

“Visual research methodologies: branding and magazine readerships”

By Mirsini Trigoni

1. Introduction

The increase in home magazine titles in the late 1990s was an effect of the increase in the housing market (*Key Note*, 2005, p. 33). Property prices had increased substantially and owners wanted to make the most of their investment. Since then contemporary consumers have seemed over-interested, maybe even obsessed, with aesthetic matters and visual impressions. In this respect they are not only preoccupied with their own appearance but with that of their private spaces as well. Home is an extension and sign of one's life, appearance or lifestyle; the home becomes a reflection of a person's personality and cultural background, a projection of who the inhabitant really is (Leiss *et al.*, 2005). The hectic nature of modern life has resulted in consumers needing a “balanced” interior space where they can be comforted and rejuvenated; in this case, the house becomes a sanctuary: “create a quiet corner for peaceful contemplation and take time out to reflect” (*Elle Decoration* January 2006, p. 93). Interior magazines can become a means to escape reality; the interior space becomes the means for subjective fantasies; the reader takes pleasure in the reading process and dreams themselves into the depicted interiors (Campbell, 1987).

Within the field of cultural studies various scholars have already researched magazines from the perspective of ideological studies looking at gender and person representations (for instance: Attwood, 2005; Ballaster *et al.*, 1991; Carter, 2011; Gauntlett, 2008; Gill, 2007; Gough-Yates, 2003; McRobbie, 2000; Gormna-Murray, 2014). Additionally, despite the very large amount of work done on women's and men's magazines (for instance: Anderson and Mosbacher, 1997; Benwell, 2003; Crewe, 2003; Duffy, 2013; Hermes, 1995; Jackson *et al.*, 2001; Machin and Thornborrow, 2003; McCracken, 1992; Pendergast, 2000; Pitzulo, 2011; Stevenson *et al.*, 2000; Whitehorne, 2010; Winship, 1987), far less attention has been paid to interior magazines. In particular, the affinity between home magazines and representations of interior spaces has been neglected. This paper therefore looks at interior magazines in a very specific way; it explores how interior spaces can be differently represented across home magazines of different background and target audiences and investigates how visual texts can differentiate a brand, encourage brand loyalty and target different market segments.

The findings of this research and the way of looking at magazine texts, however, can be applicable to visual texts in general. In particular these findings could be used to analyse fashion photography in editorial, fashion advertising, fashion brand websites and social media, thereby assisting in the analysis of fashion photography and the relationship between fashion items, set design, styling of space, target audiences, branding and visual communication; exploring further how fashion photography can effectively target different market segments and enhance a fashion brand and its identity.

The method of analysing interior spaces/set design presented in this paper can be developed further to provide in depth analysis of window and in store display design and the use of display design and visual merchandising as a way to reflect the fashion brand identity, target-specific market segments, differentiate and gain competitive advantage.

2. Literature review

The literature review encompasses a number of relevant and related themes including creative devices, architecture, commercial photography and fashion retail spaces and product presentation. In the following section some references will be made to the advertising industry. This is happening because advertisements and editorial content have a lot in common; their production, consumption and content have strong resemblance and relevance to one another and in the media, advertising and editorial techniques are often interwoven.

2.1 Creative devices

The literature review has revealed a range of devices in the production of an advertisement in order to capture consumers' attention. A common practitioners' technique to capture the audience's attention and promote a product is through stimuli means such as novelty, contrasting, striking and unusual visual imagery, "emotional triggers", "shock-inducing visuals", humour, drama, "aesthetic and spectacular elements" have been extensively used by creatives (Admap, 2003; Beck, 1997; Falk, 1994, pp. 179-180; Leiss *et al.*, 2005, pp. 231-232, 417; White, 2000, pp. 91-92). Leiss *et al.* (2005) mark the power of "iconic representation in presenting product-related imagery" and argue that visual images can effectively be registered in humans' retention; they seem to work better than solely verbal information, they can be unconsciously absorbed and create an impact overlooking verbal explanations (pp. 230-232).

Beck (1997) especially explores the use of emotional stimuli in advertisements and in magazines' editorials, and the ability of print advertisements and magazines' editorial content to generate emotions through this medium. Her research shows that print advertisements that contain positive emotional stimuli can arouse notably more positive emotions, such as happiness, enthusiasm and love, than neutral advertisements. Additionally, based on her interviews Beck argues that magazines of different types (e.g. women's, parenting, home or men's magazines) emphasize corresponding or different emotions within their editorials such as enjoyment, desire, feeling understood, comfort and optimism. Specifically, in the case of home decorating magazines, she underlines that while initially the main function was to inform the reader, more recently they have become more emotional. Rather than promoting the functional aspect of the interiors any more they now adopt the "cocooning trend", through the promotion of emotions such as "security" and "warmth", and they highlight the enjoyment of life as central through lively and pleasant interior depictions. For instance, it is no longer the functional kitchen that appeals to readers, but the kitchen that can be lived in and enjoyed. Beck (1997) points out the potentialities of emotional stimuli, and signals the ability of emotional stimuli to capture the viewer's attention and argues that this technique can create a positive attitude towards a brand and to highlight the traits of a product. She also points out the ability of magazines to adopt an emotional editorial content makes them "particularly suitable to carry emotional messages"; for example through ads with emotional advertising messages. She suggests therefore that practitioners should take more advantage of this technique.

Storytelling and especially strong, emotional stories are a significant component of successful branding (Healey, 2008). The creation of a coherent story is also a key device in advertising in order to capture consumers' attention. The importance in this case is "to integrate the brand into the story, so that attention goes with the brand and its selling points, just as with the narrative" (Admap, 2003). This integration is important, as with all the attention getting devices such as humour, so that the narrative does not "overshadow" the brand and the advertising message that may result, and leave the consumer remembering the advertisement but not the brand or the accompanying message (Admap, 2003). Leiss *et al.* (2005) make an interesting remark about this idea and argue that creatives transfer messages that have "a rich filmic look and feel. Ads masquerade as movie trailers, sporting events, music videos, videogames, vignettes, reality TV programs, soap operas, and celebrity talks shows"; this "filmic look" can be used to attract the attention of viewers (Leiss *et al.*, 2005, pp. 431-432; Falk, 1994, pp. 179-180). Similarly, Unwin's study of audiences points out the efficiency of this method; she suggests that advertisements that adopt the recognizable language of a movie, a celebrity, or any well-known style "can be created more easily and can communicate more effectively than advertising written in usual advertising style" (FDFD Unwin, 1982 as cited in Leiss *et al.*, 2005, pp. 431-432).

This study explores the major creative devices used by creatives in the production of features; how each magazine creates a distinctive style of features and how visual texts can differentiate a brand and encourage brand loyalty.

2.2 Architecture, commercial photography and fashion retail spaces

The literature review has revealed a strong linkage between architecture and commercial photography (Arnold, 1999; Barrie-Anthony, 2006; Hornbeck, 1999; Steiner, 2000). In the past not only spectacular, renowned architectural buildings which are easily identifiable to wider audiences, but also "quiet" and "remote" buildings known to limited, specialized audiences (such as the baths by Peter Zumthor in Vals) are used as backdrops for commercial purposes (Steiner, 2000). The reason behind these choices is on one level to produce "a spiritual atmosphere" while appealing to an audience educated enough to recognize the depicted buildings (Steiner, 2000, pp. 20-23). At a second level it is to associate and transfer the aesthetic, social and economic qualities of the building to the depicted products (Barrie-Anthony, 2006; Hornbeck, 1999).

Steven Barrie-Anthony (2006) specifically explores the use of American "high" architecture in

contemporary advertisements as well as the potentialities of this association. The practitioners responsible for these advertisements “are scrupulously aware of the architecture they feature; each shot is meant to convey specific social, aesthetic and economic values and to associate them with the brand”. In this case the building is easily recognizable and stands for “beauty, sophistication and aspiration, for confident urbanity”; “high” architecture in advertisements seems a valuable medium to promote products “especially for well-heeled people who imagine themselves worthy” (Bob Garfield in Barrie-Anthony, 2006). The architectural building seems to lend its qualities and principles to the advertised products. These seem to be the reasons for contemporary architectural buildings being used extensively as backdrops in advertisements. For instance, the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles by Frank Gehry has been used for advertisements by a wide range of brands and product sectors; such as Skyy Vodka, Microsoft, Sony, Supercuts, Macy’s, Vidal Sassoon, Nokia, M&M’s, Bass Ale, Oral B and several automobile companies. Other buildings have had the same fate, such as the Caltrans building in Los Angeles Pacific Design Center, the Los Angeles Convention Center, the Southern California Institute of Architecture and the Pomona Campus of Diamond Ranch High School. Steven Barrie-Anthony points out that the depiction of “high” architecture in advertisements has to do with the fact that the contemporary audience is “starting to have a higher aesthetic” and to be challenged by “high design” (Barrie-Anthony, 2006). There is also a tendency in the fashion industry to employ architectural buildings, strategies and “star architects” in order to produce their imagery (Barreneche, 2008; Dowdy, 2008; Moore *et al.*, 2010; Steiner, 2000). Especially in the case of flagship stores, the architecture of the building can assist the fashion brand not only to stand out from their competitors but to differentiate the flagship store from the other stores that the brand owns (Nobbs *et al.*, 2012). Herzog and de Meuron designed the Prada flagship store in Tokyo, Zaha Hadid Architects designed the Stuart Weitzman flagship store in Milan; OMA designed the Prada store in New York, Future Systems designed the flagship store for New Look in London, Frank Gehry designed the window displays for Louis Vuitton in September 2014 and the Louis Vuitton foundation. The collaboration with renowned architects can really enhance the fashion brand image and generate a different brand experience (Moore *et al.*, 2010).

Distinguished buildings have also been used as part of a store’s locational planning for fashion brands. The prestige, status and heritage of these buildings are being transferred to the fashion brands and their products (Moore *et al.*, 2010). Ralph Lauren’s flagship store occupies the Rhineland mansion in New York; likewise Prada has taken up the Guggenheim building in New York; Jil Sander acquired the Royal Bank Building in London and Burberry’s flagship store occupies an old cinema place in London. Etro has acquired a nineteenth-century building in Bold Street that used to be an art gallery. This study will explore the use of renowned architecture as a location for photo shoots and the possible implications that may have.

2.3 Product presentation

The existing literature has shown the affinity between minimal and classical compositions, luxurious products and elite audiences (Goldman, 1992; Leiss *et al.*, 2005; Messaris, 1997). While for Messaris (1997) classical style compositions, such as simplicity, austere presentation of goods and order, in advertising indicates classy and sober qualities of the products, their high status rather than wealth, to a high-class audience, Leiss *et al.* (2005, p. 548) argue that pictorial or verbal reference to the “classics” denotes authenticity and disassociates luxury products both from mass-produced ones and from fashion trends. Leiss *et al.* (2005) argue that it was the twentieth century that linked the notions of abundance and wealth with the austere presentation of goods. By creating compositions with just one product or a small number of them, advertisers could highlight effectively their “uniqueness”. From this perspective, advertisers present luxurious products in austere displays – products presented as art – while the existence of their brand name seems enough to promote them. The authors argue that as luxurious products are “displayed for serious contemplation” advertisers avoid using humorous and playful techniques; rather they tend to present objects as art pieces with as few as possible distracting elements (Leiss *et al.*, 2005, p. 534).

Previous studies (Serraino, 2002; Young, 2006) have also shown that while “the pursuit of emptiness” is an effective way to represent a building and pass on architectural ideas to a specialist audience, through the use of props and models, that can reveal occupancy, consumption and lifestyle, and thereby make design ideas more accessible to a wider, non-specialist, audience. Through the use of props and models readers can envision themselves in the depicted space (Serraino, 2002). This research will show whether minimalism, classical style compositions and use of props and models is a general technique that interior magazines apply.

3. Methodology

This study draws on material from comparative analysis within three London-based, home interest magazines. In order for this study to be comprehensive, it focuses on three magazines that are published in Britain and aims at diverse market segments. As case studies three magazines have been chosen: *Wallpaper*, an international magazine that has managed to gain world media and expert attention since it was first published in 1996; *Elle Decoration*, an interior magazine with local editions worldwide, however, this study focuses on its British edition; and *Ideal Home*, Britain's bestselling home magazine with a notable history in the magazine industry since 1920. What these magazines have in common is their interest in interior spaces and this is where the focus of this study and interest lies; in their representations of interior spaces and the ability of visual texts and photographs to differentiate a brand, encourage brand loyalty and target different market segments.

In order to explore the visual texts of these magazines a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods has been chosen. Quantitative content analysis has been selected which has typically been used to look at texts and count "the frequency of certain visual elements in a clearly defined sample of images, and then analysing those frequencies" (Rose, 2012, p. 87). This study has adapted content analysis so as to explore in depth the texts of magazines. The method has been developed in order to produce an analytical tool capable of capturing the variations of interior space and its dynamic and atmosphere. In this respect the dynamic of the text is being explored, rather than just the content of the text as content analysis normally does. Indeed, content analysis was the best available method that could be used in this study as it allowed the researcher to thoroughly "look at" and deconstruct visual texts and to systematically record, count and compare particular elements within a huge number of photographs extracted from three different magazines.

Furthermore, qualitative fieldwork observations have been conducted in four London-based home magazines' editorial offices, using selective elements from diverse fields such as semiotics and visual theories (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001; 2002; 2006), sociology (Bourdieu, 1984), anthropology (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981), advertising and media studies (Leiss *et al.*, 2005; Messaris, 1997). Fieldwork remarks and selective concepts from the above-mentioned fields enabled the researcher to interpret and further explore the quantitative data.

Bourdieu's (1984) study which explores taste within social classes in France shows that people's taste and consumption of goods is strongly connected to their cultural and social capital. Cultural capital is knowledge that has been gained either early in life within the family circle and from daily contact with forms of legitimate culture, or later in life through schooling and personal effort (educational capital). Social capital is the social class from which a person originates. Bourdieu's extensive research goes into great detail about the variants within each social class and their taste in a wide range of material and non-material commodities, however, for the purposes of this study the researcher borrows selective concepts from his theory, focusing particularly on distinctions drawn between aesthetic dispositions associated with upper-class, middle-class and working-class tastes.

The researcher acknowledges that Bourdieu was working in, exploring and referring to French society in the 1960s and that his suggestions in the context of current British society may appear rigid, absolute or even out of date. The researcher also acknowledges that magazines do not link to social groups as such but are better described in terms of market segments. Magazines are addressing "lifestyle segmentations" and target markets (Gough-Yates, 2003, p. 2). Magazines' professionals aim not at social groups but at target markets of female and male consumers. However, in the context of the UK's magazines under investigation, Bourdieu's concepts can be valid to an extent; his theories on social groups' aesthetic preferences are not rules and imperatives so much as useful concepts in order to understand the magazine industry, magazines' readers and representations of interior space. Consequently, each case study magazine does not correspond to one specific social group; for example, *Ideal Home* to the working or middle class. Rather, specific concepts from Bourdieu's theory can be applicable to the case study magazines. Therefore, in this study the researcher explores representations of interior spaces in terms of media professionals aiming at different market segments.

In the following section key concepts from the work of Bourdieu will be presented as these will better enable the analysis of the magazines' visual texts.

As far as the taste cultures associated with the "working-class" aesthetic is concerned, according to Bourdieu (1984), what characterizes working-class members is the "taste of necessity" that spreads through every aspect of their life and impels them towards economic, practical and classic choices. They try to achieve the "maximum effect" with the "minimum cost" and often turn to "bargains" and consequently to "irrational" and extravagant purchases. The working class follows a "submission to necessity" and strongly inclines towards functionality instead of the aesthetic for purely aesthetic reasons. They tend to decorate

according to “established conventions” and only those interior spaces that are meant to be decorated. They mainly select objects that would characterize their social class without any attempt to be distinguished from it (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 374-384). In art, they incline towards simple dramas with clear messages that will be easy for them to participate in and identify with (Bourdieu, 1984). This concept of submission to necessity can be extended to understand how the magazine industry works. This research will explore which of the case study magazines address this “submission”; to what extent and, most importantly, how.

As far as the middle class is concerned, (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 253) proposes that the “middle classes are committed to the symbolic”. This makes them too preoccupied with the appearance not only of themselves but also of others. Motivated by their insecurity of what their appearance may reveal, they attempt to create an image of positive attributes; as a result, they often overdo it (Bourdieu, 1984). They value culture but at the same time they are estranged from it; they seem unable to recognize pure culture and consequently they end up in heterogeneous choices in their daily practices. However, they are full of “goodwill” to expand their way of living not only practically, for example by improving the interior space of their homes, but also intellectually through the integration with legitimate culture such as through popularized magazines or “light” shows. But this attempt does not succeed, as this type of culture is beyond their scope or potential and therefore loses its value through middle-class popularized endeavours (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 319-326). The commitment to the symbolic and “ordinary popularization” are two valuable concepts that could assist exploring magazine features and the style and character of their published interiors; particularly interior spaces based on specific architectural styles such as art deco, easily adoptable by their readers through following clearly explained rules or steps but also heterogeneous, very simplified and cheap reproductions with features that present solutions and advice, such as how to maximize the use of their domestic spaces or how to create a “fake” impression such as an antique look.

Additionally, Bourdieu argues that upper-class members’ taste is shaped by their economic and cultural capital and by their social origin. As a result, there are two different factions, two different types of “tastes” and lifestyles within the “social space”: “intellectual taste” and “bourgeoisie taste”. In the first case, individuals owe their positions in the upper class to their personal effort, through their education later in life; and they have shaped an inexpensive, austere but also “better equipped” and “daring” taste in the consumption of materials and non-material commodities. In the second case, individuals have gained their cultural capital early in life within their families and in reality they have inherited the taste of their distinctive class; their taste is “modal”, “temperate”, “based on average competence” and they incline towards luxurious commodities and prestigious activities (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 264-286).

The concept of “intellectual taste” is very interesting as it is a taste of austerity that is based on education and has as a result “prudent” and “homogeneous” choices. As one of the case study magazines aims at an elite audience, the results aspire to explore this affinity between high cultural and economic capital, minimalism, asceticism and homogeneity in aesthetic dispositions.

In order to better understand the different tastes among the social classes it is also important to juxtapose Bourdieu’s notions of “pure taste” and “barbarous taste”. According to Bourdieu, “pure taste” and its aesthetic rested on the refusal of pleasure that derives from submission to “immediate” and “primitive” sensations. “Pure taste” rejects everything that is “facile” or too “simple”, rejects everything that does not culturally challenge the individual and therefore is too easy for him/her to decipher. These kinds of “works” can be regarded as an offence to a refined and demanding audience (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 486).

At the very opposite of “pure taste” stands “barbarous taste”, which is strongly connected with the working class. “Barbarous taste” is a “popular aesthetic” that values information and “legibility” in works of art; “works” that are easily decoded and do not confuse their audience with vague representations; works of art that celebrate “the beauty and the joy of the world” and offer pleasures that are strongly connected with the “charm” of the senses. Consequently, “barbarous taste” rejects “abstract” works such as cubist painting which working-class members feel powerless to comprehend and are inclined towards “a respectful, humble, submissive representation of objects designated by their beauty and their social importance” (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 42-44).

Another interesting point from Bourdieu’s work that will help to explain the kind of photographs that the case magazines use is that each social class can be distinguished by its aesthetic preferences in “legitimate works” such as photography or painting; people’s opinions about what themes or combination of objects can make a beautiful photograph vary according to their educational capital (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 40). According to his study members of the working class incline to refuse “photography for photography’s sake e.g. the photo of pebbles, as useless, perverse or bourgeois” and adopt an aesthetic that judges a photograph according to its depicted theme or potential use of the photograph itself (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 40-41). For them, important elements of a photograph seem to be its use and its realism; in this case the

important element is the information and the readability of the information. As they expect each photograph to have a function, they tend to classify them into categories, for example, “competition photo”, “educational photo”. They value colour photography and tend to believe that colours can enhance the beauty of the photograph. This is happening because for working-class people “aesthetic pleasure” is strongly connected with the “charm” of the senses. Even abstract photographs or paintings seem to confuse working-class people as it seems difficult for them to decode them, and because this abstraction seems to oppose the “beauty” that they seek in works of art. Therefore, they incline towards realistic depictions of modest objects selected for their beauty (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 41-44).

3.1 Time frame

This research refers to an exploration that took place between 1997 and 2006 with the aim of capturing the beginning of stylized interior features, which started appearing in home magazines in the late 1990s.

3.2 Categories of features

The objective of the study was to explore only those types of feature produced in all of the three case study magazines. Therefore, only interior photo shoots/features and interior fashion shoots/features have been included. These photo shoots/features have been classified into three categories. First is the “interior” category, which includes features that present and promote furniture and interior accessories. Second is the “still life” category, which includes features that depict only groups of objects, usually domestic in nature. These items are displayed on a surface such as a table and are photographed at close distance. Third is the “people” category, which is either a combination of an interior and a fashion shoot feature, where furniture and interior accessories are presented along with models that promote fashion items, or it is an interior photo shoot which includes models to give a human dimension to the space, but they are not present to advertise clothes.

3.3 Sample volume

The objective was to systematically select features from each magazine. However, the researcher could not use a “systematic” sampling strategy, as it was not possible to select every *n*th unit from the sampling frame, as some magazine issues were missing and it was difficult to locate them or they were badly damaged and not possible to use. Additionally, a “systematic” sampling technique seemed insufficient for this study, as it was important to avoid bias connected to “periodicity” (Riffe *et al.*, 1998, p. 103). For instance, the same month’s issues every year may contain the same kind, number and style of features every time. For example, the December issue devoted to Christmas. Therefore, a more “flexible” sampling strategy was required that would enable the researcher to pass over the missing issues and the selection of the same month’s issues. For these reasons, “stratified” method was chosen as appropriate sampling method. In the stratified method, the researcher divides the entire population into sub-categories and then randomly chooses units from the different groups (Riffe *et al.*, 1998). Therefore, the researcher chose at random one issue from each season, therefore four issues per year. Each issue contained a different number of features each time, in which case a “stratified” strategy has been applied again, and the researcher chose at random one feature that corresponded to the categories “interior”, “still life” and “people” features. By using the “stratified” method it was assured that there would be a representative sample from each category of features. In the end 10 per cent of the features that these magazines contained have been selected and in total 524 images has been analysed: 181 images from *Wallpaper*, 223 images from *Elle Decoration*; 120 images from *Ideal Home*.

3.4 Coding forms

In order to shape the coding forms a variety of issues have been taken into consideration: the aims of this study; studies of analysis of paintings, visual methodologies, architectural composition, media studies, advertising and anthropology; fieldwork observations and personal experience of consumer of magazines; short tests and two pilot studies underlined problematic areas in the coding form and equivocator questions. A point was reached where it seemed that nothing could be added that would give another important insight. The result was a detailed coding form of 13 basic categories (please see Table I). Under each of these categories several sub-categories have been created (please see example in Table II).

- 1 Identification
- 2 Size of photograph
- 3 Illustration
- 4 Spatial organization/composition
- 5 Colour
- 6 Lighting
- 7 Materials
- 8 Styling of space
- 9 Elements of architectural styles
- 10 Elements of space
- 11 Products
- 12 Suppliers of products – credits
- 13 Models

Table I.

13 basic categories of the coding form

a	Space: (tick one)
	i) 3D Space
	ii) 2D Space
b	Lines: Which are the dominant lines within the image? (tick more than one if necessary)
	i) Vertical lines
	ii) Horizontal lines
	iii) Diagonal lines
	iv) Curves
v) There are not dominant lines	
c	Degree of proximity: (tick one)
	i) Intense proximity among the depicted objects
	ii) Medium proximity among the depicted objects
	iii) Low proximity among the depicted objects
d	Complex and controlled compositions: (tick one)
	i) Complex composition
	ii) Controlled composition
	iii) None of the above
e	Depth of space: (tick one)
	i) Narrow range of space
	ii) Medium range of space
	iii) Wide range of space
f	Balance: objects and space (tick one)
	i) Space overcrowded with products and props
	ii) Balanced space with products and props
	iii) Space with few products and props
g	Foreground-background: (tick more than one if necessary)
	i) The depicted products are uniformly spread in space
	ii) The depicted products dominate the foreground
	iii) The depicted products dominate the middle ground
	iv) The depicted products dominate the background
h	Edges of picture: (tick one)
	i) The composition is cut off at the sides
	ii) The composition is not cut off at the sides
i	Angle of view: (tick one)
	i) High angle
	ii) Low angle
	iii) Eye level
	Frontal and oblique angle: (tick one)
i) Frontal angle	
	ii) Oblique angle
j	Viewing distance: (tick one)
	i) Close distance
	ii) Medium distance
	iii) Long distance

Table II.

Spatial organization / composition sub-categories

3.5 Coding protocol

In order to ensure the reliability and objectivity of this study a “coding protocol” was produced. In this protocol, every category and subcategory of the coding forms has been defined so as to be very clear and coherent about what every subcategory involved (Krippendorff, 1980). In order to have as comprehensive a protocol as possible, many images have been included as visual explanations of each subcategory. This process of finding the appropriate explanatory images of each definition assisted in clearing up any ambiguity in the coding forms in order to make the coding as reliable as possible throughout this analysis. In the end a coding form was developed that could work not only in theory but also, and most of all, in practice. In order, therefore, to enhance the reliability and objectivity of the content analysis and to test the coding forms and protocol, an iterative process took place through the construction and execution of two pilot studies.

3.6 Text analysis

The aim in this study is to analyse the interior spaces in magazine features, their production and representation. The text analysis is focused on the production and images themselves. The aim is to deconstruct and analyse the spatial composition into its main parts such as spatial organization and colour in relation to the wider context in which these texts exist; for example, the social, cultural and economic background of the magazine itself and of its target audience.

This study adopts Rose’s (2012) thinking and attempts to provide a compositional analysis of the pictorial space in its key components: content, colour, spatial organization and light. The intention is to explore the spatial organization of an image on two levels. First, the exploration of the organization of space “within” the picture; the main “volumes” of the images and how they are arranged in relation to each other; and the contemplation of the space in which these volumes are positioned. Second, the investigation of “the way in which the picture also offers a particular position to its viewers”; how the pictures are directed so as to offer a specific viewing position to their spectator (Rose, 2012, pp. 61-65). Through this approach it is possible to explore how areal 3D space is designed in order to be presented and consumed in a 2D space.

Moreover, in order to better explore the spatial organization, the researcher follows Rose’s (2012) suggestion for a linear diagram of converging and diverging line: “draw a summary diagram of the image you’re looking at [...] look for lines that show the edge of things; extend them, and see where and how they intersect” (Rose 2012, p. 65). The good thing about this linear diagram is that it enables the researcher to better and reliably identify each image’s dominant lines, depth of space, angles of view, spatial arrangement of objects, and how complex, controlled or balanced its composition is.

As Rose (2012) argues, however, compositional interpretation has limitations as it does not give evidence of the production of the image apart from its technological and compositional aspect or possible interpretations by the viewers. Additionally, content analysis has limitations, because it is very difficult to “evoke the mood or the affect of an image through codes”, and therefore attention is paid to the image itself and its production, while the reader’s personal interpretation of the depicted theme are ignored (Rose, 2012, pp. 101-103). That is why it was important to overcome these absences, by combining quantitative methods (content analysis and consequently compositional interpretation) with additional, qualitative ones. As already mentioned fieldwork observations and selective theories from diverse fields were chosen because the analysis of space requires a multidisciplinary approach.

The mixed method approach enables the researcher to better comprehend the production process of the visual texts including practitioners’ subjectivities, their process of work, their carefully selected choices and their common creative devices used in the production process. Mixed method approach also assist the researcher in the analysis of the depicted interior spaces; namely to capture the atmosphere and dynamic of these depictions and to explore the affinity between representations of interior spaces, magazines’ background and target markets.

While quantitative methods allow focus on the images themselves and pay extra attention to their compositional modality (how interior spaces can be differently represented across magazines), qualitative methods enables the researcher to interpret these different representations and to explore (apart from the images themselves) their production, paying attention not only to their compositional but also to their social modality, as already stated, the wider context in which these visual texts exist: the magazines’ backgrounds and their distinctive target audiences. In this respect, the selected quantitative methods allows us to “look at” images and capture “how” interior spaces can be differently represented in 2D, while qualitative methods go beyond that to suggest “why”; they allow the researcher to provide possible interpretations for these representations.

3.7 Social semiotics

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) analyse visual texts through a design approach and use social semiotics to explore how their main compositional structures and constituent elements can communicate messages. The advantage of their approach is that they pay attention not only to the text but also to the production process of the text. Following their thinking allows the researcher to effectively deconstruct and analyse the representations of interior space in their main constitutive parts such as colour schemes, angles of view, perspective. Also, their approach allows the researcher to investigate the social process of production of magazine texts. It allows exploration of the quantitative data and fieldwork observations taking into consideration the sign-makers (the creatives in the magazine industry), their "interest" (how they work and the methods, schemes/themes commonly used) and the social factors that determine the sign-making process (the wider cultural and social context in which magazine texts are produced and the themes that they address).

This study also applies Kress and Van Leeuwen's theory of representation (2006) and their notions of "discourse of living" (2001) and "colour as semiotic mode" (2006, 2002). Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) interpretation of the viewing distance and angles of view will be used, as these elements are a fundamental and integral part of every image. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) look specifically at the sphere of "the house" and discuss the production of discourses and modes. For Kress and Van Leeuwen 'discourses are socially constructed knowledges of (some aspect of) reality. By "socially constructed" it means that they have been developed in specific social contexts, and in ways which are appropriate to the interests of social actors in these contexts, whether these are very broad context ("Western Europe") or not (a particular family), explicitly institutionalized contexts (newspapers) or not (dinner-table conversations)' (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 4). And "mode is that material resource which is used in recognizably stable ways as a means of articulating discourse" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 25). Using as an example home magazines they argue that colours, objects, materials and patterns are used in magazines' texts as semiotic modes in order to "articulate aspects of a discourse of living". In this case each colour, object, material and pattern is carefully selected and assembled by the practitioners from the existing "culture's repertoire" according to the purpose of the text, the audience profile and the kind of discourse that is intended to be produced. Every one of these elements belongs in a "recognisable and well-understood set of signs". These modes offers semiotic possibilities and invite the reader to make association with other modes, other materials such as air, rock, water and other "culturally salient aspects" such as sun, shade and produce meanings in a culture and a defined time. They give the example of colour as semiotic mode that can imply seasonality in home magazines (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 27). Through the materiality of each mode (the substance and traits of each of the selected colours and material) a specific sensory response and as a result a discourse of living is being produced (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001). The interpretation of the presented discourse of living will depend on the audience's social and cultural background and the context of the text; for example, in which country the magazine is being published or in which decade (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001). The next section will present what "discourse of living" each magazine promotes, the modes they employ and what possible interpretations these modes can have depending on readers' distinctive profiles (their social, cultural and economic background).

4. Findings

The results suggest that magazines promote different representations of interior spaces depending on their background and target readership (please see Table III). The findings also suggest that *Wallpaper* is not just a magazine, but it has expanded to become a brand with a well-recognized logo. Practitioners managed to create a strong brand identity through the creation of a magazine with a very distinctive style among its competitors that clearly address the elite. Features aiming at very upmarket readership adopt an aesthetic approach and produce unrealistic and minimal interior spaces that are focused on the present. Practitioners create classical style compositions, design-focused spaces, often with an entertaining or surreal twist and with frequent use of hints and riddles. However, frequently these depictions look lifeless and self-centred.

Wallpaper	Ideal Home	Elle Decoration
Aesthetic approach	Informative nature	Humanized aesthetic approach
Unrealistic interior spaces	Practicality	Realistic interior spaces
Minimal spaces	Realism	Memories and nostalgia
Classical style compositions	Less experimental	Vintage
Design-focused spaces	Not design oriented	Avoidance of overcrowded
		Humanized aesthetic approach
Focused on present	Warm, friendly and family environments	Strong art orientation
Entertaining nature	Nostalgia and memories	Appeal to senses
Surrealist compositions	Past and present time	
Use of hints and riddles	Informative nature	
Lifeless spaces	Practicality	
Not family oriented < self-centred	Realism	
	Very simplified	
	Heterogeneous	
	Cheap	

Table III.

Characteristics of feature for each magazine

Practitioners manage to clearly differentiate Wallpaper features from their competitors' through the careful selection of themes for the features but equally importantly, through the photographic execution of these features. The magazine adopts a strong aesthetic approach and its features make strong pictorial statements. In this respect Wallpaper features are very distinctive in content and visual presentation and communication. In Wallpaper, the overwhelming majority of the depicted themes are photographed from a frontal angle. Based on Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) it can be argued that Wallpaper invites the reader to become a participant and to identify with the depicted theme. Furthermore, in Wallpaper its practitioners usually photograph their themes from eye level, a type of shoot, according to the authors, that creates the impression of equality between the objects and the viewer. From this perspective, perhaps identification with the products becomes easier. However, in Wallpaper very often they also employ low-angle shots in which, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen, the objects look powerful and imposing. In this light, it does not seem accidental that Wallpaper, which is the case study magazine that most often depicts and promotes the most expensive goods, and is the only one that employs low-angle shots. It could be argued that the low angle is an effective way to depict expensive, sophisticated and less-common products in order to imply these qualities to the reader. Low angles in combination with frontal-angled spatial depictions may challenge the reader's attention, but at the same time the depicted object seems to have power over the spectator.

Moreover, the results show that Wallpaper mainly uses medium-distance shots; however, the percentages of close and long shots are high and tend to be almost equal in amount. These results not only demonstrate the experimental style of the magazine, but also that Wallpaper plays with personal, social and impersonal ways of representation, perhaps as part of its aesthetic approach rather than a practical and pragmatic one. In particular, the long shots accord with the lifeless mood the magazine.

The magazine promotes a limited number of products in each photograph, adopting a strong aesthetic approach and design orientation; as a result, the photographs look stronger, can make a statement and consequently enhance the "power" of the goods (Leiss et al., 2005, p. 543). Generally, Wallpaper uses a uniform level of illumination throughout the space. However, practitioners experiment with lighting; spotlighting or dark spaces often used in Wallpaper's spatial compositions in order to create mystery and drama (dark spaces) or to direct the viewer towards a specific part of the setting (spotlighting) (Rose, 2012).

Wallpaper makes strong pictorial statements, and through the challenge of the reader's involvement (frontal-angle shots), alongside equality between the viewer and the products (eye-level shots), cultivates a level of involvement between the reader and the depicted theme. This involvement is either enhanced or reduced according to the selected viewing distance each time: close, medium or long (intimate, social or impersonal). These results concur with Bourdieu's theory mentioned in the Methodology section, according to whom upper-class members tend to value aesthetic depictions in

photographs and paintings and reject ordinary themes and ordinary ways of presentation. It could be argued that the widespread use of frontal angle is an indirect appeal to Wallpaper’s cultivated and upmarket readers to appreciate and decipher the aesthetic (and usually obscure) depictions.

The aesthetic approach of the magazine is also revealed by the fact that often the photographers hired for the photo shoots are not just “technicians” that follow the stylist’s instructions and take the photographs; these photographers are closer to artists and overrule the stylists during the compositions of setting and the photo-shoot process. The purpose of this approach is not to show readers how to live and design their houses, but rather to visually stimulate and entertain them through the playful and highly artistic and stylized spatial compositions. Inspired by Bourdieu’s (1984) discussion on high social class and aesthetic taste, it seems that as Wallpaper core readers are from socio-economic grouping A/B they feel confident about their distinction and high status and do not need to parade them; thus making these readers shun anything that might appear “flashy” and look “common”. On the contrary, because of their “intellectual taste” and high cultural capital they value the aesthetic and incline towards austere aesthetic choices; for these readers practical and functional choices are “commonplace”, and for that reason they favour aesthetic traits (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 247). Therefore, practitioners in Wallpaper promote spaces with aesthetic qualities (harmony, balance and composition), imaginative and unique interior spaces, while promoting products from sophisticated and less mainstream stores and boutiques. It is not accidental that the Wallpaper directory has a category titled “prototypes and limited editions” that includes artists, new designers and student works; this reveals the magazine’s interest in depicting unique objects rather than mass-produced ones. In addition, how important the ideas of “stylishness” and “uniqueness” are to this elite readership is revealed by the fact that the limited editions of Wallpaper (with the excuse of its tenth year of publication) were not widely distributed; on the contrary, they were distributed only in “smart shops”. As it will be discussed in the next session, these techniques are strategic decisions that set Wallpaper from its competitors and enhance its brand identity.

Through carefully selected modes (please see Table IV) Wallpaper features make an appeal to their male and female readers, who according to the Wallpaper media pack are not family orientated but young creative professionals focused on contemporary design. It is worth pointing out at this point that in the Wallpaper directory “children” are classified as “oddities”. This is clearly reflected in its features where practitioners avoid depicted family photos, children or children-related objects.

<i>Wallpaper</i>	<i>Ideal Home</i>	<i>Elle Decoration</i>
Strong pictorial statements	Informative and solutions direction	A personal way of spatial presentation
Frontal angles	Oblique angles	Frontal angles
Eye level and low angle shots	Eye level	Eye level
Classical style compositions	Medium-distance shots	Close-distance shots
Central compositions	Classic revival furniture – “Classic” purchases	Avoidance of overcrowded spaces
Dark spaces and spotlighting	Unfamiliar use of objects	Textured objects
Black and white photography	Objects that reveal habitation	Experimentation with lighting
Unusual presentation of objects	Light, warm pale colours	Black and white photography
Absence of family photographs, antiques and the inclusion of children or child-related objects	Intense proximity among the depicted objects	Warm and pale colours
Absence of ornament	Family photos, antiques, souvenirs and domestic settings	Vintage items and family photographs
Surrealist compositions and visual tricks	Flowers, flower patterns, architectural ornament details in some of the props and products	Unexpected presentation of objects
High architecture – use of renowned buildings	Objects with heterogeneous style	High experimentation with the balance of space
Narratives – story theme features	Photographs lack variety	Exotic objects and themes
Abstract language	Explicitly coherent language	Use of unkempt spaces Analytic or abstract language

Table IV.
Modes used by each magazine

Research has shown that a frequent technique in the production of an advertisement seems to be the creation of a coherent story behind it (Admap, 2003; Leiss et al., 2005; Nixon, 2003). The results of this study reveal that of the case study magazines only Wallpaper adopts this device. On the basis of content analysis findings it can be argued that only wealthy and upmarket magazines may produce features with strong narratives; perhaps as a medium to entertain their readers or as a vehicle to evoke subjective fantasies, often with entertaining tinges supported by the subtitles and the styling of the space. A favourite theme that Wallpaper uses in its features is the visual representation of how Wallpaper's reader lives, works, travels, shops and socializes; usually this depicted "ideal reader" is young, successful and sophisticated. Based on Bourdieu's (1984) discussion on "pure taste" (pp. 486-490), "intellectual taste" (pp. 265-267) and social-class taste and photography (pp. 35-40), it can be argued that Wallpaper readers favour story theme features because in general they value aesthetics for aesthetics' sake, imaginative and intellectual challenging depictions. Wallpaper, is widely read not only by wealthy readers that are able to purchase the depicted products, but also by everyday readers or designers and architects that look to the magazine for design inspiration and information. Readers who cannot afford the depicted products themselves, the unrealistic interior spaces may intellectually challenge them and appeal to their aesthetic but, following Campbell's (1987) theory, these spaces can also be the spark for daydreaming as it will be discussed in the next section.

The language that this magazine adopts is an abstract one; it produces visual riddles and invites the reader to decode them, while the subheadings may provide some hints for their decipherment. Inspired by Bourdieu's (1984, pp. 486-490) concept of "pure taste", it seems that Wallpaper's readers incline towards these kinds of taste and value representations that are difficult to decode. Therefore, practitioners produce abstract representations of space that contain obscure information and hidden messages; representations that intellectually challenge their readers and do not appeal to their senses in a straightforward manner.

In the end, the discourse of living is a minimal and modern one. Wallpaper produces interior spaces with focus on present and contemporary design where there is no space for reference to family and past. These spaces have strong character and imply individual style and beauty; they reveal their inhabitant's cultural and economic background without the ostentation of wealth. Generally, Wallpaper's spatial compositions are stylized and visually stimulating and often reach the boundaries of art. However, these depictions are unrealistic, as they usually do not depict real living spaces, and they often appear too stylized and therefore lifeless. As a result they can generate numerous interpretations and dreams.

As far as Ideal Home is concerned, the picture is very different. The magazine adopts an informative and solution-based approach in its features. The interior spaces are usually photographed using an oblique angle that, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen, detaches them from the viewer as something s/he should not get involved with. This accords with the informative and solutions direction of the magazine. They direct the reader through instructions, but these features ultimately isolate the viewer from the depicted products as if they are something they see in a shop window, a store display or a catalogue. In this case the reader does not become a participant but remains a viewer. Additionally, in Ideal Home they commonly depict an interior space from eye level (the score for eye-level shots is extremely high), which according to the authors emphasizes equality between the objects and the viewer. Moreover, the results show a high percentage for the depiction of spaces from a medium distance. This is a social way of presentation; as a result, these spatial depictions do not cultivate intimacy, but they do not look impersonal either. This social way of presentation (medium-distance shots) matches the frequent use of oblique angle and the fact that Ideal Home creates spaces that do not challenge the reader's involvement. These depictions inform and direct the readers, but at the same time they keep them at a safe distance; again the reader remains an onlooker.

Another attribute that distinguishes Ideal Home's features is realism; the photographs appear to be of real houses belonging to ordinary people. Its features are dominated by realistic depictions and the techniques that they utilize in order to accomplish that are numerous. For examples, Ideal Home's features are executed on location. Usually, these features include structural elements such as windows with views, doors and fireplaces that enhance the sense that the depicted space is a real one. Ideal Home's features are spread with props and products that act as evidence of life and habitation; these interior spaces are deluged with flowers, unfinished food and drinks, clothes and personal items on the furniture, open books and magazines, which strongly create the impression that somebody was in the room and has just now popped out. The realism of the depictions is also promoted by the frequent use of family photographs and art pieces that are typical displays in houses of everyday people. Furthermore, the realism is achieved through depictions of heterogeneity in the space, the application of contrasting colour schemes and the construction of balanced and often overcrowded spatial compositions. As

happens in real life, in Ideal Home's interior spaces objects with clashing styles and colours from different eras coexist, and often these objects dominate the space and even overcrowd it. Additionally, the eye-level photography underlines the realism of the space, as this is the way in which humans view and experience the world. Lastly, Ideal Home generally avoids any technique or depiction that could create the impression that the photographed spaces may not be real ones. It commonly avoids surrealistic depictions, visual tricks, the unusual presentation of objects, depictions of unkempt interiors and damaged goods, but also classical style and "controlled compositions" and generally any kinds of playful composition and rigorously geometric representations that do not correspond to real people's houses.

According to the content analysis results and the high percentages in several options of the coding forms, it can be argued that the photographs of Ideal Home's features lack variety, look repetitious and do not create a strong mood and distinctive character. The depicted interior spaces do not make a strong statement, look very realistic and lack design orientation. Ideal Home, through social ways of representation (medium-distance shots) along with depictions that do not challenge the involvement of the reader (oblique angle) and a familiar angle of view that generates equality between the reader and the object (eye level), keeps its readers as just viewers, while the depicted interior spaces remain spaces for information and contemplation. This may be why these spatial depictions with the strong social representation and informative nature cannot generate the "daydreaming" that Campbell (1987) describes. It seems that these depictions mainly address the rational aspect of readers. These results harmonize with Bourdieu's (1984) discussion on photography and social-class taste; according to his research the working class tends to judge a photograph according to its use and realism. In this respect, Ideal Home's down-market photographs follow this logic by being explanatory, informative and easily readable.

In Ideal Home's features they adopt an informative and practical approach; as its core readers are ABC1 females who seem to incline towards a "taste of necessity" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 374) the magazine promotes interior design solutions and suggestions that are easily adoptable by their readers in terms of practicality and economy. Contrary to Wallpaper, the purpose of Ideal Home's approach is to show readers how to decorate their houses and to inform them about new products. Based on Bourdieu's discussion about middle-class aesthetic taste and "goodwill", which encourage them to find the means to expand their way of living (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 319-321), it seems that Ideal Home's practitioners often build on this idea. They often present design solutions that create false impressions, e.g. how to make a room to look bigger, how to create an antique look with inexpensive products, how to update the look of a room with economical changes. This is happening because Ideal Home practitioners are aware of their readers' need to make the most of their spaces and low budgets. Moreover, Bourdieu's idea of "committed to the symbolic" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 253) may be valid to some extent in this case; it is not implied that these readers are insecure about the impression they give to others; rather it seems that they would like to live in a style that is beyond their means; for example they aspire to create stylish rooms, to redesign a room to give a spacious feeling. However often owing to their low cultural, social and economic capital, they resort to heterogeneous choices; they seem to lack the necessary competence to value, identify and adopt genuine architectural styles. This may be why Ideal Home's practitioners present heterogeneous design solutions that seem not to follow design rules.

Through careful selection of modes (see Table IV) practitioners create a welcoming and friendly mood; highlight the celebration of family life and interpersonal relationships; appeal to readers' emotions through pleas to memories and nostalgia; imply romanticism; underline practicality of space; and join the past and the present. Through these modes they make an appeal to their readers' emotions and their need to preserve family history ties and to shoulder the emotional aspect of their homes (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981).

The language that this magazine adopts is usually explicitly coherent; Ideal Home clearly explains the depicted interior spaces both visually through photographs and drawings and verbally through short texts and subheadings. Inspired by Bourdieu (1984) discussion on working-class taste, it seems that Ideal Home's readers may need a sense of security that they are doing the right thing, and this need is directed by fixed social and design conventions, that they do not try to explore or widen too much. Therefore, practitioners do not attempt to alter established rules; in contrast, they promote conventional and mainstream design solutions and adopt coherent language in order to clearly direct their readers, often through step-by-step rules. As these readers seem to incline towards the "popular aesthetic" (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 42-44), practitioners tend to avoid the use of hints and resort to straightforward messages and depictions that do not leave any ambiguities that could confuse their readers and perhaps restrict their identification with the depicted representations. This tendency towards visual and verbal explanations often reaches the boundaries of "ordinary popularization" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 323). Practitioners produce features that seem to be simplified versions of specific architectural styles or designs. Through the

depiction of well-explained steps they guide the reader on how to quickly and economically achieve these styles. However, in the end, often these representations of interior space look heterogeneous, simplified and cheap.

As a result, the proposed discourse of living that emerges from *Ideal Home* is totally different from that of *Wallpaper* (and *Elle Decoration*); in *Ideal Home* the discourse of living seems to be a mundane one. It promotes real living spaces that are not design orientated, that are timeless and easily accomplished; interior spaces that value family, tradition and the past and where human relationships are celebrated. In order to produce these spaces it uses straightforward messages both visually and verbally. These depictions generate mundane dreams, as this readership seems to need dreams that are within its reach.

Lastly, *Elle Decoration* adopts a humanized aesthetic approach and a personal way of spatial presentation. The magazine uses mainly frontal angles in its spatial depictions, and through this medium challenges the involvement and the interest of its readers and invites them to become participants. Moreover, in its features they photograph interiors from eye level and consequently promote equality between the depicted theme and the viewer. What makes this magazine distinctive from the other two is the frequent inclusion of close-distance shots in its features. Via the close ups *Elle Decoration* addresses its audience through a personal way of spatial presentation. An intimacy between the viewer and the object is offered, and the reader is encouraged to strongly identify with the depicted theme. This intimacy matches the overall sensuality and sensitivity that the magazine produces. These close ups can also be an effective eye-attracting technique, as they can increase the viewer's involvement and enhance their attention towards the depicted theme (Messaris, 1997).

Moreover, the results show that *Elle Decoration* is highly experimental with the balance of space, and even though there is mainly a balance between the interior space and the depicted objects and props in its features, often they produce overcrowded spaces or spaces with few products and props. Additionally, the "lighting and space" variable also shows the experimental nature of the magazine; generally they produce uniform levels of illumination throughout the space, but on some occasions they create dark spaces. The production of interior spaces with limited light or dark areas also demonstrates the sensuality that the magazine promotes. Overall, the results highlight that *Elle Decoration* is less unilateral than *Ideal Home* and that to some extent it is design focused and promotes aesthetic depictions.

This study argues that through the challenge of the reader's involvement (frontal- angle shots), along with equality between the viewer and the products (eye-level shots) and with the offered intimacy (close-up shots), *Elle Decoration* promotes a strong identification between its readers and the depicted themes and makes an appeal to their senses. While being quite experimental and making some strong pictorial statements, however, it does not match *Wallpaper* in this regard.

Elle Decoration embraces an art approach and produces interior spaces that are lively, artistic and creative. This strong art approach is evidenced from the data that shows that *Elle Decoration* has the highest percentages of the magazines in the following variables of the coding forms "the photograph has art feeling", "depiction of artistic/creative environment", "there are exotic/oriental elements in the image", "unkempt interior spaces", "depiction of damaged objects within the photograph", "the feature theme based on a contemporary event", "abstract idea theme feature" and "bright colours dominate the photograph". In addition, the higher percentages in the "related colour scheme" compositions, and in surrealist compositions, also enhance the art orientation of the magazine.

The purpose is to show its readers how to design their houses, inspired by art or current cultural events, or by being creative themselves, but also to produce artistic and aesthetic compositions that will highlight the value of the products but at the same time remain lively. This approach places this magazine between *Wallpaper* and *Ideal Home*; the core readership of *Elle Decoration* being AB/ABC1 supports this claim. *Elle Decoration* strikes a balance between "pure taste" (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 486-490) and "popular aesthetic" (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 42-44), and its practitioners often build on these ideas. They produce highly aesthetic representations of spaces that in the end look habitable and lively.

Through carefully selected modes (please see Table II) practitioners create aesthetic spatial compositions; promote memories and nostalgia; generate daydreaming; and appeal to the senses. Through these modes they make appeal to their female readers' emotions (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981), but not as strongly and unilaterally as *Ideal Home*.

The language that *Elle Decoration* adopts is either analytical and explanatory through photographs and captions or abstract and vague, in which case the features intellectually challenge the reader, while subtitles provide the necessary hints for their comprehension and decipherment. It seems again that *Elle Decoration* balances between an upmarket and down-market aesthetic, and between imaginative, studied and highly aesthetic interiors, and comfortable, fashionable neat ones. However,

even though its representations appeal to their readers' senses, it does not seem to be connected with "barbarous taste" (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 42-44) as this appeal to the senses is strongly linked with the art orientation of the magazine, which in the end makes these depictions less easily decoded and straightforwardly consumed. It seems that Elle Decoration's readers need both kinds of representation – analytic and abstract – and therefore practitioners attempt to produce depictions that belong to both categories.

The discourse of living is usually a realistic one, however, stylized and artistic. The interior spaces have an aesthetic approach with the focus on modern design, but these spaces manage to remain sensuous and full of life/energy; it is about stylized interior spaces that look habitable and can be accomplished by their readers.

5. Discussion

This research suggests that Wallpaper is not just a magazine, but it has expanded to become a brand with a well-recognized logo. Practitioners managed to create a differentiated brand through the creation of a magazine with a very distinctive style that clearly addresses the elite. The findings propose that Wallpaper services the desire among the economically and culturally wealthy consumers to maintain their predominance and distinction. As Gough-Yates (2003, p. 114) notes, this idea of branding has a double benefit: not only does it strengthen the relationship between reader and magazine and thus "reader loyalty by distinguishing individual titles from their competitors" but it "also encourages more defined 'lifestyle' readership profiles that can be used to sell advertising space to advertisers".

This paper suggests that Wallpaper managed to become a successful brand for specific reasons. Its founder – Tyler Brule – identified an elite audience eager for a new lifestyle magazine to address their needs and to reflect their lifestyle (Izatt, 1996). He not only identified this gap in the market but also managed to create along with the other Wallpaper creative practitioners a magazine with a very distinctive style among its competitors that clearly addressed this distinctive market segment. Wallpaper is clearly differentiated from the other magazines in terms of content and presentation. In the end practitioners created a successful magazine because they managed to produce one that appealed to both their target audience and to their advertisers.

Wallpaper practitioners use specific techniques such as the creation and promotion of a very distinctive profile of the Wallpaper reader. They have defined this imaginative and desirable person very clearly in their media pack, and, equally importantly, they have defined them clearly, verbally and pictorially, in the magazine's features. Practitioners have embodied this imaginative person with traits such as aesthetic, design focused, wealth, and have created an image that a few people could afford or accomplish. Campbell's (1987) theory, which perceives self-directed consumption as emanating from an individual's temperament and personal experience, seems to be applicable to how people consume magazines like Wallpaper. The reading and riffling process enables readers to project their desires onto the depicted products, and the visual consumption of the magazine becomes a means of escape from reality, and a way of enjoyment: the magazines' texts and advertisements can inspire "imaginative hedonism" (Campbell, 1987, p. 92). From this perspective, the whole magazine with its features and advertisements becomes a form of escape and an "imaginative pleasure-seeking" activity (Campbell, 1987, p. 89).

Wallpaper depicted spaces become the medium to let everyday readers imagine that they are the typical Wallpaper reader; they enable the hedonist fantasy of being a wealthy and cultured individual (Campbell, 1987). Through these depictions these readers experience in their fantasy the Wallpaper consumption dream. These unrealistic depictions rest in the readers' desire to dream and live the promoted Wallpaper life. They project their desires onto the depicted goods and the visual consumption of interior spaces becomes a means to escape reality and a way of enjoyment. Maybe this need for daydreaming could induce many consumers to buy magazines like Wallpaper which presents a very wealthy lifestyle, not easy to be adopted and followed by the majority of consumers even though they know that they will be able to acquire almost nothing depicted in its pages. While the actual Wallpaper reader that can afford this luxury lifestyle and products perhaps feel flattered by its stylish spatial depictions and the plot of the story.

The existing literature has highlighted storytelling as a creative branding and advertising technique (Admap, 2003; Healey, 2008; Leiss et al., 2005). The findings have revealed that of the case study magazine, Wallpaper often uses this device. The story theme features that Wallpaper often presents can be an additional branding technique to strengthen the relationship between reader and magazine and to encourage brand loyalty.

In addition, subsidiary techniques such as the Wallpaper city guides, Wallpaper Paper Passion

perfume with its unusual packaging, Wallpaper limited editions distributed only to “smart” shop manage to further differentiate the magazine from their competitors’ ones and enhance the profile of the imaginative Wallpaper reader. Through these techniques they add extra traits to this persona and make even stronger the idea of Wallpaper reader; for instance, it is not any more just a design-conscious reader, professional or proprietor but also a design-conscious traveller. Through these techniques the magazine managed not only to increase its revenues but also to strengthen its brand identity; through these media Wallpaper boosted reader loyalty and at the same time attracted the attention of world media experts, planners and buyers.

Wallpaper therefore successfully manages to appeal to its actual – wealthy – reader but also to its everyday – aspirational – reader. The fashion retail industry adopts a similar approach. Research has shown the importance of displaying the correct balance between expensive and inexpensive merchandise in the window display in order to reflect the fashion brand identity but at the same time to encourage customers to enter the store (Sen et al., 2002). Fashion brands like Burberry, similarly to Wallpaper, successfully address its core customer and aspirational customer, for example by combining in its window displays of expensive and inexpensive product. Through the depiction of the trench coat the company communicates its brand identity and targets its core customer, while through the depiction of less expensive products like the perfumes or scarves they target the aspirational customer at entry price products. Additionally for the aspirational customer, the window display depicting the Burberry trench coat can be the spark for daydreaming (Campbell, 1987).

With the rise of e-commerce and the increased global retail competition fashion brands need to work harder to retain customers’ attention. This has led to retailers embracing extravagant architectural visions, and large scale shopping malls (Thomson, 2008). The literature review has revealed the use of renowned buildings in advertising and the strong linkage between “star architects”, distinguish building and luxury fashion brands (Barreneche, 2008; Dowdy, 2008; Moore et al., 2010; Steiner, 2000). The data from this project revealed that designated buildings are also used in magazine features. In particular Wallpaper uses designated buildings, while the other two magazines prefer to depict everyday locations that are not credited. Wallpaper often selects renowned buildings for its photo shoots, and somewhere in the feature they credit the location and often its architect, and in some cases they even provide a short text about the building. On some occasions Wallpaper features not only credit the location and the architect but also advertise that these houses are for sale. It is interesting that in these cases, the photo-shoot location becomes a commodity itself; for instance, Wallpaper November 2005. It is also notable that Wallpaper selects renowned buildings for its photo shoots from all over the world: Ixtapa house in Guerero, Mexico (April 2003); Staley-Wise Gallery, New York (April 2003); Hill House, Los Angeles (November 2005); a country house in Gifu, Japan (July/August 2002). This was somewhat expected and highlights several issues. First, it accords with Steiner’s (2000) point of view that Wallpaper’s readers are interested in design and architecture, and the depiction of labelled buildings is a way to address this interest, to present a space with strong character and to pass on architectural ideas.

Elle Decoration and especially Ideal Home readers are less architecture-focused and thus the depiction of famous buildings would not be appealing to them. Second, this data suggests that for Elle Decoration and Ideal Home the photo-shoot locations are simply the medium to promote the products and interior design ideas; the importance for these magazines are the goods not the location. That is why very often in Ideal Home’s features, the depicted houses look more or less the same. The depicted houses have the same architectural style and structure. By contrast, in Wallpaper, not only the products but also the buildings are of equal importance and need to be evenly presented and promoted. Fieldwork data showed that often Wallpaper takes advantage of a location’s distinctive elements, and if the practitioners like an element of the building, for example, a glass wall with view, an unusual fireplace, or other structural elements, materials or textures, they compose the spatial composition around these elements. Frequently, the building itself and its traits are underlined through these depictions. This is evident, for instance, by the fact that Wallpaper includes in its features photographs of the building itself without the insertion of any products at all, or the composition in some photographs of the feature is such that the emphasis is mainly on the space and only second on the goods.

Additionally, the location of Wallpaper’s photo shoots seems to aim at the transaction of qualities between the building and goods as pointed out by Barrie-Anthony (2006) and Hornbeck (1999). The spaces that the practitioners of Wallpaper choose have values that can emphasize the product’s features and enhance the aesthetics that the magazine cultivates. It is not accidental that Wallpaper uses as photo-shoot locations a wide range of named private, commercial and public spaces whose status, sophistication, wealth, cultivation and beauty can be transferred to the depicted products. Thus the data underlines the affinity between designated architecture and elite audiences and reveals the frequent depiction of labelled locations in order to successfully deliver to wealthy and highly qualified consumers.

As discussed in the literature review renown buildings have also been used as backdrops in advertising.

Also, in Wallpaper visual texts adopt an aesthetic approach and produce minimal, unrealistic and design-focused spaces, often with an entertaining or surreal twist. Wallpaper features make strong pictorial statements. The results confirm previous studies results that stimuli can be an effective creative technique to capture consumer's attention. The results suggest that elite audience can really appreciate humour, entraining, surreal, fun themes. Luxury fashion brand often adopt stimuli on their window display themes as well when it is in line with their brand identity and communication tone. Louis Vuitton is one brand that employs fun and humour in the window displays; this device in combination with high quality of props, expensive materials and set design communicates craftsmanship, attention to detail, luxury but at the same time it is an effective way for a traditional brand to look contemporary.

Wallpaper's main objective is to produce compositions which highlight the aesthetic value of the products. Inspired by Bourdieu (1984) this study argues that these depictions are an indirect appeal to Wallpaper's cultivated and upmarket readers to appreciate and decipher the aesthetic (and usually obscure) depictions. In this respect, the results of this study confirm the link between minimal and classical compositions, luxurious products and elite audiences. Wallpaper features often depict minimal and classical style compositions. Also as the literature review shows (Serraino, 2002; Young, 2006), "the pursuit of emptiness" is an effective way to represent a building and pass on architectural ideas. Through the styling of space Wallpaper attempts to some extent to promote a lifestyle; however, often it depicts limited styling elements and as a result the building is being celebrated. An extension to the use of minimalist and classical style compositions in editorial and advertisements of luxury products is "the extravagance use of empty space" in luxury retail spaces in order to signify exclusivity and luxury; the abundance of space, limited products on window and in store displays, enhance the luxury brand experience (Moore et al., 2010; Morgan, 2011). For example Louis Vuitton has designed window displays depicting only one or two products (handbags) while Tiffany & Co. regularly display limited products in window displays usually one to three items.

This research also reveals that as we move towards more down-market readerships (like Elle Decoration and Ideal Home) the representations of interior spaces become more realistic, practical and informative and less experimental; these spaces are lively, warm and human and often appeal to their readers' senses, memories and emotions; these are spaces that are designed to promote, cultivate and celebrate human relationships.

The findings reveal that Ideal Home stands completely opposite to Wallpaper; Ideal Home seems more like a companion to its readers. Ideal Home's primary objective is to deliver feasible design solutions and ideas and to highlight the utilitarian and practical aspect of the interior space and the depicted products. The findings suggest that the consumption of Ideal Home editorial content in order to improve one's life mainly in practical ways and second at an aesthetic level.

This study also shows that Elle Decoration is not only balanced between Wallpaper and Ideal Home as far as the data are concerned, but that it also has a "balanced" approach towards aesthetic and realism. Elle Decoration is an interesting example showing that stylized and aesthetic interiors can also look lively, human and sensual. The study suggests that Elle Decoration appeals not only to educated readers but also to emotional readers who may perceive their homes as places to indulge themselves; in this case, the consumption of this magazine perhaps becomes a medium to cope with or even escape from reality, either through the adoption of some of the proposed design solutions or simply through the reading process and daydreaming.

Finding the correct styling and aesthetic approach seems to be an imperative not only in interior photo shoots but also in display design and visual merchandising. Globalization, rise of flagship store, well-travelled consumers had lead the quest of a more "personal, intimate approach to fashion" (Jaeger, 2009, p. 189). Even if stores stock the same collection, different stories and interpretations need to be created in order to surprise customers and keep their interest (Jaeger, 2009).

6. Conclusion

This research suggests that magazines promote different representations of interior spaces depending on their background and target readership and that magazine features can enhance the creation of a strong brand. Through the selection of specific modes, magazines can be differentiated from their competitors. Magazine features which are aimed mainly at down-market female readers tend to cultivate and promote memories, nostalgia, family values and traditions, relationships with other people and domesticity through the careful selection of props and products that stand for these qualities; as we move towards more cultivated and wealthier consumers of both genders these references to the past, traditions and "others" do not seem so appropriate. Additional creative and marketing techniques employed by the magazine can

strengthen the relationship between reader and magazine and enhance brand loyalty. In this sense magazines can become a companion that helps the reader improve his/her life in a practical level; they can become a way to escape reality through daydreaming process; or a form on entertainment and enjoyment.

This study analysed visual texts within interior magazines, however, the method used to deconstruct and analyse these images into their main parts such as spatial organization and colour in relation to their wider context can also be used to analyse fashion photographs in the context of editorial, fashion advertising, fashion brand websites and social media.

This study has also revealed the different modes used by magazines in order to target different audiences (as shown in Table IV) and analysed why these modes are appropriate for their distinctive market segments. The creative techniques, modes, language, discourse of living that have been identified can be used to create the set design and styling of products for fashion photo shoots for traditional and new media, and in window display and store design as well. Practitioners can balance emotional and rational approaches, artistic and informative approaches, abstract and explicit language, fantasy and realism, depending on each market segment. Displays that target "high street" mass market consumers can adopt more rational and informative design approach pointing out the qualities of the products, highlighting to customer how to style the clothes and how to combine them with accessories. The theme of the display and the set design can be realistic to help the customer envision themselves consuming the products. Displays that aspire to attract elite consumers on the other hand, can adopt an artistic approach, with abstract language that makes reference to art and culture; the theme can be playful in order to attract and entertain the customer; limited display of products point out their uniqueness; and the set design and composition can follow design rules to create highly aesthetic displays.

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