observations which are insufficient or not representative (van Eemeren et al 1996). Hasty generalizations, also known as *overgeneralization* or *sweeping generalization*, are a form of presumptive

reasoning; they are generic statements applied to insufficient statistics, to few samples (Walton 1992:37). In terms of argumentation, hasty generalizations constitute a form of fallacy, considered a 'doubtful persuasive strategy' (Willard, 1989:232), that is, any 'moral, procedural, and interactional failings' in argumentation (Willard, 1989:221). Van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1992:118) suggest that such generalizations contribute to emphasize the 'indisputability of the standpoint'.
They say:
The suggestion made by such phrasing [such as *Every woman knows*, as found in EWM] is that someone who fails to see immediately the self-evidence of the standpoint must be incredibly stupid, whereas, in fact, the words may only be a smokescreen designed to conceal the weakness of the standpoint. Whoever allows himself (sic) to be overwhelmed by it may well drop his (sic) doubt. That, at any rate, is what the protagonist in such a situation is hoping for.

By using generalizations, the editor attempts to create the effect of making readers accept what is being said. For example:
12. *Every woman knows* how it feels to have her worth measured purely by the way she looks, but very few of us have ever tried to calculate that worth and actually put a price on it (*Options* – November, 1993).
13. *Everyone knows* it's a nightmare to lose weight. But not any more. This week we're giving away a free 16-page booklet – The Target Diet – which makes shedding those extra pounds a cinch (*Woman's Own* – October 18, 1993).
14. *It's a truth that women cease* to be thrilled by attention that is mostly sexual if they feel deprived of love and understanding. But men are thrilled throughout their whole lives by sexual attention, whatever the reason (*Cosmopolitan* – Jan, 1994).
15. Turning 30 is *a major landmark in a woman's life* – one of those meaningful birthdays that signifies more than just the passing of another year (*Options* – October, 1992).
16. *There are three things every woman wants*: to feel good, to look good, and a stonkingly good sex life. Just as well you bought this issue of *New Woman* then (*New Woman* – Jan 1994).

This form of standpoint with the use of generalizations is commonly used in the EWM. The effect is that readers are impelled to agree with what is said about *women* or *men* or at least plausibly accept those statements as being true.

The use of the generalized group (such as the underlined cases above) forms a kind of 'immunization strategy, that is, a sophisticated way of 'evading the burden of truth', where the protagonist attempts to become immune to criticism (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992:119). Using general formulations is, thus, understood as referring to the 'essence' of women or men, and arguments against these statements are considered irrelevant.

In the selected data, generalizations occur with mental process verbs (see above), relational processes (verbs of being, that is, those which establish a relation between two entities or which identify an entity, (as example (15) above), and existential processes (with There is/are, as in the last example). The generalizations used with different processes in the present tense, for example, create frames of reference, a kind of routinization (Giddens 1984). These mental representations, these *frames* created by the generalizations, are eventually incorporated into society and shared by members of a certain discourse community, becoming part of social cognition (van Dijk 1993, 1996). This way such frames of reference become

naturalized and seen as commonsense, as *reality* itself, which as such is not to be questioned or challenged, reproducing common sense knowledge and influencing readers' conduct to accept them.

6. Concluding remarks

In women's magazines, women's world is represented linguistically mainly as pertaining to the private sphere of personal and domestic issues. In establishing a degree of intimacy with women readers, editors conform their discourse to an ideology of consumption, of advice and of femininity that responds to the current hegemonic social structure. From these publications women read and share ideas about their love affairs, careers, families, health, plans, relationship with men and consequently become part of a wider more globalized discourse community.

These publications, which comprise several kinds of genres, are a form of promotional and hortatory discourse, constituting a unified whole with the headline, the covers, the attractive pictures, the other advertisements, the written genres, in other words, all the verbal and photographic texts and their special sequence, as well as color are important communicators in women's magazines. Editorials in women's magazines, as previews of the features in each issue, contribute to reinforce the belief that women have to learn how to cope with different problems in their lives.

In this paper I have briefly discussed lexicogrammatical elements in EWM which

contribute to form the argumentum ad populum (mentaI process verbs, the use of *we*, evaluative lexical choices and personal narratives). I also looked at hasty generalizations. I consider the interdisciplinary link between discourse analysis and argumentation very important for all researchers of language to see the pervasive link between language and society and the way that discourses determine and are determined by social values and conventions. Only then can we effectively contribute to social change.

NOTES

i. 115 editorials from 14 different women's magazines published in Britain were selected for the textual and social analysis. I randomly collected these texts frorn weekly and monthly publications from 1992, 1993, 1994 end one from 1995. The selected editorials were taken from the weekly magazines Best, Chat, Woman's Own, Woman's Realm, Woman, Woman's Weekly and Me as well as from the monthly magazines Cosmopolitan, Company, Essentials, Options, New Woman and More. For comparison I selected 14 editorials from Brazilian women's magazines (Claudia, Criativa Nova, Maxima, Mulher de Hoje and Corpo a Corpo), one from an Italian magazine (Pratica! and editorials from different types of magazines published in Britain and in Brazil (such as Focus, Isto, and Skopia Médica). The comparison with other publications offered subsidies for a verification of globalized discursive tendencies in contemporary society.

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