

Hybrid Messages in Magazines: A Case Study of the Lifestyle Magazine *Obrazi*

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SUMMARY

*In recent years, media critics have expressed great concern about a blurring of the lines between two types of content in the press: advertisements and editorial content. The aim of this article is to reveal hybrid journalistic and advertising discourse on the level of text and discourse processes. I use Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis approach and combine text analysis with an analysis of discourse processes in studying text production and interpretation. The aim of article is also to show the usefulness of expanding Fairclough's version of Critical Discourse Analysis through hybrid message discourse in review print with participant observation and in-depth interviews. I analyse how hybrid messages in the magazine *Obrazi* were constructed and who influenced their production.*

The results show that there are two genres of hybrid messages: short news items and hybrid advice articles. Hybrid messages take precedence over non-hybrid articles. Before a magazine goes to print, advertisers can check hybrid messages and change them. In so doing, they interfere with the journalists' role, making the journalist no longer the one who decides how content will be presented.

The analysis of production practice has uncovered the motives and purposes of participants in the production process of hybrid messages. The analysis of interdiscursivity has shown how, through textual devices, journalists incorporate discursive elements of promotion which are drawn upon within the discourse of hybrid messages.

Key words: hybrid messages, lifestyle magazine, advertising, journalism, interdiscursivity, production practice

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Introduction

In recent years, media studies (Erjavec, 2004; Splichal, 2002), journalism studies (Poler Kovačič, 2002) and advertising studies (Cameron and Ju-Pak, 2000) have drawn attention to the illegal practice of publishing paid-for commercial text in the form of news that cannot be recognized as advertorials or hybrid messages, which are by definition “blocks of paid-for commercial message, featuring any object that simulates the editorial content of a publication in terms of design/structure, visual/verbal content and/or context in which it appears” (Cameron and Ju-Pak, 2000: 66-7).

The main difference between unlabelled hybrid messages and special advertising sections is that these hybrid messages are published in the editorial part of a magazine, i.e., among regular journalistic items; however, their sources (sponsors) are not identified. They also differ from public relations texts, as they are paid for in one way or another (Erjavec and Poler Kovačič, 2009). Advertorials potentially have a significant impact on readers (Cameron and Curtin, 1995), because readers believe that advertorials are part of the publication’s editorial content. That is why advertorial format can influence readers more effectively than conventional advertisements.

The aim of this article is to uncover hybrid messages in the lifestyle magazine *Obrazi*. My aim is to uncover the elements of promotional practice, which pays to publish texts for commercial benefit. I will uncover the genre of the hybrid messages, the process of production of hybrid messages and their structure. I have chosen to analyse hybrid messages in a magazine because magazines play an important role in our culture. That is to say, they are sources of pleasure for millions of readers and that alone gives them great value (Holmes, 2007).

In order to be able to identify and analyse hybrid messages, my research follows a chronological plan. I will analyse a new discursive practice and through the analysis collect a corpus of hybrid messages, a mix between journalistic text (editorial content) and advertisements that look like journalistic texts but are not labelled as advertisements.

This study adheres to the paradigm of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) described by Fairclough (1992, 1995b), who suggests that the analysis of media discourse should be multidimensional: texts must be related to the discourse practice and to the social practice of which they are part. In this article, I combine text analysis with an analysis of discourse processes, while incorporating ethnographic methods.

After the literature review I will present the results of analysis of hybrid messages (genre, vocabulary, initiative) and the production practices, and at the end of paper I will discuss the social practice of hybrid messages.

Literature review

Hybrid messages are overlooked in studies of magazine journalism. The majority of magazine journalism studies explore gender and magazines (e.g., Nelson, 2000; Tyler, 2004; Boni, 2002), the history of magazines (e.g., Greenberg, 2000; Heller,

2008) and different themes in lifestyle magazines, such as power, health, diets, depression and smoking (e.g., Amos, 1984; Borman, 2003; Sultze, 2003).

Because hybrid messages are studied, above all, by advertising and public relations scholars, the existing analyses of hybrid messages mostly reflect their research interests, such as the external recognisability of hybrid messages as commercial texts (e.g., Armstrong et al., 1980; Cameron et al., 1996; Cameron and Jupak, 2000; Foxall and Goldsmith, 1994) and the effect of hybrid messages on readers (Cameron et al., 1996). Hybrid messages have become accepted because advertisers are convinced that an editorial format can be more effective than the traditional advertising format in influencing audiences for commercial benefit (Cameron, 1994). Existing research has focused on the role of advertisers in hybrid messages, whereas the role of the producers of hybrid messages has been ignored.

The existing research is based on the premise that readers can recognize a hybrid message by at least one external characteristic, but in recent years, media scientists, as well as journalists themselves (Erjavec, 2004), have called attention to the illegal practice of publishing paid-for commercial texts in different form of articles that cannot be recognized as hybrid messages. For the sake of conceptual clarity, I use the term 'hybrid message' for all short news items and advice articles that have been paid for, that have been published in the form of journalistic texts and that seek to influence audiences for commercial benefit.

In recent years there has been a lack of research on hybrid messages in lifestyle magazines. Scholars have analysed advertisements in magazines (e.g., Kim and Lennon, 2006; Albright et al., 1988), but they have not analysed hybrid messages. In a 2004 article, Erjavec analysed hybrid promotional news discourse in Slovenian newspapers, while the purpose of my research is to analyse hybrid messages in the lifestyle magazine *Obrazi*. Research on hybrid messages in lifestyle magazines has not been conducted yet; this study seeks to fill this gap.

Methods

Critical discourse analysis

According to Fairclough (1995) discourse is the use of language seen as a form of social practice, and it is a linguistic/semiotic construction of social practice. For Fairclough each discursive event has three dimensions: it is a spoken or written language text; it is an instance of discursive practice involving the production and interpretation of text; it is a piece of social practice. Fairclough's concept of analysis of discursive practice focuses on the features of the text. According to Fairclough (1989) discourse refers to the whole process of social interaction, of which the text is just a part. Based on Erjavec (2004), I expand the dimensions of discourse practice to include the processes of production where text is a product, and the process of interpretation where the text is a resource. Because the processes of production and interpretation and the structure of the text are integrated and mutually dependent properties of discourse, text analysis should be combined with an analysis of the discourse processes (Barthes, 1964). Within the analysis of dis-

course, processes could also be analysed, considering questions about what sort of relationships there are among participants in the processes of the production and interpretation of texts.

My aim is to combine these insights into a multidimensional approach to the study of hybrid messages: an approach that considers the structure of messages as well as the processes of production, interpretation and the text itself as independent and overlapping moments of the communication process. In order to be able to identify and analyse hybrid message items, research is carried out according to a chronological plan. In the first step, I analyse a new discursive practice, and through the analysis collect a corpus of hybrid messages items, in which discursive elements of promotion are identified using a text analysis in the second step. I will employ the sensitivity of the reception paradigm to uncover what the hybrid messages producers' responses to hybrid messages involve.

The data were collected using two methods of field research: first, participant observation, and second, in-depth interviews. "In-depth interviews enable the researcher to go deep, to uncover new guidelines, open novel problem dimensions and provide with a clear, accurate and inclusive opinion based on a personal experience" (Walker, 1988: 4). "During observation with participation the researcher joins the group he or she studies and observes it from within; in this way he or she can examine its structure, working process, problems and behaviour—directly or in a way that the members of the group experience it" (Sarantakos, 2005: 220).

Over a period of 12 weeks in 2008 I spent 250 hours in the offices of a lifestyle magazine in Slovenia called *Obrazi*. As a lifestyle magazine, *Obrazi* represents different lifestyles. Like other lifestyle magazines, *Obrazi* depends greatly on advertisers who promote products linked to lifestyles the magazine represents (Wheaton, 2003). Roughly 30 to 40 percent of the magazine's income comes from advertisements,¹ and in 2008, an average of 14.9 pages per issue of *Obrazi* were devoted to advertisements.²

Abrahamson (1996: 28) describes magazines as "specific information in a specific form that can be expected to appeal to a definable segment of readers" that allows the commercial publisher to "deliver" those readers to a "group of manufactures or distributors with the means and willingness to advertise their product as service" to them. The next characteristic of the lifestyle magazine *Obrazi*, as well as other lifestyle magazines, is that it is addressed to a smaller and more specialised audience (Gamble and Gamble, 1989). *Obrazi* is intended for the whole family; mostly, however, it is read by women of middle and higher education between 20 and 45 years of age.³ Specialised magazines offer advertisers a specific audience segment; they are offered a more efficient use of the advertising funds, since they offer them a readership that meets their needs (Gamble and Gamble, 1989: 137).

I analysed 152 hybrid messages altogether in *Obrazi* in the period between 1 October and 31 December 2008. I participated in and helped with the production of hybrid articles, and observed the hybrid production activities in the commercial sector of magazine *Obrazi* and the editorial department. My goal, based on Erjavec (2004), was to become immersed in the world of hybrid message production. Carrying out in-depth interviews was necessary because of the problematic character of the subject-matter of the analysis, as the producers of hybrid message

items were aware that the practice is illegal and tried to conceal it. With the in-depth interviews I intended to check the data gained by participant observation and add to it, whereas the secondary goal was to obtain the participants' responses to discussion of hybrid article practices. I conducted an in-depth interview with each of the main participants actively involved in the production of hybrid articles (three journalists, one assistant editor, three marketing agents and one advertiser) for *Obrazi*. Interviewees were between 21 and 41 years old, and all but one of the interview subjects, one of the journalists, were women.

Analysis of the hybrid messages

Textual analysis

Genre

Following Erjavec (2004), Van Dijk's (1983, 1988), and Bell's (1991) schematic conception of genre is most familiar. This schematic structure of headline + lead + satellites is made up of stages, either all obligatory, or some obligatory and some optional.

Fairclough's conception of media genres (Fairclough, 1995a) focuses less upon activity-type structures associated with genres than on two other conceptions, and also introduces the question of interdiscursivity. Fairclough and Chouliaraki (1999) define genre as a specifically discursive/linguistic ordering of social practice, a regulative device that controls what goes with what and in what order, including the configuration and order of discourses. I will analyse the generic structure of hybrid messages and their interdiscursual features and therefore combine the schematic concept of the genre with Fairclough's concept of interdiscursivity. The generic structure of hybrid messages is, at first glance, the same as that of other articles and messages in magazines. The form of the hybrid messages analysed is not different from that of any other message or news in a magazine.

Textual analysis shows that two genres of hybrid messages prevail in *Obrazi*. The first genre is short news items. In *Obrazi*, they are located under *Novosti*. In each issue there is a limit to the number of short hybrid news items. If the issue contains more than 84 pages,⁴ then there are two pages for short news items (where fourteen short news items can be found at the most); if there are fewer than 84 pages in total, there is only one page, with seven short news items at the most. Short news items are also located in the first third of the magazine under *Promenada*. Here there are five to seven news items, regardless of the number of pages in a magazine.

The other genre used by hybrid messages is the hybrid advice article, which is an editorial support to an advertisement, found on the same page in a magazine as the hybrid advice article, that talks about the same topic as the advertisement. For example, if an advertisement for plasters occurs in a magazine, then the hybrid advice article next to the advertisement covers the same topic. Since *Obrazi* mostly features celebrities, they often appear also in hybrid advice articles, preventing readers from differentiating hybrid messages from independent articles.

Only a detailed discourse analysis of both hybrid genres reveals that the hybrid messages analysed include elements of promotional discourse. The first specific characteristic of hybrid messages is revealed in the headline. All the headlines analysed in short hybrid news and hybrid advice articles evaluated the topic in an explicitly positive way, e.g., *Ford: Audacity and appeal united; Direct energy for silky skin; L'occitane against blindness; anti-aging effects in one capsule; Jeweller No. 1 in France; Phone for people who demand only the best; Sens pampering in autumn; Oh, the cold!; Discover the power of night in perfume Velvet hour; Perfect care for perfect skin; More colour than in a lip gloss, more shine than in a lipstick; 'The Bible' for parents; Good old Sumi – with the new image and content; Mascara celebrates; Enter into the world of Angal; Much more than just a fragrance for home; Family Outlet finally in Slovenia*. Most of the headlines include five or six words, with one categorical claim, praising the organization and its product or service more or less explicitly. These headlines are a typical characteristic of hybrid or promotional genres (Jefkins, 1994). The headline orients the reader to process the text in a pre-determined direction (Van Dijk, 1991). That is why the headlines give the preferred positive meaning to the subject discussed.

Scholars of journalism agree that the lead paragraph, which follows the headline, summarizes the central action by answering the questions 'who,' 'when,' 'where,' 'what' and sometimes 'why' and establishes the point of the story (Bell, 1991). The bodies of the hybrid messages analysed list the promotional characteristics/activities of the organization and its service or product. This list of promotional characteristics/activities specifies the characteristics/activities summarized in the lead (Erjavec, 2004). In the bodies of both hybrid genres analysed, comments giving positive evaluations are dominant, which clearly shows the incorporation of the characteristics of promotional genres, such as advertisements and press releases (Wragg, 1993). The difference between short hybrid news items and hybrid advice articles lies only in the fact that the body of short hybrid news items is substantially shorter than in hybrid advice articles.

Vocabulary

The hybrid messages analysed use vocabulary which is specific for promotion. How can we identify promotional vocabulary? Its first characteristic is the use of positive words (Jefkins, 1994). I have analysed the vocabulary in both hybrid genres, short news items as well as hybrid advice articles.

First, I will examine the pervasive use of lexical cohesive devices to construct an image of an organization, its products or services as successful. The most obvious and direct form of lexical cohesion is positive adjectives. The use of synonymous adjectives and other direct references such as top quality, effective, energy, unique, richness, elegance, revolution, sophistication, brilliance, aesthetics, magic, exclusive, luxurious, better, best, interesting, improved, new, attractive, also contribute to the co-referentiality of the success of an organization, its products or services. In Table 1, typical examples of positive adjectives and other positive words in hybrid messages are presented for each of the issues analysed.

With this kind of vocabulary hybrid messages try to form a positive image of the organization, its products or services. Positive publicity in magazines tries to form a positive image of the organization and this is the basic function and effect of promotion (Wragg, 1993; Erjavec, 2004; Milosavljević, 2005).

Table 1: Vocabulary in hybrid messages

Source	Use of positive adjectives and positive words in hybrid messages
<i>Obrazi</i> (2/10/08)	enticing volume; majestic, playful; glamorous derivatives; attractive and efficient; we gained a more revolutionary novelty; sophisticated colour layers; flirtatious sophistication; impeccable elegance; appealing sensuousness; top safety; sophisticated look; exclusive care; revolutionary discovery; direct energy; silky skin; new perfume; you will be taken away by; passionately committed to details
<i>Obrazi</i> (9/10/08)	indispensable fashion accessory; royal power; adventure; breeze of courage; unique protection; revolutionary deodorant; clean and effective ; symbol of creative determination; innovative ; a touch of haute couture; wonderful line; top-most professional techniques; skin flashes up in freshness ; sensual character; brilliant character; glows from excitement; shines in all its glory; revolutionary; sophisticated perfume
<i>Obrazi</i> (16/10/08)	Sophisticated scent; aesthetic procedures; quality care; prestigious trademark; ideal for a sweeter life; the most prestigious telephones; the best materials; revolutionary discovery; alluring perfume; sensitivity and balance; protection for the whole family; perfect perfume; sense pampers ; for the ones, who demand only the best; select only what's best
<i>Obrazi</i> (23/10/08)	Spectacular event; wonderful surprise; multi-awarded; precious ingredients; unique scents; passion for life; knock-out the enemies of health; new dimensions of seduction; glamour uncovered; small numbered and exclusive collection; intelligent oven
<i>Obrazi</i> (30/10/08)	perfect solution; perfect care; their preciousness; symbol of glamour, elegance and eternity; brilliant shine; glowing, tight, smooth and full of life; discover magic; appealing shine; light texture; indefensibly soft ; compliment to mysterious grace, power of dancer; unique pen reflects the beauty of a skilfully performed pirouette; sophisticatedly supplemented; new scent; mysterious trace of a unforgettable perfume; uncovers allures, clean lines; first-class and juicy ; line of wines from selected vineyards; absolutely flowery and alluring ; its luxurious personality; excellent composition of perfumes; one of the most trendy and recognizable trademarks; of extreme quality, comfortable and exclusive ; unique gem among perfumes; luxurious perfume for her; with a royal colour of amethyst reflects the precious nature of the scent of a pure flower; elegant relief box; elegant femininity

Source	Use of positive adjectives and positive words in hybrid messages
<i>Obrazi</i> (6/11/08)	Perfume for eternity ; rich floral symphony; promises a lively source of inspiration ; pure essence; new sophisticated perfume; numerous presents; exceptionally fast cleans the nasal cavity; stabilizes and renovates; bigger shopping is a more than obvious solution; outstanding characteristics; pleasure and efficiency ; wonderful sense of safety and shelter ; unique world of tropical forests; pleasure and relaxation ; buying quality goods; fashionable and highly advanced mobile phone; defeat annoying microbes; enticing way to warm up the body and soul; beauty enthusiasts; unique combination of shopping, fun and exercise
<i>Obrazi</i> (13/11/08)	confirms quality , reliability , emotional charge and diversity ; soothes agitated skin; unique vision and talent; modern , elegant and sensual ; scent of lust ; gentle daisies caress; wear their label of quality ; deviation from average; lovers of supreme , innovative design; extended range; enthused ; inspired with the original perfume; classic elegant perfume; perfume is sensual and select ; legendary golden watch; true wealth ; new, inspiring experience; create a unique , unrepeatable world; feeling of untamableness ; exquisite ; Sisley – perfect house of beauty; big name; top cosmetics; with greater keenness and style builds business; revolutionary; uniting several functions; success in quality
<i>Obrazi</i> (20/11/08)	Rich in quality fruit; one hundred percent intelligent diet; to the time of a perfect seductress and world icon; seductive , sexy , feminine , eternal ; presented revolutionary chairs; second best seller ; excellent and thrilling story; uncovered the secret of a young look; inspiration in a magic story ; holiday products; uncovers true beauty; prepared novelties ; discover variety; inspires with positive feelings ; efficient , simple , clever solution; satisfaction with the result
<i>Obrazi</i> (28/11/08)	Symbols and words of life in jewellery; every jewellery has a story; walk into a new day; provides an instant effect; provides young look; a touch of the past ; will satisfy sports hours; sparkling career; sophisticated mix; playfully , upper note; enthuses one of the sets; secret of timeless beauty; soft , glowing , full of energy; presents luxury; experience your dreams; unstoppable perfume; sensuous gel; make the morning beautiful; trendy idea; high technology; simple ; perfect as a gift; neatly wrapped; neat pots and nice trays; nice surprise ; perfect ; trip in the magic world of memories

Production of hybrid messages

In-depth interviews show that marketing agents are responsible for initiating the production of hybrid messages in *Obrazi*, and they have three different reasons for doing so.

The first reason marketing agents offer advertisers editorial support in a magazine or the publication of short hybrid message is as a bonus for good clients,⁵ those who advertise frequently in a magazine. "Usually short news items and editorial support is offered without hesitation to those advertisers, for whom we know that they advertise with us a lot on a monthly basis" (Marketing Agent C).

The second reason for the publication of hybrid messages is that marketing agents want to attract new advertisers. "We publish the news to a potential advertiser so

as to attract their attention. If the news gets positive response and the advertiser is satisfied with it, he will make a quicker decision about advertising in printed media in future” (Marketing Agent B).⁶

The third reason is humanitarian, when news is published for the purpose of charity. Here belongs also news which comes to the magazine based on acquaintances or various interests of marketing agents. Such news is regarded as ‘friendly support’ (Marketing Agent C).

As previously mentioned, there are always a limited number of pages available for short news items. If the issue is larger (more than one hundred pages), then hybrid messages get two pages, but otherwise only one page is devoted to hybrid messages. Marketing agents agree among themselves which eight or sixteen news most deserve publication: which ones, therefore, are really important.

This research confirms the results of Erjavec’s study (2004) which suggests that the advertisers have two key goals: to gain favourable publicity for the organization among readers and/or to achieve the identification of a new or improved product or service among readers. The link between the advertisers and the editors/journalists is the magazine marketing sector with its marketing agents, who consider hybrid messages as advertisements, and therefore direct their production in the magazine. Hybrid messages are actually market goods with a well-known price, which is triple the price of an advertisement of the same length.

Ordering of hybrid messages to the editor or journalists

Marketing agents frequently offer big advertisers discounts for advertising and support. Therefore, it also sometimes happens that news of events which may not belong in the magazine or match its general concept gets published. “If we have a contract with a big advertiser, who is holding a grand event, it is expected for the journalists and media representatives to attend the event and write about it. To what extent will the event be recorded naturally depends on how important the advertiser is and what the event is. Then we agree with editor or with assistant editor about the publication of the event, its length and position in the magazine” (Marketing Agent B).

In-depth interviews show that marketing agents place the interests of advertisers above the content itself. “If an advertiser orders an ad and voices his demands, which relate to the editorial support, then hybrid advice articles have advantage over other articles” (Marketing Agent A). If the content is linked to the advert, it takes precedence over regular, non-hybrid articles.

In this manner certain articles, which are the copyright work of a journalist, can be removed from the magazine for marketing reasons and replaced by hybrid messages in the form of an advisory article (editorial support) that reflects the interests of advertisers. This primarily happens for financial reasons and the response to hybrid messages is positive, because in the end everyone benefits: journalists by giving them a better income and working conditions, owners and the management with the financial benefits and advertisers with new possibilities for advertising, as confirmed by Erjavec’s study (Erjavec, 2004).

While they are gathering information and writing hybrid messages, marketing agents require the total support and cooperation of an editor or assistant editor. "Marketing agents always order a certain amount of articles in the form of editorial support and short news items. We have to stick to this. Usually we get a list of adverts and a list of hybrid messages a few days before going to print but in any case it depends on what kind of an article it is about. If perhaps the person placing an order has other wishes, the journalist is informed about it in time" (Assistant editor).⁷

Who writes hybrid messages?

Marketing agents can choose a journalist to write a hybrid message. "If a certain hybrid message brings a large profit and a good deal with the advertiser, then we inform the editor and assistant editor about its publication and choose a journalist, who will write the hybrid message. The selection of a journalist is in most cases our business" (Marketing Agent B).

The marketing agent always discusses hybrid messages in a magazine with the journalist who will write it. "Normally we present the needs of the advertiser (in this case it is an advertising agency or advertiser directly) and send the entire material he or she sends to us. These are various notices, PR articles, other promotional material and requests as to how the article should be written" (Marketing Agent B).

How do marketing agents decide which journalist will write the promotional article? "We make a decision mostly on the basis of previous experience. The most important in this case is reliability, because it is extremely important that the work is done within a deadline and according to the advertiser's wishes. Personally I chose a different journalist every time at the beginning and so found out who was the most reliable and who got the job done well. Now I am working with two journalists and the work is flawless" (Marketing Agent A).⁸

And how does a journalist respond to a request by the marketing agent to write a hybrid message? "Usually journalists accept the work we offer. Particularly because in most cases it is a fairly easy job, which is normally paid the same as one done by the journalist on his or her own. When a journalist writes a short news items or advice article, he or she receives the whole material and wishes of the advertiser via e-mail. Then he or she formulates the material and changes it in his or her own way into a short news items or advice article" (Marketing Agent C).

'Journalistic' forming of hybrid messages

Involved observation has shown that advertisers do not interfere with the writing of hybrid messages. To them it is important that hybrid messages contain all the crucial information, which is usually separately marked also in promotion materials.

The length of the message is usually determined by the marketing agent, and length is the only rule that journalists have to follow. When the item is finished and set, a preview may be sent to the advertiser. This is not common practice, but an exception can be made upon advertiser's request.

Editorial support follows a completely different procedure. There the advertiser always sees previews of articles. "In this way the advertiser has every right to change the text or include other information. He or she can change the entire text or only a part of it" (Journalist A).⁹

In order to avoid additional work and numerous corrections from advertisers, journalists often follow the promotional material (PR articles) when writing hybrid messages. "In this way we are faced with much less work and inconvenience and also the advertisers are most content with it. It has sometimes turned out that we wrote about a certain topic differently than advertisers would have wanted it, simply because we did not follow all information from the promotional material. Therefore, misunderstandings arose and advertisers wanted corrections in articles. At the end we had double work, since in such a situation a new article had to be written upon the request of the advertiser" (Journalist B).¹⁰

"However, we cannot forget to include all the excellent characteristics and advantages of a new product or service of the advertiser. It is important that the whole hybrid message contains positive writing" (Journalist C).¹¹

Selection of hybrid messages

The selection of events and facts is entirely in the domain of advertisers, whose orders are realized within the structure of the magazine by the marketing sector. The marketing sector sends a journalist on an assignment to write a hybrid message or to cover a 'pseudo-event', which is in some sense an unreal event and has no rational meaning and no point outside the circle of the media for which it was designed (Boorstin, 1962). "Pseudo-events are still mostly characterised as various events which would not have occurred if journalists or marketing agents, who were sent there, were not present. Here belong even some press conferences, which have lately been quite different from the ones we were used to in the past. Press conferences, which we have to attend due to our marketing agents and advertisers, have become some sort of a gathering which in addition to an official part always carries with it the unofficial part. There advertisers during a sports activity, dinner or some other activity meet journalists, get in touch with them and with a present or other surprise make sure that the event or the new product will be written about" (Journalist A).

Promotional events, press conferences and social events have with time become the same, so that nowadays we can no longer tell which we have attended. "The fact is that in each event first the product is shown and then there is time for questions; at the end there is the social part, so that actually a press conference evolves into a social event" (Journalist C).

The invitation alone is that which gets the attention, so that a journalist can choose one event from the multitude of events. "Of course this is no longer a press conference, where a new product or service would be presented, but it is a social gathering, where journalists are shown a novelty in an interesting and different manner. At the end participants receive a gift" (Advertiser A).¹² If a journalist attends the event, the advertiser expects the publication of short news items about the event. Observation with participation has shown that journalists get all the relevant

material at these events that they require for the publication of the news. Normally pictures and promotion material are compiled on a CD or USB device so that the writing of the short news items does not take much time.

Sometimes the marketing sector asks the editor to publish a text written by the advertiser. In editing advertisers also have a decisive role, because they demand that hybrid message items be published on certain pages or on pages with certain content. "If advertisers utter such a wish and pay for the article then we have to grant their wish, unless one of their wishes is highly controversial and is not in accordance with the editorial policy. In such cases we confer about it with marketing agents as well as the advertiser him/herself" (Assistant Editor A).

Social practice: commercialization of life-style magazines

Social practice is the third dimension of discourse (Fairclough, 1989, 1992) and the explanation of the context of discourse samples is its main function. Because broader social practice is not the main focus of this study, I only try to explain broader developments in journalism that have stimulated the development of hybrid message discourse.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the marketing approach to journalism started taking over the classical, and in recent decades it has become the prevailing style of journalistic reporting. A key characteristic of the commercialization of journalism (based on Erjavec, 2004) is its primary subordination to the business sphere and its logic of profit maximization. This logic encompasses three general principles (McManus, 1994): (1) increase your audience as much as possible, (2) decrease your costs as much as possible and (3) do not stand in the way of the big advertisers and other interests of the owner. According to Poler Kovačič (2005) the core of marketing journalism actually contains marketing logic; the main goal is to increase profits while other goals--which are part of the so-called normative journalism concept--are subordinate to the supreme goal of profitability. As established with the analysis, this applies also to lifestyle magazines, since the research has revealed that hybrid messages ordered by advertisers take precedence over non-hybrid articles in magazines. The number of advertisements in an individual issue of a magazine, however, depends also on the length of the magazine. In the case of *Obrazi*, issues range in size from 84 to 120 pages, depending on the number of pages of advertisements. Therefore, the size and content of the magazine is also always connected to marketing.

But this has serious consequences. According to Hardt (1996), the invasion of marketing logic into journalism has serious consequences for journalistic reporting, because a new system of information collection and distribution appears, in addition to a new structure of authority for defining the nature and type of information that comes into print, and that provides the foundation for social and political decision-making. Journalism derived from the practice of advertising and public relations promotes the construction of corporate realities at the expense of a common-sense desire for a fair and truthful representation of everyday life. Journalists have started to serve the interests of the commercial class and a new understanding of the public interest has arisen. This submission of journalism as cultural

practice to the economic logic of the market has enabled the development of promotional journalistic discourse, or in this case hybrid reporting, where marketing plays the key role.

Conclusion

The study which I conducted in this article is based on Fairclough's CDA (1992, 1995a, 1995b) which suggests a multidimensional approach to media discourse. Based on Erjavec (2004), the analysis focuses on three dimensions of the communicative event: text, discourse practice and social practice. The analysis of the text is linguistic; the analysis of discourse practice is intertextual and interdiscursual. The analyst is searching for 'traces' of the process of production, trying to find indications of how the text can be interpreted. Fairclough's discourse analysis is an analysis of the text, and as discourse refers to the whole process of social interaction of which the text is only a part. But text analysis must be combined with an analysis of discourse processes, i.e., the processes of text production and interpretation. In this case the analyst is in a better position to understand why and how the text is constructed as it is.

This approach has been conducted in the analysis of hybrid messages. In a 2004 article, Erjavec analysed hybrid promotional news discourse in Slovenian newspapers. The purpose of my research was to analyse hybrid messages in the lifestyle magazine *Obrazi*. With this analysis, I have filled a gap in the research. This approach was very effective, because hybrid messages are illegal and in many cases difficult to identify. Had I relied solely on text analysis, I could not have identified the subject of the analysis. The analysis of interpractice has also enabled me to uncover how the promotional nature of the hybrid messages analysed has been concealed, which would have been difficult to reveal through text analysis alone.

The analysis of production practice has enabled me to uncover the production processes, in which the hybrid message's producer is subordinated to the advertiser at all stages of production, and has enabled me to uncover the motives and purposes of the participants in the hybrid message production process. The pressure exerted by marketing agents on the magazine *Obrazi*, the positive attitude towards this practice demonstrated by marketing agents and advertisers, the very different responses of journalists and editors to this practice and the commercialization of journalism in Slovenia in recent years have all contributed to the spreading of hybrid message discourse.

The analysis of interdiscursivity of hybrid messages has shown how, through textual devices (generic structure, genre, vocabulary), journalists incorporate discursive elements of promotion, which are drawn upon within hybrid messages discourse.

Hybrid message discourse could be identified through the production process, which reveals that the key actors in the process of production of hybrid messages are the marketing agent and the advertiser. This reveals a partial, positive-only evaluation of the characteristics/activities of an organization and its product or service.

ENDNOTES:

- ¹ One page of color advertisement in magazine *Obrazi* cost around 2.500 €. (*Oglaševanje v letu 2009*. Dostopno na: http://public.edition-on.net/DeloRevije/oglasovanje_2009.html. Datum dostopa: 20. 2. 2009).
- ² Lists of advertisements in the magazine *Obrazi* for the year 2008 (from number 1 to number 40).
- ³ *Oglaševanje v letu 2009* (2009). Dostopno na: http://public.edition-on.net/DeloRevije/oglasovanje_2009.html. (20. 2. 2009)
- ⁴ The number of pages varies regarding the amount of adverts. If there are less than five pages of adverts, the magazine has 84 pages, if there are 5-12 pages of adverts, the magazine has 92 pages, if there are more than 12 pages, the magazine has one hundred pages in total (Assistant editor).
- ⁵ "A good advertiser is the one who has at least one one-page advert in a magazine per month" (Marketing Agent B).
- ⁶ Interview with Marketing Agent B, 28.1.2009.
- ⁷ Interview with Assistant editor, 3.2.2009.
- ⁸ Interview with Marketing Agent B, 28.1.2009.
- ⁹ Interview with Journalist A, 24.1.2009.
- ¹⁰ Interview with Journalist B, 24.1.2009.
- ¹¹ Interview with Journalist C, 27.1.2009.
- ¹² Interview with Advertiser A, 4.2.2009.

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Miješane poruke u časopisima: Studija slučaja časopisa *Obrazi*

Katarina Štular

SAŽETAK

Posljednjih godina, medijski kritičari su izrazili veliku zabrinutost zbog nejasnih razgraničenja između dviju vrsta novinskih sadržaja: oglasa i uredničkog sadržaja. Cilj ovog rada jest da pokaže miješane novinarski i oglašivački diskurs na razini teksta. Koristim Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis pristup i kombiniram analizu tekstova i analizu diskursa u proučavanju i tumačenju teksta. Cilj rada je, između ostalog, ukazati na korist od Fairclough's version of Critical Discourse Analysis kroz miješane poruke u miješanom diskursu s opažanjem sudionika i ciljanim intervjuima. Analiziram kako su miješane poruke u časopisu *Obrazi* bile konstruirane i tko je utjecao na njihovo osmišljavanje.

Rezultati pokazuju da postoje dva žanra miješanih poruka: kratke informativne poruke i miješani savjetodavni članci. Miješane poruke imaju prednost pred nemiješanim člancima. Prije nego što časopise ide u tisak, oglašivači mogu provjeriti miješane poruke i promijeniti ih. Čineći to, ulaze u ulogu novinara I time novinari prestaju biti ti koji odlučuju na koji će način sadržaj biti predstavljen.

Analiza proizvodnje je razotkrila motive i svrhe sudionika u procesu proizvodnje miješanih poruka. Analiza diskursa pokazala je, kroz tekst, da novinari u promoviranju uključuju elemente diskursa koji su temeljeni na miješanim porukama.

Ključne riječi: miješane poruke, časopis o stilu života, oglašavanje, novinarstvo, interdiskurzivnost, praksa produkcije