Linguistic and Content Analysis of British Teenage Magazines for Girls

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Typické rysy jazyka používaného v dívčích časopisech
Vliv dívčích časopisů na sociální život jejích čtenářek

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Představení analyzovaných časopisů
Analýza vzhledu a grafických prvků vybraných časopisů
Role nápisů pro porozumění textu z hlediska lexikologického, sémantického a gramatického
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ABSTRAKT
Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá problematikou britských dívčích časopisů a jejím cílem je analyzovat specifický jazyk a obsah těchto periodik.

Teoretická část uvádí všeobecnou charakteristiku časopisů a rozděluje je do několika kategorií podle jejich obsahu. Konkrétněji se zabývá popisem dívčích časopisů, především pak jejich funkcí a roli v životě čtenářek. Další část charakterizuje typické rysy těchto časopisů, zejména prvky týkající se vzhledu, obsahu a jazyka. Závěr teoretické části představuje nejoblíbenější dívčí časopisy na britském trhu.

Praktická část popisuje jednotlivá periodika, která byla použita k analýze. Lingvistická analýza charakterizuje užívaný jazyk z hlediska lexikálního, stylistického a syntaktického. Obsahová analýza zpracovává hlavní témata a rubriky dívčích časopisů, zabývá se četností výskytu reklam a grafických prostředků.

Klíčová slova: dívčí časopisy, lingvistická analýza, obsahová analýza, grafické prostředky, reklamy.

ABSTRACT
The present bachelor thesis deals with the topic of teenage magazines and its aim is to analyze a specific language and content used in these periodicals.

The theoretical part characterises magazines in general and divides them into categories according to their content. It deals with teenage magazines in more detail, particularly with their functions and a role in female readers’ lives. The next part describes the typical features of these magazines, especially the attributes of appearance, content and language. The conclusion of the theoretical part contains the most popular teenage magazines’ for girls on the British market.

The practical part consists of the description of the magazines used in this analysis. The linguistic analysis characterises the language from the lexical, stylistic and syntactic points of view. The content analysis focuses on the main topics and columns of teenage magazines and deals with the frequency of advertisements and non-linguistic means.

Keywords: girls’ magazines, linguistic analysis, content analysis, graphical means, advertisements.
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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own and certify that any secondary material used has been acknowledged in the text and listed in the bibliography.

May 12, 2009
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INTRODUCTION

I chose the topic of teenage magazines because this kind of medium appears in everyday lives of the majority of teenage girls and I aimed to find out how these periodicals influence them. The main objective of this bachelor thesis is to describe what teenage magazines say (content) and how they say it (language).

The main objective of the theoretical part is to introduce teenage magazines. The first part is going to describe the magazines in general and the second part is going to pay attention to special content and the language of teenage magazines which differs from broadsheets a lot.

The practical part consists of the analysis of selected British teenage magazines. The first part is going to characterise the language of teenage magazines and the main objective is to find out if this language influences girls’ vocabulary. The second part is going to process their content – to describe what the most frequent topics are and compare the frequency of these topics among the individual teenage magazines. The content analysis contains the characteristics of graphical means used in teenage magazines and deals with the amount and topics of advertisements as well. This bachelor thesis contains a CD on which the examples of analyzed articles can be found.
I. THEORY
1 CHARACTERISTICS OF MAGAZINES IN GENERAL

A magazine is generally considered to be a kind of literature which provides its readers with information, knowledge and entertainment. Linda McLoughlin (McLoughlin 2000, 2) introduces a magazine definition which originally comes from The Collins Concise Dictionary. This dictionary describes a magazine as “a periodic paperback publication containing articles, fiction, photographs, etc.” McLoughlin works with this definition and tries to specify it more properly. She clarifies the frequency with which these magazines are issued – it may be weekly, monthly or quarterly. The term *paperback* is also discussed because she points out that this expression is much more common for a book rather than a magazine nowadays. The last part of the definition above deals with the content of magazines. McLoughlin (McLoughlin 2000, 3) defines articles, fiction, photographs as “a composition of unrelated parts,” which is one of the magazines characteristics.

Concerning the magazines for teenagers the mixture of fiction and photographs which creates the photostory was very popular in the past but nowadays it is not common or even old-fashioned. She concludes it that with magazines development the size has changed but the three elements (articles, fiction and photographs) will always be an inseparable part of every magazine.

McLoughlin also describes material which is used in a magazine production and its close relationship to the perception of the text. She argues that a quality of the paper used for magazine editing depends on the time interval in which the magazine is published. A magazine with a longer interval between two issues (published monthly or quarterly) is usually made of glossy paper while a magazine with a shorter frequency of publishing is made of cheaper quality paper. Higher quality of paper is generally associated with luxury and attraction. In McLoughlin’s opinion these high quality magazines are the ones “which are likely to be found adorning coffee tables, the type that people like to show off” (McLoughlin 2000, 2).

1.1 Types of Magazines

Today’s market offers a wide range of magazines of any kind which must satisfy each member of population. Magazines’ supply has been increasing and still more various types of magazines appear. It is probable that at the same time the number of consumers is rising up otherwise the huge number of magazines would not exist. Nowadays magazines are very
popular and have become a part of entertainment and education of people of all ages and nationalities.

The British server Magforum.com (Magforum.com, UK magazines) deals with magazines division. According to this source 8,000 titles published in the UK can be classified into seven categories: consumer magazines, business magazines, customer publishing, staff magazines, newspaper supplements, part works and academic journals. The server Magforum.com provides its readers with definitions of these types of magazines.

1) Consumer Magazines
Consumer magazines create one of the biggest categories of magazines published not only in the UK but also all over the world and this group consists of two huge subcategories - general titles and consumer specialist titles. The former are magazines such as Elle, Radio Times or Loaded which should provide their readers with some information and entertainment. The latter deal with a specific hobby or interest – PcPhoto, Car, Gardeners’ World etc. According to Magforum.com, 2,800 consumer magazines can be found on the British market and 90% are sold indirectly through supermarkets and newsagents’. A subscription is not as popular in the UK as in the rest of Europe or in the USA.

2) Business Magazines
This type of magazines is also known as B2B magazines and its target readers are employed people. According to Magforum.com there are about 5,100 titles from different industries such as veterinary, energy or aeronautics on the British market. Examples of the business magazines are: Investment Week, Insurance Age, Search Engine Strategies.

3) Customer Magazines
Customer magazines are sometimes called ‘contract’ or ‘custom’ magazines and the first title was published in the 1980s. They can be considered as promotional materials because they are usually distributed free of charge to consumers. An example of the customer magazine is Sky the Magazine which is distributed to satellite channel subscribers.

4) Staff Magazines
Staff magazines are periodicals produced by company’s internal communication team or a publishing agency. These magazines are distributed to the employees in order to inform
them about all the activities connected with the company. Staff magazines are issued by e.g. IKEA or Microsoft.

5) Newspaper Supplements
Newspaper supplements can be found inside a daily or Sunday newspaper. They have become a regular part of the most of the British newspapers and even some of them produce more than one supplement each week. Examples of the British newspapers publishing newspaper supplements are *Sun, The Times, Daily Mail*.

6) Partworks
Partwork is a special type of periodical which differs from the most of the magazines mentioned in this division. It has a planned number of issues and when all the issues are published, the reader gets an encyclopedia dealing with a specific topic. The most famous representative of a partwork is the magazine *The Unexplained: Mysteries of Mind, Space & Time* which contained the multi-volume *Illustrated Science and Invention Encyclopedia*.

7) Academic Journals
Academic journal is a magazine published to evoke discussion on a scientific topic. Authors of the articles are not paid and the topics are controlled by an academic board. The best known academic journal is *Nature*. 
2 MAGAZINES FOR TEENAGERS

The term ‘magazines for teenagers’ is generally used for girls’ magazines. Willemsen (Willemsen 1998), who compares teenage magazines for girls and boys, argues that there are a very few general interest magazines for teenage boys on the market. Titles which are intended for boys of this age mainly focus on their hobbies or activities they are interested in.

A closer definition of magazines for teenagers is provided by Free online dictionary: “Teen magazines are magazines aimed at teenage readers. They usually consist of gossip, news, fashion tips and interviews and may include posters, stickers, small samples of cosmetics or other products and inserts” (Free online dictionary).

2.1 Teenage Magazines Categorization

Girls’ magazines are very often considered to be a subcategory of women’s magazines. Bignell (Bignell 1997, 56) divides women’s magazines into six categories while one of these categories is called “magazines aimed at pre-teens and adolescents”. Kadlecová (Kadlecová 2007, 11), who researched teenage magazines, argues that both girls’ and women’s magazines often interdigitate with each other. Some of her female respondents participated in the survey said that they read the articles together with their mothers (or cut the articles out for them) and vice versa that they sometimes read women’s magazines. The topics of girls’ and women’s magazines are very similar and it is probable that girls’ magazines readers will continue with reading women’s magazines in their adulthood.

2.2 The Readers Specification

Before making a deeper research of girls’ magazines a fundamental question, who the reader of these magazines is, should be answered. Davies (Davies 2002), who deals with the semiotic codes of the front covers of teenage magazines, says that “the average teenage reader will be a heterosexual girl seeking a boyfriend (or seeking the way to gratify the needs of her boyfriend), enjoying shopping, fashion, and popular culture and needing plenty of advice on sex and love”. Kadlecová (Kadlecová 2007, 13) analyzed several teenage magazines and she came to a conclusion that girls’ magazines are suitable for girls and young women at the age from 11 to 22. Jonathan Bignell (Bignell 1997, 57-58), who
analyzed media in general, presents a division of readers from publishers’ and advertisers’ point of view. The first type of a magazine reader is an active buyer who purchases every single copy in a shop or at a newsagent’s while the second type is a magazine subscriber. The former is more important for publishers because he actively buys the issue with the intention to read it while the latter receives the magazine but he does not have to be interested in that issue. On the other hand a subscriber is important for advertisers because information about subscribers may be reflected in the profile of the regular reader, which helps the advertisers to select advertisements which are interesting and attractive to magazines’ target readers.

Davies (Davies 2002) points out that teen magazines have also male readers such as brothers or boyfriends of the female readers but he also adds that a boy does not understand the message in the same way as a girl does. Boys are not so interested in cosmetics and beauty and Davies also presents the difference in women images interpretation. A boy sees the cover girl as a sex object but a girl considers the same image to be an example of perfection and ideal. On the contrary Kadlecová (Kadlecová 2007, 44) argues that teen magazines have no or a very few male readers, which is caused not only by the topics and prejudice that these magazines are intended for girls but also by the fact that the language is not acceptable for them. Male coevals of girls’ readers read magazines about computer games, technical hobbies, motor or sport titles.

### 2.3 Functions of Teenage Magazines

Teenage magazines have as well as any kind of literature functions which influence their readers. According to Bignell (Bignell 1997, 66) the fundamental function of teen magazines is “to provide readers with a sense of community, comfort, and pride in this mythic feminine identity”.

Kadlecová (Kadlecová 2000, 21) indirectly outlines three of the main functions which may be summarised into the following points. The first function of girls’ magazines is giving advice. The magazine is mostly made by the readers’ letters. The female correspondents often write about their problems with partners or they even tell the other readers their contretemps in order to be given a piece of advice which will solve their problem. The second characteristic feature is providing information. This information is not intellectually
valuable because it predominantly deals with celebrity or fashion news. Another important and probably the most obvious function is the substitution of parents’ and friends’ roles.

The functions mentioned above can be summarized by Davies (Davies 2002) who argues that “a magazine becomes a familiar friend for the female – it advises her, and provides entertainment, amusement and escapism for the reader and speaks to her in a language she understands”. That is a clear explanation of the fact that the girls’ magazines are so popular nowadays.

To conclude this subchapter, an idea of Kadlecová (Kadlecová 2007, 142) must be expressed. She points out that girls’ magazines do not fulfil either the educational or cultural function and that these titles cannot be considered ‘belles-lettres’ as well. According to her their primary function is to entertain not to cultivate.

### 2.4 Role of Teenage Magazines in Girls’ Lives

Teenage magazines keep girls company every day and therefore they must influence their social lives in many ways. Stokes (Stokes 1999, 209-217) deals with a question of sex, sexuality and sexual health in magazines for girls and its impact on girls’ behaviour. She says that teenage magazines are criticised for “contributing to a perceived increase in promiscuity and a real increase in unplanned pregnancies among British teenagers.” Stokes made a content analysis of teenage magazines whose results disproved the statement above. Her research revealed a very small percentage of sexual content in teenage girls’ magazines and she destroyed a presumption that girls’ magazines encourage the idea that all young girls should have sex. This conclusion means that teen titles discuss sexual topics but not as much as it was expected. A majority of information discussing sexual topics can be found in the readers’ letters and on the pages dealing with readers’ problems. These columns provide readers with a piece of advice how to have safe sex or they recommend people or organisations where readers can turn for help.

Debra Merskin (Merskin 2001), the associate professor of the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon, argues that girls’ magazines play a very important role in the creation of young woman’s personality. Girls’ titles teach female readers how to look and behave in order to catch boys’ attention. According to a survey, conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited in 2003, girls’ magazines readers want the magazines content to reflect their own lives (Kaiser Family Foundation). Girls follow
magazines’ advice and recommendations regarding fashion, make-up, relationships and even girls’ behaviour because they want to approach an ideal presented in their favourite magazine.

Teenage magazines influence girls not only positively by giving advice or information but also negatively. According to the article written by Mark Macaskill (Macaskill 2005) and published in The Sunday Times in 2005, teenage magazines are blamed for an increase in a number of girls’ suicide. He argues that a problem is caused by growing pressure on girls to correspond to perfect photos published in girls’ magazines. This article introduces a research discussing the satisfaction of girls’ bodies. The survey shows that 70% out of 2,000 responding teenage girls do not like their faces and only 8% are satisfied with their bodies. Most of the respondents say that they felt frustrated by their bodies when they looked at the images of perfect celebrities. This problem cannot be solved by any restriction but teenage magazines should teach young girls how to love their bodies and believe in themselves instead of frustrating them and making them envy.
3 APPEARANCE OF GIRLS’ MAGAZINES

Girls’ magazines are published in the A4 or A5 format. Nowadays more usual size is the smaller one, so-called ‘schoolbag’ size. A characteristic attribute distinguishing them from other magazines is their colourfulness. A typical example of this feature is the front cover.

3.1 Front Cover

A front cover plays a significant role in a magazine promotion, which reflects in its merchantability because the aim of every magazine is to attract the buyer’s attention and persuade him or her that it offers everything the reader needs to know. A front cover of every magazine consists of three dominant parts – a title, a cover girl and cover-lines.

The title is very important element which must be perfectly though out because it characterises the magazine and it is not possible to change it with every new issue. It is always located on the top of the magazine written in large letters. McLoughlin (McLoughlin 2000, 6) argues that the magazine title is crucial because it forms the reader’s expectation. David Crystal (Crystal 1998, 215) completes the McLoughlin’s definition saying that “magazine covers destroy any simple definition of sentences in terms of initial capital letters and final full stops”.

The second important segment on the cover is represented by cover-lines. Their role is to tell readers what the content of the current issue is but in a peculiar way. Its glossy language is specific in its syntax as well as vocabulary which should serve to a special purpose – to attract the reader’s attention. According to Havránková (Havránková 2005), the meaning of cover-lines is emphasized not only by their size and colourfulness but also by frequent usage of exclamation and question marks.

The last indispensable component of the front cover is ‘cover girl’. It is a photo of a beautiful girl or a young woman smiling and having no problem. Occasionally some famous people appear on the cover. The fact that only young beautiful girls occur on the cover is in itself very interesting. Bignell (Bignell 1997, 69) argues that the photos of young girls on the covers are “iconic signs which represent the better self which every woman desires to become”. A female reader may come to a conclusion that if she continues reading she will become more beautiful and smiling, like the girl on the cover. Davies (Davies 2002) compares girls’ magazines covers to the male ones. He says that a girl image on a male
magazine cover is considered to be a sexual object while the same girl on a women magazine cover would represent an ideal of beauty which every woman looks for.

As it was outlined at the beginning of this subchapter, the visual as well as contextual aspect of the magazine front cover is very important for its success on the market. This fact was proved by the research of the covers’ importance to buyers commissioned by Comag (the magazines distributor) in 1990. Morrish (Morrish 1996, 167) comments on this study which revealed that readers prefer an interesting cover to a boring one and that they don’t care about the connection of the picture with the topic. But on the other hand he mentions the second group of readers who buy their magazines without taking a cover into consideration. This may be the case of specialist titles or in general all magazines which are subscribed by readers.
4 CONTENT OF GIRLS’ MAGAZINES

The teen magazines topics are not too imaginative or inventive. Macurová (Macurová 2005, 243) argues that popular magazines do not make great demands on their readers and that they do not want to strain them. She also warns against the book reading decline because the occasional readers recently tend to read magazines instead of books. A research made by Teen Read Week, SmartGirl and Young Adult Library Services Association in 1999 revealed that 66% of teenagers read teen magazines and they regarded them as their favourite non-book reading material. In 2001 the same survey reported that only 31.3 % of teen readers considered teenage magazines to be their favourite non-book reading material (Kaiser Family Foundation). The question is if we are not witnesses of magazines rather than books reading decline.

Every teenage magazine is composed of two main parts - articles and pictures (photos). A typical feature of a teen magazine is its colourfulness which nearly borders on eccentricity. McLoughlin (McLoughlin 2000, 28) specifies the usual composition of pages. She says that an article is very often accompanied by a visual image and these two components always work together. The articles occurring in the magazine may differ in length and it is possible that more articles of various genres are published on the same page.

4.1 Topics of the Articles

The topics mostly deal with the themes concerning love, boys, appearance and celebrities. The most important theme of a current issue can be found on the cover in order to catch the reader’s attention. What could not be found in girls’ magazines are articles discussing motherhood, marriage, money savings, or in general topics dealing with maturity (Kadlecová 2007, 20 - 21).

Articles in teen magazines can be basically divided into three main categories: readers’ letters, articles written by journalists and advertisements. Notes made by Kadlecová are used as a primary source and they are completed by my own remarks.

1) Readers’ Letters

Readers’ letters are articles very popular within the readers. The readers themselves write about their happiness or problems which create one of the magazine’s biggest parts. There are three simple reasons why they do it. Firstly the readers want to tell someone their
secrets and this is the right place because the teen magazine is a girl’s friend. The contributors do not have to be shy because the letter is published only with the first name and age and thus it is almost impossible to identify the contributor. Secondly the magazines also provide their readers (usually but not only female readers) with a piece of good advice they expect. The third reason of writing and publishing the letters is to entertain other readers by telling their contretemps and other ludicrous stories. Teenage magazines contain a lot of readers’ letters with absolutely different topics. Here are four examples:

- Readers’ sad stories. They are usually connected with anorexia, bulimia, drugs and with sexual or physical abuse. These stories serve also as a deterrent case.
- Readers’ letters and narrations with humorous stories which happened to the contributors. Their only reason is to entertain the readers.
- Readers’ letters containing a problem or an unpleasant situation, asking for a piece of advice.
- Articles not written by reader’s hand but in which the reader is personally involved – e.g. change of reader’s appearance.

2) Articles Written by Journalists

These articles occur in all types of magazines and their function is purely informative or they provide the readers with amusement. Examples of the articles written by editors are the following:

- News from celebrities’ lives. These articles are abundantly accompanied by pictures and photos concerning fashion and style and provide the readers with the latest gossip.
- Materials dealing with girls’ appearance and its improvement. These articles discussing fashion, cosmetics, hair, etc. are usually connected with hidden advertisement.
- Interviews with famous people.
- Quizzes.
- Horoscopes.
- Cultural information referring to new singles, albums, games, movies, etc.
3) Advertisements

Texts offering a product have become an inseparable part of every magazine but the number of advertisements occurring in teen magazines is extremely high in comparison with broadsheets. Hájková (Hájková 2006), who wrote an essay dealing with girls’ magazines, studied advertisements and classified them into three categories.

- Ordinary (so called extratextual) advertisements focusing on cosmetics, fashion, perfumes, etc.
- Promotion of products. These advertisements are included within the text (so called intratextual) discussing a change of appearance and they indirectly offer a product.
- Self-advertisements. This kind of advertisement persuades the readers to purchase the next issue. They lure girls by next issue’s content, its front cover or they offer advantageous subscription.

4.2 Genres Used in Teenage Magazines

One of the typical features of articles in teen magazines is their length. In comparison with the adults’ magazines or newspaper, the columns are very short. Kadlecová (Kadlecová 2007, 23) points out that one long article never follows another long text. She argues that this fact is caused by the inability of girls’ readers to pay their attention to longer texts. That is the reason why a travel reportage or a long interview is hard to find in these periodicals. Characteristic genres offered by editors are reports, reviews, short stories or even poems.
5 LANGUAGE OF GIRLS’ MAGAZINES

One of the typical features of teenage magazines which makes them completely different from e.g. technical or scientific magazines is their language. This language is specific in its form as well as structure and vocabulary.

5.1 Girls’ Magazines from the Stylistic Point of View

At the beginning of this subchapter the idea of Hoffimanová should be mentioned. She argues that the girls’ magazines are generally more aggressive and rougher in comparison with women’s magazines and Čmejrková adds that this trend is going to be intensified in the future (Hron 2006).

Girls’ magazines use colloquial language a lot because it creates ‘friendly’ atmosphere which supports an impression that a female reader talks to her ‘friend’ (Kadlecová 2007, 44).

Čmejrková (Čmejrková 1996, 201) partly deals with a question concerning the style of the language in teenage magazines’ articles. She introduces four significant features which are frequently used. The first typical feature addressing the masses is called synthetic personalization. This term means that the author talks to the mass of readers but at the same time it makes an impression that this mass is considered as an individual to whom the author talks. This is also connected with the question if editors know the readers of their magazines. They do not and they have to imagine them. That is the reason why addressing of an imaginary reader, which is the second feature, was created.

While reading an article from a teenage magazine a huge frequency of the personal pronoun you and of the possessive pronoun your may be noticed. Usage of the 2nd person singular plays a fundamental role in this kind of texts. It is just you who should read this article and you need this piece of advice because it is you who have this kind of a problem. The author speaks directly to a female reader trying to attract her attention and it also has a persuasive function. This way of writing increases the ability of the text to appeal to the readers. Čmejrková equates this language with the language of advertisements.

The last feature presented by Čmejrková is the fact that the text is very often written in a form of a dialogue. It contains questions which expect a reader’s answer, choice from several options or an agreement. These articles may have a hidden meaning which is represented by advertising or goods offer.
5.2 Girls’ Magazines from the Lexicological Point of View

The uniqueness of teenage magazines vocabulary is caused by selection of words which resemble spoken rather than written form of English. Jan Hron (Hron 2006) analyzed teen magazines and he argues that their language adapts to the target group of readers which are girls in the pubertal age. The vocabulary used in teenage magazines was also analyzed by Willemsen (Willemsen 1998), Kadlecová (Kadlecová 2007, 52), Hron (Hron 2006), McLoughlin (McLoughlin 2000, 23) and Havránková (Havránková 2005) whose results make a complete list of the typical features of teen magazines’ vocabulary. The features are:

1) Words expressing emotions. Willemsen’s study comparing girls’ and boys’ magazines reveals that emotion words are used in girls’ magazines very often while in periodicals intended for young men rather tough words and expressions can be found. According to Kadlecová, words expressing emotions are frequently used in an authentic language of teenagers which occurs in readers’ letters and celebrities interviews. The main subcategories of emotion words are the following:

   a) Euphemisms. This term represents polite words which substitute the unpleasant ones in order to make the message neutral. These words are often used in teenage magazines while talking about family members’ or pets’ death.

   b) Dysphemisms, cacophemisms and vulgarisms. All these terms are antonyms of euphemisms. In girls’ magazines they are very often used as negatively intended expressions but they may also appear in humorous or ironic sense.

   c) Diminutives. Their aim is to make the relationship between things and readers more intimate. It is argued that these words are particularly used for expressions which are in a neutral form unflattering and deal with a girl’s body. A huge number of these words can be found in the section discussing cosmetics.

   d) Frequent usage of superlatives. According to Hron the aim of these words is to attract the readers’ attention. This category includes also extreme words which carry the meaning of superlatives. Hron equates this feature of girls’ language with the language of advertisements.
e) Emoticons (smileys). These symbols are used in “e-mails to show how someone is feeling. E.g. :-) is an emoticon showing happiness” (English Collins Dictionary). Emoticons can be found predominantly in readers’ letters.

2) Clippings. Long words become shorter, e.g. magazine – mag, celebrity – celeb. This sign is typical for the language of teenagers and McLoughlin argues that this process suggests a familiarity with the reader.

3) Tag questions. Kadlecová points out that the function of sentences ending with a question mark is rarely interrogative. They may serve as thought-provoking and paying attention means.

4) Rhetoric questions. They are made by authors without the expectation to be answered. Havránková argues that rhetoric questions and their answers fall into category of figures of speech whose aim is to make contact with female readers.

5.3 Girls’ Magazines from the Syntactic Point of View

The language of teen magazines is not boring. The editors use various tools to make the magazine headlines, slogans and cover-lines attractive and interesting but on the other hand also short and apt. The language is specific in its content and in the choice of vocabulary which should serve to its primary aim – to catch the reader’s attention. Teenage magazines inform and entertain their readers through tricky language, which is one of the characteristic features of teenage magazines.

McLoughlin (McLoughlin 2000, 21-23) introduces six tools which occur in magazine headlines, cover-lines and even in the articles themselves in order to increase their attraction and to entertain. Some of these features can be found only in special type of literature - in poetry. She also provides explanation and examples. The tools are:

1) Rhyme. This term represents “a short poem, often for children, that has lines ending in the same sound” (Macmillan dictionary). The example of a rhyme provided by McLoughlin is: “Catch him, snatch him, make him yours.”

2) Alliteration. This phenomenon means a repetition of the initial consonant, e.g. “Six simple secrets to keep you looking fabulous.”
3) Assonance. This stands for a repetition of the same vowel sound, e.g. “Fake mates.”

4) Pun. It is “a humorous use of a word that has two meanings, or of words with the same sound but different meanings.” (Macmillan dictionary) This word play uses homophones, homographs, homonyms and polysemies that cause ambiguity, which is the core of this language tool. E.g. “Cheque mate.”

5) Intertextuality. This tool means “a complex interrelationship between a text and other texts taken as a basis to the creation or interpretation of the text” (Merriam-Webster online dictionary). McLoughlin introduces two examples of intertextuality: “Boys are us!” and “Curl Power!” The first one refers to the popular toyshop, “Toys R Us” and “Girl Power” is a modern teenage slogan. These examples of the intertextuality are based on the phonological similarity between the words boys/toys and curl/girl.

6) Nominalisation. This is a process where a verb becomes a noun, e.g. the sentence “Police shoot demonstrators” can be transformed into “Demonstrators die in shooting.”
6 BRITISH TEENAGE MAGAZINES

More than 10 various teenage magazines can be found on the UK market. Basically they can be divided into three categories: comics, entertainment and lifestyle (Magforum.com, Teen magazines). Some of the magazines occurring on the British market are not originally published in the UK. For example British newsagents distribute an American version of CosmoGirl! because production of the British version ended in 2007. The most popular British girl’s magazines are: Sugar, Bliss, Top of the Pops, Mizz, Kiss, etc. The Table 1 shows the most popular British teenage magazines. The title of each magazine is completed by information about its price, its publisher and frequency of its publishing. It can be seen that the most usual frequency of publishing is one month and the average price of a teenage magazine is £2.35. Sugar, Bliss and Top of the Pops are going to be analyzed in the practical part of this work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>HFUK</td>
<td>monthly</td>
<td>£2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bliss</td>
<td>Panini</td>
<td>monthly</td>
<td>£2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of the Pops</td>
<td>BBC Magazines</td>
<td>monthly</td>
<td>£2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizz</td>
<td>Panini</td>
<td>fortnightly</td>
<td>£2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiss</td>
<td>Minjara Ltd</td>
<td>monthly</td>
<td>€2.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Top British Teenage Magazines (ABC)
II. ANALYSIS
7 ANALYSIS INTRODUCTION

The practical part of this bachelor thesis is going to deal with three popular British teen magazines – Bliss, Sugar and Top of the Pops. I will analyze the contents and language of all these magazines and compare them with each other. The main objective of this analysis is to answer the question which problems these magazines focus on and whether they are suitable for young teenage girls. This analysis is going to find out if these magazines enlarge and develop knowledge and language of teenage girls or if they are only a mixture of materials trying to sell as many goods as possible.


8 CHARACTERISTICS OF MAGAZINES ANALYZED

Before searching the British market of teenage magazines, my intention had been to choose at least one teenage magazine intended for boys in order to compare it with girls’ magazines in this analysis. But I did not find any boys’ title which would belong to the category of consumers’ magazines having the same entertainment function as the girls’ ones.

I have chosen three very popular teenage magazines occurring on the British market with the purpose to make their content and linguistic analysis - Bliss, Sugar and Top of the Pops. Bliss and Sugar are titles which are considered as market leaders and they are the biggest competitors. Top of the Pops differs from the two previous titles by its special orientation because, as the title suggests, it focuses on pop music.

Bliss magazine has existed on the British market for 19 years and it is published every month by Panini publisher. It was launched as a response to Sugar. Bliss is intended for young girls at the age from 12 to 16 (Magforum.com, Teen magazines). All the analyzed issues were bought in Great Britain and their price was £2.50, which makes Bliss the most expensive title from all the analyzed magazines.

Sugar magazine has been published by Hachette Filipacchi UK (previously by Attic Futura) since October 1994. Young girls at the age from 13 to 19 are considered to be the target readers of Sugar. In 2006 Sugar slumped from the first place of the best-selling girls’ magazine and it was overtaken by Bliss (Magforum.com, Teen magazines). All the issues of Sugar used in this analysis were provided for free by Mr. Tamimi, the magazine’s features assistant. Sugar magazine offers an additional eighteen-page magazine called Sugar LadMag which is written by boys or men and it is intended for both female and male readers. I decided to analyze Sugar LadMag as a separate magazine because it exists independently of Sugar, except for the fact that they are sold together.

Top of the Pops is a magazine published monthly since 1995 by BBC Worldwide. It was created according to the world’s music show of the same name broadcast weekly on BBC. The target readers are girls at the age from 12 to 18 (Magforum.com, Teen magazines). Both analyzed issues were bought on the British electronic auction for £2.25 each.

All the analyzed magazines belong to the category of consumers’ magazines which use a specific language to express the specific content. The following analysis is going to reveal if the presented titles enrich both knowledge and language of British teenage girls. Table 2
introduces detailed information about the titles used in this analysis. Except the magazines’ prices mentioned above, table 2 contains information about the magazines’ formats as well as the average number of pages or gifts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Analyzed Issues</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Average Number of Pages</th>
<th>Gift Included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bliss</td>
<td>July 08</td>
<td>A4, A5</td>
<td>£2.50</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>A pair of sandals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December 08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar + Sugar</td>
<td>February 09</td>
<td>A5 + A4</td>
<td>£2.30</td>
<td>114 + 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LadMag</td>
<td>March 09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of the Pops</td>
<td>June 08</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>£2.25</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Eyeshadows, stickers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Presentation of Magazines Analyzed (self-created)
9 LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

Teenage language used in teenage magazines is special in many ways and thus it is going to be analyzed from three points of view in this chapter. This analysis is going to focus on the vocabulary, style and syntax of teenage magazines.

9.1 Lexicology

Choice of words used in teenage magazines is closely connected with the unique style of teenage magazines. As it was outlined in the theoretical part, teenage magazines are written in informal style hence the vocabulary used in these magazines is colloquial, closely resembling spoken form of language.

The lexical analysis is going to be presented from two points of view. The first one is going to analyze the teenage magazines’ vocabulary according to its creation. The goal of this subchapter is to find out whether the teenage magazines use existing words or whether they invent their own vocabulary and this analysis is going to reveal how the neologisms are created. The second point of view is going to present a meaning of the particular vocabulary.

9.1.1 Lexicology from the Word Formation Point of View

The teenage magazines’ language is typical for frequent usage of neologisms thought up by editors and for publishing of unique words not usually found in any kind of magazines. As it was outlined in the theoretical part, the teenage magazines are considered to be a subcategory of women’s magazines. Comparing the language of these two types of periodicals, the language used in women’s magazines is, in my opinion, more formal and sophisticated than the language of teenage magazines and it does not use as much imagination in word formation as teenage magazines do.

Blending is a process compounding two parts of different words. This type of word formation is frequently used in the creation of puns which are highly published in teenage magazines. The function of these words is to entertain, to increase attractiveness of the articles, to enlarge the readers’ vocabulary because most of the words can be used in the real life and last but not least to save space because two words are substituted by one with the same meaning. Sugar magazine offers special space in each issue where it presents one
blended word with its explanation. For example the noun “Bog” which was created from the words bad and snog and Sugar provides its readers with an example of the sentence using this new word: “He is fit, but I heard he’s a bog (a boy who cannot snog).” The same example is the second word “Fad” which was created from the words fit and lad and it can be used in the sentence: “Check out the fad (a nice boy) in History! Yum!”.

Clipping is usually classified as a subcategory of blending. This process creates new words using a shorter form of long words. As it was outlined above, this form is typical for spoken language and cannot be found in articles written in formal language. The usage of these words creates more familiar atmosphere simulating a dialogue or speech of young teenage girls. Typical examples of clipping are the following words: “mag” (magazine), “celeb” (celebrity), “prob” (problem), “pro” (professional), “girlf” (girlfriend), “’mare” (nightmare). All these words appeared in all analyzed magazines.

Initialisms stand for another group of words appearing in the teenage magazines as well. These words are abbreviations represented by the initial letters of a phrase which are not read as one word but their letters are spelled. They occur in the text very often because it is more comfortable to use contracted forms than to repeat still the same long phrase. It might be difficult for foreigners to understand these words but I believe that the British teenagers use these words in their real lives and they understand them easily. Examples of initialisms used in the teenage magazines’ language are the following: “BFF” = best friend forever (Sugar March 09), “OMG” = oh my god (Bliss January 09), “HSM” = High School Musical, which is the name of very popular movie in the UK (Top of the Pops June 08).

Compound words are created by putting two words together. Words created by this process and used in teenage magazines can be understood as puns. Their main function is to entertain but their smart structure saves space as well. Compound words do not need any explanation, their meaning is clearly expressed. Example of a compound word is “matemergency” (Sugar February 09) derived from words mate and emergency resulted in the ability to help friends immediately. Other examples of compound words are: “hitlist (Sugar February 09), superstar (Bliss July 08), overweight (Top of the Pops June 08).”

Loanwords are words borrowed from other languages. English is a worldwide language mostly relying on its own vocabulary and does not borrow words from other languages in as large quantity as some languages do. I focused on this fact with the intention to find foreign words or sentences in teenage magazines. But the result of my research is the only one French word, “chic” (Sugar February 09), and one French statement “J’adore Cutie Pie!”
(Bliss July 08) in all the analyzed issues. Both these borrowed words are connected with fashion and thus it is no surprise that French words were used because France is considered to be a fashion cradle.

The vocabulary of teenage magazines uses a lot of processes to create and present a new vocabulary, which carries one important function - the development of teenage girls’ vocabulary. This is performed by amusing and attractive way, encouraging the creativity and imagination in the use of language by teenage magazines’ readers.

9.1.2 Lexicology from the Semantic Point of View
Each word carries a special meaning which can be understood differently depending on the current situation. The teenage magazines’ language is characteristic for its specific vocabulary which can be hardly found in broadsheets written in Standard English.

Interjections create a typical part of teenage magazines’ vocabulary. They evoke an impression that editors talk to readers personally, not through any medium. For the spoken form of language it is typical that the interjection “Ouch!” instead of the verb expressing pain is used. Interjections make the language dynamic, amusing, immediate and realistic. Examples of interjections used in teenage magazines are the following: “Ehh. Yoweh! Eww. Oops! Yum! Yay! Oh! Er. Ha! Woo! Aargh.” These interjections are used in all the analyzed magazines.

Extreme words create a very important part of the teenage magazines’ language. They usually make an important part of headlines or cover-lines because they contribute to the increase in attractiveness. These words usually exaggerate the real story and they make a narration vigorous and more dynamic. Extreme words are often represented by adjectives, such as “bloodied” (Sugar March 09), “exclusive” (Bliss December 09), “desperate” (Sugar February 09), “ashamed” (Top of the Pops October 09), “super” (Sugar LadMag February 09) and adverbs, such as “totally” (Sugar LadMag March 09), “brutally” (Sugar LadMag March 09), “viciously” (Bliss January 09), “urgently” (Sugar March 09). Representatives of the extreme nouns are the following: “shame” (Top of the Pops June 08), “shock” (Bliss January 09), “violent” (Sugar LadMag February 09), “scandal” (Bliss February 09), “disaster” (Top of the Pops June 08). Extreme verbs can be found as well: “hate” (Bliss July 08), “detest” (Sugar March 09), “hurry” (Sugar March 09). These
words create a hyperbole very often. An example of use of hyperbole in teenage magazines is the following sentence: “I was eaten alive!” (Sugar February 09).

Homophones have become an inseparable part of puns creation. Teenage magazines frequently use homophones in order to increase the level of amusement, which enriches the text a lot. A typical example of a homophone is the word “cribtique” published in Sugar LadMag (March 09). It sounds the same as the word critique but in the spelling there is one extra letter which makes the word totally different. The article in which this homophone is published deals with the appearance of girls’ rooms. To analyze the semantics of the word “cribtique”, the meaning of its first part crib must be explained. The word crib stands colloquially for a mess. I think that the meaning of the original and the created word is the same with the difference that the word “cribtique” carries one more meaning. In my opinion the word cribtique means critique of a crib in girls’ rooms. Other examples of homophones are: art attack = heart attack (Sugar March 09) or buy-buy = bye-bye (Top of the Pops June 08).

The teenage magazines’ vocabulary is very inventive. It contains a lot of words which carry a strong meaning especially in connection with pictures. A typical feature of these words is the expression of emotions which intensifies the message that they carry. The vocabulary is also based on the play with well-known words. It is typical for teenage magazines to use the language which is familiar not only in its structure and form but also in the choice of words.

9.2 Stylistics
Teenage magazines are written for wide audience of girls with mostly lower or medium level of education and thus any special knowledge presupposition is required.

The articles are written in colloquial English, often resembling spoken form of teenage language which may be proved by characteristic vocabulary. The editors use colloquial English in order to approach teenage girls’ style of communication. Examples of colloquial vocabulary are: “havin” (having), “‘cause” (because), “gonna” (going to), “wanna” (want to), “fave” (favorite), “celeb” (celebrity), “prob” (problem), “mag” (magazine), “‘scopes” (horoscopes), “brekkie” (breakfast). All these words became shorter in speech as a consequence of language development and they occur in all analyzed magazines.
The typical feature of the teenage magazines’ language is a direct contact with readers. The editors frequently use sentences expressing a very personal approach to every single reader, which increases the attraction of the article. This is achieved by the help of the possessive pronoun *your* and personal pronoun *you* and also by imperative and interrogative clauses. Examples are the following: “Hot boys. For you. Who’s your fave?” (Bliss July 08). “Are you on a relationship roundabout?” (Bliss January 09). “Your mystic month.” (Top of the Pops June 08). “Find your new season look!” (Bliss January 09).

Another characteristic feature supporting the idea of direct addressing of readers is frequent usage of rhetoric questions. This type of questions makes the text more diversified and although the rhetoric questions are not expected to be answered, they force readers to think about the problem solved in the article. Examples of the rhetoric questions are the following: “What would you do?” (Bliss January 09). “How do you persuade them?” (Bliss January 09). “What do you think?” (Sugar March 09).

In the theoretical part (see page 26) it was said that the teenage magazines’ language uses a lot of tag questions. During my research I found only few of them which appeared predominantly in readers’ letters thus I do not consider tag questions to be one of the main stylistic features of teenage magazines.

The teenage magazines use a mixture of different styles. The most usual genre is a report whose aim is to mediate information dealing with social events, fashion news or it announces the future events, such as concert or a CD launch. The authors of this style are mainly editors. Another popular genre is an interview appearing in a form of a short dialogue in every issue of all analyzed magazines. This style provides teenage readers with information about their favourite celebrities’ lives, hobbies and ambitions. The last genre occurring widely in teenage magazines is short stories. This category mainly includes readers’ letters discussing their contretemps or lives stories.

Teenage magazines use one important linguistic tool which variegates their language a lot – puns. The main goal of the word play is to increase the level of amusement and to catch the readers’ attention. Because of this function, puns are usually used in headlines, cover-lines and slogans. Puns can be created by a lot of different ways. Word plays published in teenage magazines are usually built on homophones, rhyme, alliteration and assonance. Example of a pun built on the sound similarity is the following: “Fat or Fiction?” (Bliss July 2008). In my opinion this is an example of intertextuality because this headline refers to the popular American serial *Beyond Belief* and its subtitle *Fact or Fiction*.
became a model for this pun. The article introduced by this headline can be found situated in
the health column discussing the effects of carbohydrates. This pun does not have to be
classified as the homophone (fat and fact) word play necessarily because it shows signs of
alliteration as well.

Alliteration creates the second type of puns. This phenomenon is typically used in
poetry but it frequently appears in teenage magazines as well. Alliteration is based on the
repetition of a consonant sound and it occurs mostly in headlines. Examples of alliteration
are the following: “Back to black” (Sugar March 2009). “Freaky fans” (Bliss July 2008).
“Makeover ’mares” (Sugar February 09). “Movie mania” (Top of the Pops June 08).
“Style steals” (Sugar February 09). “Cool case” (Bliss January 09). “Book bonanza”
(Bliss January 09). “Who will win your vote?” (Sugar March 09).

Assonance is a similar phenomenon to alliteration with the difference in repeated sound
because assonance means that the words contain the same vowel sound. The usage of
assonance in teenage magazines is not as frequent as alliteration or homophones but some
examples can be found: “Festive fashion” (Sugar February 09). “Toy story” (Sugar
February 09). “Think pink” (Bliss January 09). “Go for gold” (Bliss January 09). “Neat
feet” (Bliss January 09).

Rhyme is a tool occurring in teenage magazines in a large quantity and it is typical for
the language of headlines and slogans. Its aim is again to entertain and to attract attention.
The principle of a rhyme is based on the repetition of a similar sound in two or more words.
Examples of the rhyme in the teenage magazines’ sentences are the following: “Get it or
regret it!” (Bliss January 09). “A trend isn’t always a celebrity’s friend…” (Sugar
March 09). “Cool for school!” (Top of the Pops June 08). “Date, mate or slate?” (Sugar
LadMag March 09).

The linguistic means mentioned in this subchapter can mix together and thus two or
more features may be found in one phrase or sentence.

The style of teenage magazines is in general quite simple and it does not make great
demands on teenage readers. It uses a lot of means attracting and keeping readers’
attention. I’m speaking not only about verbal means outlined above but also about emotions
visible in the non-verbal aspects of the text, such as the usage of a form, colour and size in
the headlines or pictures creation (see chapter 10 Content Analysis).
9.3 Syntax

The syntactic features of the teenage magazines’ language closely correspond to the lexicological and stylistic level because all these linguistic disciplines have one common characteristic – the colloquial language.

Sentences used in teenage magazines are not long, which makes articles more dynamic. They usually contain present simple or past tense, which depends on a content of an article. Any form of the future tense is hard to find.

One of the main characteristics of the teenage magazines’ language from the syntactic point of view is a frequent usage of ellipsis. This phenomenon is typical for informal, spoken form of language. The editors or contributors usually omit one word or a short phrase which should be used in the sentence from the grammatical or semantic point of view. This omission results in a shorter sentence with a unique structure whose meaning is fully comprehensible. Example of ellipsis in the teenage magazines is the following: “Feel like a treat?” (Bliss December 08) instead of the grammatically correct question “Do you feel like a treat?” Another example is the sentence: “Alesha Dixon talks boys, bitching and Beyoncé with Bliss.” (Bliss December 2008) The verb talk should be followed by the preposition about.

The next important syntactic features of teenage magazines are definitely linguistic tools which were characterized in the previous chapters – puns, alliteration, assonance and homophones. As it was said they are used in headlines, cover-lines and slogans and they destroy the rules of traditional sentence structure because they usually lack a subject or a predicate.

Most of the sentences used in teenage magazines stick to the rules of typical English sentence structure. The exceptions to these rules are represented by linguistic means mentioned in the chapter 9.2 Stylistics (puns, alliteration, assonance, homophones). Thanks to these tools, the text is not boring and it is able to attract and amuse its readers. The authors of teenage magazines’ articles show their readers how the language is inventive and ludic every day.
10 CONTENT ANALYSIS

This chapter, dealing with the content of teenage magazines, aims to reveal what the crucial topics of teenage magazines are and in which columns these topics are contained. It should also show what the proportion of commercial and non-commercial articles is and which topics these commercial materials focus on.

Basically, a content of every teenage magazine is made of two essential components—texts and pictures—which always work together. This content analysis is going to deal with both parts separately and thus it is divided into the content analysis of the textual and non-textual part of teenage magazines.

10.1 Content Analysis of the Textual Part of Teenage Magazines

Content analysis of the texts which are published in teenage magazines is going to characterise the main topics appearing in this kind of magazines and to describe their individual columns. It is very important for editors to know addressees of teenage magazines because the entire magazine is created according to their desire and need.

All the analyzed teenage magazines have a very similar structure. Immediately after opening the teenage magazine a reader will read about the latest gossip. This part is followed by an interview with a famous person and readers’ contretemps. The middle parts of teenage magazines are usually different but the reading always finishes with horoscopes and girls’ problems pages. The three most fundamental topics which create basis of every teenage magazine are celebrities, fashion and relationships matters. Except these three main issues, health and entertainment (miscellaneous) topics will be analyzed as well.

1) Topic of Celebrities

Celebrities’ topic represents the most numerous group of all articles. This topic is highly popular within ordinary people because they are interested in every step or event happened to famous person they like or dislike even though the majority of information are rumours. The columns published in teenage magazines discussing celebrities are celebrities’ gossip and an interview with a famous person.

Celebrities’ gossip column is mainly built on compromising photos discussing fashion or relationships of celebrities. The function of the text in this column is only to describe the
picture, any story or narration cannot be expected. People who are spied on are movie stars or famous singers.

An interview with a famous person belongs to the fundamental topics of every teenage magazine. The aim of this column is to introduce the celebrity’s hobbies, opinions, future ambitions, generally to present the celebrity’s character to readers. In teenage magazines a reader will never find an interview with a politician, a scientist or an economist because the teenage readers are not interested in such intellectual topics. They want to learn something about their idols – movie stars or favourite singers – about their careers as well as private lives.

a) Celebrities’ Columns in Magazines Analyzed

Both the columns mentioned above, celebrities’ gossip and an interview with a famous person, are presented in all magazines analyzed but they differ in quantity, which depends on the magazine’s orientation.

Bliss magazine’s column dealing with celebrities is called BlissStalker and it fills 16 pages (14%) on average from the entire issue. BlissStalker includes columns of celebrities’ gossip as well as an interview with a famous person. This column is very colourful because most of the space is devoted to photos or photomontage. An exception is an interview which is mainly made of the text and pictures serve as an illustration. The headlines are huge and in gaudy colours because they must contrast with the background. They are not colourful only in their appearance but also in their varied language and thus they can be considered to be one of the dominant features of teenage magazines.

Top of the Pops column discussing celebrities is called Gossip2Go and it provides its readers with 17.5 colourful pages (36.5%) on average offering the latest news from celebrities’ lives per one issue. A famous person interviewed in the current issue is always presented on the cover to attract the readers. In comparison with Bliss, Top of the Pops uses more aggressive combination of colours which consequently make the text fussy. This is supported by the headlines’ depiction because its size, colours and meaning contribute to typical teenage magazines’ eccentricity.

Sugar magazine offers to its readers 22.5 pages (21%) on average describing celebrities’ lives, contretemps or events where they participated in per one issue. This column is called Insider and in comparison with Top of the Pops, Sugar’s column offers clearer and better arranged information. Insider’s depiction is not as extreme as
Gossip2Go’s one but it still corresponds to the main teenage magazines’ characteristics – colours eccentricity.

Sugar LadMag is a unique magazine because as it was said all editors are men writing about male celebrities and publishing only male readers’ letters. This magazine offers 6 pages (34%) on average per one issue discussing celebrities’ gossip in the column with no title. The page is introduced only with the statement: “This month celeb lads are mainly:”... This is finished by the subtitle “Dazed and confused” (February 09) or “Girlfriend grooming” (March 09). The column dealing with a famous person interviewed is called Cover story and it is no longer than two pages. An interviewed star is always a man presented on the cover of the current issue.

To compare space devoted to celebrities’ topics in all teenage magazines analyzed, Top of the Pops is the magazine writing about this topic the most frequently (36.5%), also offering a lot of celebrities’ posters. The next positions are ranked by Sugar LadMag (34%) and Sugar (21%). The magazine offering the least amount of celebrities’ topic is Bliss (14%) because it focuses on relationships rather than on celebrities. The content of all celebrities’ columns is the same in the all magazines analyzed. A slight difference can be found only in their depiction.

2) Topic of Fashion and Beauty
One of the cornerstones of teenage magazines is the subject of fashion and beauty. This topic is very popular among the girls’ readers because it is one of a few sources introducing fashion trends. Pages containing this topic are fully devoted to girls, boys’ fashion news cannot be found even in Sugar LadMag focusing on boys’ audience.

Teenage magazines’ column dealing with fashion and beauty can be called Fashion and beauty tips. This column is predominantly made of pictures and photos, articles are hard to find. This part resembles a fashion and beauty catalogue because it presents goods, including their price and the shop where the reader can buy them. Hence this column can be classified as an advertisement as well.

The second fashion column appearing in teenage magazines is connected with celebrities’ topic because the aim of this column is to evaluate celebrities’ outfits. The evaluators are either professionals oriented in fashion trends or editors expressing their own opinion. This column shows the readers current trends, which consequently serve as models for them.
a) Fashion and Beauty Columns in Magazines Analyzed

The analyzed teenage magazines mainly contain a column discussing fashion and beauty tips, the evaluation of celebrities’ outfits can be found only in *Sugar*.

*Bliss’s* column dealing with the fashion and beauty tips is called *BlissStyle* and it offers to the readers a wide range of cosmetic products, clothes and accessories from perfumes through t-shirts to sunglasses. This column contains on average 25 pages (24%) per one issue. The content of this column is predominantly made of goods pictures, articles are missing. *Bliss* does not offer a column discussing celebrities’ outfits so the only representative of fashion and beauty topic is the column *BlissStyle*.

*Top of the Pops*’ fashion and beauty column contains 5.5 pages (11.5%) on average per one issue. The name of the column differs in each issue as well as the range of the goods offered. The former issue of *Top of the Pops* (June 08) presents summer dresses and the headline of this column is *Dress to impress!* The latter issue (September 09) offers jeans and the name is *Flares Fever!* It may be noticed that *Top of the Pops* adjusts the trends to seasons and it does not contain any column evaluating celebrities’ outfits.

*Sugar* publishes the highest number of pages concerning fashion and beauty. The average amount of pages is 48 (41%) while 3 pages out of this evaluate the celebrities’ accessories or outfits. The depiction of this column in *Sugar* is different than in the other magazines. The column is mainly made of articles and pictures of products serve as an illustration. Almost one half of the magazine contains fashion topic because this topic interferes in the ordinary articles. *Sugar* offers a catalogue form of products as well and this column is called *SugarStyle*.

*Sugar LadMag* is the title dealing with the topic of fashion in the lowest amount. As it was said above, this title is created by boys and intended mostly for boys and thus the fashion topic is not frequent. *Sugar LadMag* contains on average 5 pages (27.5%) of the fashion topic per one issue. These pages are represented by fashion trends evaluated by the male readers. This column is called *BoysGoGok* and is devoted to girls and it should express the male opinion on fashion trends.

The topic of fashion and beauty creates definitely an inevitable part of teenage magazines. The title dealing with this sort of information the most frequently is *Sugar* paying on average 41% of its attention to shopping tips. *Sugar’s* first position is followed by *Sugar LadMag* (27.5%) and *Bliss* (24%). On the contrary *Top of the Pops* provides its readers with the lowest percentage (16.6%) of fashion and beauty topic. The content of
these columns as well as their implementation is almost identical in all the teenage magazines used.

3) **Topic of Relationships**

Relationships topic creates a huge part of every teenage magazine. The main objective of this topic is to help the readers to solve their problem or to provide them with information mostly about people of the opposite sex, in the case of teenage magazines, information about boys. Concerning the relationships topic, this is a part of teenage magazine which substitutes parents or friends role. The authors of the articles about relationships are mainly readers themselves telling their stories and secrets. Teenage magazines contain three fundamental columns discussing relationships topics.

   Stories from readers’ real lives make a group highly participating in a magazine creation. Majority of the articles published in this column offer unhappy or even shocking stories. The readers describe their own life experience which has consequently a deterrent effect. The main topics this column writes about are bullying, self-harm, sexuality or family problems.

   The second column is represented by problem pages which I classify into the category of relationships topic because they predominantly deal with girls’ problems with boyfriends or family members. This column is very useful in my opinion because readers can practically anonymously ask for advice or information they are interested in. A lot of teenage girls are bashful to talk about intimate topics, such as sex, with their parents and thus this column is a good way how to advise and inform them. Problem pages always consist of a reader’s short question and its answer made by editors or psychologists.

   The third column concerning relationships is again created by readers’ letters describing their contretemps. Their aim is to entertain the other readers but from the contributors’ points of view the magazine serves as a friend to whom they tell their secrets. I included this column into relationships topic because the contretemps’ content focuses on boys, friends or girls’ family members. The question is if these articles are really written by readers or if they are fully or partly thought-out by editors.

   **a) Relationships Columns in Magazines Analyzed**

   It must be mentioned that not all the articles discussing relationships can be classified into the three columns described above but these columns are the most frequent and create one
of the fundamental parts of teenage magazines. All the three mentioned columns are presented in all titles analyzed, except Sugar LadMag which lacks the problem pages as well as column of contretemps.

Bliss contains on average 35 pages (33%) dealing with relationships topic per one issue. It has different names for each column mentioned above. The column concerning readers’ life stories is called BlissRealLife and it usually offers two one-page long stories per issue. Out of nine analyzed magazines Bliss (January 09) published only one article with a positive content. This article is called “I kissed a girl” and it contains the story about a nineteen-year old girl realising she is a lesbian. The article is optimistic and I believe it will encourage other girls struggling with their sexuality to accept themselves. In Bliss the column dealing with girls’ problems is called Surgery and it is divided into four sections (boys, bare, body and bothers). The fact that advisers are doctors and psychologists increases trustworthiness of the entire column. The column of contretemps is called OMG and it is one page long containing on average eight short stories and one big picture illustrating the most shameful story.

Top of the Pops provides its readers with 6.5 pages (14.5%) of relationship topics on average per one issue. The real stories column is very similar to the Bliss’ one. It is called Real life and it includes one story accompanied by a photo. The column discussing readers’ problems is called Your probs sorted! and Top of the Pops provides its readers with the smallest space for their problems which are solved by two male editors. The column Your probs sorted! is one page long and it contains only three short letters compared to Bliss column which deals with ten texts. The last huge column dealing with relationships is called Your oops! and as the headline suggests the content focuses on the readers’ embarrassing experiences. The length as well as the depiction of this column is the same as in Bliss.

Sugar magazine publishes relationships topic on 20 pages (17.5%) and it contains all three crucial columns mentioned above. Sugar offers three double-paged real stories in the column called Sugar Best for Real Lives. In comparison with other analyzed magazines, Sugar dedicates the largest space to real stories’ column. Your problems sorted! is the column dealing with readers’ problems. It offers the same space as Bliss with the difference that it does not divide the column into further sections and the advisors are not educated experts but only editors of the magazine. The last crucial column mainly dealing with relationships is called Shameful confessions and it introduces on average twelve different
letters. This column is accompanied by pictures which illustrate some of the contretemps mentioned.

Sugar LadMag contains the only column discussing relationships which is called Real Life. This article is presented on 3 pages (16%) in one issue. The article always publishes a boy’s or a man’s story introduced by a huge headline and picture.

To conclude this category of relationships topic it must be mentioned that the title focusing on relationships columns the most frequently is Bliss (33%) which is followed by Sugar (17.5%) and Sugar LadMag (16%). Top of the Pops (14.5%) offers only one column and thus it ranks the last position. All the magazines publishing a column of readers’ problems offer contacts (telephone numbers and web sites) of organizations dealing with drugs, bullying or eating disorders where readers can ask for professional help.

4) Topic of Health
Before I started to work on this analysis, I had classified topics which I expected to read about in teenage magazines. All the topics I assumed are described in this analysis except the one whose a mere mention disappointed me – a topic of health. I consider this topic to be very important for teenage girls because they should be taught how to care of their bodies and health since their early age. As a reader of a teenage magazine, I would miss information about healthy food, sports and hobbies.

Bliss is the only title offering one page (1%) to the health topic in every issue. This column is called BlissPromo and it discusses the problem of health food. It consists of five short articles informing about eating habits illustrated by food pictures on an average.

5) Miscellaneous
This category contains columns which cannot be classified into any of the previous topics. It includes horoscopes, teasers, quizzes, competitions and promotions of concerts and record albums. All these columns are not crowd-pullers but they make the magazine more varied. The main objective of these columns is to entertain and some of them provide an opportunity to win a prize. All the analyzed titles offer at least two of the columns mentioned above – horoscopes and quizzes.

Horoscope’s column in teenage magazines varies from broadsheets in the content as well as in visual depiction. Predictions are written for pubescent girls so the main topics
solved in this column deal with boys, friends and relationships in general. These short articles lack topics connected with responsibility, such as school or money matters.

Quizzes represent the second column of entertainment. The topic of this column is related to relationships as well. Quizzes can be considered as surveys into a reader’s personality and they reveal for example the suitable character of a reader’s partner to go together.

**a) Miscellaneous in Magazines Analyzed**

The depiction of the columns belonging to the miscellaneous category is very different in all the analyzed titles. Some of them create these columns in a typical colourfulness, others use restrained colours and almost no pictures. On the other hand the content of these columns is very similar and it fulfils the main function – to entertain.

*Bliss* offers 19 pages (17%) on average to columns of entertainment, such as horoscopes, quizzes and competitions per one issue. This title does not contain any teasers. *Bliss*’ horoscope column is called *BlissDestiny* and it is intended for girls’ and boys’ readers because *Bliss* publishes a horoscope for boys’ audience as well. The girls’ horoscope offers twelve short articles including the date of a ‘good’ and ‘bad day’, ‘star buy’ and ‘flirt alert’. In this column there are practically no pictures. The boys’ horoscope column is called *Himscopes* and it is the one page long article usually containing two sentences estimating the boys’ future. The horoscopes’ section is followed by quizzes revealing a reader’s style or personality.

*Top of the Pops* columns of entertainment can be found on 11 pages (22%) on average. The column is called *Your mystic month!* and predictions are made by famous people such as David Beckham, Cameron Diaz or Keira Knightly and thus they are probably the least reliable but the funniest ones. These horoscopes are intended only for girls because the most frequent topic appearing in the text are relationships with boys. *Top of the Pops* offers the widest range of teasers from all the analyzed magazines. Crosswords and wordsearches attract readers by the opportunity to win mobile phones, mp3 players or DVD players.

*Sugar* provides its readers with on average 15 pages (13%) of entertainment topics per each issue. Horoscopes column published in *Sugar* is called *Your day-by-day destiny* and it is the most detailed one from all the analyzed magazines because it offers to readers their everyday schedule telling them what will happen or what girls should do in the future 30 days. *Sugar* deals with boys’ horoscopes as well as *Bliss* does with the difference that
Sugar’s horoscope for boys is usually inserted to the girls’ one. Sugar offers few quizzes and competitions referring to its webpage.

Sugar LadMag contains only 3 pages (16%) on average discussing entertainment topics. It lacks horoscopes because boys’ horoscopes are included in Sugar. It offers only few quizzes highly accompanied by pictures.

Even though the columns of entertainment such as horoscopes, quizzes, teasers and various competitions are not the reason why readers buy teenage magazines, they participate in a magazine creation in a quite high percentage. The highest percentage of entertainment columns per one issue can be found in Top of the Pops (22%) which is followed by Bliss (17%) and Sugar LadMag (16%). Sugar devotes only 13% from its content to horoscopes or teasers, on the other hand it provides its readers with a boys’ horoscope which can be found only in Bliss.

6) Advertisements
Advertisements were classified into three categories (extratextual, intratextual advertisements and self-advertisements) in the theoretical part of this work. In the analysis of advertisements I am not going to deal with the intratextual advertisements because this form of promotional material appears in almost every article.

a) Advertisements in Magazines Analyzed
Advertisements have become an inseparable part of all magazines. Their content differs according to the target readers. In teenage magazines various topics of advertisements can be classified – fashion, cosmetics, hobbies, fun, self-ads and help category which mainly promotes organizations for escaped or abused girls. The implementation of advertisements in all the analyzed magazines is the same. The advertisement is composed of a full-page picture of a product and a short slogan. The language of slogans is sometimes very interesting because it uses a wide range of linguistic means, such as rhyme or alliteration. The example of alliteration in the advertisement’s slogan is the following: “Lipcote. Lipstick’s lost without it” (Bliss December 08).

Bliss provides on average 12 full pages (11%) of the magazine’s content to advertisers. The most usual topic of advertisements presented in Bliss is cosmetics. This category is represented by advertisements promoting perfumes, hairsprays or eyeshadows. Fashion is
the advertisement’s topic which can be found only in Bliss. In the other magazines fashion promotion occurs only in the articles (intratextual advertisements).

Every issue of Top of the Pops contains on average 7.5 pages (16.5%) of materials published by advertisers. This percentage is the highest from all the analyzed magazines. The Top of the Pops’ advertisements mainly focuses on hobbies, which means that they promote especially computer games, DVD movies and CD albums.

Sugar magazine includes on average 8.5 pages (7.5%) whose aim is to promote products, especially cosmetics products because they create the main group of all the advertisements found in this title. Sugar and Bliss publish the same promotional materials very often, which can be caused by the fact that they are closely connected in their topics.

Sugar LadMag encompasses only one page (5.5%) of advertisement which deals with help arranged for abandoned dogs. In this title any advertisement promoting fashion, cosmetics or even the title itself cannot be found.

The analysis of extratextual advertisements has revealed that approximately 10% of every teenage magazine is made by advertisements. The biggest amount of these promotional materials can be found in Top of the Pops (16.5%) followed by Bliss (11%) and Sugar (7.5%). Sugar LadMag contains the lowest percentage of extratextual advertisements (5.5%). Figure 3 shows the topics of extratextual advertisements. It can be seen that the most usual topics are hobbies and cosmetics. As it was outlined in the theoretical part of this work, the main objective of advertisements is to sell a product. Self-adsvertisements promoting the next issue of a particular teenage magazine belong to this category as well but this research has revealed few full-page advertisements which are not published with the intention to earn money but they try to help.
Although the teenage magazines represent one category of consumers’ magazines, the analyzed titles are not the same. They contain similar topics but they focus on different target readers. Figure 4 shows the percentage of all the topics mentioned in the title’s content. It reveals that *Sugar* represents titles mainly discussing fashion and beauty news which advise girls what to buy and what to wear to look ‘cool’. On the other hand, *Bliss* is a title prioritizing readers’ relationships providing readers with advice and tips how to have a satisfied partnership and many friends. *Top of the Pops’s* and *Sugar LadMag’s* main concerns focus on celebrities’ gossip and lives with the difference that the former prefers articles about pop stars and movie stars.
Figure 4: Topics of Magazines Analyzed (self-created)
10.2 Analysis of the Non-textual Part of Teenage Magazines

One of the characteristic features of teenage magazines is their colourfulness. Each article is accompanied by a picture or a photo, especially celebrities and shopping tips columns which are, in fact, mostly based on compromising photos.

Considering the size and colours of headlines, their depiction is typical for tabloids presentation. Magazines’ designers frequently use combinations of gaudy colours, in order to attract customers. Designers’ and editors’ job is to create big, attractive and colorful headlines carrying a sensational meaning.

A front cover is a typical example of designers’ and editors’ co-operation because the front cover always sells the magazine. All front covers of the analyzed teenage magazines present a full-page photo of a smiling celebrity interviewed or introduced in the current issue. This is accompanied by huge, colourful cover-lines usually ending by question marks and exclamation marks or three full stops.

Inside the magazine, designers use aggressive tools to attract a reader’s attention or to emphasize something. Figure 5 shows some of the non-textual tools published in teenage magazines which increase article attractiveness. The first picture was published in Sugar LadMag and it resembles a traffic sign with the title “Warning” continuing with a slogan “Contains brutally honest love advice”. In my opinion this picture captures more attention than a headline itself, especially with the combination of words brutally and love. The second picture (“All you need to know. Right now!”) lures readers to read the article while the third picture (“Only in the next issue of Bliss”) tries to sell the next issue. All the analyzed magazines contain the same form and content of graphical means and thus any comparison of colours or shapes cannot be made.

I think that scandalous content participates in tabloids’ creation from one half. The second half is represented by a visual depiction through which it is send to a reader.

![Figure 5: Non-textual Tools Catching Readers’ Attention (self-created)](image-url)
CONCLUSION

This bachelor thesis deals with a content of teenage magazines (textual as well as non-textual) and the way how this content is expressed – the language of teenage magazines.

The language of teenage magazines definitely enriches young girls’ vocabularies but at the expense of formal language. Teenage magazines contribution lies in the creation of neologisms and in the fact they do not teach young girls to use vulgarisms or generally impolite words. In my opinion an informal language increasingly substitutes a formal one in media in general, which may endanger Standard English in a future. The form in which the words are presented is amusing and interesting. Teenage magazines use a wide range of different linguistic means, such as rhyme, puns or alliteration, which consequently make the language dynamic, attractive and entertaining.

The content of teenage magazines for girls is mostly made of superficial topics. This fact is understandable considering the scope of girls’ interests at their teens. Teenage magazines provide their readers with a wide range of information from relationships through celebrities’ lives to fashion and beauty tips and they do not forget to offer them some products, which is the aim of the advertisements published. The content of every teenage magazine is also made by non-textual means, such as pictures, photos or even headlines depiction, which attract readers to read the article. Teenage magazines could contain more educational topics written in a form which is comprehensible and interesting to their target readers.

Teenage magazines are representatives of a special kind of literature which has its supporters as well as opponents. But it definitely has its own value, positive as well as negative, in the girls’ evolution and influences them a lot.
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APPENDICES

P I  Typical Features of the Teenage Magazines’ Language.

P II  An overview of Columns Published in Teenage Magazines (see enclosed CD).
APPENDIX P I: TYPICAL FEATURES OF THE TEENAGE MAGAZINES’ LANGUAGE

1. PUNS

Figure 1: Alliteration
Figure 2: Assonance

Figure 3: Rhyme
Figure 4: Homophones

Figure 5: Intertextuality
Figure 6: Neologisms
2. FEATURES OF INFORMAL LANGUAGE

Figure 7: Colloquialisms
Figure 8: Ellipsis

Snort support
I was at a party recently and got talking to this boy I’d liked for ages. I was really enjoying his company and we were getting on brilliantly, I couldn’t believe it! Then he said something really funny and I couldn’t help laughing hysterically – in fact, I laughed so hard that I accidentally farted. And it stank. Whoops.
Nicole, 14, Stowmarket

“I asked my mates to go to M&S with me and they were like ‘ew’ but they’ll go to charity shops ‘cause that’s cool. People should stop being so snobby – you can get cool stuff everywhere!”
Danielle, 15, Scotland

Figure 9: Interjections
APPENDIX P II: AN OVERVIEW OF COLUMNS PUBLISHED IN TEENAGE MAGAZINES

1. TOPIC OF CELEBRITIES

1.1. Bliss

Figure 10: Celebrities’ Gossip Column in Bliss (July 08) - BlissStalker

Figure 11: An Interview with a Famous Person in Bliss (December 08) – BlissStalker
1.2. Top of the Pops

Figure 12: Celebrities’ Gossip Column in *Top of the Pops* (June 08) – Gossip2Go

Figure 13: An Interview with a Famous Person in *Top of the Pops* (June 08)
1.3. Sugar

**Figure 14**: Celebrities’ Gossip Column in *Sugar* (February 09) – Insider

**Figure 15**: An Interview with a Famous Person in *Sugar* (February 09) – Sugar idol
1.4. Sugar LadMag

Figure 16: Celebrities’ Gossip Column in Sugar LadMag (February 09)

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2.2. Top of the Pops

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Figure 23: Beauty Column in *Sugar* (February 09) – SugarStyle
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