



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Product Placement in Television Series

**A qualitative study about the effects of Gossip Girl's
product placement of luxury brands on the viewers**

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Abstract

Purpose: To explore how young women are affected by the product placement of luxury products in the television series Gossip Girl.

Background: Consumers are turning away from traditional ways of advertising and research has proven that advertising is more effective when the recipients are not directly aware of its promotional purpose. This is why nowadays a lot of advertisers are relying on product placement to advertise brands. Television and movies have shown to have a great influence on people's consumption behavior as they have an impact on culture and can therefore influence the viewers. The effectiveness of product placement has mainly been studied in the context of movies and regular consumer goods. This study focuses on product placement in television series using the example of Gossip Girl. The particularity of product placement in Gossip Girl is its placement of mainly luxury products. How effective product placement for luxury brands is has never been studied. This thesis aims to fill that gap.

Methodology: Qualitative research was chosen to reach the purpose of the study. To collect data, semi-structured interviews were carried out. Those were transcribed and then analyzed using the qualitative content analysis of Mayring.

Main findings: It was discovered that product placement of luxury brands in Gossip Girl has an impact on the female viewers. All perceived a distance between their life and the lifestyle in Gossip Girl and were therefore not influenced in their consumption behavior. However, there were some differences between the participants of the study. Some gained brand consciousness and wished to own the product placed in the show while others did not feel much influenced. This was mainly due to the difference in the awareness of product placement in the show and the difference in interest in the luxury industry.

Keywords: Product placement, television series, marketing communications, mass media, Gossip Girl, luxury products, advertising.

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I. Introduction

The society in which we live has gradually transformed into a materialistic consumer society in which consumer products and brands play a central role. There is a multitude of products available on the market for the consumers. Therefore, it gets increasingly important for companies and their brands to position themselves, which has resulted in a very competitive market landscape. Advertising and promotion of brands consequently, play a key role for the success and popularity of a brand. Often profits of companies depend on the effectiveness of their advertising.

In the past, advertisers used to resort to classical advertising channels such as printed advertisements in newspapers and magazines or television and radio commercials. More recently, marketers have also integrated online marketing in their communication campaigns such as websites, social media, banners or pop-ups. These promotional activities are nevertheless losing power as the recipients are aware of their promotional purpose. Research¹ has shown that subtler ways of advertising a product are more effective as the recipients are not conscious or aware of their promotional purpose. As a result marketers have come up with alternative advertising measures.

One of these important alternative ways of promoting a good is product placement, which is the placement of brands in media content such as movies or television shows. Ever since its huge success in the movie *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*, product placement is present in almost every movie or television show. The viewers get easily influenced by product placement as its advertising purpose is not obvious to them. Furthermore, the connection of a product to the storyline of a movie or television show makes it desirable and attractive to the viewers.

However, the effects of product placement have mainly been studied in the context of movies. This thesis aims to contribute to the existing research by studying the effect of product placement in television series. This is important as viewers of television series are repeatedly exposed to the media content and therefore, the same type of product placement.² Therefore, it can be argued that the effects of product placement in television series on the viewers might be stronger than the effects it has on movie viewers.

Moreover, the existing research of product placement has mainly been focusing on the placement of brands the average viewer can afford. Therefore, previous studies are not valuable for marketers of luxury products, products which might not be accessible for everyone. However, many television shows resort to product placement of luxury goods such as *Sex and The City*, *90210*, *The OC* or *Gossip Girl*. It can be of value for luxury companies to know how the placement of their brands in television series affects the viewers in order to find out what use

¹ Further elaboration on p. 6

² View cultivation hypothesis p.5 and product placement in televisions series p.7

product placement can have for them. Furthermore, it can help them to develop possible solutions or alternatives.

The study will be based on the example of the television show *Gossip Girl*. This show has been chosen, as product placement of luxury goods is especially prominent and the show is very popular among young girls and women. This research will be based on qualitative semi-structured interviews to obtain the recipients' point of view. This study does not aim to come up with generalizable results but to study the research topic in an explorative and exemplary manner, to find out *how product placement of luxury goods in television series affects the viewers, using the example of the show Gossip Girl. How do the viewers of the show react to product placement? How does it influence the way they view the luxury products and how does it affect the awareness of luxury brands? What are the purchase intentions of the Gossip Girl viewers? How does product placement influence the viewers' view of their own life?*

In a first part, the theoretical background necessary to carry out this study will be analyzed. First, the effects of mass media and television on culture and consumption in general will be described. Then, the theories of framing, cultivation, social learning and connectedness will be explored and related to the research questions. Furthermore, product placement will be defined and an overview of current research will be given. Afterwards, the concept of luxury products and its implications for the consumer will be defined. Finally, a short description of the show *Gossip Girl* and the particularities of its product placement will be given.

In a second part, the relevance of the topic and the methodology of this study will be reviewed. Then, the results of the study will be analyzed. After that the analysis of the results will be discussed and related to the theories. The study will conclude with a critical reflection on the methodology and the study in general. Finally, an outlook on further research will be given.

II. Theoretical Background

1. Mass media and television

1.1 Definition and introduction to mass media

The evolution of the mass media from the early days of the press and newspapers has had a huge impact on people's lifestyle. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011, p.2) mass media refers to "any form of communication that simultaneously reaches a large number of people, including but not limited to radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, billboards, films, books, and internet". Mass media are therefore much diversified and are created to reach a large audience. Moreover, mass media have a lot of functions. In general, different kind of media might satisfy different kind of needs. For instance, mass media can be a source for information, an 'escape' of the reality, an entertainment or used for advertising (Katz, Gurevitch, Hadassah, 1973, p.1).

As mass media are able to reach a lot of people by using different kind of techniques it might be assumed that they have big potential to influence our culture.

1.2 The media's impact on culture

There are many ways for individuals to acquire a culture. It can be acquired by the process of social learning or the observation and emulation of behaviors of others (Hallahan, 1997, p.4). The mass media are especially important when it comes to social learning because media portrayals provide role models for how people behave in everyday life and they construct a view of reality on which people can orient themselves. Hallahan states that consequently the media help to define and shape culture (Hallahan, 1997, p. 4). However, Katz suggests that mass media do not define or create our culture but present a picture of it. "The media don't render our culture smart or dumb, civilized or raucous, peaceful or violent. They mirror the state of the existing culture" (Hallahan, 1997, p.7). A similar alternative has been suggested by Rushoff. He proposes that mass media are a ground for new ideas in our culture (Hallahan, 1997, p.7). Therefore, symbols and their meaning are an important part of mass media messages because "they help us define our identities, or our self-perceptions of who we are, our role in society, and our worth vis-a-vis others" (Hallahan, 1997, p. 5). Consequently, the importance of the mass media might be understood in terms of their role in propagating the symbols' importance for a society.

Additionally, the media can also present particular symbols more frequently and prominently than others, suggesting that certain ideas are more important than others. Consequently, media set the cultural agenda for a society (Hallahan, 1997, p.6). The agenda-setting metaphor states that "media tell people what to think about, not necessarily what to think" (Hallahan, 1997, p.6). Therefore, the media play an important role in shaping what the audience values.

Furthermore, another way media might impact culture is through storytelling (Hallahan, 1997, p.8). The stories are models for people and show how people should act or not. Stories are told and retold to celebrate shared beliefs and values and to transmit these beliefs and values to future generations (Hallahan, 1997, p.8). Stories are especially effective for social learning because the media involve audiences by entertaining them. Furthermore, many marketers use stories to dramatize the cultural benefits of products (Hallahan, 1997, p.8).

Finally, this shows that the mass media play an important role in the socialisation process. Because one of the function of mass media is advertising they play an important role in consumer socialisation which is defined as "the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in a marketplace" (Noor Hasmini Abd Ghani, 2004, p. 67).

The fact that the mass media have an impact on culture might be really important for understanding why advertisers use the media for promotion. One of the best ways use the effects of mass media for the promotion of products is to feature them in the medium of television.

1.3 The medium Television

The focus of this thesis will be put on television as it is an important mass medium of communication. Nowadays it seems to be very important to study not only how often people watch television or how much they like the programs but also how much they relate to the situations and characters in those programs and how such referential relationships affect their own consumption experiences as it has been proven that television plays a key role in spreading global consumption (Noor Hasmini Abd Ghani, 2004, p. 67).

In order to understand how viewers will be influenced by the medium television in their consumption behavior, the reasons why they actually watch television need to be explained. According to Dominick there are four main purposes for watching television: cognition, diversion, social integration and withdrawal (Gullotta and Adams, 2005, p. 68). This means that the audience mostly watches television to gain information, to relax, to construct a quasi-social relationship with the television characters and to escape reality (Gullotta and Adams, 2005, p. 68).

Based on the assumption that mass media have an impact on culture and that one of the functions of mass media is to advertise, television can “create a discourse about lifestyles and the consumption of objects that affects the culture, specifically, the consumer culture in a society” (Varman and Belk, 2008 p. 230). Moreover, as Varman and Belk state, different modes of communication like sounds, words, notes, visuals, gestures, expressions used in television help to “create symbolic representations of different modes of consumption, which in turn are internalized by consumers” (Varman and Belk, 2008 p. 230). In addition, they argue that the meaning connected with the products influence further consumption (Varman and Belk, 2008 p. 230).

Adults, teens, and children have access to hundreds of channels each day that have the power to influence how viewers act, think, talk, dress, and more importantly, consume. As some of the main reasons to watch television are copying, seeking for information or cultural identification, one of the ways television promotes the consumption of goods might be by showing to the audience certain products and lifestyles that have no limit to consumption. This kind of lifestyle is presented in *Gossip Girl*.

Based on the assumptions that mass media have an impact on our culture and television influences its audience, product placement in the show *Gossip Girl* should have an effect on the audience. This assumption is placed on several theories which explain how mass media influence the viewer.

2. Important theories

2.1 Framing

One important theory that asserts how viewers are influenced by media content is the theory of framing. In general, framing is defined as “selecting or highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution“ (Entman, 2004, p. 5). Therefore a frame is a certain interpretation of an issue by the mass media which influences the way the audiences view and understand it (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p.11). A frame is an interpretive process that happens in the human brain. Ideas, attitudes and emotions that are stored in the memory are linked with each other network-like and are called “knowledge networks”. These networks can be activated by frames. Once one “knowledge network” is activated other thoughts get activated, leading to a multilevel process which is also called cascade of network activation. Emotional associations are created with every thought which can be positive or negative concerning a certain issue or topic. Frames therefore build themselves on previously existing “knowledge networks” and use these networks to influence the viewers’ interpretation of a given topic (Entman, 2004, p. 7).

In the context of this thesis, the concept of framing is relevant in analyzing the influence of product placement in the television series *Gossip Girl* as placements are always framed in a specific manner. Indeed, brands are placed and presented in a certain way to influence the viewers and direct their thoughts in a certain direction. Marketers wish for the viewers to perceive the placed products in their intended manner, meaning in a positive and desirable way.

2.2 Cultivation hypothesis

In addition, the cultivation hypothesis states that individuals who are frequently exposed to mediated messages will be influenced by the content of those messages (Hammermeister, Brock, Winterstein & Page, 2005, p. 254). In 1980s Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli proposed that “media influences viewers through extensive exposure which shapes the viewers’ perceptions of social reality” (Gullotta and Adams, 2005 p. 69). The cultivation theory holds that “television viewing significantly assists in creating or cultivating a view of reality that is biased toward the highly formulaic and stylized narrative content of television” (O’Guinn and Shrum, 1997, p. 279-280). Moreover, the cultivation theory posits that the beliefs about the social world of heavier television viewers will be more consistent with the televised social representations than the beliefs of light viewers (O’Guinn and Shrum, 1997, p. 280). In addition, O’Guinn and Shrum believe that “exposure to the world as it is portrayed on television has the potential to influence consumers' perceptions of the very existence or incidence of things, including consumption objects and activities often associated with a more affluent lifestyle” (O’Guinn and Shrum, 1997, p. 280). Therefore, heavy television viewers are more influenced by the realities presented in television than light viewers.

According to this theory, regular viewers of *Gossip Girl* will be more influenced by the content and the messages sent by the show than occasional viewers.

2.3 Social learning theory

The social learning theory might also be important for this study. According to Bandura's social learning theory, "individuals acquire new response tendencies through modelling and imitative behaviors". This means that people might acquire new patterns of behavior through direct experience or by observing the behaviour of others (Bandura, 1977, p. 3). Furthermore, this shows that viewers who identify with a desirable character or wish to be like him might imitate this person by consuming the same products or brands as the character (Balasubramanian, Karrh & Patwardhan, 2006, p. 132). Related to Bandura's theory is the "association principle". This means that people link themselves with positive and desirable images while avoiding the association with negative ones. In this case viewers do not completely imitate a desirable character but just some traits of them such as the brand they use (Balasubramanian, Karrh & Patwardhan, 2006, p. 132). The viewer's attitudes towards the placed brands are therefore influenced by the character's attitudes towards these same brands (Balasubramanian, Karrh & Patwardhan, 2006, p. 127).

In the context of this thesis, the social learning theory is relevant to analyse the influence and effectiveness of product placement. In motion pictures, characters may serve as role models for the consumers who view them; therefore, viewers might be likely to imitate them. One way to do that might be by using the same products as the character.

2.4 Theory of connectedness

Finally, the theory of connectedness plays also an important role in this study. Characters from television shows appear to live in a similar time scale to the audience and they might depict social roles, structures of family life, lifestyles etc. that appear desirable to the viewers. Thus, they might provide strong role models for the viewers for identification, comparison and inspiration. As a result, strong relationships may form between the viewers and the television characters (Russell, Norman and Heckler, 2004, p. 151). Russell, Norman and Heckler define connectedness as "the level of intensity of the relationship(s) that a viewer develops with the characters and contextual settings of a program in the parasocial television environment" (Russell, Norman, Heckler, 2004, p. 152). Since connectedness characterizes the degree to which television characters appear as referent others, it should follow that more highly connected viewers not only pay more attention to product placements related to characters but also develop positive attitudes toward brands associated with the characters they are connected to. Besides, they will have a stronger desire to emulate the consumption schemas of those characters. Therefore, the connectedness construct is important to assess the effectiveness of product placements.

3. Product placement

3.1 Definition and introduction to product placement

The term product placement as used today first appeared in the 1980s and popularized with the

movie *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*. In the movie, the alien “followed a trail of Hershey’s Reese’s Pieces to his new home”. The movie was a great success and so were the sales of Reese’s Pieces. Product placement as an advertising strategy as we know it today was born (Newell, Salmon & Chang, 2006, p. 575). However, the process of integrating advertising in movie content already existed in the very first movies produced and projected to a paying audience though in a different fashion (Newell, Salmon & Chang, 2006, p. 590).

In today’s oversaturated advertising landscape new advertising techniques are needed to influence people and increase their brand awareness. Such “hybrid” types of advertisements might be more effective and powerful than traditional advertisements as they are not perceived as overtly persuasive (Russell, 2002, p.306-307). This is when product placement comes into play.

In general, product placement in television or in movies is the placement of a brand in the narrative of the media program for promotional purposes (D’Astous & Séguin, 1998, p.897). It has increased rapidly in the last decade. In 2000 the Entertainment Resources and Marketing Association estimated that advertisers paid up to 360 million dollars a year to the film industry to feature their products (Russell, 2002, p.306). La Ferle and Edwards’ study on product placement in American prime time television revealed that product placement is a very prominent way of promoting products as every three minutes a brand is appearing within a program (La Ferle & Edwards, 2006, p.81). This suggests that product placement is a very important technique for advertisers to promote brands. This is why it is important to study how viewers react to this kind of brand promotion, for advertisers as well as researchers.

In the past, sponsors of television and radio programs used to have the control over the plot and the way their product would be featured in the show or movie. Nowadays, the television and movie producers are the ones who get to decide how a brand is integrated in their shows and therefore advertisers need to collaborate with them (Russell, 2002, p.306). Although product placement has mainly been studied in the context of movies, product placement in television series has some advantages over product placement in movies. First, television series’ placements can be planned and adjusted to the viewership whereas in movies the placement decisions have to be made according to forecasts. Moreover, the impact of product placement is influenced by the position or scene of the placement within the program. In series it is easier to build the product placement in the plot accordingly to what is important for the audience (Ong, 2004, p.149-150).

3.2 Characteristics of product placement

Product placement in media contents can be achieved through several ways. D’Astous and Séguin distinguish three types of product placements: implicit, integrated explicit, non-integrated explicit. Product placement is implicit when the product is present without being explicitly expressed, it is integrated explicit when the brand is formally expressed and plays an active role in the content of the programme, it is non-integrated explicit when the product is formally expressed but without being integrated in the content (D’Astous & Séguin, 1998, p.898).

Russell makes another categorization. She categorizes product placement types along three dimensions: visual, auditory and plot connection. The visual dimension refers to the physical appearance of the brand on-screen, the auditory dimension refers to the mentioning of a brand and the plot connection dimension refers to the degree to which the brand is integrated in the story. All these dimensions can vary in the degree to which the brands are put in the center of attention (Russell, 2002, p.307).

There are some similarities between the two categorizations. For instance, what D'Astous and Séguin call implicit or explicit product placements is what Russell refers to as the degree of prominence of the placements. This means that product placement can either be very obvious or it can be subtle. Same goes with the plot connection or integration of the product placement in the story of the program. The more connected to the plot the placement is, the more natural it appears (Russell, 2002, p. 307).

The way in which a brand is placed in program content has therefore, an influence on how it affects the audience.

3.3 The effects of product placement on the audience

The viewer's reactions to product placement depend on several variables. It depends on the image of the sponsor and in some cases the program's image might transfer to the sponsor. It also depends on the relation between the programs' content and the advertised products, the more integrated in the content a product is, the more credible and consistent the placement will be perceived. Finally, the type of television program in which products are placed also has an impact on the viewer's perceptions. For example, in a television series viewers will be more likely to accept product placement than in television news as these are supposed to be more objective and serious (D'Astous & Séguin, 1998, p.899).

Before analyzing the influence product placement has on the audience, studies that assessed the attitude of the viewers towards product placement will be reviewed. Studies showed that the audience saw product placement in a positive way as it enhances the reality of the material and adds cultural meaning to the mass media. However, some surveys also indicated a negative attitude towards product placement. For instance, aspects such as "too much repetition, obvious commercial motivations, or the use of ethically charged products" were seen negatively by the audience (Russell, 2002, p.307). DeLorme and Reid found similar results. They found out that across their sample, regardless of the age and the frequency of movie going, the participants appreciated the enhanced effect of realism and authenticity created through product placements (DeLorme & Reid, 1999, p. 77). However, across all participants the opinion concerning excessive, inappropriate or unrealistic placements was negative as those types of placements were associated with promotional motives (DeLorme & Reid, 1999, p. 78).

Research done with quantitative surveys has shown that in general US-American university students perceive product placement in a positive manner whereas older audiences often perceive

product placements negatively and manipulative. DeLorme and Reid's results also showed that product placement and its enhancing effect on brand awareness is viewed positively by younger people but rather negatively by older viewers (DeLorme & Reid, 1999, p. 80). Younger people and students see them as reality-enhancing in a movie unless they are too repetitive, excessive and used inappropriately. Especially brand placements that were manifest, in relation to the principal actor and well integrated in the story were evaluated positively (Nelson & McLeod, 2005, p. 517). Russell also studied how the audience perceives product placement. Brand placements are often perceived as more natural by the viewers when they are integrated in the plotline to enrich the characters and the story (Russell, 2002, p.307). If product placement is subtle the audience might interpret it as a result of our consumer culture or as an effort to increase the show or movie's realism. However, if the product placement is blunt and straight forward, the viewers will probably notice that it has an advertising objective and as a result perceive it negatively just as traditional advertisings (Russell, 2002, p.307).

To measure the effectiveness of product placement, researchers in the 1990s used to measure how the brands mentioned or shown in a program or a movie were recalled. More recent scholars focus more on the attitude change and purchase intentions triggered by the product placements (Ong, 2004, p. 151). However, there is only little and weak evidence of attitude change as a result of product placement (Homer, 2009, p. 22).

As mentioned above, several studies have analyzed how product placement affects the memory and brand awareness of the viewers. Some studies found support that prominence had effects on the recall and the recognition of brands placed in movies or televisions shows (Russell, 2002, p. 307). Prominence also has an effect on the attitude towards the placed brand. Homer studied the effects of product placement on brand attitudes and found out, that brand attitudes are affected negatively when the product placement is obvious, especially when these prominent placements are repeated. She also discovered that subtle product placements affect consumer attitudes positively. In such cases repeated exposures only have a small increasing impact (Homer, 2009, p. 28). Koch and Ruland's study using experimental groups and control groups also shows that even though prominent product placements are better remembered than subtle ones, only subtle product placements have a significant positive effect on viewers' attitudes towards the placed brands. Moreover, a positive attitude towards the program influences the attitude on the placed brands positively if the brand placement is subtle and negatively if it is prominent (Koch & Ruland, 2011, 276).

The modality used to place a brand also influences how it is remembered and perceived. This has been studied by Russell who showed that the visual and auditory modes of product placement differ in the amount of meaning they hold. While the visual component mainly serves to create the context of the story, the auditory component is an integral part of the plot and therefore more meaningful. Moreover, auditory aspects are also easier processed by the receiver as they can process it without actually watching the program (Russell, 2002, p.308). In the context of audiovisual media, auditory stimuli are thus better remembered by the brain as they contain more

meaningfulness (Russell, 2002, p.314). Each modality therefore adds certain meaningfulness to the plotline. This is important as meaningful stimuli are better processed by the brain and as a result better remembered (Russell, 2002, p.308).

The connection of the product placement to the plot of the program also plays an important role in influencing people's perception of the placed brand. Russell argues that not only the modality creates meaning but also the level of plot connection. The more related to the story the product placement is the more people will remember it (Russell, 2002, p.308). The combinations of plot connection and the modality of a product placement will interact in influencing people's memories and attitudes (Russell, 2002, p.309). While modal presentations that are incongruent with the plot improve memory as the brain is processing harder, they have the inverse effect on persuasion (Russell, 2002, p. 313). This is due to the fact, that viewers will notice the ulterior motive of the product placement as a means of advertising (Russell, 2002, p.309). Congruent product placements are much more persuasive as the product placement is subtle, people are therefore not aware of its objective of persuasion and are thus better influenced by it, mainly subconsciously (Russell, 2002, p.314). These aspects can help explaining why certain product placements are more effective than others.

Other researchers also showed the importance of plot connection for product placements. Branded placements in television and movies are inseparable to the program's content; they contribute to the plot development, characters and scenes. This shows how important it is to integrate the placement in the program content. The consumer needs to make an "emotional connection" with the product for the product placement to be effective as simply showing the product in a "haphazard manner" will affect the consumer negatively (Homer, 2009, p. 29).

Plot connection is also linked with a connection of the placement to the characters. Product placements also carry social information. This means that they are more effective when associated with a desirable character (Homer, 2009, p. 22). Using focus groups and depth interviews, DeLorme and Reid found out that positive reactions were important for familiar branded products as those tended to attract the attention of the audience and enhance their movie enjoyment, especially when those brands are used by a movie character (DeLorme & Reid, 1999, p. 78-79). Moreover, all participants agreed that product placement is important as it provides information about "the character's personality, lifestyle, and role in the movie plot". The association of characters with a specific brand also helped the viewer to relate to them and influenced the brand images as the viewers associated the brands with something desirable (DeLorme & Reid, 1999, p. 79). This kind of celebrity endorsement furthermore reinforces "vicarious consumer learning" (Nelson & McLeod, 2005, p. 516).

Another important aspect of product placements is that they enable people to relive past events or to live other people's experiences. These social comparisons nevertheless also have negative aspects such as bad feelings about one's life because one cannot afford nor have what the character in the movie has (DeLorme & Reid, 1999, p. 81-82).

As this study focuses on product placement in the show *Gossip Girl* in which the most prominent products are luxury products, the concept of luxury products and their characteristics have to be defined.

4. Luxury Products

4.1 Characteristics and appeal of luxury products

According to Mansharamani and Khanna, luxury products are associated with “the core competences of creativity, exclusivity, craftsmanship, precision, high quality, innovation and premium pricing”. Luxury goods enhance people’s sense of self-esteem, prestige and feeling to belong to the elite (Mansharamani & Khanna, 2007, p.1). Luxury products are also related to pleasure and desirability (Hansen & Wänke, 2011, p. 790). In general, Podoshen and Andrzejewski argue that goods which are viewed as “aesthetically pleasing and unique” are placed on a higher prestigious level than other goods (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012, p. 322).

Nevertheless, to most consumers, luxury goods represent something special, out of the ordinary as they cannot afford luxury goods on a regular basis (Hansen & Wänke, 2011, p. 789). As such, the purchase of such goods is often only hypothetical and a desire people have. Luxury goods are therefore often reserved to a higher upper-class (Hansen & Wänke, 2011, p. 790). As a result, consumers feel a certain psychological distance to luxury goods. They see luxury goods as products of very good quality and high pricing which distinguishes them from ordinary products. They moreover perceive luxury goods as “scarce and unique” and they often feel “foreign” from the luxury world (Hansen & Wänke, 2011, p. 790).

One of the main reasons for consumers’ attraction to luxury products is their believed potential to procure social status. Veblen was the first to describe this phenomenon and to introduce it under the name of conspicuous consumption in his book *The Theory of the Leisure Class* in 1899. He states that in a society in which boundaries of social classes are becoming more vague and permeable; the way of life of those on the top is seen as the norm and as the ideal one. Therefore, people strive to achieve this ideal social standing by imitating the upper class’ consumption behavior or by distinguishing themselves from a lower class. According to Veblen “the means of showing pecuniary strength, and so of gaining or retaining a good name, are leisure and a conspicuous consumption of goods”. By displaying status symbols and hence consuming in a conspicuous and showing manner people wish to establish a certain social standing (Veblen, 1899, p. 69). Such possessions are believed to show “merit and worthiness” (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012, p. 322).

However, Bourdieu states that financial resources are not sufficient to gain social standing. People rely not only on their economic but also on their social and cultural capital to achieve social status. This means that they also rely on their relationships and the skills associated with high cultural capital acquired through their education and upbringing to achieve high social standing (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004, p. 252-253).

Nonetheless, the old meaning of luxury known as conspicuous consumption as established by Veblen has slightly changed. While luxury was used to display wealth and attain social status in the past, nowadays luxury goods are also satisfying needs of the consumer such as fulfillment from possessing such a product (Mansharamani & Khannam, 2007, p. 3).

In general, people consume luxury products for mainly three reasons. Firstly, people buy luxury products “for their superior functionality and quality”. Such consumers mainly make logical decisions when purchasing a new product. Secondly, consumers purchase luxury goods to use them as a status symbol. They want to show their success to others by displaying those products. The last group of consumers mainly purchases luxury goods as a means of self-indulgence. Those consumers want to express their individuality through luxury products and respond to the emotional appeal of such products (Mansharamani & Khannam, 2007, p. 4).

Finally, consumption and continuously increasing personal possessions is believed to be linked not only with a higher social status but also with increased happiness in the eye of the consumer. However, this view is problematic as research has proven that materialism negatively influences personal happiness (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012, p. 319).

4.2 Consumption patterns in general and luxury goods in particular

In general, consumers do not only buy products for their functional benefits but also for their symbolic properties in order to express their identities. They try to transmit message through the products they consume to other socially significant people. This is especially true for young people who are still in a phase of uncertainty and identity search. By consuming certain products they try to assert their identity and gain prestige (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004, p. 251). People might choose to consume certain products to associate them with a certain social group (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004, p. 252). This is also what they do when consuming luxury products.

In accordance with the wish to establish a certain social identity, luxury consumption is also influenced by the “bandwagon effect”. This effect refers to the extent by which people wish to consume a good because others are consuming it. This effect depends on the person’s self-concept. A status-seeking person who is sensitive to normative influence and has a high need for uniqueness will be more subject to bandwagon luxury consumption (Ko & Megehee, 2011, p. 1395).

Furthermore, some people are more prone to consume luxury goods than others. For instance, as shown by several studies, people with low self-esteem tend to consume more luxury goods as luxury goods enhance one’s self-esteem (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2013, p.130). By consuming luxury products, people expect a reward in the form of social appraisal. The mere expectation of that reward increases the consumer’s self-esteem (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2013, p. 131).

Also people with high materialistic values buy more luxury goods than others. They tend to display the goods they own in public as they believe they will gain social standing, power as well

as happiness by doing so. They derive more pleasure from showing to others that they own such goods than from actually using them (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012, p. 321). Materialism is according to Richins and Dawson defined as a phenomenon “whereby individuals have material acquisition at the center of their lives and view these possessions as the key(s) to their happiness”. Materialistic people therefore judge success on the possessions people own and are often envious of the possessions of others (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012, p. 320).

Therefore, the brand of the luxury good also plays an important role for consumers. Consumers of luxury goods desire the “existence of an inspirational brand endorsing the product”. When buying a luxury good, consumers do not only pay attention to the particular qualities of a product but also to the name it represents (Godey, Pederzoli, Aiello, Donvito, Wiedmann & Hennigs, 2013, p. 60).

In addition, the price of the luxury goods is crucial for their appeal to customers. Indeed, the luxury sector is marked by “veblen effects” which are people’s willingness to pay a higher price for equally functional goods. The luxury industry would therefore suffer from lower pricing as its image would be damaged and lose prestige (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996, p. 349). Price is indeed a “powerful signal of exclusivity” (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996, p. 352).

Finally, the thriving for status through consumption is a never ending process. Once a product that gave status can be acquired by the masses, people acquire new luxury goods to distinguish themselves and gain status (Trigg, 2001, p. 99-101).

4.3 Marketing of luxury products

Based on the marketing mix which consists of the four dimensions place, product, pricing and promotion, Mansharamani and Khanna have compared the way marketing is carried out for regular products and luxury products. Regular products can be purchased at convenience levels in concordance with the product category whereas the luxury products are only available in selected and exclusive stores. Regular products are standardized and adapted to the masses. In contrast, luxury goods are highly customized or only available on limited editions. Concerning the pricing strategies, regular goods have prices adapted to the value of the product whereas luxury products are premium priced. Therefore, customers pay for the name rather than for the actual product. Regular products are promoted through all kinds of media, through all kinds of reference groups and according to their functional as well as aspirational value appeals. In comparison, luxury goods are mostly advertised in premium media, celebrities are used as reference groups and the products are promoted through their aspirational and exclusivity appeals (Mansharamani & Khannam, 2007, p.2).

Bastien and Kapferer also exposed some of the particularities of luxury marketing. They argue that luxury brands do not need to position themselves as “luxury is not comparative”. Marketers should make the access to the product limited and therefore not respond to a rising demand. Finally, prices should never be lowered as this would reduce the exclusivity of the products

(Bastien & Kapferer, 2013, p. 26). Instead values should be created for the customer and prices should be raised according to the new values customers get (Bastien & Kapferer, 2013, p. 31).

5. The show Gossip Girl

5.1 Introduction to the show Gossip Girl

Gossip Girl is an American teen drama television series which aired from September 2007 to December 2012 with a total of six seasons. The show follows the lives of privileged young adults who live in Manhattan's Upper East Side, in New York City. The target group is mainly composed of women between the ages of 18 and 35 (2008, <http://blog.cwtv.com/category/shows/gossip-girl/>).

The show is one of the most popular television series on the CW Network (2008, <http://blog.cwtv.com/category/shows/gossip-girl/>) and therefore a lot of young women are exposed to the series' content. The characters portrayed in the show are part of "Manhattan's elite" - as stated at every beginning of an episode - and have unlimited access to money. They eat at the most expensive restaurants of Manhattan, go shopping in the most luxurious designer boutiques, and go out in the most coveted places in New York. They have a luxurious lifestyle most people admire and aspire to have as explained earlier in this thesis. Therefore, it is likely that the viewers are influenced by the show's character's lifestyle and consumption patterns.

5.2 Product placement in Gossip Girl

There is no scientific research on product placement in the show Gossip Girl so far, so most of the information provided below is extracted from non-scientific journals and own observations while watching the show.

One of the ways to promote consumption and brand awareness in Gossip Girl is the use of product placement as an advertising technique. Gossip Girl integrates products and brands in its narratives therefore influencing its target audience and making them long for the presented luxury good. The lifestyle presented in Gossip Girl perfectly fits the image such luxury brands associate themselves with (<http://www.luxurydaily.com/cartier-aligns-itself-with-ultra-affluent-lifestyle-through-gossip-girl-placement/>).

In the show Gossip Girl, most of the product placements are implicit or integrated explicit. An example of implicit product placement is when the characters go shopping and they hold shopping bags from the French brand Chanel. An integrated explicit product placement in Gossip Girl is for instance when one of the characters shops jewelry from Cartier for Valentine's Day and explicitly mentions to his son that he wants to buy a Cartier piece for his wife (<http://www.luxurydaily.com/cartier-aligns-itself-with-ultra-affluent-lifestyle-through-gossip-girl-placement/>).

Furthermore, most brands placed in Gossip Girl are luxury brands such as clothing brands, jewelry, cars, and beauty products. Those brands are not affordable to the average consumer and

are characterized by exclusivity and high pricing. However, luxury products are not the only products placed in the show. Food and technological devices are also placed in the show. These products are not part of the luxury industry and therefore might be more accessible.

Although luxury brands are not the only products placed in Gossip Girl, they represent a major part of the products in the show. This is why this study is mainly focusing on luxury products when analyzing the effect of product placement in Gossip Girl.

III. Empirical analysis

1. Relevance of the topic and research questions

This thesis focuses on the influence of product placement on the viewers on the example of the show Gossip Girl. Product placement is a marketing strategy that has gained importance in the past decades as classical channels of advertising are losing significance. Past studies have shown that movies and television shows all use product placement as an advertising strategy and that it is rather prominent. Nevertheless, most of the studies focused on the content of those movies or shows using content analysis. Others have assessed people's attitudes towards product placement in general but there is little evidence on its actual impact as an advertising strategy.³

Furthermore, product placement has mainly been studied in the context of movies and not so much in the context of television shows. However, product placement in television shows holds a strong potential as the viewers are regularly exposed to the same type of product placement and it can be adjusted to the viewers after the release of a few episodes.

Moreover, product placement has not been studied for luxury brands. Its effect has been proven for affordable and fast moving consumer brands but the consumption of such products differs from luxury products as explained earlier. It is therefore interesting to study the effectiveness of product placement in this context as it could be valuable for marketers who wish to promote luxury goods using the technique of product placement. This study will assess the effects of product placement of luxury goods in television series on the viewers.

To investigate the effects of product placement of luxury goods the study will analyze the case of the television series Gossip Girl. Product placement in Gossip Girl is very prominent and an important part of the plot which is why it is relevant for this study. Many adolescent girls or young adults watch this series and are fascinated by the lifestyle portrayed in it. Gossip Girl also contains the particularity that the products placed in the show are mainly luxury products the viewers cannot afford.

The purpose of this study is to identify *how product placement of luxury goods in television series affects the viewer, using the example of the show Gossip Girl. How do the viewers of the show react to product placement? How does it influence the way they view the luxury products*

³ View product placement p.7 for more details

and how does it affect the awareness of luxury brands? What are the purchase intentions of the Gossip Girl viewers? How does product placement influence the viewers' view of their own life? Using qualitative semi-structured interviews, the thesis will answer these questions by analyzing the viewers' point of view on how product placement in Gossip Girl influences them.

2. Methodology

2.1 Qualitative paradigm

The methodical approach of this study is based on the qualitative paradigm. This will be used because of its non-standardized character (Bergmann, 2006, p. 19). This paradigm allows the researcher to stay open and flexible towards the field of study. This aims to get an in-depth look into the field of study without being biased by expected results. Qualitative studies are focusing on individual cases and therefore, give a deeper and more complete picture of the object of research. The result does not have to be representative but rather an in-depth, exemplary analysis of the object of research (Bergmann, 2006, p. 21). This is relevant in this case as the study aims to analyze the topic in an exemplary way.

2.2 Sampling

Because of the limited extent of this study it has been chosen to carry out six interviews. The participants are all female students from the University of Gothenburg between the ages of 23 and 26. As the main target group of Gossip Girl consists of women between the ages of 18 and 35, only female viewers have been chosen to participate in the interviews to make the results more representative and easier to compare. Students have been chosen as they are more likely to reach a certain social status and wealth in the future than people who did not study, and as a result they are more likely to be part of the target group of the luxury products portrayed in Gossip Girl in the future. The participants have moreover been chosen internationally to get a wider sample and add diversity to it. Potential participants were contacted by randomly asking female students from the University of Gothenburg to participate in the study. Before starting the interview the participants were asked if they watch the show Gossip Girl as only people having watched the show regularly could be considered for this study. Women who do not or only seldom watch Gossip Girl were eliminated as the effects of product placement in a television series such as Gossip Girl are not significant for irregular viewers according to the cultivation hypothesis.

2.3 Data collection: Qualitative semi-structured interviews

No such study has been carried out before which is why a non-standardized method is needed. It enables to study the topic in a deeper way and to get more explanations from the interviewee's perspective. For the purpose of this study, qualitative semi-structured interviews have been chosen to collect the data. To give the interview a certain structure questions on which the interviewers could orient themselves have been developed. As it is not standardized the questions

are open questions which enable the participants to answer freely. Therefore, the interview structure neither provided answer possibilities nor a specific question order. The order of the questions was adapted during the interview without leaving any of them out. In some cases questions were added if the interviewer felt that it was necessary for deeper information and understanding. This was especially important as the topic involves questions about people's opinion on luxury and wealth, which are sensitive topics. The qualitative interview therefore enables to ask further questions and to get information from the respondents they were reluctant to give. Moreover, qualitative interviews take into account paralinguistic sounds such as intonations, hesitations or laughs which might be significant for the interpretation. This would not have been possible with a quantitative survey as the questions are standardized. This study does furthermore, not aim to come up with generalizable results but with a deep exemplary picture of the field of study, which answers the research question.

The interviews begin with introductory questions to the topic such as questions on how often the participants watch *Gossip Girl*, their reasons to watch it and what they liked the most about the show. Then the participants were asked to talk about the brands they remembered from the show and their attitudes towards those brands. They were also asked about the influence *Gossip Girl* has on their view of the brands. After that the interviewees were asked to talk about the feelings the portrayal of the brands in *Gossip Girl* triggered in them. Furthermore, questions assessing whether the participants have learned something about luxury products by watching *Gossip Girl* were asked. Then the participants were encouraged to talk about their attitude towards luxury products in general and whether they wished to own luxury products because of the show *Gossip Girl*. Moreover, the participants were asked to talk about product placement in the show, if they know what it is, how they perceived it in the show and their opinion on it. Finally, the participants were given the opportunity to add comments on the topic and to speak freely about aspects of product placement in *Gossip Girl* which they felt were left out in the interview. Before finishing the interview, the interviewers gathered demographic information from the participants.

2.4 Execution of the interviews and transcription

Four of the interviews took place at the University of Gothenburg, one took place in a café in Gothenburg and another one took place in the private apartment of the interviewee. Before starting the interviews, a declaration of consent guaranteeing anonymity and the sole use of the interview for the purpose of this master thesis was signed by the participants. All of the six interviews took place in a friendly and opened atmosphere. While most of the participants were able to talk freely about the topic, some of them seemed reluctant to reveal their true feelings about the effects of product placement in *Gossip Girl*. Furthermore, some of the interviewees had slight troubles to express themselves in English which made the interviewing process more difficult as the interviewers had to ask a lot of additional questions to get important information. The interviews had an average length of fifteen minutes.

The transcription was started right after the interview to ensure more accuracy. The transcription followed specific transcription rules (see p. 56) in order to be more easily comparable. Moreover,

they were transcribed according to the rules of true verbatim transcription meaning that not only the words but also sounds and non-verbal communication such as fillers or pauses were taken into account in the transcription. A reason for this is that how something is being said in the interview is as important as what is being said for the analysis. The accents the participants have in the English language were however not accurately transcribed as this is not relevant for the analysis, grammatical errors were however, transcribed.

2.5 Method of data analysis: Qualitative content analysis according to Mayring

The transcription of the audio recordings was used for the analysis of the interviews. The transcription was analyzed by applying the rules of Mayring's summarizing content analysis. The objective of this analysis is to reduce the material to its most important content (Mayring, 2008, p. 58). First the data was paraphrased, then those paraphrases were generalized, and finally they were reduced to separate categories. Those categories were generated by putting generalizations with the same meaning together so only the essence of the statements remains. Finally, the remaining generalizations were divided in separate categories which represent the essential content of the interviews (Mayring, 2008, p. 61). In order to structure those categories content wise, a structuring content analysis was conducted which enabled to extract a structure out of the material.

3. Analysis of the interviews

The following part will evaluate and analyze the results of the study.

3.1 Interview 1

The interviewee from the first interview will be called person 1.

3.1.1 General information

Person 1 started to watch Gossip Girl at the beginning, when it was first released. She has seen most of the show; she only missed the last season. She mainly started to watch Gossip Girl because her female classmates were always talking about the show. As a result she got influenced and wanted to watch it as well.

She particularly likes the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl as it is the kind of lifestyle that makes her dream. Therefore she finds the story catchy and nice to watch. Another factor which makes her like the show is the fashion and the clothes worn by the characters:

"I like this (.) stuff around all those clothes and ehm (---) it it may be a life (.) that we can <p> dream about something like this <p> but yes, I mean it's kind of catchy, (.) in a way, yeah I think this is why I watched the show"(p. 57, l. 13-15)

In general fashion is an important theme of the show and central to the analysis of product placement. Person 1 appears to appreciate fashion and therefore one could argue that she might be more easily influenced by product placement of fashion brands in the case of Gossip Girl.

Nevertheless, person 1 also talked about what she dislikes in the show. Sometimes she feels bored about the show as the stories of the characters seem quite confusing and complicated. There is too much drama and the problems the characters appear to have are sometimes annoying to her.

3.1.2 View of the luxury industry

Person 1 feels a certain distance to the characters and the products portrayed in Gossip Girl. As she mentioned, she is sometimes annoyed by the characters' stories and sees no relation between her life and the characters' life. This is partly due to the fact that the characters in the show live in a world of luxury, a world to which she does not feel she belongs. The characters own only very expensive products from luxury brands which in Person 1's opinion are not accessible to the viewers:

“it just make us realize that (.) it's not something really accessible for us” (p. 58, l. 38-39)

She also argues that maybe one or two pieces of the products placed in Gossip Girl might be accessible to the viewer which is, in relation to how much products and brands appear in the show, almost nothing. Therefore person 1 perceives a big gap between her lifestyle and the one of the Gossip Girl characters. She nevertheless does not feel frustrated about the fact that this lifestyle and the products the characters use are inaccessible to her. However, she still feels jealous of the characters sometimes, when they have a product such as a bag or shoes she would love to have:

“maybe for some (-) special clothes that would (.) be like (.) okay I'm a bit jealous (.) about that” (p. 58, l. 58-59)

But she does not have deep negative feelings about it and she does not seem affected by the distance between her life and the luxurious life shown in Gossip Girl. This luxurious lifestyle is attractive to her and it makes her dream:

“the fact that it's (.) not really accessible for us (.) common people (.) ehh I'm not frustrated about that, (.) it's (--) maybe I would dream more about that than I used to do (--) because it's kind of attractive” (p. 58, l. 52-54)

She clearly seems to distinguish that the world created through Gossip Girl is a fictional world which does not exist like that in reality.

In general her opinion about luxury products such as those placed in Gossip Girl is that they are too expensive and that their price is not justified. She feels that those products are only so expensive because of their brand and the prestige they represent. Person 1 thinks that people

often just buy luxury products to show their wealth. As she cannot afford luxury brands she would feel guilty if she spent such an enormous amount of money just on one product:

“I would feel a bit (-) guilty to spend so much money on one thing (--) eh I eh I think it's not our world so I would not feel comfortable about buying (-) so expensive” (p. 59, l. 111-112)

This again expresses the distance she seems to feel between her lifestyle and the one of the Gossip Girl characters. Here the question might arise whether product placement in Gossip Girl is an effective strategy to promote luxury products if such a great distance is felt between the ordinary viewer's world and the Gossip Girl characters' world.

3.1.3 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

In general, person 1 is aware of what product placement is and knows the definition. She views it as positive as it makes a show closer to reality. She argues that in our society we are surrounded by brands and no one can deny this fact:

“it can be positive <p> (.) I mean (.) I don't like people who (.) deny (.) the fact that (.) brands are (.) all around us (--) I mean: it's real world and when it's (.) when you watch this kind of show they just (.) closer to the reality I think” (p. 60, l. 152-154)

In her opinion product placement is not disturbing as long as it is not provoking or shocking.

Person 1 likes to pay attention to product placement in general. This is why she also clearly noticed the presence of product placement in Gossip Girl. Her laughing as a reaction to the question whether she was aware of the presence of product placement in Gossip Girl before the interview shows that in her opinion brands are strongly placed in the show:

“Oh yes, (laughs) I can see (.) I mean (---) eh it's obvious because in (.) they ehm they change their clothes (.) I would say (.) four or five times (.) per episode” (p. 60, l. 145-146)

This frequent change of clothes seems to be what she perceived to be the most obvious aspect of product placement in Gossip Girl. In her opinion, the products placed in the show seem to be mainly clothes and fashion items in general from designer brands.

Even though to person 1 product placement in Gossip Girl seems to be obvious she argued that it might not be the case for everyone. She only notices it because she pays attention to it in general but she thinks that for other viewers product placement in Gossip Girl probably seems rather subtle. She thinks that the brands in the show are only shown very quickly or shortly named without being focused on the whole time:

“they are not showing something like eh (--) it's not really obvious (.) for everybody (-) and it's (.) placed in (.) well it's not (---) but it's really quick (-) ehm (--) I mean you see something a couple of seconds (.) and hear name but that's it (.) it's not really: (.) how can I say (---) it's not showing for showing (-) it's not really disturbing at all” (p. 60-61, l. 159-163)

While watching Gossip Girl she therefore did not feel disturbed by product placement.

When talking about product placement in Gossip Girl she only speaks about designer brands in form of clothes, shoes and bags. These products seem to be the only ones she noticed placed in the show. Other brands like technological brands or food brands are not mentioned by her. She describes product placement in Gossip Girl as being related to the characters. In her opinion, the brands placed are embodied by different characters depending on their image and what they represent:

“I would say that in a way (.) some brands fit more to some kind of (.) personalities than others”
(p. 60, l. 128-129)

As an example she mentions the character Blair who is classy and therefore embodies old luxury brands:

“Blair (.) she's really girly in a way (-) and she's always really (--) ehm well dressed and (-) she's really attracted by ehm (-) old brands (.) I would say Chanel and (.) ehm (--) somehow the the archetype of (.) what should be a really classy girl I think” (p. 60, l. 133-135)

3.1.4 Effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl

In general Person 1 remembers a lot of brands that were placed in Gossip Girl. For example, she mentioned the brands Valentino, Chanel and Louboutin. She also mentioned names of designers who appeared or were mentioned in the show like Karl Lagerfeld or Miuccia Prada. However, the brands she remembered were exclusively luxury fashion brands:

“I would say hmmm Valentino, Chanel (.) Louboutin (-) ehm their names ehh (--) but we can see ehh Miuccia Prada in one of the episodes (.) they talk about Karl Lagerfeld” (p. 58, l. 26-27)

Person 1 claims to have known all the brands placed in Gossip Girl before watching the show and not having learned anything about the brands by watching Gossip Girl. She somehow contradicts herself though as she later mentions that she learned about the particular collections of those brands because of Gossip Girl:

“I mean maybe (.) now I know a bit more about all the collections” (p. 59, l. 78)

Product placement in Gossip Girl therefore seems to have a slight learning effect on person 1 but it appears that she is not really conscious about it.

The same applies to person 1's buying behavior. She affirms that she is not influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl and that her opinion about those brands has not changed by watching the show. She claims to wish to own the product placed in Gossip Girl especially shoes and bags. However, she has always had this wish and it has not been influenced nor reinforced by Gossip Girl. She merely argues that she wants these products because she likes their design:

“It's just beautiful (laughs)” (p. 59, l. 106)

Furthermore, person 1 does not know anyone who is influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl. When she discussed the topic of product placement with others they only mentioned that they noticed it but not that they were affected by it:

“I told my: roommates that I was about to do this interview and they told me (--) eh we started to talk about movies (.) and they were not like I'm affected by this but just I saw this I saw that and: that's it” (p. 61, l. 184-186)

However, many effects of product placement are unconscious and this might be the reason why person 1 and the people she talked with do not feel influenced. They probably are somehow since they are constantly exposed to those brands while watching Gossip Girl. As the cultivation theory states the more viewers are exposed to media content the more influenced they get.

Despite the fact that person 1 does not feel influenced by product placement, she still thinks it is an effective advertising strategy. She argues that the viewers might not notice product placement in Gossip Girl as it is rather subtle and as a result get influenced. She moreover states that she thinks people are influenced by this brand placement as the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl is attractive and therefore, people will wish to have the products the characters own:

“I could understand that people (.) would be (-) not jealous but would like to (.) get the same thing (.) as the character” (p. 61, l. 168-169)

In her opinion, many people desire such a luxurious lifestyle and by buying what the characters own, they embody their life:

“In a way you:: (.) embody your favorite character (.) like having the same way of life or something like this (--) and we can't deny that this way of life is pretty (.) comfortable” (p. 61, l. 173-174)

In a way this is a strategy to reduce the distance existing between the viewers' life and the characters' life.

3.1.5 Conclusion

As a conclusion, it can be said that person 1 does not seem to be strongly influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl. She only appears to have gained consciousness about the collections of fashion brands. This might be due to the perceived distance she feels between her lifestyle and the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl as well as her strong awareness of product placement in the show. She is not bothered by product placement and thinks that it is a good advertising strategy. Even though she does not feel affected, she claims that other people might be affected by it.

3.2 Interview 2

The interviewee from the second interview will be called person 2.

3.2.1 General information

Person 2 watched Gossip Girl regularly, on a weekly basis. She watched the episodes as soon as they were released. She has watched the whole show, meaning every episode. She mainly watched Gossip Girl as a means of entertainment.

What she likes most about the show is its dramatic and surreal aspect. She also appreciates the way the characters look and are dressed:

*“what I liked most (-) I liked probably most that it was quite (-) surreal and very dramatic (--)
<p> I think <p> (---) and the pretty people” (p. 69, l. 11-12)*

3.2.2 View of the luxury industry

Person 2 feels a certain distance between her lifestyle and the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl. She does not feel part of the target group of the brands placed in Gossip Girl and feels that the brands are out of her reach. In her opinion, they only target the upper class because only people like the Gossip Girl characters living in Manhattan’s Upper East Side can afford them:

“I feel that they're not really (-) addressing me (.) so:: those are definitely brands for (-) upper class (.) typically upstate Manhattan I would guess” (p. 70, l. 28-29)

As person 2 does not feel part of the world shown in Gossip Girl, the lifestyle and the brands appearing in the show do not influence her view on her own life. Besides, she does not aspire to have such a luxurious lifestyle because of a personal experience she had with people leading such a life.

Moreover, person 2 believes that luxury products such as the products placed in Gossip Girl are not necessary in life. She thinks they are over evaluated and does not understand why everyone puts them on a pedestal or aspires to possess them:

“it's not really (--) necessary in life and it's (--) way: overvalued (.) so that (-) I don't really see why it's so: (.) aspired by everyone because it's very much (.) hyped so (.) a lot of people want to have these and these different things (.) so (-) my opinion about that is that it's not really (.) necessary but (--) somehow everybody gets influenced (.) by it” (p. 71, l. 107-111)

However, she mentions that she would probably buy luxury products if she could afford them. The main reasons why she would do that are to reward herself and to have products of better quality:

“My opinion about luxury products is:: (---) well something (--) in general I would say something nice to have to reward yourself” (p. 71, 106-107)

“a nice designer bag or (.) sunglasses might be of higher quality sometimes than (.) for example my H&M bag or sunglasses so (-) I would buy more expensive stuff (.) ehh to have more quality as well” (p. 72, l. 126-128)

She also states that the mere fact to be able to afford luxury products would make her buy them. Although she claims not to understand why everyone wishes to consume luxury products, she also says that she would probably buy them if she could. This is somehow contradicting and indicates that she wishes to own such products. Nevertheless, she relativizes her claim by explaining that if she were really wealthy and would buy luxury products she would probably still not spend enormous amounts of money on them:

“when it comes to really really expensive stuff (.) ehmm I'm not not sure (--) whether I would buy it” (p. 72, l. 128-129)

She seems to be aware that only a small proportion of the population can afford luxury products and therefore, she does not pay much attention to luxury products in general:

“they're somehow more out of reach most of the time so then I don't really (.) care” (p. 71, l. 115-116)

Person 2's general attitude towards luxury products indicates that she is not very interested in the luxury industry. As a result she might not be influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl as the brands placed in the show are mainly luxury brands.

3.2.3 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

In general, person 2 is aware of what product placement is. She perceives product placement in Gossip Girl as being very strong and obvious. In her opinion the brands are central in the show and very strongly focused on:

“I think they're very strongly presented so they put a lot of emphasis on the brands and .hh eh you can very much feel that ehmm (.) they do want (.) to place these products in the show (.) they do want to (-) promote them so (.) I think it's very (-) obvious” (p. 72, l. 134-136)

Because of its obvious character, person 2 was aware of the presence of product placement in Gossip Girl while watching the show and she mentions that she felt manipulated by it:

“Well sometimes it feels like eh you are (--) trying to be manipulated” (p. 72, l. 141)

Nevertheless, it did not especially annoy or disturb her. She still appreciated Gossip Girl enough to watch it despite the strong product placement. She nonetheless states that she would prefer product placement in Gossip Girl to be more subtle as it would make watching the show a nicer experience:

“I would prefer it to be less strongly so I would like this sho: show more if there was less (.) products placed I guess (--) ehmm but it didn't directly (-) annoy me (--) as in I would stop watching the show” (p. 72, l. 142-144)

Person 2 suggests that a way to make product placement in Gossip Girl subtler and more pleasant would be to take the focus from the products. The brands placed in the show should be more in the background and not in the center of attention:

“if it would simply appear but not be as strongly focused on or less talk about it it would feel more (.) subtle” (p. 72, l. 150-151)

However, person 2 thinks that product placement is an integral part of Gossip Girl as it is integrated in the plot of the show. A big theme of the show is fashion and impression management which is why product placement in Gossip Girl is inevitable:

“I guess that's hard because Gossip Girl is a lot about the: (-) shopping and representing yourself” (p. 72, l. 149-150)

3.2.4 Effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl

Person 2's awareness of the brands placed in Gossip Girl is rather weak. She is conscious that a lot of brands are placed in the show as she noticed product placement while watching. However, she was not able to name any brand featured in the show. She could remember that a lot of brands are present in Gossip Girl but did not remember the brand names:

“let me think about that (---) ah (-) probably a lot (.) but I can't really recall any right now” (p. 69, l. 17-18)

The fact that she was not able to name any brands is probably due to the fact that she feels that the products placed in Gossip Girl are not accessible to her. She claims to notice product placement but does not seem to pay particular attention to the brands that are actually placed in the show as she cannot afford them.

Although she was not able to name any brands, she claimed to have been influenced by the product placement of cell phones in Gossip Girl. She affirms that because of the strong placement of cell phones in Gossip Girl she wished to have such as slide phone as well:

“they were quite promoting these (.) you know phones you know slide phones with the (.) eh (.) keyboard (.) so I was actually considering whether I would wanna have one of those or (.) a classical smartphone before I bought a new smartphone” (p. 70, l. 44-46)

Despite the fact that she was influenced by the placement of cell phone brands in Gossip Girl she only describes the design of the product. She does not seem to recall the brands of these phones either. This indicates that she probably does not pay attention to brands in general. She seems to focus more on the design and the aspect of a particular product rather than on the brand.

In her opinion, the main reason she wanted to have such a cell phone was the constant exposure to this type of product by watching Gossip Girl:

“Maybe just because I saw it a lot (.) so exposure” (p. 70, l. 56)

She does not seem to have been influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl because of the characters or the wish to have their lifestyle. As analyzed before the wish to lead such a luxurious lifestyle is not present.

Moreover, she states that her opinion on brands has changed because of their placement in Gossip Girl but that this does not include designer brands:

“when it comes to say designer brands for (-) bags (.) it didn't really change much” (p.70, l. 43-44)

Although designer brands represent the biggest part of product placement in Gossip Girl she does not seem to be affected by their placement. This is can probably also be explained by the fact that she feels a gap between her life and the luxurious lifestyle portrayed in the show.

She affirms that she knew the majority of the brands placed in Gossip Girl before the show but that she still learned things about those brands. She believes that she has a clearer image of the brands because of Gossip Girl and learned what they stand for. She mentions that she associates the brands with other things than before and learned about the designs of the products from particular brands:

“I guess it would influence me in a way that I would associate the brand with different things now (.) or that I probably would have a clearer picture of (.) what they are (.) what they represent” (p. 71, l. 79-91)

She also mentions that these learning effects probably happened unconsciously which makes it quite difficult for her to grasp the exact things she learned through the show:

“Probably sub (.) consciously I did ehm like I said (.) in what they represent or what kind of bags they have or how they look like” (p. 71, l. 95-96)

Nevertheless, she does not recall any brand names so these learning effects have to be relativized. This also proves that she recalls the design of products from a particular brand better than its name.

Furthermore, person 2 thinks that product placement in Gossip Girl is an effective advertising strategy. In her opinion, the target group mainly consists of younger girls who are more likely to be influenced by brand placement. When considering herself, person 2 does not think that her buying behavior is affected by product placement in Gossip Girl. She thinks that in her case product placement in Gossip Girl is not a good advertising technique:

“considering their: (-) ehm target audience (.) I would say: (.) yes (.) for me personally (.) not (.) but in general I could see that (.) it would actually work effectively (-) yes” (p. 73, l. 176-177)

She believes product placement in Gossip Girl is only effective for younger girls which are part of the target group of the show. She does not consider herself as being part of the target group of Gossip Girl. However, this is not entirely true as the website from The CW where the show was

aired, states that the target group consists of women between the ages of 18 and 35. (2008, <http://blog.cwtv.com/category/shows/gossip-girl/>) Considering person 2's age which is 23 years, she clearly is part of the younger fraction of the target group.

She probably thinks younger girls are more prone to wish such a luxurious lifestyle which is not her case. She justifies her opinion by saying that she does not aspire to such a life which is why she is not influenced by the placement of luxury products. She thinks that younger girls identify themselves with the characters and as a result wish to have their lifestyle. Their consumption wishes and purchase intentions are therefore influenced by the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl. Besides, young girls will pay attention to what the characters own and as a result they will be more aware of the brands which will lead to more brand consciousness:

“when it comes to (.) maybe younger girls they always like to (.) see themselves in the characters want to be them want to have that kind of life so (.) ehmm (--) maybe they will be more aware of the brands and will eh want to have more than they would without the show” (p. 73, l.182-185)

Moreover, person 2 contradicts herself when saying that her purchase intentions have not been influenced by brand placement in Gossip Girl. This might be true for designer brands but not for technological brands as she affirms having been influenced by Gossip Girl when buying a new smartphone.

Finally, person 2 confesses that she has been influenced by product placement in television series before when it comes to fashion. Once she searched information about clothes placed in a show as she wished to buy them. However, this has only been the case for another series and not for Gossip Girl. The fact that the placement of fashion or designer brands in Gossip Girl has not influenced her buying behavior is probably due to the fact that she cannot afford luxury products.

3.2.5 Conclusion

As a conclusion, person 2 does not appear to be very influenced by luxury brands placed in Gossip Girl. She nevertheless learned about the brands even though the effects were weak. She has been influenced by brand placement when it comes to technological brands. This can be explained by the fact that she does not feel part of the luxury world and cannot afford such expensive products.

3.3 Interview 3

The interviewee from the third interview will be called person 3.

3.3.1 General information

Person 3 started to watch Gossip Girl three years ago. She has seen all of the episodes from the show but not in the right order. She did not watch it regularly. The last time she watched it was one year ago. She mainly started to watch the series because her boyfriend talked about this

show. As a result, she got influenced and started to watch it as well. She did not expect to be so eager to watch the show when she started it.

She mostly watched Gossip Girl to relax and to improve her English. What she found interesting in the show and what she mainly liked was the setting because she got a glimpse of how life of the upper class in the New York can look like:

“but what I like about it is the setting (.) because it is New York and you get kind (.) of feeling of the upper class living in New York” (p. 83, 15-16)

Moreover, the lifestyle presented in the show is attractive to her because she likes fashion which is a major theme of the show. Person 3 appears to appreciate the fashion and lifestyle portrayed in the show, which are strongly connected to the product placement in Gossip Girl. This strong connection between her interests and product placement in Gossip Girl might make her more easily influenced by product placement in the show.

Furthermore, she also appreciates the fact that the story of the show is quite surreal. She distinguishes it from reality and she knows that this kind of life as lived by the characters of Gossip Girl rarely appears like that in real life:

“although it is a little bit a fairy tale style”(p 83.,1 16-17)

3.3.2 View of the luxury industry

Person 3 seems to feel a distance between her lifestyle and the one portrayed in Gossip Girl as she cannot afford the expensive luxury products the characters own:

“Well I don’t have anything against them they are just out of my reach” (p. 85, l. 109)

She nevertheless does not have any negative feelings and she does not seem to be frustrated about the fact that she cannot afford luxury products placed in the show as she knows that the world created in Gossip Girl is fictional world.

In general she does not have anything against luxury products. When she mentioned luxury products she mostly talked about clothes. She appreciates the luxury products because of their design and classy style that can be worn with everything to any occasion. In her opinion, behind expensive brands there is always a famous designer and long as well as interesting history:

“I like the design and also the of course there is the name behind it like the history for example out of different fashion brand (.) it’s like Chanel (-) yhm.: so yeah it is (-) strong brands with long history” (p. 85, l. 115-116)

Moreover, she perceives luxury products as a status symbol which is also the reason why she wants to own this kind of products. It is a way for people to display their wealth and a way of distinguishing themselves from the mass. For her, owning and displaying luxury products seems to be a way to show to others that she achieved something in her life and that she worked hard to

get there. This is the reason why she would buy luxury products if she could afford them in the future:

“I think if had if I earned a lot of money I would willing to spend for this” (p. 86, l. 128-129)

“because it is a kind of symbol of status” (p. 86, l. 133)

Furthermore, she is willing to spend money for luxury products in the future because in her opinion, they have better quality which means that they will last longer:

“if you if you know that the quality is good and you like design because it is like (-) ever it would it’s classic it will work with a lot of outfits and it will last for years (.) so why not” (p. 86, l. 133-135)

Person 3 seems to appreciate luxury products and she would like to spend money on them in the future. This is why in the case of person 3 product placement in Gossip Girl might be an effective advertising strategy for the luxury products.

3.3.3 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

In general, Person 3 is aware of what product placement is and she clearly sees it as an advertising strategy:

“brands they basically selling or (.) having a deal with the production to (.) put their products in the setting somehow” (p. 86, l. 159-160)

Person 3 clearly noticed the presence of product placement in the show. She paid attention to product placement in Gossip Girl while she was watching it. As a result, she remembered a lot of brands placed in the show, ranging from fashion brands to technological and food brands. In her opinion, product placement of luxury products in Gossip Girl is rather subtle. She perceived it as a part of the plot because luxury products are strongly connected to the character’s lifestyle. For her it makes the show closer to reality:

“honestly speaking when I watched the show the luxury brands for me (-) they I didn’t perceive that so much that product placement (.) I thought that this has to be there because (.)of the way they like the people they show (.) this is the part of their life” (p. 86, l. 140-142)

Moreover, she believes that the luxury brands placed in Gossip Girl do not need this kind of advertising. Their brand names are already known around the world and a lot of people are able to recognize them. Therefore to her, the reason why luxury brands resort to product placement might be questionable:

“I also thought that this kind of brands not need this kind of the promotion (.) somehow (-) like Chanel or Dior they are already there recognized (-) m.: so this I saw as more subtle kind of way of y.: showing them “ (p. 86, l. 143-145)

In addition, person 3 mentioned that products such as Vitamin water or HP computers were placed in the show in a more obvious manner than luxury products. For instance, there were a lot of close-up views of the logo of the brands. Furthermore, she thinks those products were not connected to the plot of the show and were not associated with the characters' lifestyle:

“when it comes to like vitamin water so it was just it was a bit ridicules to me because you would had shoots where (-) like in a private house someone has like a bench of these bottles” (p. 86, l. 145-148)

She perceived this as a rather obvious way of advertising. She believes that by associating the products and the brands with the characters of the show, the company the tries to make the brand more popular:

“it’s just so obvious what they trying to sell” (p. 86, l. 147-148)

“which also funny just always they have close and no one use this Bing but in Gossip Girl apparently they do so”(p. 86, l. 151-152)

However, it was not bothering her in any way. She was aware why the products are placed in the show and she mentioned that it was funny to observe that.

Person 3 also mentioned that musicians gained popularity through Gossip Girl as their music was featured in the soundtrack:

“it is also the same with the not brands but bands on the show that they would always have some upcoming or some very popular bands and that also I saw as a way of the promoting them” (p. 87, l. 174-176)

3.3.4 Effectiveness of the product placement in Gossip Girl

In general, person 3 remembers a lot of brands presented in Gossip Girl. She mentioned brands like Chanel, Dior, Tiffany and Chloé which are related to the fashion world. She also recognized several technological brands like Hewlett-Packard and Bing. Moreover, she noticed food products like Vitamin Water and Macaroons from Ladurée:

“I remember the most Dior bags and Chanel (-) m.: clothes I remember the episode when they travel to Paris for shopping and then (.) like Chloé Chanel and Dior were very much y.: portrayed” (p. 84, l. 34-36)

She claimed that she knew all of these brands before watching Gossip Girl and probably this is one of the reasons why she was able to recognize them. Person 3 believes that she did not learn anything about the brands from Gossip Girl. She admitted that she probably did not even recognize every brand by watching the show. Product placement in Gossip Girl only gave her an impression of what kind of products people from a higher class possess and what their lifestyle might look like:

“I got the impression it kind get me inside how people might life and like high class in the New York I don’t think if I learn about (.) new things” (p. 85, l. 101-103)

She said that she never bought any of the products presented in the show because she cannot afford most of them. She claimed that she tried one of the food products presented in the show but she was not sure whether it was because the product was portrayed in the show or because she was living in the city where the brand comes from:

“I tried this but I am not how (-) I am not sure how much I was influenced by the show at that time I was actually living in Paris” (p. 84, l. 62-63)

Furthermore, she believes that especially the brand Ladurée became really popular after the producers featured it in the show:

“I think like (-) Ladurée kind of became very popular after that” (p. 84, l. 62)

In addition, she started to incorporate language from the series in her own life. For example she started to use the phrase “xoxo” from the show.

Product placement in Gossip Girl therefore seems to have a slight learning effect on person 3 but it appears that she is not really conscious about it.

Moreover, she said that her opinion about the brands did not change through watching the show but she knows people who got inspired by the show and bought some products because they were influenced by Gossip Girl:

“I guess people like want to do the same things (.) like as I mentioned my friend when she visited Paris she wanted to go to the same places where the people were (.) and she wanted to eat the same things (laugh) like (.) the macaroons from Ladurée“ (p. 87, l. 207-209)

Person 3 believes that she was not influenced by Gossip Girl in any way because she was aware of product placement while she was watching it. She mentioned that neither the characters nor the product placement influenced her.

Despite the fact that person 3 does not feel influenced by product placement, she still thinks it is an effective advertising strategy. She believes that viewers want to imitate the lifestyle presented in the show. The lifestyle and products portrayed in the show might be attractive for them and it might be a reason why they get influenced by product placement.

However, she believes that the majority of the viewers of the show are still very young and they are not part of the target group yet but marketers of the luxury products might seek to create a new target group for the future:

“I know the target for this show and majority of people who watch it are very young and I don't think that they can afford many of this products (.) so it that way hm: I don't know maybe they are producing hh. a new target group that's maybe will be able to buy some of them like the luxury brands in 10 or 20 years” (p. 87, l. 191-195)

She believes that product placement might be a rather effective way of advertising especially for the cheaper products that young viewers can afford.

However she is not sure if the product placement is effective as a long term advertising strategy:

“I don't know how long lasting that effect will be (.) if they would remember it still” (p. 87, l. 195-196)

3.3.5 Conclusion

As a conclusion it can be said that person 3 does not seem to be very influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl. This might be due to the distance that she feels between her lifestyle and the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl. She thinks that product placement is an effective advertisement strategy and that it is a very interesting topic especially on the example of Gossip Girl. Even though she does not feel influenced by product placement in the show, she claims that other people might be affected by it.

3.4 Interview 4

The interviewee from the fourth interview will be called person 4.

3.4.1 General information

Person 4 has seen the whole show. She mentioned that she has seen all the episodes but she was not sure how many seasons Gossip Girl had. She mainly started to watch the show because she had read the books before and she thought that they were funny and exciting. The plot has a lot of action and this is one of the reasons why she decided to start watching the show.

What she likes the most about the show is that it is dramatic, romantic and diverse. She also particularly appreciates one of the characters from the show. Another factor which makes her like the show is the fashion and the clothes portrayed in it. When person 4 mentioned that she likes the clothes she strongly increased her intonation which might indicate that she has a strong interest in fashion:

“And have a little bit of everything and then (--) all the nice clothes? and you know (--) yeah I think that's why” (p. 100, l. 26-27)

As fashion and luxury products are an important theme of the show and big part of product placement, one can argue that person 4 will be easily influenced by product placement in the Gossip Girl.

3.4.2 View of the luxury industry

Person 4 feels a certain distance between her life and the lifestyle of the characters presented in Gossip Girl. She mentioned that she would appreciate luxury products more than rich people do as they are not within her reach. She argued that she would like to own luxury products but she cannot afford them. As a result she feels excluded from the luxury world:

“We:ll I would love to afford them” (p. 101, l. 108)

“I would (-) really love to own <p> a few pieces <p> (-) for sure” (p. 101, l. 109-110)

Person 4 also mentioned that she is willing to spend money for luxury products in the future. She strongly emphasizes that now she is a student and she cannot afford most of luxury products portrayed in the show. This shows that students might not be the right target group for luxury products:

Yeah: <p> of course not right now I am student but if I had had money I would definitely (-) <p>do that <p> (p. 102, l. 152-153)

One of the reasons why she would like to spend money for this kind of products is that they represent luxury which indicates that she would like to be a part of the luxury world:

“I think because it is luxury” (p. 102, l. 116)

Moreover, she states that luxury products have a unique design and are not easily available to the mass. She also believes that luxury products such as those placed in Gossip Girl are an investment because they have better quality and can be used for a long time. Moreover, person 4 claims that this kind of products are more durable because after some time they might get a sentimental value:

“I think it is investment because you can have them fo:r (-) such a long time and they just become more be:autiful (-) the longer you have them and grab them (.) because they get personal” (p. 102, l. 117-119)

However, she mentions that she values the exclusivity of luxury products regardless of their price. The price does not seem to be the reason why she would like to own luxury product but it is a factor which makes them more exclusive as not everyone can afford them.

3.4.3 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

In general person 4 is aware of what product placement is and knows the definition of it. She perceives product placement in Gossip Girl as rather subtle and as an integral part of the plot. While watching the show she did not consciously pay attention to the brands and products placed in Gossip Girl. She mentioned that for her it was not obvious that product placement in the show was a way to promote the products and brands because they are part of the characters' lifestyle:

“it is not something (.) what I was thinking about (.) it is not like ok we:ll she is wearing (.) that bag and this probably (.) because they place the product (.) like I said there supposed to be this hm:: (-) rich girls it would be weird if they weren't wear expensive brands (-) so it's nothing that I would think about” (p. 103, l. 182-185)

Moreover, for her product placement was not disturbing and she was not annoyed by it. She mentioned that it was inspiring for her:

“It was not annoying (-) more inspiring, (.) I think” (p. 100, l. 45)

Furthermore, when she speaks about product placement she mostly talked about fashion brands and food products but she also mentioned technological devices. Person 4 claimed that the most visible products portrayed in Gossip Girl were clothes and accessories the characters wore and technological devices they used:

“mostly like on people (-) they wear the clo:thes and the bags and the shoes and the (..) yeah? it is like (-) technological devices they also <p>use them<p> and then of course there are cars and everything (---) so I guess (-) the things I have noticed from I was watching the show (.) is the (.) the brands? that people actually wear” (p. 102-103, l. 158-161)

Her strong interest in fashion might be the reason why person 4 mostly noticed these products in the show.

3.4.4 Effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl

In general, person 4 remembers several brands presented in Gossip Girl such as Gucci and Louis Vuitton which are all luxury fashion brands. She mentioned also two brands of technological products: Samsung and Iphone. For some products she mostly seems to remember the design rather than the brand:

“yeah they had IPHones for instance <p>Samsung<p> probably and we:ll you see all the jewellery (.) it is like Louis Vuitton (-) Gucci and a lot of brand in the clothing (.) <p> as well <p>” (p. 100, l. 33-35)

While watching the show person 4 especially noticed the placement of a certain type of food called macaroons. She admitted that she got influenced by product placement and wanted to try one of this product presented in Gossip Girl:

“I never tried them before (.) but when I saw Blair yhm eat them I actually wanted to try them” (p. 101, l. 85-86)

Furthermore, she claimed that she wished to own the products portrayed in the show because she likes the character who presented the product in the show and the character’s lifestyle. She admitted that she got influenced by product placement because it was strongly connected to the character from the show and to the lifestyle she seems to wish to lead:

“yeah, (-) I like her (-) but I also I don’t know(.) it is just it is (-) girly you know I also wanted to lay in bed and eat <p>macaro::ns <p> (-) so I guess (.) I get influence, by her character? (--) in some way” (p. 101, l. 93-95)

Product placement seems to be an effective and good way of promoting the products and brands in Gossip Girl for person 4 as she felt a strong connection to the characters and their lifestyle presented in the show. The importance of the character for product placement seems to be undeniable here.

Person 4 said that she knew all of the brands portrayed in the show before watching it and that she has not learned about anything about those brands while she was watching the show. However, she contradicts herself as she admitted to have learned more about the new collection of those brands by watching Gossip Girl. She furthermore engages in a substitution behavior when it comes to buying expensive products. She tries to buy a product similar to that placed in the show which is more affordable:

“<p>yes<p> yeah (--).hh you know maybe (.) you saw like a nice item or:: blouse or whatever (-) and then(--) I might just (.) you know try to find something similar (--)but cheaper”(p. 101, l. 74-75)

This quote also shows that her wish to own the products placed in Gossip Girl increased by watching the show. For her, product placement presented in the show had an inspiring effect. She admitted that she got a lot of inspiration on how to dress even though she cannot afford most of the luxury products placed in the show:

“you know a lot of fashion (.) and you can (-) you get a lot of inspiration and how to dress and what kind (.) of clothes to buy (.) even if you can't afford like <p>Gucci<p>”(p.100, l. 49-50)

In general, person 4 thinks that brands can become popular because they are placed in shows. However, she could not think of any brand that might have become popular because of Gossip Girl. This shows that the effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl might have to be relativized. She bases this assumption on the example of the brand Manolo Blahnik, which in her opinion became really popular after being placed in the show Sex and the City:

“It is not like for instance Sex and the city (.) where like Manolo Blahnik became really popular after (.) the show (--)so I can't really think about the brand (.) that (--) became popular because of (.) Gossip Girl”(p. 101, l. 102-104)

Despite the fact that person 4 believes that no brand placed in the show gained popularity because of it, she thinks that product placement in Gossip Girl is an effective advertisement strategy because she wants that products more than she used to after having watched the show:

“Well:: I guess (.) I:: want that product more”(p. 103, l. 189)

Moreover, she thinks that it might be due to the connection between the products and the characters. It might be because product placement is more interactive than classical advertisements such as magazine advertisements as the products are related to the character:

“because you see them in(.) in a different way of course you see them in magazines and (.) fashion magazines (-) but you don’t get (--) the same connection (-) or not connection but you don’t see them in the same way like you can see a picture of them” (p. 103, l. 189-192)

3.4.5 Conclusion

As a conclusion it can be said that person 4 seems to be influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl. She claimed that because of the show she wishes to own the products more than before watching it. Moreover, she has gained consciousness about the new collections of fashion brands and got inspired by the brand placement in Gossip Girl. She is not bothered by product placement and thinks that it is a more effective advertising strategy than classical advertisements.

3.5 Interview 5

The interviewee from the fifth interview will be called person 5.

3.5.1 General information

Person 5 has seen all episodes of Gossip Girl except the last season. She mentioned that she did not watch it in the television but on the internet and this is the reason why she watched it on a very frequent basis. She mainly started to watch the show because a friend suggested it to her. As a result she got influenced and she started watching the show:

“I watch it because (.) my friend suggested to me” (p. 114, l. 24)

What person 5 likes most about Gossip Girl is its surreal aspect. Moreover, she thinks that the plot of the show is funny. She mentioned that she watches it during free time and that it is purely for entertainment. Furthermore, for her the plot of the show seems to rather simple as she watched the show to relax:

“you can watch it you don’t have to think about (---) things(.) because it is quite simple” (p. 114, l. 25-26)

Moreover, she believes that Gossip Girl’s target group is mainly made of younger people.

3.5.2 View of the luxury industry

In general, person 5 perceives luxury products as being of good quality, expensive and maybe sometimes not worth the high price the customers have to pay. In her opinion, the expensiveness of the products might be the cause of the uniqueness of luxury products. Moreover, she seems to feel a certain distance to the lifestyle and the products portrayed in Gossip Girl. It might be due

to the fact that she cannot afford most of the luxury products and does not feel part of the social group which buys luxury products:

“because I don’t come from very luxury family (.) so:: that (.) all the expensive clothes for me (--) like (-) sometime or on very special event I would wear it” (p. 117, l. 164-165)

Although she strongly perceives a big gap between her lifestyle and the one portrayed in Gossip Girl, she did not mention about any negative feelings that might arise as a result of this gap.

In addition, she seems undecided whether she would spend a lot of money on luxury products or not as she mentioned that she would maybe buy luxury products if she earned a lot of money but then she could not think of any reason why she would actually need them. One of the reasons for this indecisiveness of hers might be that she does not feel any connection between her lifestyle and the lifestyle presented in the show:

“Maybe I will have a lot of money (.) then I will spend it for brand clothes” (p. 116, l. 153-154)

“I think I wouldn’t buy those luxury products because (-) I wouldn’t wear them (.) because for me: (-) it is something (.) for very special event”(p. 117, l. 166-168)

If she would spend money on the luxury products she would probably do it because of the quality of such products. In her opinion, luxury brands have a better quality than other fashion brands. For instance, she compared two brands in the interview, Diesel and Prada:

“because of the quality(.) I think (-) well:: it depends what you mean brand, (-) Diesel is brand (.) and (-) I don’t know (-) Prada is brand” (p. 116, l. 158-159)

Furthermore, person 5 said that she likes the looks of the characters presented in the show and that she sometimes tends to substitute the expensive products she likes with cheaper ones as she does not feel the need to own luxury products:

“I would like to have similar (.) I don’t need that particular (-) maybe that is very expensive (--) As I believe (.) I can find something similar” (p. 117, l. 183-184)

She also insists on the fact that she pays more attention to the look of the character from the show rather than on the actual product or brand they are wearing or using. She keeps repeating this argument throughout the interview. She does not seem to care about the labels of products in general:

“I would like to own the looks (--) as I said I don’t pay attention to (.) brands or products (.) I see look (.) how they (.) look together” (p. 117, l. 177-178)

3.5.3 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

Person 5 does not seem to be aware of what product placement exactly is. She is aware that products are part of the plot of the show and that they are featured in Gossip Girl but she does not seem to be aware of the fact that is part of advertising strategy. She could not come up with any reason why the brands and products are actually placed in the show:

“It’s so when you want to put this brand into some episodes (-) maybe (---) for (.) a particular reason (-) maybe for: like general (.) I think (-) for example in this particular episode they need (-) Blair to wear this and this brand (.) because it is somehow related” (p. 118, l. 225-227)

Consequently, she does not perceive product placement as being rather obvious. In her opinion, products are strongly connected with the characters and their lifestyle. She mostly noticed products as being integrated in the plot, in everyday situations and being used by the characters in the show:

“I think it is (.) relevant because it is about (.) that kind of lifestyle (.) so I think it is not annoying for me (-) it how it should be (.) it would be different (-) than (.) it might (-) be disturbing” (p. 114, l. 60-62)

As the quote above shows, product placement does not seem to bother her at all. She does not pay much attention to the products placed in Gossip Girl and as it was mentioned before, she pays more attention to the whole look of the character than on the concrete product or brand. Person 5 also mentioned that if the products had not been relevant to the lifestyle presented in the show, product placement would probably be more disturbing and obvious.

Person 5 added that she was not thinking about product placement while watching Gossip Girl and before the interview.

3.5.4 Effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl

In general, person 5 is aware that brands are present in Gossip Girl but she barely remembered brand names. She only mentioned the brand Louis Vuitton and she states that she recognized it because of the product’s shape:

“I know that they are wearing a lot of (--) designer clothes (--) but (.) I am quite bad in (.) recognizing (.)them so I haven’t actually noticed (-) <f>particular </f> names“ (p. 114, l. 42-43)

Moreover, the only other brand she remembered from the show was the fictional brand created for the show by one of the characters. This shows that she probably only pays attention to the plot of the show.

She probably did not recognize a lot of brands placed in Gossip Girl because she is not a person who is particularly interested in fashion as she mentioned later:

“I might not be the person you really follow the fashion” (p. 116, l. 137)

Furthermore, when talking about luxury products, person 5 exclusively mentioned fashion related products. She did not mention any technological devices or food products which were also portrayed in the show.

In addition, Person 5 claimed that she did not learn anything about the brands shown in Gossip Girl and that she did not discover any brands she did not know before watching the show. She added that she would probably notice brands she does not know if she would be looking consciously for brand names while watching Gossip Girl:

“maybe if I would watch (.) it now and see (.) than I would realized yeah.: actually I have noticed that before (-) and I didn't know that there is such a brand” (p. 115, l. 83-84)

Moreover, as it was mentioned above, person 5 does not seem to be interested in fashion and luxury. This might be the reason why she does not pay attention to the brands placed in Gossip Girl. She also mentioned that she cannot afford most of the products presented in Gossip Girl, this might also be a reason why she did not care about the brands while watching the show:

“maybe because I cannot afford that (.) So I don't pay attention to that“ (p. 116, l. 141-142)

However, she believes that product placement in Gossip Girl can be an effective way to promote a product for people who are actually interested in fashion and luxury:

“I think so (.) for people who are interested in fashion (.) I think it's very effective (.) for them (-) for people like me, (--) yeah, (.) in some way (--) as I said (.) I still notice something” (p. 118-119, l. 253-255)

Person 5 also believes that product placement might have a stronger effect on young people who want the products placed in the show:

“I believe that many young people watch this (-) and then they want (-) and then they ask their parents” (p. 118, l. 243-244)

Furthermore, person 5 believes that product placement might be effective as people might learn about new products on the market from Gossip Girl. Nevertheless, this does not seem to apply to her. She mentioned that she only learned what might be trendy and nothing about the particular brands:

“I think this is also a way how to follow (-) the trends (.) and style (.) and fashion” (p. 115, l. 108-109)

“it doesn’t influence me in that way (.) the look influence me (--) how (-) yeah I might thinking o:: this is trendy now” (p. 115, l. 102-103)

Although person 5 believes that product placement is an effective advertisement strategy, it does not seem to be very effective for her. She strongly feels that it does not affect her or at least she does not seem to be conscious about it. She does not buy the products and does not remember the brands presented in the show. Nevertheless, she still seems to be slightly affected by it as she added that sometimes she looks for a cheaper substitute or something similar:

“I would like to have similar (.) I don’t need that particular (-) maybe that is very expensive (--) As I believe (.) I can find something similar” (p. 117, l. 183-184)

3.5.5 Conclusion

Product placement in Gossip Girl seems to have a slight effect on person 5 but it appears that it is not very strong and that she is not really conscious about it. She learned about trends and somehow got inspired by product placement in Gossip Girl. Nevertheless, she did not remember any brands in Gossip Girl as she is not very interested in fashion and luxury products. She is not bothered by product placement in Gossip Girl and she thinks that in some cases it might be an effective advertisement strategy.

3.6 Interview 6

The interviewee from the last interview will be called person 6.

3.6.1 General information

Person 6 used to watch Gossip Girl every night when she started to watch the show. She streamed the episodes and has seen most of the seasons. Now she does not watch it regularly anymore, she only watches it occasionally when it is on television.

She decided to watch Gossip Girl because she heard a lot of people talking about it and eventually got influenced by them. She also saw a lot of advertisements on television which made the show appealing to her:

“Because there were many people talking about it and I saw many advertisement in tv .h and then I started to watch it” (p. 129, l. 15-16)

What person 6 likes the most about Gossip Girl is its unreal and distant character. The story of Gossip Girl seems very different from her own life. This aspect also fascinates her. She likes the luxurious lifestyle and the fashion portrayed in Gossip Girl:

“I think it's that it was so (.) un(.)real for me and so distant and.: it's something that never happens at least where I live .h so: for me it was just fascinating to see these (.) other perspective of life and (.) yeah (--) and then fashion and all those things” (p. 129-130, l. 20-22)

Person 6 seems to be attracted to the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl which is why it is likely that she will be influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl.

3.6.2 View of the luxury industry

In general, person 6 perceives an important distance between the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl and her own lifestyle. She believes the lifestyle in Gossip Girl is unrealistic and like in a dream. It seems like a fairytale:

“Gossip Girl is something unreal for me cause it's so (.) distant from my reality an:d I mean (.) for in a way it's like (.) a dream” (p. 130, l. 57-58)

She does not only feel this distance to the lifestyle but also to the characters. Person 6 does not share any of the characters behaviors and attitudes. In addition, she does not have the same priorities in life as they have, and in her opinion, their problems are not real problems. She feels that the characters do not have to worry about anything as they are so wealthy. As a result, they do not know the value of money:

“they don't realize how much (.) money are important for other people (.) because I just (.) sometimes it just a wasting of money” (p. 131, l. 76-77)

This distance person 6 feels towards the characters and their lifestyle is also present with the products placed in Gossip Girl. She does not buy any of the products placed in Gossip Girl because they are too expensive. Most of them are part of the luxury industry. She feels that those brands are reserved to the elite to which she is not included. In general, she likes luxury products but they are not her priority when it comes to spending money. She believes that immaterial things can make a person much richer than money:

“of course I like them (laughs) .h but yeah sometimes I feel (.) if I have (.) for example to choose .h between a (.) very (-) ah expensive bag and maybe some travels or something like that .h then (.) I prefer to travel or (.) something that can make me (.) rich as a person and not (.) ehm doesn't make rich just my wardrobe (laughs)” (p. 131, l. 84-87)

Furthermore, person 6 believes that many people consume luxury products as a way to get accepted by others and to get socialized. She thinks that especially in some environments or cultures consumers behave like this:

“I think it depends on these because in some (.) cultures in some environment then having something new it's (.) like a new way to get accepted or (-) socialized with people sometimes” (p. 131, l. 97-99)

She relates this behavior to her home town where people are very eager to buy luxury products. For her, one explanation might be that people there do not have anyone to compare with or broaden their horizons and as a result they all adopt the same consumption behavior as the majority.

Although person 6 argues that she does not put too much importance on luxury products, she mentions that in some cases she would be willing to spend a lot of money on luxury products. Furthermore, she wishes to know how it feels to be able to spend as much money as the characters in Gossip Girl because she cannot afford to do so. She likes this kind of luxurious lifestyle and would like to try it:

“somehow I li:ke (.) their life because it's like (.) they don't have many things to worry about” (p. 130, l. 66-67)

For her a way to get a glimpse of the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl is by owning luxury products like those placed in the show and used by the characters. In her opinion, this is a way to simulate the characters' life and escape her own reality:

“I think it's a way to get closer to them and: .h like (.) simulating you're living another life and (.) yeah (.) with different preoccupations and things (.) to care” (p. 130, l. 59-61)

Moreover, she affirms to be annoyed by the fact that she will never be as rich as the characters. Sometimes this fact affects her feelings negatively especially when she is in a bad period of her life with a lot of stress. Besides, frustration also sometimes overcomes her when she really likes a product placed in the show which she cannot afford:

“I think it's sometimes maybe with something I really like or something (.) eh maybe it's just a bad period for me and I'm so stressed about other things and then I see these (.) people wor worried about the bags or the shoes and then I .h yeah (.) it's a bit frustrating in that sense” (p. 134., l. 224-227)

Product placement in Gossip Girl therefore seems to affect her as she appears to want the brands placed in Gossip Girl to reduce the distance between her lifestyle and the one portrayed in the show.

3.6.3 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

In general, person 6 is aware of what product placement is and knows the definition of it. She perceives product placement in Gossip Girl as being rather obvious and explicit as the brands are focused on. However, she also says that the brands are not always named but the characters often refer to them as being exclusive or expensive:

“they also .h in a way make this explicit yeah where something very maybe they don't name the the brand but they (.) ah make some referments to such that (.) it's something re really expensive and not that cheap that (.) not everybody can allow those (.) kind of (.) clothes” (p. 132, l. 139-142)

When person 6 talks about product placement in Gossip Girl she only speaks about fashion and designer brands. She does not seem to perceive the brand placement of other products such technological brands, food or services. This might be due to the fact that the show's plot focuses much more on fashion and puts those brands in the foreground.

In general, product placement in Gossip Girl does not seem to bother person 6. When brands are placed in the show she seems to be more bothered by the fact that she cannot have these products than by the fact that they are present for an advertising purpose:

“that it's like you will never (.) be like them (laughs) so: .h that's annoying .h but ah not not that much I mean (.) that (-- depends on the moments I think” (p. 132, l. 159-160)

Although person 6 appears to believe that product placement in Gossip Girl is rather explicit, she did not think about product placement while watching the show, she was not really aware of it before the interview. She argues that she noticed the presence of brands in the show but was unsure whether the brands were featured in the show for an advertising purpose or just as a part of the plot:

“I don't know but (.) in Italy it happens and sometimes .h that it's not exactly: allowed (.) but it happens anyway (.) so: I I noticed it but it didn't know if it was on purpose or not” (p. 132, l. 151-153)

This somehow shows that product placement seems to have affected her unconsciously as she never thought about it before actively talking about it for the purpose of this study.

3.6.4 Effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl

Person 6 seems to have a rather strong awareness of the brands placed in Gossip Girl. She remembered several brand names such as Prada, Chanel and Burberry. Nevertheless, as mentioned before, she exclusively mentions luxury designer brands:

“Prada (laughs) Chanel I think Burberry (-) ehm (.) I am sure there are many others” (p. 130, l. 28-29)

She claims that she knew many of the brands placed in Gossip Girl but that she also discovered many brands she did not know before. She also has learned to recognize the brands placed in Gossip Girl because of the show:

“I discovered many other brands and I wanted to have more (laughs) of those brands (-) ehh::m yeah maybe you recognize I mean I can recognize (.) many other brands more easily and (.) maybe desire some of those things” (p. 130, l. 43-45)

This quote also shows that her wish to own the products placed in Gossip Girl increased by watching the show. For her, product placement in Gossip Girl is nonetheless not the only reason why she wishes such designer products. She affirms that she wishes to own these products in general because she is interested in fashion. The fact that those products were placed in Gossip Girl has only reinforced her wish:

“I mean (-) in a way probably it does (.) but I (.) really (.) like those things (.) I I mean I like fashion I like clothes I like bags (laughs) .h so: it's something like (.) a reason more (.) to buy those things” (p. 130, l. 50-52)

Furthermore, person 6 usually engages in a substitution behavior when it comes to buying expensive products. When she sees a product placed in Gossip Girl she really likes she often tries to buy a similar product which is in her affordable price range:

“sometimes I buy those (.) kind of products .h but then I try like to compensate with other products that (.) yeah (.) are (.) real really nice and yeah but ah (.) cheaper” (p. 131, l. 120-121)

She seems to be conscious about the influence product placement in Gossip Girl has on her. The fact that she likes fashion and luxury might be an important factor why she is influenced.

In addition, person 6 noticed effects of product placement in Gossip Girl on other people. For instance, her cousin created her own line of headbands after having watched Gossip Girl:

“my cousin she created her own em (.) ehh like line of (.) those bands Blair is always wearing” (p. 132, l. 172-173)

Headbands are an important part of the character Blair's style; she wears them very frequently and from different luxury designers. Her cousin is really fond of the series Gossip Girl and the characters. As she had difficulties finding such headbands she could afford she decided to make a business out of it. Nevertheless, it was more for fun and it never took off. One can argue that this might show that the effect of product placement in Gossip Girl is rather short lasting.

Furthermore, person 6 believes that the viewers have to be interested in fashion and luxury for product placement in Gossip Girl to be effective. She also thinks that the effectiveness depends on the culture and the context in which people watch the show:

“I think it depends on the people because not everybody are (.) not everybody is interested in those kind of things so: it depends on the context on the environment (.) yeah on the societies” (p. 133, l. 193-195)

The effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl can in person 6's opinion, not be generalized.

In addition, person 6 argues that she is not sure whether product placement in Gossip Girl can really be effective as the products and brands placed in the show are mostly part of the luxury

sector which the average viewer cannot afford. She believes that it can therefore only affect people who can afford these products:

“That's (.) the thing I don't I'm not sure if it can work because .h ah comparing (.) Gossip Girl with OC (.) in OC you can (.) also see many (.) brands .h but (.) ah:: (.) there were (.) I mean (-) some (.) some of these things were (.) still cheaper and: more affordable than in Gossip Girl (.) so (.) it could affect people with money but (.) it cannot affect people without money because (.) those things are very expensive I think” (p. 133, l. 206-210)

She compares product placement as an advertising strategy in Gossip Girl with product placement as an advertising strategy in The OC, a similar television series from the same producer as Gossip Girl. In her opinion, the products and brands placed in The OC were more affordable and therefore they were more directly targeting the viewers of the show. However, as analyzed above person 6 is affected by product placement in Gossip Girl. She seems to be measuring the effectiveness only by the purchase intentions and behaviors following the viewing of the series.

3.6.5 Conclusion

It can be concluded that person 6 has been influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl. She remembered a lot of brands placed in the show and learned about brands she did not know before. As a result of watching the show, she wishes the products placed more than she wished them before. She also likes the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl although she believes that luxury products are not especially important in her life.

4. Comparison of the results

4.1 Similarities

Most of the interviewees have seen the whole series. Person 2, 3 and 4 have watched every episodes while person 1, 5 and 6 missed one season. All the participants claimed to like the surreal aspect of the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl and the fact that it is so different from their own life. Moreover, except person 5 they all mentioned to appreciate the fashion present in the show. Finally, they watched the show as a means of entertainment.

The participants come all from different countries and cultures but they still seem to appreciate similar aspects of the show. This shows that the themes of the show Gossip Girl can be appealing to very diverse women.

Furthermore, the interviewees all mainly focused on fashion luxury brands. They mostly named clothes, bags and shoe designer brands when they were asked to talk about brands placed in Gossip Girl, except person 2 and 5 who barely remembered any brands name. Person 2 also mentioned technological devices placed in Gossip Girl but without remembering the brand. In contrast, person 3 and 4 who also mentioned technological devices were able to name and

recognize the brands. They also were the only ones mentioning food placed in the show; person 3 was even able to recall the brand.

Moreover, all the interviewees appreciated the luxurious lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl. They are attracted to luxury products in general. However, some of the participants wished to own such products while others were more neutral towards luxury products. Nevertheless, they all felt a distance to the luxury world and the luxury brands as they cannot afford them. Some participants, especially person 1 and 6 mention to be jealous of the characters at some points and a little bit annoyed that they cannot afford the brands placed in Gossip Girl. Still product placement in Gossip Girl does not seem to trigger feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration about their lives.

In general, all the participants except person 5 knew what product placement is. Person 5 understood that product placement was the placement of a brand in media content but she was not aware of the fact that it is part of an advertising strategy.

Person 1, 2 and 3 were strongly aware of the presence of product placement in Gossip Girl while watching the show whereas person 4, 5 and 6 never thought about it while watching Gossip Girl. In addition, most of the participants did not perceive product placement in Gossip Girl as disturbing or annoying as they felt it was integrated in the plot and part of the lifestyle of the Gossip Girl characters. Therefore, product placement appeared rather subtle to them. They only felt bothered by it when it was incongruent with the storyline, only present as part of a promotional activity or when the presence of the brand was very obvious. Person 2 is the only exception as to her product placement in Gossip Girl seemed very obvious and disturbing in general.

4.2 Differences

Comparing the results of the six interviews, two groups seem to emerge: one group with stronger effects and one group with weaker effects.

4.2.1 Stronger effects

Person 4 and 6 are part of the group that shows stronger effects as a result of product placement in Gossip Girl. Person 4 named fashion and technological brands but she did not mention food brands although she remembered their products. Person 6 also remembered a lot of brands but mainly designer brands.

While person 4 knew all the placed brands before watching the show, person 6 discovered many brands besides the ones she already knew by watching Gossip Girl. Both participants learned things about fashion and designer brands by watching Gossip Girl. For instance, person 4 learned about the collections of the particular brands portrayed in Gossip Girl and person 6 learned about new brands and how to recognize them more easily.

They claimed that their wish to own the products portrayed in Gossip Girl has been reinforced by watching the show. Person 4 even mentioned that she got influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl because of the characters and the lifestyle in the show. Person 6 also mentioned that the lifestyle in the show is appealing and this is a reason why she gets influenced.

Nevertheless, both never bought any products from the brands placed in Gossip Girl as they are too expensive and as a result not accessible to them. They have however both a substitution behavior; they try to find products that are similar to those placed in Gossip Girl but within an affordable price range. Person 4 even affirms that she gets inspired by product placement in Gossip Girl.

This rather important effect of product placement might be the result of their strong interest in fashion and the luxury lifestyle. This might also be the reason why they mainly talk about luxury products when it comes to product placement in Gossip Girl.

4.2.2 Weaker effects

This group can be divided in two subgroups as the rather weak effects of product placement in Gossip Girl manifests itself in a different manner.

4.2.2.1 Weaker effects and strong awareness of product placement in Gossip Girl

Person 1 and 3 show rather weak effects in comparison with person 4 and 6. Both participants were strongly aware of the presence of product placement in Gossip Girl and they actively paid attention to it while watching. As they were actively aware of the fact that brands were placed in the Gossip for a promotional purpose the effects of product placement were weakened.

Because they paid attention to product placement, they both remembered a lot of brands. Person 3 mentioned brand names ranging from mainly designer brands to technological and food brands while person 1 only mentioned designer brands.

Neither person 1 nor person 3 discovered new brands by watching Gossip Girl. The brands they noticed in Gossip Girl were all brands they already knew. Person 3 also mentions that she probably only recognized these brands because she knew them before watching the show. Nevertheless, they still learned something by watching the show. Person 3 learned how people from the upper class live and what products they consume. Person 1 learned about the particular collections of the brands placed in the show.

Both participants claim that they are not influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl whatsoever. This is nevertheless not entirely true as they still remember a lot of brands that were actually placed in the show. They easily connect these brands with Gossip Girl and seem to be more aware of them in general.

However, their buying behavior is not influenced by Gossip Girl as most of the products are very expensive. They claim that Gossip Girl does not influence their wish to have luxury products as

they wish to own these products in general. Only person 3 was slightly influenced by the show when she bought macarons, however these are not part of the luxury industry.

4.2.2.2 Weaker effects and weak interest in fashion and luxury

Person 2 and 5 also show weaker effects of product placement. This might be explained by the fact that they are not as interested in fashion and luxury as the other participants and the fact that fashion and luxury brands are the main products placed in Gossip Girl.

Both interviewees barely recalled any brand placed in the show. They both affirm that they did not pay attention to the brands as they are not accessible to them. Moreover, they both put more emphasis to the actual product placed in the show and its design rather than their brand.

They both claim not to be influenced by Gossip Girl when it comes to luxury brands. However, this is not completely true as they both learned how the products from particular brands look like; they learned to recognize the designs more easily because of the show. Moreover, person 5 also mentioned that she sometimes tries to copy the looks of the characters but without paying attention to the brands. Furthermore, person 2 wished to own a smartphone like those placed in Gossip Girl. She admitted to get influenced in this case. Even though this is not part of the luxury industry, she still got influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl.

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study has shown that product placement in Gossip Girl has effects on the viewers. All the participants seem to be influenced in some way by brand placement in the show. Nevertheless, there is a difference in the intensity of this influence. While two participants seem to be rather strongly influenced by it, the other four interviewees are only weakly affected by product placement in Gossip Girl.

A main difference between these participants is the degree of awareness of product placement in the show. Person 4 and 6 who were rather strongly influenced were actually not aware of product placement in Gossip Girl while watching it. In contrast, three of the participants who were weakly influenced were strongly aware of the presence of product placement in the show for advertising purposes. This coincides with Russell's research who argued that product placement is a more effective advertising strategy than traditional advertising as people might not be aware of the ulterior motive of product placement as a means promotion. She states that if people are not aware of the advertising purposes of brand placement they will be more influenced. This influence mainly happens unconsciously. Homer also argues that subtle product placement affects the consumers positively in contrast to obvious product placement. Regarding the results of this study, it can be argued that the participants who are strongly aware of the presence of product placement and perceive it as obvious seem to be less influenced by it whereas people who are not aware of it seem to be more influenced.

Furthermore, in accordance to previous studies, the participants argued that product placement in *Gossip Girl* is part of the plot of the show and therefore they do not perceive it as particularly disturbing. One reason for this might also be the age of the participants. Previous studies have shown that young people in contrast to older people are not bothered by product placement except when it is inappropriate or excessive. Indeed, most of the participants were not bothered by product placement in *Gossip Girl*.

Another aspect which might influence the effects product placement in *Gossip Girl* has on the viewer is the interest in fashion and luxury. The results have shown that the participants with a strong interest in fashion and luxury seem to be more influenced by product placement in the show than the participants with a weak interest in these topics. Person 5 and 6 even state in their interview that interest in fashion and luxury are necessary for product placement in *Gossip Girl* to influence the viewers.

In general, five of the six participants claimed that product placement is an effective advertising strategy as the viewers might identify with the characters and might wish to get closer to them. Buying the products the characters have, can be seen as a way to embody the characters and a way to get closer to the luxurious lifestyle they have. Throughout the show the luxurious lifestyle and luxury products are framed as desirable and exclusive and therefore, appear positively to the viewers. Moreover, these findings support the theory of connectedness and Bandura's theory of social learning. The characters seem to play an important role in the effectiveness of product placement in *Gossip Girl*. As stated by person 4 and 5, they get inspired by the characters and as a result want to copy what they do and what they wear.

However, person 6 does not believe product placement in *Gossip Girl* is an effective advertising strategy as she believes that the viewers cannot afford the products placed in the show. Person 3 was also unsure whether this technique is successful for the target group of *Gossip Girl* as they are still quite young and cannot afford luxury products. This suggests that the participants of this study measure the effectiveness of product placement by the purchase intentions that result from brand placement. Another evidence for that is the fact that four of the participants claimed not to be influenced by product placement in *Gossip Girl* because they did not buy the products placed in the show. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of product placement cannot only be measured by the consumption behavior of the viewers. Other factors such as the awareness of the brands, the wish to own the brands without buying them, the recognition of the brands and the feelings the placement triggers in the viewers can also be taken into account when measuring the effectiveness of product placement. When considering all these factors together, the results show that all the participants seem to be somehow influenced by product placement in *Gossip Girl*.

In addition, even though these participants believe they are not influenced, they still think that other people might be influenced by product placement in *Gossip Girl*. This can be related to the theory of "Third Person Effect" by Davidson from 1983. This theory states that people believe the mass media have a greater influence on the behavior of other people than on their own (Hoorens & Ruiter, 1996, p. 599). Person 1, 2, 3 and 5 all claim that other people are probably

influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl while they are not. As explained before this is not entirely true as they are also influenced by it to some extent such as that they remember the brands or wish to own the products shown in the show.

Furthermore, the participants seem to pay more attention to the product and its design rather than the brand. This is especially true for the person 2 and 5 who were not able to recall many brand names. But also person 4, who is rather strongly influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl, mentioned the product she wished to own without the brand of it. For instance, she states that she wants to eat macaroons like the character Blair but she does not mention the brand. This indicates that in some cases the designs or the type of product placed in the show seems to be more memorable than their actual brand. Considering this, the effectiveness of product placement in the show has to be relativized as some of the participants seem to have gained more awareness of the type of products that are part of the luxury industry than of the brand names. Moreover, the participants seem to pay more attention to the brands they knew before watching the show. Except person 6, all affirmed that they knew the brands placed in Gossip Girl and that they did not discover new brands. However, it is unlikely that they knew all the brands placed in the show as a lot of brands appear in the series and many of them are not universally known, especially by people who are not interested in the fashion and luxury industry.

Moreover, DeLorme and Reid's research states that product placement might trigger negative feelings in the viewers as they might not be able to afford what the characters have. The results of this study however, do not support these findings. Although the participants claimed that sometimes they feel a bit jealous, the negative feelings do not go further. A reason for this might be that the difference between the participants' lifestyle and the lifestyle in Gossip Girl is too important. Therefore, the viewers feel an important psychological distance between the show and their lives. As a result, they feel that the lifestyle portrayed in the show is unrealistic and surreal. Due to this distance they probably do not feel frustrated as this lifestyle is only hypothetical to them. These findings about the distance between the viewers and the luxury world also support Hansen and Wänke's research about luxury products. Furthermore, Veblen's theory of conspicuous consumption cannot be supported in this case. The participants do not seem to wish to gain a higher social status by consuming luxury products and therefore, they do not feel frustrated by the fact they cannot afford them. The participants who value luxury products value them because of their higher quality and uniqueness. For them, it is more a way to express their individuality of reward themselves.

Finally, many effects of product placement in Gossip Girl probably happen unconsciously and therefore it is difficult to assess the entire effects it has on the viewer. The interviewees probably do not consciously know how they are affected. Therefore, it can be assumed that product placement in Gossip Girl is more effective than the participants claim.

To conclude, it is important to mention that luxury products do not depend on advertising as much as other types of products to make the brand known. Luxury brands have their costumers and are not depending on the market changes of supply and demand. Therefore, the primary

motive of placing luxury brands in Gossip Girl might not be of promotional nature. Maybe the purpose of product placement is more one of enhancing reality in the show and giving the viewers a glimpse into another lifestyle. It might nevertheless be a good technique to make young people aware of luxury brands as due to their age they might not know those brands yet.

6. Critical reflection and outlook on future research

Qualitative semi-structured interviews proved to be a good methodology for this study as they enable to get information from the participants which would be difficult to get in another way. For instance, information on how people feel towards product placement in Gossip Girl or if they wish to own the products placed in the show can only be obtained by questioning or asking the viewers. The answers provided by the participants are crucial for answering the research questions.

However, these answers might be biased by social desirability. An example for that is that the participants were reluctant to admit that they wish to have a luxurious lifestyle like the one portrayed in Gossip Girl or that they were unsatisfied with their lives. The interpretation of the answers has nevertheless shown that the wish for such a life is present for most of the participants. Moreover, the answers of the participants are always subjective which makes it difficult to measure their accuracy. As a lot of the effects of product placement are unconscious, the results of this study might not entirely reflect all the effects product placement in Gossip Girl has on the participants. Therefore, the results have to be handled carefully.

Furthermore, the results of these studies cannot be generalized as they are not representative. The results merely show exemplary cases. In the future, a quantitative study with questionnaires should be carried out to complete the results of this thesis and to provide more representativity. In addition, this study only answers the question of how product placement in Gossip Girl affects the viewers. It does not explain why it affects them. In order to find out why it affects the viewers, a content analysis of the show Gossip Girl should be done. This is important as the way products are placed in the show affects the viewers in different ways. There is no scientific research on product placement in Gossip Girl so far, therefore in this study the information has been taken from own observations of the authors. This information was nevertheless not used to analyze the interviews, therefore only assumptions could be made to explain why product placement in Gossip Girl affects the viewers in the way it does. A content analysis of Gossip Girl would help to explain why product placement in the show affects the viewer in a certain way.

This study has nevertheless brought important results which can be valuable to researchers and marketers. It has shown that the placement of luxury products in the television series Gossip Girl does indeed affect the viewers as they gain more consciousness about luxury brands and wish to own them. However, it did not trigger any purchase intentions in the participants. This is mainly due to the fact that they feel excluded from the luxury world and cannot afford such products. Luxury companies should therefore, reconsider whether to use product placement as an advertising technique depending on their objective. If their wish is to spread brand awareness and

popularity, then product placement in television series might be effective. However, if they wish to increase the viewers' purchase intentions, product placement of luxury products will not be effective, at least not for people who are not extremely wealthy. Product placement of luxury products might be more effective in shows with another target group which is older and might be able to afford such products. In such a case, purchase intentions might arise as a result of product placement. It has also shown that product placement of luxury products triggers substitution behaviors in the viewers as they try to find a similar but cheaper product after having seen the luxury product in the television series. Therefore, this study might also deliver an important finding for non-luxury fashion brands as the viewers can afford them. In this case product placement might trigger purchase intentions. Further research is however needed to confirm these results.

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Appendix 1: Interview guide

Beginning:

- How often do you watch Gossip Girl?
- Why do you watch Gossip Girl and what do you like the most about the show?

Main part:

- Can you name some of the brands appearing in Gossip Girl?
- How do you feel about the brands portrayed in Gossip Girl?
- Did you know these brands before? How did you view these brands before the show? How has your opinion on these brands changed through watching Gossip Girl? If the opinion changed why?
- How does the portrayal of those brands influence you? Why?
- What effects does the portrayal of brands in Gossip Girl have on your life if there are any? What feeling does the show in general and the lifestyle of the characters convey you on your own life and why?
- Did you learn things about fashion and luxury products by watching Gossip Girl? If yes what?
- What do you think in general about luxury products? Why?
- Would you want to own the products shown in Gossip Girl? Are you willing to spend money on them? Why? Which products in particular and why?
- Can you explain how brands appear in the show Gossip Girl? How did you perceive this portrayal? (Subtle, obvious, annoying...)
- Are you aware of what product placement is? Can you explain what it is?
- Were you aware that product placement was present in Gossip Girl before this interview? Did you think about it before?
- What is your opinion on products placement in Gossip Girl?
- Do you think product placement in Gossip Girl is an effective advertising strategy? How do you think you and other people are affected by this?

End:

- Do you have any further comments? Do you want to add something to the topic?
- Demographic information: age, studies (programme and level), nationality

Appendix 2: Transcription rules

Transcription	Meaning
<u>Underlining</u>	Representation of an emphasized word or sound
(laugh)	Representation of paralinguistic information
(.)	Very short speaking break
(-) (--) (---)	Longer speaking breaks between 1 and 3 seconds
: :: :::	Word expansion, depending on length 1, 2 or 3 colons
<p> <p>	Marker of a quiet expression
<f> <f>	Marker of a loud expression
.h .hh .hhh	audible breathing, depending on volume of the noise
?	Strongly increasing intonation
,	Weakly increasing intonation
;	Weakly decreasing intonation
.	Strongly decreasing intonation

Appendix 3: Interview 1

1. Transcript

Name:

Master Thesis – Interview 1

Day of recording, time, place:

Wednesday April 17th, 10:30 a.m., in a café in Gothenburg, minor background noises

Duration of the interview: 12:38 Minutes

Name of the person interviewing and transcribing: Carolin Moll

Name of the interviewee: Person 1

The participant is a female student in the Master of Communication at the University of Gothenburg. She is 23 years old and from France. The interview is a semi-structured, qualitative interview. This interview took place in a face-to-face situation and was audio recorded. The atmosphere was friendly and the interviewed person was able to talk freely. Nevertheless she seemed to have some trouble expressing herself in English at some points.

Summary of the interview:

At the beginning the interviewee was asked to describe her Gossip Girl viewing patterns and her motives. She claimed to be well aware of product placement in Gossip Girl and in general but she was not bothered by it. She viewed product placement in Gossip Girl as subtle and as a good advertising technique. She remembered a lot of brands present in Gossip Girl but she did not feel influenced by their placement.

The interview was transcribed on April 18th and April 19th.

1 **Interviewer:** So can you tell me (.) how often do you watch Gossip Girl and (.) if you have seen
2 every episode and every season, #00:00:08-1#

3

4 **Person 1:** ehmm (-) I think I started the series at the very beginning because I was in ehmm (.)
5 communication school with a lot of girls and (-) they were always talking about that (.) so I
6 started at the very first episode a::nd (--) yeah (-) I missed the last season I think, but (.) eh I
7 think I watched (.) all the other episodes #00:00:34-4#

8

9 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) can you tell me why you watched it and what you enjoyed the most about
10 the show, #00:00:40-1#

11

12 **Person 1:** ehmm I must confess that sometimes it is (.) a bit boring because it's a lot of stories and
13 so on a:nd (--) but (.) I like this (.) stuff around all those clothes and ehmm (---) it it may be a life (.)
14 that we can <p> dream about something like this <p> but yes, I mean it's kind of catchy, (.) in a
15 way, yeah I think this is why I watched the show #00:01:15-7#

16

17 **Interviewer:** okay (.) so:: (.) do you personally relate to these stories (.) to their life (.) would you
18 like to have a life like that? #00:01:22-5#

19

20 **Person 1:** it's a bit too complicated (-) they're always arguing sometimes it's really eh (.) not
21 boring but annoying and (---) eh (.) I don't think that I can (-- there is no link between my life
22 and this I mean it's not this thing at all (-- #00:01:42-0#

23
24 **Interviewer:** Earlier you mentioned that you like (.) the clothes (.) can you maybe name some
25 brands that appear in the show, #00:01:51-0#

26 **Person 1:** well (.) I would say hmmm Valentino, Chanel (.) Louboutin (-) ehm their names ehh (-
27 -) but we can see ehh Miuccia Prada in one of the episodes (.) they talk about Karl Lagerfeld
28 #00:02:19-7#

29
30 **Interviewer:** Okay (-) ehm so did you know all these brands before watching Gossip Girl?
31 #00:02:26-6#

32
33 **Person 1:** Yes #00:02:27-1#

34
35 **Interviewer:** Okay .h did your view of the brands change through Gossip Girl did you have a
36 different view of the brands after watching Gossip Girl, #00:02:36-3#

37
38 **Person 1:** ehm I I don't think so, (-) ehm (-- it just make us realize that (.) it's not something
39 really accessible for us (-- and otherwise no not really #00:02:54-1#

40
41 **Interviewer:** And (.) how do you feel about that if you feel it's not accessible for you #00:02:59-
42 5#

43
44 **Person 1:** Not really (.) I mean (---) it's (.) from my point of view not at all; I we I mean we see
45 sometimes that they have (.) their world wardrobes it's made of Chanel and really really
46 expensive brands (.) maybe one piece or two but otherwise no I don't think that it's really::
47 #00:03:25-7#

48
49 **Interviewer:** yeah: but how do you feel about that (.) does it frustrate you, or do you think it's
50 alri::ght, what is you general opinion about the fact that it's inaccessible #00:03:33-6#

51
52 **Person 1:** eh the fact that it's (.) not really accessible for us (.) common people (.) ehh I'm not
53 frustrated about that, (.) it's (-- maybe I would dream more about that than I used to do (--
54 because it's kind of attractive but no I'm not #00:04:00-3#

55
56 **Interviewer:** Okay (-- Okay #00:04:04-1#

57
58 **Person 1:** Maybe (.) maybe for some (-) special clothes that would (.) be like (.) okay I'm a bit
59 jealous (.) about that #00:04:14-8#

60
61 **Interviewer:** okay (.) ehm how does the portrayal of those brands you mentioned earlier and
62 those clothes they wear (.) in the show actually (.) affects you does it influence you in some way,
63 #00:04:26-7#

64
65 **Person 1:** No (.) not at all (.) no #00:04:29-1#

66

67 **Interviewer:** Okay (--) so did you learn (.) things about fashion and luxury in the show,
68 #00:04:36-6#
69
70 **Person 1:** hmmm (.) no #00:04:41-4#
71
72 **Interviewer:** no, okay #00:04:42-4#
73
74 **Person 1:** I mean (-) it depends ehm (--) but not really #00:04:48-6#
75
76 **Interviewer:** okay #00:04:49-8#
77
78 **Person 1:** I mean maybe (.) now I know a bit more about all the collections (.) but #00:04:55-5#
79
80 **Interviewer:** <p> Yeah ok not so more <p> .hh ehm what is your general feeling about luxury
81 products and the luxury (.) world what is your opinion on that in general #00:05:04-7#
82
83 **Person 1:** .h ehh:: I think that some (.) things (--) can be like (.) luxury products but sometimes
84 it's just too much #00:05:19-5#
85
86 **Interviewer:** What do you mean by too much? #00:05:23-0#
87
88 **Person 1:** some stuff (.) doesn't need to be that expensive #00:05:28-4#
89
90 **Interviewer:** Okay #00:05:28-8#
91
92 **Person 1:** It's just the brand (-) because of the brand it's expensive #00:05:34-3#
93
94 **Interviewer:** Yeah #00:05:34-8#
95
96 **Person 1:** It's just a way to show that you (-) have (.) it means that you can afford the (.) stuff but
97 otherwise #00:05:44-1#
98
99 **Interviewer:** So eh (.) would you want to own such products, (.) like those products presented in
100 Gossip Girl #00:05:51-1#
101
102 **Person 1:** Sometimes yes (-) shoes and bags #00:05:54-3#
103
104 **Interviewer:** yes (-) and why, #00:05:57-2#
105
106 **Person 1:** It's just beautiful (laughs) #00:06:00-4#
107
108 **Interviewer:** okay (laughs) and would you be willing to spend so much money on it or not
109 #00:06:05-7#
110
111 **Person 1:** I would feel a bit (-) guilty to spend so much money on one thing (--) eh I eh I think
112 it's not our world so I would not feel comfortable about buying (-) so expensive #00:06:23-2#
113

114 **Interviewer:** And some of the things you would like to have (.) you would like to have them in
115 general or has Gossip Girl influenced you there, #00:06:30-3#
116
117 **Person 1:** No in general #00:06:31-4#
118
119 **Interviewer:** Okay (-) ehm (.) can you maybe explain how (.) how you perceived it, how the
120 brands are presented in Gossip Girl (.) how do you did you see them how were they presented by
121 the producers you know what I mean, #00:06:45-6#
122
123 **Person 1:** ehm you mean eh how I (--) my vision #00:06:54-4#
124
125 **Interviewer:** yeah how you saw them (.) how were they presented (.) was it through the
126 characters, or #00:07:00-1#
127
128 **Person 1:** (---) ehm I would say that in a way (.) some brands fit more to some kind of (.)
129 personalities than others (--) #00:07:16-0#
130
131 **Interviewer:** Have you an example, #00:07:20-8#
132
133 **Person 1:** Ehm (---) Blair (.) she's really girly in a way (-) and she's always really (--) ehm well
134 dressed and (-) she's really attracted by ehm (-) old brands (.) I would say Chanel and (.) ehm (--)
135 somehow the the archetype of (.) what should be a really classy girl I think #00:08:01-3#
136
137 **Interviewer:** And (.) are you in general (.) aware of what product placement is, (.) have you ever
138 heard of it, #00:08:07-9#
139
140 **Person 1:** Yes (.) and I like to (.) ehm (.) pay attention to this in movies in general #00:08:16-7#
141
142 **Interviewer:** Oh okay, (.) so: were you aware that there is product placement in Gossip Girl then
143 #00:08:21-6#
144
145 **Person 1:** Oh yes, (laughs) I can see (.) I mean (---) eh it's obvious because in (.) they ehm they
146 change their clothes (.) I would say (.) four or five times (.) per episode #00:08:42-8#
147
148 **Interviewer:** And eh what do you (.) think about this (.) about this product placement in Gossip
149 Girl like your opinion in general about this is it positive or negative, do you think it's effective,
150 #00:08:50-7#
151
152 **Person 1:** Ehm (.) it's (.) <p> it can be positive <p> (.) I mean (.) I don't like people who (.) deny
153 (.) the fact that (.) brands are (.) all around us (--) I mean: it's real world and when it's (.) when
154 you watch this kind of show they just (.) closer to the reality I think more than (.) ah I mean (--)
155 #00:09:21-9#
156
157 **Interviewer:** So you think that in Gossip Girl it's a good advertising technique, #00:09:28-4#
158
159 **Person 1:** Yes (.) because they are not showing something like eh (--) it's not really obvious (.)
160 for everybody (-) and it's (.) placed in (.) well it's not (3 seconds not understandable) but it's

161 really quick (-) ehm (-- I mean you see something a couple of seconds (.) and hear name but
162 that's it (.) it's not really:: (.) how can I say (---) it's not showing for showing (-) it's not really
163 disturbing at all #00:10:19-6#

164
165 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) and so (.) how do you think that people might be affected by eh (.) by this
166 product placement #00:10:28-0#

167
168 **Person 1:** (---) ehm (.) I could understand that people (.) would be (-) not jealous but would like
169 to (.) get the same thing (.) as the character #00:10:51-3#

170
171 **Interviewer:** For what reason, #00:10:52-9#
172 **Person 1:** In a way you:: (.) embody your favorite character (.) like having the same way of life
173 or something like this (-- and we can't deny that this way of life is pretty (.) comfortable
174 #00:11:12-2#

175
176 **Interviewer:** Have you known people (.) who: actually told you that they were affected or
177 influenced by it, #00:11:18-6#

178
179 **Person 1:** No #00:11:19-0#

180
181 **Interviewer:** No (.) not at all, #00:11:20-2#

182
183 **Person 1:** Yesterday I told my: roommates that I was about to do this interview and they told me
184 (-- eh we started to talk about movies (.) and they were not like I'm affected by this but just I saw
185 this I saw that and: that's it #00:11:39-3#

186
187 **Interviewer:** Yeah ok (-) But do you have any more remarks you would make about this topic (.)
188 anything you would want to add, #00:11:47-0#

189
190 **Person 1:** Just that it's not disturbing at all (-) for me it's very not I mean (-) as long as it's not
191 really (-- provoking, you know or shocking (.) it's okay #00:12:02-2#

192
193 **Interviewer:** Okay (-) now I would like to have some demographic information (.) like your age
194 what you study .h on which level and your nationality #00:12:11-7#

195
196 **Person 1:** I'm 23, French ehm I am doing communication (.) I got a communication bachelor and
197 I'm doing communication Master (.) but in France it's a bit different communication means
198 advertising and so on (laughs) .hh so::: yeah and::: what do you want to know, #00:12:35-8#

199
200 **Interviewer:** No that's it, (.) that's it thank yo

201
202 After the interview, Person 1 mentioned that in the show they do not always mention the brands,
203 they are sometimes only shown and the viewer recognizes them.

2. Summarizing content analysis

Interview number	Page number	Line number	Paraphrase	Generalisation	Reduction
1	57	4	I think I started the series at the very beginning	Watched Gossip Girl since the beginning	C1 Viewing patterns - Has started to watch Gossip Girl at the beginning - Has seen the whole series except the last season C2 Reasons for watching Gossip Girl - Other girls were talking about the show and influenced her C3 Likes about the show - The story focuses around clothes - The lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl makes the viewer dream C4 Dislikes about the show - Sometimes boring - Too much drama - The stories and problems of the characters are complicated and annoying C5 Awareness of the brands in Gossip Girl - Remembers a lot of brands - Examples are Valentino,
1	57	4-5	I was in communication school with a lot of girls and they were always talking about that	Started to watch because the girls she studied with influenced her	
1	57	6-7	I missed the last season but I think I watched all the other episodes	Apart from the last season she has seen all episodes	
1	57	12	Sometimes a bit boring	The show is sometimes a bit boring	
1	57	12-13	It's a lot of stories and so on	A bit too much drama	
1	57	13	I like this stuff around all the clothes	Likes that the story focuses around clothes	
1	57	13-14	A life that we can dream about	The lifestyle of Gossip Girl makes the viewers dream	
1	58	20-21	It's a bit complicated they are always arguing about something it's annoying	Annoying that the stories of the characters in the series are so complicated	
1	58	21-22	I don't think I can relate there is no link between my life and this	No relation between the life of the Gossip Girl characters and the interviewee	
1	58	26-27	Valentino, Chanel, Louboutin, we see Miuccia Prada in one episode and they talk about Karl Lagerfeld	Remembers a lot of brands and designers mentioned and shown in the show	
1	58	33	Yes I knew all these brands before	Knew the brands before the show did not learn about brands	

				through Gossip Girl	Louboutin, Prada
1	58	38	I don't think my opinion of the brands changed	Gossip Girl did not influence her opinion on the brands	C6 Learning effects of product placement in Gossip Girl - She knew the brands portrayed in Gossip Girl before the show - Did not learn anything about brands by watching Gossip Girl - Learned about the particular collections of the brands in Gossip Girl C7 Distance of the products in Gossip Girl - The characters live in a world of luxury - The characters only use very expensive products - Only a few products are accessible to the viewer - Does not feel part of the luxury world C8 Feelings about the lifestyle displayed in Gossip Girl - It is not frustrating for her that she cannot have it - No relation between her life and the life of the Gossip Girl characters - Makes her dream about a luxurious lifestyle - Attractive lifestyle
1	58	38-39	It makes us realize that it's something not really accessible for us	The luxury brands in Gossip Girl are not accessible to the viewers	
1	58	45-46	Their world and wardrobes are made of Chanel and really expensive brands	The characters only own very expensive products and live in a world of luxury	
1	58	46	Maybe one piece or two	Only a few products as used by the characters are accessible to the viewer	
1	58	52-53	The fact that it's not really accessible for common people I am not frustrated by that	The fact that the products shown in Gossip Girl are not accessible to her is not frustrating	
1	58	53	I would dream more of that than I used to	Gossip Girl makes her dream about a luxurious lifestyle	
1	58	54	Because it's kind of attractive	The lifestyle presented in Gossip Girl is attractive	
1	58	58-59	For some special clothes I am a bit jealous	Sometimes jealous because she would like to own some of the products presented in Gossip Girl	
1	58	65	No I am not at all influenced	Product placement in Gossip Girl does not affect her in any way	
1	59	74	It depends but I didn't really learn anything about luxury and fashion	Did not learn much about brands through watching Gossip Girl	
1	59	78	Maybe now I know a bit more about all the collections	Did not learn anything about the brands but learned about particular collections of those	

				brands	- Sometimes jealous when the characters have a product she would like to have
1	59	83-84	Luxury products are sometimes too much	Luxury products are too expensive	C9 Effects of product placement on the viewer - Product placement in Gossip Girl did not affect her - It did not influence her opinion on the brands - She wishes to own products placed in Gossip Girl such as bags or shoes - But this wish has always been there and not been influenced by Gossip Girl - Wishes these products because of their aesthetical aspect C10 Opinion on luxury brands - They are too expensive - Price is not justified - They are prestige products and so expensive because of the brand - People buy luxury products to show their wealth - Would feel guilty if she spent a lot of money just on one product C11 She knows the definition of product placement
1	59	88	Some stuff doesn't need to be that expensive	It is not justified that luxury products are so expensive	
1	59	92	Because of the brand it's expensive	Luxury products are so expensive because of the brand, you pay for a prestige	
1	59	96	It's just a way to show that you can afford it	People consume luxury products to show their wealth	
1	59	102	Sometimes I would like to own products like those in Gossip Girl such as shoes and bags	Wish to own certain products placed in Gossip Girl such as shoes and bags	
1	59	106	It's just beautiful	Wish to own those products because of their aesthetic aspect	
1	59	111	I would feel a bit guilty to spend so much money on one thing	Guilt if buying such expensive products	
1	59	112	It's not our world so I would not feel comfortable about buying such expensive things	Does not feel part of the luxury world	
1	60	117	I would like to have those things in general	The wish to own luxurious products has not been influenced by Gossip Girl	
1	60	128-129	Some brands fit more to some kind of personalities than others	The brands are embodied by different characters depending on what they represent	
1	60	133-135	Blair is really girly well dressed and attracted to old brands like Chanel	The character Blair is classy and embodies old brands	
1	60	135	She is the archetype of a really classy girl	The character Girl is classy	
1	60	140	Yes I like to pay attention to	Is aware of product placement	

			product placement in movies in general	and pays attention to it	<p>C12 Presentation of the brands in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brands are embodied by different characters depending on what they represent - The character Blair is classy and embodies old brands <p>C13 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Product placement in Gossip Girl is clearly present - Very frequent change of clothes shows how strong product placement is - Product placement in Gossip Girl is rather subtle - It is not disturbing while watching <p>C14 Opinion on product placement in general</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive - Brands are everywhere in our society - Brand placement makes a show closer to reality - She pays attention to product placement in general - It's not disturbing only when it is provoking or shocking
1	60	145	Yes it's obvious	Product placement in Gossip Girl is clearly present	
1	60	146	They change their clothes I would say four or five times per episode	Very frequent change of clothes in Gossip Girl	
1	60	152	Product placement can be positive	Product placement in positive	
1	60	152-153	I don't like people who deny that brands are all around us	Brands are everywhere	
1	60	153-154	It's the real world and when you watch this kind of show it is closer the reality	Brand placement makes a show closer to reality	
1	60	159-160	Product placement is a good technique because it's not really obvious for everybody	Product placement in Gossip Girl rather subtle and might work unconsciously	
1	61	161-162	It's really quick you hear something a couple of seconds and hear the name but that's it	Product placement in Gossip Girl is rather subtle	
1	61	162	It's not showing for showing	Product placement in Gossip Girl is rather subtle	
1	61	162-163	It's not really disturbing at all	Product placement in Gossip Girl is not disturbing	
1	61	168-169	I would understand that people would like to get the same thing as the character	People are influenced by product placement as they wish to have the products the characters use	
1	61	172	You embody your favorite character	By buying what the character owns people embody the character's life	
1	61	172	Like having the same way of life	By buying what the character owns people embody the	

				character's way of life	C14 Opinion on the effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl as an advertising technique - As it is subtle it might work unconsciously - People are influenced by product placement as they wish to have the products the characters use - By buying what the characters own the viewers embody their life - It works because the way of life shown in Gossip Girl is desirable C15 Effects of product placement in Gossip Girl on others - Does not know anyone influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl - People notice it but don't feel affected by it
1	61	173	We can't deny that this way of life is pretty comfortable	The way of life presented in Gossip Girl is desirable	
1	61	179	No I don't know anyone who has told me that they are affected by it	Doesn't know anyone who has been influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl	
1	61	184-185	I talked with my roommates about movies they didn't say they were affected but they said I saw this I saw that	People are noticing product placement but don't feel affected by it	
1	61	190	It's not disturbing at all	Product placement is not disturbing	
1	61	190-191	As long as it's not really provoking or shocking	Product placement is only disturbing when it's provoking or shocking	
1	61	202-203	The brands are not always mentioned in the show, they are only shown and recognized	Brands are subtly placed as they are seen by the viewer but not mentioned	

3. Structuring content analysis

General information

C1 Viewing patterns

- Has started to watch Gossip Girl at the beginning
- Has seen the whole series except the last season

C2 Reasons for watching Gossip Girl

- Other girls were talking about the show and influenced her

C3 Likes about the show

- The story focuses around clothes
- The lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl makes the viewer dream

C4 Dislikes about the show

- Sometimes boring
- Too much drama
- The stories and problems of the characters are complicated and annoying

View of the luxury industry

C10 Opinion on luxury brands

- They are too expensive
- Price is not justified
- They are prestige products and so expensive because of the brand
- People buy luxury products to show their wealth
- Would feel guilty if she spent a lot of money just on one product

C7 Distance of the products in Gossip Girl

- The characters live in a world of luxury
- The characters only use very expensive products
- Only a few products are accessible to the viewer
- Does not feel part of the luxury world

C8 Feelings about the lifestyle displayed in Gossip Girl

- It is not frustrating for her that she cannot have it
- No relation between her life and the life of the Gossip Girl characters
- Makes her dream about a luxurious lifestyle
- Attractive lifestyle
- Sometimes jealous when the characters have a product she would like to have

Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

C11 She knows the definition of product placement

C12 Presentation of the brands in Gossip Girl

- Brands are embodied by different characters depending on what they represent
- The character Blair is classy and embodies old brands

C13 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

- Product placement in Gossip Girl is clearly present
- Very frequent change of clothes shows how strong product placement is
- Product placement in Gossip Girl is rather subtle
- It is not disturbing while watching

C14 Opinion on product placement in general

- Positive
- Brands are everywhere in our society
- Brand placement makes a show closer to reality
- She pays attention to product placement in general
- It's not disturbing only when it is provoking or shocking

Effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl

C5 Awareness of the brands in Gossip Girl

- Remembers a lot of brands
- Examples are Valentino, Louboutin, Prada

C6 Learning effects of product placement in Gossip Girl

- She knew the brands portrayed in Gossip Girl before the show
- Did not learn anything about brands by watching Gossip Girl
- Learned about the particular collections of the brands in Gossip Girl

C9 Effects of product placement on the viewer

- Product placement in Gossip Girl did not affect her
- It did not influence her opinion on the brands
- She wishes to own products placed in Gossip Girl such as bags or shoes
- But this wish has always been there and not been influenced by Gossip Girl
- Wishes these products because of their aesthetical aspect

C15 Effects of product placement in Gossip Girl on others

- Does not know anyone influenced by product placement in Gossip Girl
- People notice it but don't feel affected by it

C14 Opinion on the effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl as an advertising technique

- As it is subtle it might work unconsciously
- People are influenced by product placement as they wish to have the products the characters use
- By buying what the characters own the viewers embody their life
- It works because the way of life shown in Gossip Girl is desirable

Appendix 4: Interview 2

1. Transcript

Name:

Master Thesis – Interview 2

Day of recording, time, place:

Wednesday April 17th, 1:15 p.m., Handelshögskolan, Gothenburg, rather loud background noises

Duration of the interview: 12:07 Minutes

Name of the person interviewing and transcribing: Carolin Moll

Name of the interviewee: Person 2

The participant is a female student in the Master of Industrial and Innovation Management at the University of Gothenburg. She is 23 years old and from Germany. The interview is a semi-structured, qualitative interview. This interview took place in a face-to-face situation and was audio recorded. The atmosphere was friendly and the interviewed person was able to talk freely.

Summary of the interview:

At the beginning the interviewee was asked to describe her Gossip Girl viewing patterns and her motives. She claimed to be aware of product placement in Gossip Girl and in general. She says that to her product placement in Gossip Girl is obvious and she does not like it so much. She was not able to tell name any brand that appeared in Gossip Girl and says not to be influenced by product placement as she does not wish to have such a lifestyle.

The interview was transcribed on April 19th.

1 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) so can you tell me how often you watch Gossip Girl in general and (.)
2 which seasons and episodes do you have seen #00:00:09-0#

3
4 **Person 2:** I have seen: (.) every single episode and I watched it on a weekly base (.) so whenever
5 a new episode came up I watched it #00:00:17-9#

6
7 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) so can you tell me why you watched it, and what did you like the most
8 about it, #00:00:22-9#

9
10 **Person 2:** Well: I would say that (.) ehm (.) I mostly watched it because of its pure (.)
11 entertainment factor (laughs) ehm what I liked most (-) I liked probably most that it was quite (-)
12 surreal and very dramatic (--) <p> I think <p> (---) and the pretty people (-) yeah (.) that's it
13 (laughs) #00:00:52-7#

14
15 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) can you name some brands that appeared in the show #00:00:56-5#

16
17 **Person 2:** (--) ahh ehm let me think about that (---) ah (-) probably a lot (.) but I can't really recall
18 any right now #00:01:10-7#

19
20 **Interviewer:** Okay #00:01:11-6#

21
22 **Person 2:** My memory is quite (.) bad in that sense (-) so:: (--) not really #00:01:20-1#

23
24 **Interviewer:** Okay (-) Maybe you could tell me even though you don't remember exact names

25 you probably remember (.) .h some things maybe can you tell me how you feel about the brands
26 that were in Gossip Girl, #00:01:29-5#

27
28 **Person 2:** Well (.) I feel that they're not really (-) addressing me (.) so:: those are definitely
29 brands for (-) upper class (.) typically upstate Manhattan I would guess #00:01:44-4#

30
31 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) and did you know that brands that were portrayed in Gossip Girl before
32 you watched it, #00:01:50-1#

33
34 **Person 2:** Ahh: (.) yes I think most of them yes #00:01:54-5#

35
36 **Interviewer:** Has your opinion changed by watching Gossip Girl #00:01:58-4#

37
38 **Person 2:** (--) I would say:: (--) to some extent yes (.) but not so much #00:02:06-9#

39
40 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) can you maybe explain how, it is your opinion has changed (.) how it was
41 before and how it is now #00:02:12-4#

42
43 **Person 2:** Okay (.) so when it comes to say designer brands for (-) bags (.) it didn't really change
44 much .h but ehm (-) for example they were quite promoting these (.) you know phones you know
45 slide phones with the (.) eh (.) keyboard (.) so I was actually considering whether I would
46 wanna have one of those or (.) a classical smartphone before I bought a new smartphone
47 #00:02:38-0#

48
49 **Interviewer:** Okay #00:02:38-3#

50
51 **Person 2:** So that's (.) I think (.) that was (.) maybe a lot of Gossip Girl changing my opinion or
52 (.) influencing me #00:02:45-7#

53
54 **Interviewer:** And why; #00:02:46-7#

55
56 **Person 2:** (-) Maybe just because I saw it a lot (.) so exposure #00:02:52-5#

57
58 **Interviewer:** So did your attitude as well change (.) on these phones or (.) just because you saw it
59 #00:02:59-0#

60
61 **Person 2:** No just because I saw it #00:03:02-1#

62
63 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) eh can you maybe say how the particular portrayal of those brands in
64 Gossip Girl as used and mentioned by: by the characters influenced you (.) like in general
65 #00:03:13-7#

66
67 **Person 2:** Sorry (.) could you (.) say that again #00:03:16-6#

68
69 **Interviewer:** Yeah sure, .hh eh the way the the brands are presented in Gossip Girl for example
70 that they are mentioned or used by the characters .h how (.) does this portrayal influence you in
71 general #00:03:27-3#

72
73 **Person 2:** I'm not really sure what you mean (.) I'm sorry like how: (.) how how it influences in
74 what way, #00:03:34-9#
75
76 **Interviewer:** Just in any way how it could influence you maybe your buying behaviour or in
77 your wishes or in your feelings about their this lifestyle, #00:03:43-0#
78
79 **Person 2:** Well ehmm (.) I guess it would influence me in a way that I would associate the brand
80 with different things now (.) or that I probably would have a clearer picture of (.) what they are (.)
81 what they represent .h (.) ehmm (.) but I guess especially for: younger people (.) it would change (-)
82 a lot (-) it would influence .h their buying behaviour strongly (.) it didn't really affect mine but (--
83) I'm not (.) I'm not sure whether this answers the question really but (laughs) #00:04:17-4#
84
85 **Interviewer:** Yes it does (.) it does (.) and: (.) do you have (.) any any feeling about your own
86 life that has changed through seeing this lifestyle and the brands that are used in Gossip Girl
87 #00:04:30-5#
88
89 **Person 2:** (--) ehmm (--) no (.) I would say no to his as well (.) not really #00:04:40-1#
90
91 **Interviewer:** Okay .h so you mentioned earlier that you are more aware of some brands (.) do
92 you think that you learned some things, about those (.) products that are presented in Gossip Girl
93 or (-) not #00:04:52-7#
94
95 **Person 2:** Probably sub (.) consciously I did ehmm like I said (.) in what they represent or what
96 kind of bags they have or how they look like #00:05:03-4#
97
98 **Interviewer:** Do you have an example maybe, #00:05:06-5#
99
100 **Person 2:** (--) na:: let's say (.) let's say for example a Chanel bag and I wouldn't know before .h
101 what they really look like or what they represent then (.) this would have changed #00:05:21-8#
102
103 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) what is your general feeling about luxury products (.) like unrelated to
104 Gossip Girl now just in general #00:05:28-9#
105
106 **Person 2:** My opinion about luxury products is:: (---) well something (--) in general I would say
107 something nice to have to reward yourself but it's not really (--) necessary in life and it's (--) way:
108 overvalued (.) so that (-) I don't really see why it's so: (.) aspired by everyone because it's very
109 much (.) hyped so (.) a lot of people want to have these and these different things (.) so (-) my
110 opinion about that is that it's not really (.) necessary but (--) somehow everybody gets influenced
111 (.) by it #00:06:15-2#
112
113 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) and so what about you (.) do you want to own such products, #00:06:20-6#
114
115 **Person 2:** Well I guess if I could afford them (.) I would probably buy them (-) ehmm but they're
116 somehow more out of reach most of the time so then I don't really (.) care #00:06:36-6#
117
118 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) but you just said that if you could afford it you would (.) buy them ehmm

119 why, exactly #00:06:43-0#

120

121 **Person 2:** Simply because I could afford it (laughs) #00:06:46-6#

122

123 **Interviewer:** Okay (-) so as a way to show that you can afford it, #00:06:50-4#

124

125 **Person 2:** Ehhm yeah I'm not (.) I'm not sure but (.) a lot of the time (-) let's say eh (.) a nice
126 designer bag or (.) sunglasses might be of higher quality sometimes than (.) for example my
127 H&M bag or sunglasses so (-) I would buy more expensive stuff (.) eh to have more quality as
128 well (.) when it comes to really really expensive stuff (.) eh I'm not not sure (--) whether I
129 would buy it #00:07:20-6#

130

131 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) and can you maybe explain how you perceive the portrayal of brands in
132 Gossip Girl (.) like in example how they are presented in Gossip Girl #00:07:31-0#

133

134 **Person 2:** Okay well I think they're very strongly presented so they put a lot of emphasis on the
135 brands and .hh eh you can very much feel that eh (.) they do want (.) to place these products in
136 the show (.) they do want to (-) promote them so (.) I think it's very (-) obvious #00:07:50-1#

137

138 **Interviewer:** Okay and how did it feel to you that it's obvious were you annoyed by it or how in
139 general (.) do you feel about it #00:07:57-8#

140

141 **Person 2:** Well sometimes it feels like eh you are (--) trying to be manipulated (.) so I would
142 prefer it to be less strongly so I would like this sho: show more if there was less (.) products
143 placed I guess (--) eh but it didn't directly (-) annoy me (--) as in I would stop watching the
144 show #00:08:23-4#

145

146 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) eh (.) how would you suggest that they could make it less obvious
147 #00:08:29-7#

148

149 **Person 2:** I guess that's hard because Gossip Girl is a lot about the: (-) shopping and representing
150 yourself and (-) so: (-) well (-) if it would simply appear but not be as strongly focused on or less
151 talk about it it would feel more (.) subtle #00:08:51-7#

152

153 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) so eh so you were aware that there (.) is some product placement in
154 Gossip Girl while you were watching it #00:08:58-9#

155

156 **Person 2:** Yeah #00:08:59-4#

157

158 **Interviewer:** Okay (---) Okay so eh so you talked about the product placement in in Gossip Girl
159 (.) did you think about it before like before watching Gossip Girl something like that #00:09:14-
160 0#

161

162 **Person 2:** No not really it only (-) came up while I was watching the show #00:09:19-9#

163

164 **Interviewer:** But you (.) you thought about it while watching the show as well or not #00:09:23-
165 8#

166
167 **Person 2:** You mean like in the beginning or: #00:09:26-3#
168
169 **Interviewer:** Whenever #00:09:27-8#
170
171 **Person 2:** Whenever (.) eh hh yeah sometimes (.) I did #00:09:31-8#
172
173 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) eh hm but do you think that eh h (.) product placement as an advertising
174 strategy is a good and effective strategy (.) on the example of Gossip Girl, #00:09:43-5#
175
176 **Person 2:** Eh hm (.) considering their:: (--) eh h target audience (.) I would say:: (.) yes (.) for me
177 personally (.) not (.) but in general I could see that (.) it would actually work effectively (--) yes
178 #00:10:02-8#
179
180 **Interviewer:** And why do you think that, #00:10:04-6#
181
182 **Person 2:** Well I think especially once again when it comes to (.) maybe younger girls they
183 always like to (.) see themselves in the characters want to be them want to have that kind of life
184 so (.) eh hm (--) maybe they will be more aware of the brands and will eh h want to have more
185 than they would without the show #00:10:30-1#
186
187 **Interviewer:** Okay and eh what about you you talked about the younger girls but (.) do you
188 aspire to have such a lifestyle, #00:10:36-1#
189
190 **Person 2:** No not really #00:10:38-8#
191
192 **Interviewer:** And why not, #00:10:40-2#
193
194 **Person 2:** Well that's because when I lived in Switzerland I spent a lot of time with very very
195 rich people, and for about a year I wanted to have that lifestyle too, and thought it was really
196 awesome but then I realized that (-) I don't really want it (.) I can't really explain why but (-) I
197 guess it's not really the kind of life I want #00:10:59-8#
198
199 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) Eh m (.) so in general just for for us for the interview (.) you know what
200 product placement is like you know the definition of it #00:11:07-7#
201
202 **Person 2:** I don't know the like (.) textbook definition but (.) when we're talking about product
203 placement as we are in this case I know #00:11:15-5#
204
205 **Interviewer:** Okay good (.) eh hm (.) so do you have any more comments about product
206 placement in general or about Gossip Girl, anything you want to add, #00:11:24-2#
207
208 **Person 2:** To this topic (---) well (---) I strong thing I realized with product placement is I don't
209 know if you ever realized it but there is (.) a lot of Volvo cars in the American movies like pretty
210 much exclusively .h and I only realized that once and then I was like wow (.) that is (.) crazy
211 product placement (-) that's all (laughs) #00:11:47-4#
212

213 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) so now I would need some demographic information your age what you
214 study, the name of the programme the level and your nationality #00:11:56-0#

215
216 **Person 2:** Okay (.) I am 23 years old I study innovation and industrial management first year
217 Master's level and I am German #00:12:05-5#

218
219 **Interviewer:** Okay thank you,

220
221 After the interview Person 2 added that she had been influenced previously by product placement
222 in television series. She has once checked the price of a dress worn in another show.

2. Summarizing content analysis

Interview number	Page number	Line number	Paraphrase	Generalisation	Reduction
2	69	4	I have seen every episode	Has seen every episode	C1 Viewing patterns - Has seen every episode - Watched it on a weekly basis - Watched the episodes as soon as they came out
2	69	4	I watched it on a weekly basis	Watched Gossip Girl on a weekly basis	
2	69	4-5	Whenever a new episode came up I watched it	Watched new episodes as soon as they came out	
2	69	10-11	I mostly watched it because of its pure entertainment factor	Watched Gossip Girl as a means of entertainment	C2 Reasons for watching Gossip Girl - As a means of entertainment
2	69	11-12	I liked probably most that it was quite surreal and very dramatic	Likes most the surreal and dramatic aspect of the show	
2	69	12	And the pretty people	Likes the physical appearance of the characters	C3 Likes about the show - It is surreal and dramatic - The way the characters look
2	69	17	There are probably a lot of brands in the show	A lot of brands are present in the show	C4 Awareness of the brands in Gossip Girl - Remembers that there are a lot of brands featured in the show - Does not remember any specific brand names that appeared in the show - Does not pay attention to the brands
2	69	17-18	I can't really recall any right now	Doesn't remember any brand names that appeared in the show	
2	69	22	My memory is quite bad in that sense	Doesn't remember any brand names that appeared in the show	
2	70	28	I feel those brands are not really addressing me	Not part of the target group of the brands appearing in Gossip Girl	C5 Distance of the brands placed in Gossip Girl
2	70	28-29	Those are definitely brands for upper class	Those brands definitely address the upper class	
2	70	29	Typically upstate Manhattan I would guess	Those brands are consumed by people from Manhattan's upper east side	
2	70	34	Yes I think I knew most of the brands	Knew most of the brands appearing in Gossip Girl before watching the show	
2	70	38	To some extent my opinion has	Opinion on the brands has slightly	

			changed but not so much	changed by watching the show	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She does not feel part of the target group of these brands - Those brands only target the upper class - These brands are only bought by very rich people like those living in Manhattan's upper east side - The brands are out of her reach so she does not pay attention to them <p>C6 Learning effects of product placement in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knew most of the brands placed in Gossip Girl before watching the show - Product placement in Gossip Girl gives a clearer image of the brands - She associates the brands with other things than before - Learned how the products of a brand look like - This learning probably happened unconsciously <p>C7 Effects of product placement on the viewer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Her opinion on some brands has changed but not for designer brands - Because there was a lot of product placement from cell phone brands she wanted to have a slide phone such as those used in the show
2	70	43	When it comes to designer brands it didn't really change much	Opinion on designer brands did not change	
2	70	44-45	They were quite promoting these slide phones with keyboards	A lot of product placement from cell phone producers	
2	70	45-46	I was actually considering whether I would want to get one of those or a classical smartphone before I bought a new smartphone	Wanted a slide phone with keyboard such as those shown in the show	
2	70	51-52	That was a lot of Gossip Girl changing my opinion or influencing me	Influence by Gossip Girl's product placement of smartphones	
2	70	56	Because I saw it a lot because of exposure	Influenced by product placement because of the constant exposure to the product	
2	70	61	Just because I saw it	Influenced by product placement because of the constant exposure to the product	
2	71	79-80	It would influence me in a way that I would associate the brand with different things now	Through product placement in Gossip Girl the brands are associated with other things than they used to	
2	71	80-81	I have a clearer picture of what they are and what they represent	Product placement in Gossip Girl gives a clearer image of the brand	
2	71	81-82	I guess especially for younger people it would influence their buying behavior	Product placement in Gossip Girl affects younger people and their buying behavior	
2	71	82	It didn't really affect mine	Product placement in Gossip Girl does not affect her buying behavior	
2	71	89	My feelings about my own life have not changed	The lifestyle and brands presented in Gossip Girl do not influence her view of her own life	
2	71	95-96	Probably I learned about the	Learned subconsciously about the	

			brands unconsciously what they represent or what kind of bags they have and how they look like	brands their image and product	- Product placement in Gossip Girl does not affect her buying behavior in general
2	71	100-101	For example a Chanel bag and I would not know before what they really look like and what they represent	Learned what products from specific brands look like	C8 Effects of product placement on others - Younger people's buying behavior is affected by product placement in Gossip Girl
2	71	106-107	My opinion about luxury products is something nice to have to reward yourself	Luxury products are rewarding	
2	71	107	It's not really necessary in life	Luxury products are not necessary in life	C9 Feelings about the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl
2	71	107-108	It's way over evaluated	Luxury products are over evaluated	- The lifestyle and brands presented in Gossip Girl do not influence her view on her own life
2	71	108	I don't really understand why it's so aspired by everyone	Does not know why luxury products are aspired by everyone	- She does not wish to have such a lifestyle because of a personal experience with people who had such a lifestyle
2	71	108-109	It's very much hyped so a lot of people want to have these and these different things	People are hyping luxury products and wish to consume them	
2	71	110	My opinion about that is that it's not really necessary	Luxury products are not necessary in life	C10 Opinion on luxury products
2	71	110-111	But somehow everybody gets influenced by it	People are influenced by the luxury industry and wish to consume luxury products	- They are not necessary in life - They are over evaluated - She does not understand why luxury products are aspired by everyone
2	71	115	If I could afford them I would probably buy them	Would buy luxury products if she could afford them	- Everyone wishes to own luxury products and puts them on a pedestal
2	71	115-116	They are more out of reach most of the time so I don't really care	She can't afford luxury brands so she does not pay attention to them	- She would buy luxury products if she could afford them simply because she could afford them
2	72	121	Simply because I would afford it	The mere fact that she can afford luxury brands would make her buy them	
2	72	126-127	A designer bag or sunglasses might be of higher quality	Products from designer brands have a better quality than cheaper products	

			sometimes than for example my H&M bag or sunglasses		Luxury products have a better quality
2	72	127	I would buy more expensive stuff to have more quality	The better quality of luxury products is an argument for her to buy them	- She would not spend an enormous amount of money on luxury products
2	72	128-129	But when it comes to really expensive stuff I am not sure whether I would buy it	She would not spent an enormous amount of money on luxury products	
2	72	134	I think the brands are very strongly presented	Strong brand placement in Gossip Girl	C11 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl - Very strong brand placement in Gossip Girl
2	72	134-135	They put a lot of emphasis on the brands	The brands are central in the show Gossip Girl	- The brands are central in the show
2	72	135-136	You can feel that they want to place these brands in the show	Strong brand placement in Gossip Girl	- It is obvious - She feels manipulated by product placement in Gossip Girl
2	72	136	They do want to promote them	Strong brand placement in Gossip Girl	- It is integrated in the plot of Gossip Girl
2	72	136	I think it's very obvious	Obvious product placement in Gossip Girl	- She was aware of product placement being present while watching Gossip Girl
2	72	141	Sometimes it feels like you are trying to be manipulated	Feels manipulated by product placement in Gossip Girl	
2	72	141-142	I would prefer it to be less strongly	More subtle product placement would be preferred	C12 Preference for more subtle product placement - Watching the show would be a nicer experience if product placement were more subtle
2	72	142-143	I would like the show more if there were less products placed	Watching Gossip Girl would be a nicer experience without so much product placement	- But excessive product placement did not stop her from watching the show
2	72	143-144	But it did not directly annoy me as in I would stop watch the show	Excessive product placement is not keeping her from watching the show	- It would be better if brands appeared without being mentioned of focused on
2	72	149-150	It's hard to do it less obviously because the show is a lot about the shopping and representing yourself	Product placement is integrated in the plot of Gossip Girl which is why it is hard to make it more subtle	
2	72	150-151	If it would simply appear but not be as strongly focused on or less talked about it would feel more	Product placement would be more subtle if the brand would only appear without being mentioned or focused	

			subtle	on	<p>C13 Opinion on the effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl as an advertising strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective advertising technique for the target group of the show - Not a good technique for interviewee - Young girls identify themselves with the characters in Gossip Girl - Young girls' consumption wishes are influenced by the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl - Young girls will pay attention to what the characters own and therefore be more aware of the brands
2	72	156	Yes I was aware that there is product placement in Gossip Girl while watching it	Was aware of the presence of product placement while watching Gossip Girl	
2	72	162	No not really it came up while watching the show	Realization that there is product placement while watching Gossip Girl	
2	73	171	Sometimes I did think about product placement while watching the show	Sometimes thought about product placement while watching Gossip Girl	
2	73	176	Considering their target group I would say product placement is an effective strategy	Product placement in the show Gossip Girl is an effective means of advertising for the target group of the show	
2	73	176-177	For me personally not	For her product placement in Gossip Girl is not a good advertising strategy	
2	73	177	But in general I could see that it would actually work effectively	Thinks that in general product placement is effective	
2	73	182-183	When it comes to younger girls they always like to see themselves in the characters	Young girls identify themselves with the characters in Gossip Girl	
2	73	183	Want to be them want to have that kind of life	Young girls consumer wishes are influenced by the characters	
2	73	184	They will be more aware of the brands	Young girls pay attention to what the character owns and as a result are more aware of the brands placed in the show	
2	73	184-185	They will want more than they would have without the show	The show influences young girls' consumer wishes	
2	73	190	I don't really aspire to have such a lifestyle	She does not aspire to have the lifestyle the characters in Gossip Girl have	
2	73	194-195	When I lived in Switzerland I	Has a personal experience with people	

			spent a lot of time with very very rich people	such as the characters in Gossip Girl	<p>C14 She knows the definition of product placement</p> <p>C15 Effects of product placement in other shows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She has been influenced by product placement previously - Has searched information about clothes placed in a show other than Gossip Girl
2	73	195-196	For about a year I wanted to have this lifestyle too and thought it was really awesome	For some time she aspired to have such a luxurious lifestyle	
2	73	196	Then I realized I don't want it I can't explain why	Because of her personal experience with such rich people she stopped aspiring for their lifestyle	
2	73	196-197	I guess it's not really the kind of life I want	Does not wish a lifestyle like the one of the characters in Gossip Girl	
2	73	202-203	I don't know the textbook definition but when we are talking about product placement I know	She knows what product placement is	
2	74	221-222	She has been influenced previously by product placement in television series	Has been influenced by product placement in television series before	
2	74	222	She has checked the price of a dress worn in another show	Once searched for information about a dress placed in another show because she wished to own it	

3. Structuring content analysis

General information

C1 Viewing patterns

- Has seen every episode
- Watched it on a weekly basis
- Watched the episodes as soon as they came out

C2 Reasons for watching Gossip Girl

- As a means of entertainment

C3 Likes about the show

- It is surreal and dramatic
- The way the characters look

View of the luxury industry

C10 Opinion on luxury products

- They are not necessary in life
- They are over evaluated
- She does not understand why luxury products are aspired by everyone
- Everyone wishes to own luxury products and puts them on a pedestal
- She would buy luxury products if she could afford them simply because she could afford them
- Luxury products have a better quality
- She would not spend an enormous amount of money on luxury products

C5 Distance of the brands placed in Gossip Girl

- She does not feel part of the target group of these brands
- Those brands only target the upper class
- These brands are only bought by very rich people like those living in Manhattan's upper east side
- The brands are out of her reach so she does not pay attention to them

C9 Feelings about the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl

- The lifestyle and brands presented in Gossip Girl do not influence her view on her own life
- She does not wish to have such a lifestyle because of a personal experience with people who had such a lifestyle

Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

C14 She knows the definition of product placement

C11 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

- Very strong brand placement in Gossip Girl

- The brands are central in the show
- It is obvious
- She feels manipulated by product placement in Gossip Girl
- It is integrated in the plot of Gossip Girl
- She was aware of product placement being present while watching Gossip Girl

C12 Preference for more subtle product placement

- Watching the show would be a nicer experience if product placement were more subtle
- But excessive product placement did not stop her from watching the show
- It would be better if brands appeared without being mentioned or focused on

Effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl

C4 Awareness of the brands in Gossip Girl

- Remembers that there are a lot of brands featured in the show
- Does not remember any specific brand names that appeared in the show
- Does not pay attention to the brands

C6 Learning effects of product placement in Gossip Girl

- Knew most of the brands placed in Gossip Girl before watching the show
- Product placement in Gossip Girl gives a clearer image of the brands
- She associates the brands with other things than before
- Learned how the products of a brand look like
- This learning probably happened unconsciously

C7 Effects of product placement on the viewer

- Her opinion on some brands has changed but not for designer brands
- Because there was a lot of product placement from cell phone brands she wanted to have a slide phone such as those used in the show
- Product placement in Gossip Girl does not affect her buying behavior in general

C8 Effects of product placement on others

- Younger people's buying behavior is affected by product placement in Gossip Girl

C15 Effects of product placement in other shows

- She has been influenced by product placement previously
- Has searched information about clothes placed in a show other than Gossip Girl

C13 Opinion on the effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl as an advertising strategy

- Effective advertising technique for the target group of the show
- Not a good technique for interviewees
- Young girls identify themselves with the characters in Gossip Girl
- Young girls' consumption wishes are influenced by the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl
- Young girls will pay attention to what the characters own and therefore be more aware of the brands

Appendix 5: Interview 3

1. Transcript

Name:

Master Thesis – Interview 3

Day of recording, time, place:

Wednesday April 17th, 16:00 a.m., at the interviewee's home

Duration of the interview: Part 1 – 5:01 minutes, Part 2 – 10:25 minutes

Name of the person interviewing and transcribing: Monika Walicka

Name of the interviewee: Person 3

The participant is a female student in the Master of Communication at the University of Gothenburg. She is 25 years old and from Poland but she mentioned that she is half Polish half Norwegian. The interview was recorded in two parts because of problems with the recording machine. The interview is a semi-structured, qualitative interview. This interview took place in a face-to-face situation and was audio recorded. The atmosphere was friendly and the interviewed person was able to talk freely.

Summary of the interview

At the beginning the interviewee was asked to describe her Gossip Girl viewing patterns and her motives. She claimed to be well aware of product placement in Gossip Girl in general but she was not bothered by it. She viewed product placement in Gossip Girl as subtle especially when it comes to the luxury products and sometimes it was rather obvious when it comes to cheaper brands. Moreover, she claimed that product placement is good advertising.

The interview was transcribed on April 17th.

1 **Interviewer:** m:: can you tell me how often do you watch gossip girl, (-) have you seen like
2 whole series or just few episodes,
3

4 **Person 3:** O::: ok (-) so I think (.)I started watching it like 3 years ago so (-) m:: and I am pretty
5 sure I watched (.) almost all of the series (.) but not in the order (.) and I haven't gone back to it
6 this (.) year I think (-) or last year (-) yeah (-) I didn't watch it like every week or anything but I
7 watched all of them #00:00:37-4#
8

9 **Interviewer:** ok so why did you watch it (-) and what did you like the most (.) in this serious
10 #00:00:44-6#
11

12 **Person 3:** It is a little bit funny how I started watching it because of (.)my boyfriend who (.) m::
13 kind of told me about this <p> girly<p> series (-) y:: which is no brainer I think or me is just a
14 show which I watch to relax (.) not thing too much about it (-) and I was very surprise how I got
15 like into it because I didn't expect that (-) but what I like about it is the setting (.) because it is
16 New York and you get kind (.) of feeling of the upper class living in New York although it is a
17 little bit a fairy tale style so I think the lifestyle (.) so I think life style is away attractive and the
18 setting when I said the lifestyle it is also the fashion is a big part of this show and (.) did you ask
19 only what I like or
20

21 **Interviewer:** What did you like the most and why did you watch it,
22

23 **Person 3:** Yeah so it is just entertaining I think (.) also to kind to improve English that was quite
24 nice to watch it (.) in original sound just to learn a little bit more. #00:01:50-7#

25
26 **Interviewer:** so the important y:: thing in show is the luxury and fashion as you said a:: how do
27 you feel about the brands portrayed in the (.) gossip girl #00:02:07-8#

28
29 **Person 3:** mhm #00:02:06-9#

30
31 **Interviewer:** can you name so brands (.) from there? #00:02:09-3#

32
33 **Person 3:** Yeah yes definitely (-) m:: since it is upper class some very expensive high fashion I
34 think I remember the most Dior bags and Chanel (-) m:: clothes I remember the episode when
35 they travel to Paris for shopping and then (.) like Chloé Chanel and Dior were very much y::
36 portrayed #00:02:37-0#

37
38 **Interviewer:** mhm #00:02:37-6#

39
40 **Person 3:** but also several other products that were just put on the show (-) mm:: as I believe
41 product placement like with not such a strong connection to the luxury life (-) and that's (.) would
42 be HP computers (.) that I have seen a lot and vitamin water (laugh) I remember one episode
43 when it was very clear (-) m:: Ladurée is also one of the favourite snack brands or whatever (-)
44 and tiffanies I think was also on the show (-) I remember <p> Tiffany party <p> and also the (-)
45 the like remake of breakfast at Tiffany's when Blair was like (.) in front of the tiffanies shop
46 #00:03:25-6#

47
48 **Interviewer:** Did you know before those brands or (--) did you find that about the brands
49 because of the series #00:03:34-4#

50
51 **Person 3:** I know all of them before so (.) that's why I was kind of able to(.) recognize them I
52 <p> guess<p> and I remember <p> them<p> #00:03:42-2#

53
54 **Interviewer:** Did your opinion like change after the series or, #00:03:48-2#

55
56 **Person 3:** m:: #00:03:49-1#

57
58 **Interviewer:** about the brands #00:03:50-0#

59
60 **Person 3:** yeahh no I wouldn't think so some of them are out of mine reach (-) a:: I mean like
61 Chanel, Dior and so on (-) the other brands I don't have so much opinion on but (-) m: definitely
62 I think like (-) Ladurée kind of became very popular after that I tried this but I am not how (-) I
63 am not sure how much I was influenced by the show at that time I was actually living in Paris
64 even so it was kind of natural but (.) I know my friends really wanted to go there because of this
65 show (.) so for me personally I don't think it changed any opinion about the brand (.) but I know
66 people who kind of got inspired to try some of them (.) because of the show #00:04:34-8#

67
68 **Interviewer:** You said that you tried this (.) Ladurée right #00:04:38-4#

69

70 **Person 3:** yeah #00:04:38-5#
71
72 **Interviewer:** so a:: in somehow like the brand (.) that they show influenced on you, #00:04:45-6#
73
74 **Person 3:** o:: well I just connected it with the brand (.) with the show in a way but #00:04:52-9#
75
76 **Interviewer:** so you didn't tried it because of the #00:04:54-8#
77
78 **Person 3:** no I would try it anyway because I was I knew about the brand before I started to
79 watch gossip girl but just #00:05:00-5#
80
81 PART 2
82
83 **Interviewer:** Mhm::: so a:: did the characters and their lifestyle like effect on you after the the
84 series (.) not only the brand but also the characters of the series, #00:00:25-4#
85
86 **Person 3:** m:: you mean pers:: the characters the person in the:: #00:00:31-3#
87
88 **Interviewer:** yeah #00:00:32-0#
89
90 **Person 3:** hm:: no (-) I don't think that they influence me in any way (.) like personally (-)
91 because I couldn't really realise them (.) I thought that most of them were am:: not very human
92 like (.) they were a bit like paper characters (.) m:: but of course I see a lot of people like they are
93 talking about their fashion and (.) m:: their way of behaving like the relationship between Blair
94 and Chuck (-) and so on but personally no (.) I only hm:: I recognize places they have been to (.)
95 when I was in Paris and but that's I mean just connecting things, characters and places (.) but
96 yeah #00:01:16-3#
97
98 **Interviewer:** Did you learn things about the fashion and luxury products by watching Gossip
99 Girl, #00:01:22-0#
100
101 **Person 3:** Hm:: Well? I think mayb (.) yeah I get (.) I got the impression it kind get me inside
102 how people might life and like high class in the New York I don't think if I learn about (.) new
103 things (-= I am not when I watched this I wasn't really sure if this is the reality or (laugh) there
104 are just people like it looks just seems to be too ridiculous the way (.) they life the private limo,
105 driver etc (-- m:: so no (-) I don't think I learn #00:01:58-9#
106
107 **Interviewer:** ok what do you think in general about luxury products, #00:02:03-2#
108
109 **Person 3:** Well I don't have anything against them they are just out of my reach but I kind of
110 enjoy looking at them or (-- seeing other people pulling them off it is quite quite interesting.
111 #00:02:17-8#
112
113 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) but why you are like you said that you are enjoying but why #00:02:23-4#
114
115 **Person 3:** Yhkm:: why, because I like the design and also the of course there is the name behind
116 it like the history for example out of different fashion brand (.) it's like Chanel (-) yhm:: so yeah

117 it is (-) strong brands with long history I believe, #00:02:43-7#

118

119 **Interviewer:** Would you like to own the products like (.) they show in the Gossip Girl

120 #00:02:47-8#

121

122 **Person 3:** M:: yeah? maybe some in the future (.) like some of the <p>designer <p>bags also but

123 #00:02:56-5#

124

125 **Interviewer:** Are you willing to spend so much money on them, #00:02:58-5#

126

127 **Person 3:** well it's when it comes to this so specific thing placed on the show that I want to own

128 it is just like the brand but yeah I think if had if I earned a lot of money I would willing to spend

129 for this #00:03:13-9#

130

131 **Interviewer:** why, #00:03:15-4#

132

133 **Person 3:** why because it is a kind of symbol of status I believe (.) but if you if you know that the

134 quality is good and you like design because it is like (-) ever it would it's classic it will work with

135 a lot of outfits and it will last for years (.) so why not, #00:03:35-5#

136

137 **Interviewer:** ok(--) m:: can explain am:: how brands appear in gossip girl? #00:03:42-6#

138

139 **Person 3:** m::hm yeah am as so we see product placement hh. it can be done in more subtle way

140 or (-) more obvious hm:: and (-) honestly speaking when I watched the show the luxury brands

141 for me (-) they I didn't perceive that so much that product placement (.) I thought that this has to

142 be there because (.)of the way they like the people they show (.) this is the part of their life (.) and

143 I also thought that this kind of brands not need this kind of the promotion (.) somehow (-) like

144 Chanel or Dior they are already there recognized (-) m:: so this I saw as more subtle kind of way

145 of y:: showing them (-) but when it comes to like vitamin water so it was just it was a bit

146 ridicules to me because you would had shoots where (-) like in a private house someone has like

147 a bench of this bottles (.) and I mean no one has that and it's just so obvious what they trying to

148 sell and also with HP (.) they always have very close shoot to the logo so you can see it I think it

149 was the case of but (.) I just remember like the windows phone but before that they had some

150 another ones so (-) and also the now I remember the hh. searching engine I think it was Bing that

151 they use on it which also funny just always they have close and no one use this Bing but in

152 Gossip Girl apparently they do so (-) it just like someone of them are more subtle one and some

153 of them are very: obvious to me that they trying to sell their products #00:05:20-1#

154

155 **Interviewer:** mhm you mentioned about the product placement so you are aware what it is

156 product placement and you can explain what it is, #00:05:25-8#

157

158 **Person 3:** yeahh I I hope I am (laugh) well I believe I know what idea is (.) hm: it's like (.)

159 brands they basically selling or (.) having a deal with the production to (.) put their products in

160 the setting somehow so (--) hm:: like I know (.) Nescafe has often in movies (.) like the

161 characters would drink coffee from red cup with the logo on (.) so or drink Heineken beer in a

162 Bond movie or something like that (.) so hm:: it's way of promoting the products sometime it is

163 more conscious (.) like people would really see and sometimes (.) it is more unconscious that you

164 would buy the product (.) just because you saw it or because you are associated with the specific
165 character and you want to be like them (-) and it's maybe more reachable than (-) other aspects of
166 their lifestyle or of the looks of this <p>person<p> #00:06:21-1#

167
168 **Interviewer:** mhm were you were you aware that the product placement was present in Gossip
169 Girl before the interview? #00:06:34-0#

170
171 **Person 3:** Yes (.) yes (.) I was aware because I recognize (.) like I just saw it was very obvious to
172 me specially with certain brands with some of them maybe (-) I many I believe I didn't recognize
173 it but when It was really obvious like with the vitamin water (.) I was sure that what they are
174 doing (.) it is also the same with the not brands but bands on the show that they would always
175 have some upcoming or some very popular bands and that also I saw as a way of the promoting
176 them so it's it's not random obviously for me (-) it is a way of advertising #00:07:10-2#

177
178 **Interviewer:** Ok am have you like were thinking about that when you were like watching the
179 series, #00:07:17-5#

180
181 **Person 3:** Hm:: yes (.) sometimes (.) yes it depends on how obvious it was but sometimes it kind
182 of didn't fit to the context to me it was just like (-) random thing put there (.) but sometimes it is
183 more subtle and then I saw it just as the way of (.) connecting to their lifestyle like the one (.) the
184 Chuck would drink drinks with Belvedere vodka it the most like the one of the most expensive
185 vodka on the market (.) so for me it's natural that they would drink that because this is their
186 lifestyle (.) so sometimes it was yeah not that<p> obvious<p> I think #00:07:52-9#

187
188 **Interviewer:** ok (-) hm: what is your opinion about product placement in the Gossip Girl,
189 #00:07:58-1#

190
191 **Person 3:** hm:: yeah I think it is quite interesting case (.) because (.) I know the target for this
192 show and majority of people who watch it are very young and I don't think that they can afford
193 many of this products (.) so it that way hm: I don't know maybe they are producing hh. a new
194 target group that's maybe will be able to buy some of them like the luxury brands in 10 or 20
195 years (-) h. so I don't know how long lasting that effect will be (.) if they would remember it still
196 (--):m:: but yeah: I think it is a clever way (.) I mean it is extremely popular show it has big reach
197 (.) so for the cheaper brands I think it was good way of selling themselves (.) but for me as
198 watching it is just funny sometimes (.) it is just (laugh) just too obvious but yeah #00:08:51-8#

199
200 **Interviewer:** Do you think that product placement in Gossip Girl is effective advertisement,
201 #00:08:56-2#

202
203 **Person 3:** Yes I think it is very much effective #00:08:58-8#

204
205 **Interviewer:** Ok (-) why, #00:08:59-9#

206
207 **Person 3:** I guess people like want to do the same things (.) like as I mentioned my friend when
208 she visited Paris she wanted to go to the same places where the people were (.) and she wanted to
209 eat the same things (laugh) like (.) the macaroons from Ladurée so it's like I can tell that people
210 (-) it is effecting them in a way #00:09:20-3#

211
212 **Interviewer:** Hm:: how do you thing about you, you are affected by them, #00:09:26-3#
213
214 **Person 3:** hm:: no:: I don't think (.) like well it really change anything (.) in me I just like started
215 using the xoxox (laugh) I my language I believe but it was just the only thing (-) but when it
216 comes to products (.) I: think I've never tried any of these that were that I saw as a product
217 placement placement of in the show so (.) in the way no (.) it didn't and as the characters also
218 didn't influence in any way I think. #00:09:57-1#
219
220 **Interviewer:** Ok do you want to add something #00:10:00-0#
221
222 **Person 3:** No I don't think so (laugh) thank you #00:10:03-2#
223
224 **Interviewer:** Ok so I just need some more demographic information (.) like your age studies like
225 programme and the level and you nationality #00:10:10-7#
226
227 **Person 3:** ok so I am 25 years old I study Master in Communication (-) and h:: yeah Po:lish I
228 believe (-) half Polish half Norwegian (laugh) #00:10:22-5#
229
230 **Interviewer:** Ok thank you #00:10:23-5#

2. Summarizing content analysis

Interview number	Page number	Line number	Paraphrase	Generalisation	Reduction
3	83	4	I think I started watching it like 3 years ago	Started watching 3 years ago	C1 Viewing patterns - Started to watched 3 years ago - Has seen every episodes - Did not watch it regularly - Did not expect to be so eager to watch the show C2 Reasons for watching - Started watching after her boyfriend recommendation - Watched to relax herself - As a means of entertainment - To improve English language C3 Likes about the show - Likes the setting of the series - Likes the surreal aspect of the show - Likes the lifestyle presented in Gossip Girl - Likes fashion presented in Gossip Girl - Get a glimpse of upper class life in New York
3	83	4-5	I am pretty sure I watch almost all of the series but not in the order	Has seen all the episodes but not in order	
3	83	6-7	I didn't watch it like every week or anything but I watched all of them	Did not watch it regularly	
3	83	12-13	I started watching it because of my boyfriend who kind of told me about this girly series which is no brainer	Started watching after her boyfriend recommendation	
3	83	13-14	for me is just a show which I watch to relax not thing too much about it	Watched to relax herself	
3	83	14-15	I was very surprise how I got like into this	She did not expect to be so eager to watch the series	
3	83	15-16	I like about it is the setting because it is New York	Likes the setting of the series	
3	83	16	you get kind of feeling of the upper class living in New York	Get a glimpse of upper class life in New York	
3	83	16-17	I think lifestyle is although it is a little bit a fairy tale style	Likes the surreal aspect of the show	
3	83	17-18	I think the lifestyle is away attractive and the setting	Likes the lifestyle presented in Gossip Girl and setting	
3	83	18	when I said the lifestyle fashion is a big part of this show	Likes fashion presented in Gossip Girl	

3	84	23	it is just entertaining I think	Watched Gossip Girl as a means of entertainment	C4 Awareness about the brands - She remembers a lot of brands (Dior, Chanel, Chloé) - She remembers a lot of brands which are not part of luxury (vitamin water, HP, Ladurée) C5 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl - Luxury products were presented as a part of plot - Product placement of luxury products is presented in Gossip Girl in more subtle way - Expensive brands are connected to the lifestyle from the show - some of the products presented in Gossip Girl were not connected to the plot and lifestyle of characters (just advertising) - Product placement of less expensive products was more obvious for her - Luxury products and expensive famous brands do not need product placement as a way of advertising because they are already known - Sometimes she was thinking about product placement while watching the Gossip Girl
3	84	23	Also to kind to improve English	Watched to improve English language	
3	84	33	Yes definitely	She remembers a lot of brands from Gossip Girl	
3	84	33-36	since it is upper class some very expensive high fashion I think I remember the most Dior bags and Chanel clothes I remember the episode when they travel to Paris for shopping and then like Chloé Chanel and Dior were very much portrayed	Expensive brands are connected to lifestyle from the show. She remembers a lot of brands (Dior, Chanel, Chloé)	
3	84	40-41	also several other products that were just put on the show as I believe product placement like with not such a strong connection to the luxury life	Noticed that some of the products presented in Gossip Girl were not connected to the plot and lifestyle of characters	
3	84	41-44	that's would be HP computers that I have seen a lot vitamin water I remember one episode when it was very clear Ladurée is also one of the favourite snack brands or whatever and tiffanies I think was also on the show	She remembers a lot of brands which are not part of luxury (vitamin water, HP, Ladurée)	
3	84	51	I know all of them before so that's why I was kind of able to recognize them	She knew all mentioned brands before that is why she was able to recognize them in the show	
3	84	60	No I wouldn't think so	Her opinion about the brands did not change after watching the show	
3	84	60	some of them are out of mine reach	She cannot afford luxury products	

3	84	61-62	the other brands I don't have so much opinion on but definitely I think like Ladurée become very popular after	She believes that one of the brand (Ladurée) became popular because of Gossip Girl	<p>C6 Learning effects about product placement in gossip girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She knew all mentioned brands before watching Gossip Girl that is why she was able to recognize them in the show <p>C7 Effects of product placement on the viewer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Her opinion about the brands did not change after watching the show - She believes that one of the brand (Ladurée) became popular because of Gossip Girl - She knows people who were inspired by the show - She connected brands with the show - She did not try product because of the show, she has known brand before watching the show - She connected brands with the show <p>C8 Importance of the character for product placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The characters did not influence her behaving - She knows people who comment fashion and character's behaviors from Gossip Girl
3	84	62-63	I tried this but I am not how I am not sure how much I was influenced by the show at that time I was actually living in Paris	She bought products presented in the show but she is not sure if it was because product placement influence on her	
3	84	64-65	I know my friends really wanted to go there because of this show	Knows people that wanted to try product because it was presented in Gossip Girl	
3	84	65	I don't think it changed any opinion about the brand	She didn't change her opinion about the brands after watching the show	
3	84	65-66	I know people who kind of got inspired to try some of them because of the show	She knows people who were inspired by the show	
3	85	74	I just connected it with the brand with the show	She connected brands with the show	
3	85	78-79	no I would try it anyway because I was I knew about the brand before I started to watch gossip girl	She did not try product because of the show, she has known brand before watching the show	
3	85	90	no I don't think that they influence me in any way like personally	The characters did not influence her behaving	
3	85	91-92	I thought that most of them were not very human like they were a bit like paper characters	Characters from the show were unrealistic	
3	85	92-94	I see a lot of people like they are talking about their fashion and their way of behaving like the relationship between Blair and Chuck	She knows people who comment fashion and character's behaviors from Gossip Girl	
3	85	94-95	I recognize places they have been	She is able to recognize places from	

			to when I was in Paris	the show	C9 Effects of product placement on others - Knows people that wanted to try product because it was presented in Gossip Girl - She knows people who were inspired by the show - Some people want to have products from the show C10 Opinion about luxury products - She likes to look at luxury products - She would like to buy luxury products in the future - She likes design of the luxury products - Luxury products are status symbol - She would buy luxury products if quality is good - She would buy luxury products if she likes design - Classic luxury clothes are universal - Luxury products are long-lasting - Luxury products have long history and famous designers - She has nothing against luxury products
3	85	101-102	I got the impression it kind get me inside how people might life and like high class in the New York	Get a glimpse of upper class life in New York	
3	85	102	I don't think if I learn about new things	She did not learn about new brands because of watching the show	
3	85	103-104	When I watched this I wasn't really sure if this is the reality or there are just people just seems to be too ridiculous the way they life	Lifestyle presented in the show was sometimes ridiculous	
3	85	109	I don't have anything against them	She has nothing against luxury products	
3	85	109	they are just out of my reach	She cannot afford luxury products	
3	85	109-110	I kind of enjoy looking at them	She likes to look at luxury products	
3	85	115	I like the design	She likes design of the luxury products	
3	85	115-116	there is the name behind it like the history for example out of different fashion brand	Luxury products have long history and famous designers	
3	86	122	maybe some in the future like some of the designer bags	She would like to buy luxury products in the future	
3	86	128-129	I think if had if I earned a lot of money I would willing to spend for this	She would like to buy luxury products in the future if she would have money	
3	86	133	it is a kind of symbol of status	Luxury products are status symbol	
3	86	133-134	if you know that the quality is good	She would buy luxury products if quality is good	
3	86	134	you like design	She would buy luxury products if she likes design	
3	86	134-135	It's classic it will work with a lot of outfits	Classic luxury clothes are universal	
3	86	135	it will last for years so why not	Luxury products are long-lasting	

3	86	139-140	so we see product placement it can be done in more subtle way or more obvious	Product placement can be presented in subtle or obvious way	<p>C11 Distance of products in Gossip Girl - She cannot afford luxury products</p> <p>C12 Awareness of the definition of product placement - She believes that she understand idea of product placement - She knows what product placement is</p> <p>C13 Opinion on the effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl as an advertising strategy - is a clever way of advertising especially for cheaper brands because Gossip Girl is really popular show - In her opinion product placement is an effective way of advertising - People who watch the show are mostly young so most of them cannot afford many of products presented in the show - Viewers of the show can be a new target group for luxury products because they might afford them in the future - Not sure if the product placement is effective in a long term</p>
3	86	140-141	when I watched the show the luxury brands for me I didn't perceive that so much that product placement	Product placement of luxury products is presented in the Gossip Girl in more subtle way	
3	86	141-142	I thought that this has to be there because of the way they like the people they show this is the part of their life	Luxury products were presented as a part of plot	
3	86	143	And I also thought that this kind of brands not need this kind of the promotion somehow so this I saw as more subtle kind of way of showing	Luxury products and expensive famous brands do not need product placement as a way of advertising because they are already known	
3	86	145-146	but when it comes to like vitamin water so it was just it was a bit ridicules to me	Sometimes product placement presented in the show was ridicules and obvious	
3	86	148	also with HP they always have very close shoot to the logo so you can see it	Obvious product placement (logo HP laptops)	
3	86	158	I hope I am well I believe I know what idea is	She believes that she understand idea of product placement	
3	86	158-160	it's like brands they basically selling or having a dill with the production to put their products in the setting somehow	She is aware what product placement is	
3	87	171-172	Yes I was aware because I recognize like I just saw it was very obvious to me	Product placement was obvious way of advertising sometimes	
3	87	172	Many I believe I didn't recognize	She thinks she was not able to	

			it	recognize all brands presented in the show	C14 Opinion about product placement - Product placement presented in Gossip Girl was a way of advertising C15 Started to incorporate language from the series in her own life
3	87	176	For me it is a way of advertising	Product placement presented in Gossip Girl was a way of advertising	
3	87	181	Sometimes yes	Sometimes she was thinking about product placement while watching the Gossip Girl	
3	87	181-182	It depends on how obvious it was but sometimes it kind of didn't fit to the context to me It was just like random thing put there	Some products presented in the show were not connected and did not fir to the plot or characters	
3	87	182-183	sometimes it is more subtle and then I saw it just as the way of connecting to their lifestyle	In some cases product placement was more subtle because it was part of the plot and character's lifestyle	
3	87	191	I think it is quite interesting case	Product placement is an interesting case in Gossip Girl	
3	87	191-193	I know the target for this show and majority of people who watch it are very young and I don't think that they can afford many of this products	People who watch the show are mostly young so most of them cannot afford many of products presented in the show	
3	87	193-194	Maybe they are producing a new target group that's maybe will be able to buy some of them like the luxury brands in 10 or 20 years	Viewers of the show can be a new target group for luxury products because they might afford them in the future	
3	87	195	I don't know how long lasting that effect will be if they would remember it still	She is not sure if the product placement is effective in a long term	
3	87	196-197	I think it is a clever way I mean it is extremely popular show it has big reach so for the cheaper brands I think it was good way of selling	In her opinion product placement is a clever way of advertising especially for cheaper brands because Gossip Girl is really popular show	

			themselves		
3	87	203	Yes I think it is very much effective	In her opinion product placement is an effective way of advertising	
3	87	207	I guess people like want to do the same things	Some people want to have products from the show	
3	87	209-210	I can tell that people it is effecting them in a way	Some people are influenced by product placement presented in the show	
3	88	214	No I don't think like well it really change anything in me	Product placement did not influence on her	
3	88	214-215	I just like started using the xoxo	She started using a phrase from the show	
3	88	215-217	when it comes to products I think I've never tried any of these that were that I saw as a product placement so in the way no it didn't	She is not influenced by product placement presented in the show	
3	88	217-218	the characters also didn't influence in any way I think	The characters from the show did not influence her way of behaving	

3. Structuring content analysis

General information

C1 Viewing patterns

- Started to watched 3 years ago
- Has seen every episodes
- Did not watch it regularly
- Did not expect to be so eager to watch the show

C2 Reasons for watching

- Started watching after her boyfriend recommendation
- Watched to relax
- As a means of entertainment
- To improve English language

C3 Likes about the show

- Likes the setting of the series
- Likes the surreal aspect of the show
- Likes the lifestyle presented in Gossip Girl
- Likes fashion presented in Gossip Girl
- Get a glimpse of upper class life in New York

View of the luxury industry

C10 Opinion about luxury products

- She likes to look at luxury products
- She would like to buy luxury products in the future
- She likes design of the luxury products
- Luxury products are status symbol
- She would buy luxury products if quality is good
- She would buy luxury products if she likes design
- Classic luxury clothes are universal
- Luxury products are long-lasting
- Luxury products have long history and famous designers
- She has nothing against luxury products

C11 Distance of products in Gossip Girl

- She cannot afford luxury products

Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

C12 Awareness of the definition of product placement

- She believes that she understand idea of product placement

- She knows what product placement is

C5 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

- Luxury products were presented as a part of plot
- Product placement of luxury products is presented in the Gossip Girl in more subtle way
- Expensive brands are connected to lifestyle from the show
- Some of the products presented in Gossip Girl were not connected to the plot and lifestyle of characters (just advertising)
- Product placement of less expensive products was more obvious for her
- Luxury products and expensive famous brands do not need product placement as a way of advertising because they are already known
- Sometimes she was thinking about product placement while watching the Gossip Girl

C14 Opinion about product placement

- Product placement presented in Gossip Girl was a way of advertising

Effectiveness of the product placement in Gossip Girl

C4 Awareness about the brands

- She remembers a lot of brands (Dior, Chanel, Chloé)
- She remembers a lot of brands which are not part of luxury (vitamin water, HP, Ladurée)

C6 Learning effects about product placement in Gossip Girl

- She knew all mentioned brands before watching Gossip Girl that is why she was able to recognize them in the show

C7 Effects of product placement on the viewer

- Her opinion about the brands did not change after watching the show
- She believes that one of the brands (Ladurée) became popular because of Gossip Girl
- She knows people who were inspired by the show
- She connected brands with the show
- She did not try product because of the show, she has known brand before watching the show
- She connected brands with the show

C15 Started to incorporate language from the series in her own life

C8 Importance of the character for product placement

- The characters did not influence her behaving
- She knows people who comment fashion and character's behaviors from Gossip Girl

C9 Effects of product placement on others

- Knows people that wanted to try product because it was presented in Gossip Girl
- She knows people who were inspired by the show

- Some people want to have products from the show

C13 Opinion on the effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl as an advertising strategy

- is a clever way of advertising especially for cheaper brands because Gossip Girl is really popular show
- In her opinion product placement is an effective way of advertising
- People who watch the show are mostly young so most of them cannot afford many of products presented in the show
- Viewers of the show can be a new target group for luxury products because they might afford them in the future
- Not sure if the product placement is effective in a long term

Appendix 6: Interview 4

1. Transcript

Name:

Master Thesis – Interview 4

Day of recording, time, place:

Wednesday April 19th, 12:15 a.m., library in IT building in Lindholmen, Gothenburg, minor background noises

Duration of the interview: 12:56 Minutes

Name of the person interviewing and transcribing: Monika Walicka

Name of the interviewee: Person 3

The participant is a female student in the Master of Communication at the University of Gothenburg. She is 26 years old and from Sweden. The interview is a semi-structured, qualitative interview. This interview took place in a face-to-face situation and was audio recorded. The atmosphere was friendly and the interviewed person was able to talk freely. Nevertheless she seemed to have some trouble finding the right way to express her feelings at some points.

Summary of the interview

At the beginning the interviewee was asked to describe her Gossip Girl viewing patterns and her motives. She claimed not to be aware of product placement in Gossip Girl while watching although she noticed the brands. In general she was not bothered by it. She viewed product placement in Gossip Girl as subtle and she admitted that she wanted to have some of the placed products more after watching the show. She remembered brands presented in Gossip Girl.

The interview was transcribed on April 19th.

1 **Interviewer:** Can you tell me a: (.) how long do (.) you watch Gossip Girl, did you watch who::le
2 series (.) or just few episodes #00:00:08-7#

3

4 **Person 4:** I have seen who:le series (.) I think it is seven (--) seven seasons #00:00:18-0#

5

6 **Interviewer:** ok, #00:00:18-8#

7

8 **Person 4:** or eight seasons (laugh) or night seasons (-) even either (-) I don't know but I saw all
9 episodes #00:00:23-9#

10

11 **Interviewer:** So:: tell me why did you watch it (.) and what did you like the most about the:(.)
12 series show, 00:00:34-1

13

14 **Person 4:** am:: Well: (.) I started reading the book (.) and then I: (.) well:: I thought they were
15 funny and interes:: or maybe not interested interesting but (--) you know something new
16 happened all the time (.) so they were like(-) so I decided to watch the show a:nd then I like the
17 show better? and then yeah I don't know(-) I just (.) enjoyed it is a lot of (---) 00:01:02-3

18

19 **Interviewer:** but what did you like in the show, 00:01:09-6
20
21 **Person 4:** am::: Chuck Bass; (.) no (laugh) but I I:: don't know I guess I like that was both
22 romantic (.) and dramatic (.) and you know 00:01:16-3
23
24 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) 00:01:18-0
25
26 **Person 4:** And have a little bit of everything and then (-- a::ll the ni:ce clo::thes? and you know
27 (-- yeah I think that's why. 00:01:26-0
28
29 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) An important thing in the (.) in the show there? are the brands. Can you
30 name(.) some of the brands that they appeared in the show? 00:01:39-3
31
32 **Person 4:** Ye::a the ma: (.) the macarons (-) I think there (---) ok now I can't remember the
33 brand but and then o Jesus it was while ago since I watched it (.) but (-) yeah they had iPhones
34 for instance <p>Samsung<p> probably and we:ll you see all the jewellery (.) it is like Louis
35 Vuitton (-) Gucci and a lot of brand in the clothing (.) <p> as well <p> 00:02:09-6
36
37 **Interviewer:** Mhm:: 00:02:11-2
38
39 **Person 4:** And:: (.) I should watched one episode <p> to prepare <p> 00:02:18-4
40
41 **Interviewer:** Ok m:: how do you feel about the brands (.) that were portrayed in the Gossip Girl,
42 They were annoying, or did you like it, and(.) 00:02:26-5
43
44 **Person 4:** o:: I don't think it was so that obvious (.) that they used the brands like (.) but well: (-)
45 It was not annoying (-) more inspiring, (.) I think(.) 00:02:45-5
46
47 **Interviewer:** Ok for what it was inspiring for you, 00:02:47-6
48
49 **Person 4:** Yeah:: you know a lot of fashion (.) and you can (-) you get a lot of inspiration and
50 how to dress and what kind (.) of clothes to buy (.) even if you can't afford like <p>Gucci<p> hh.
51 00:02:54-9
52
53 **Interviewer:** So (.) you were looking for something similar, 00:03:03-3
54
55 **Person 4:** Yeah I guess (---) maybe not every: (-) every item (-) but yeah sometimes(-) and yeah
56 but I didn't find it (.) annoying 00:03:12-9
57
58 **Interviewer:** Ok did you know about those brands that they were appear in the show before,
59 00:03:15-8
60
61 **Person 4:** Yeah:: I think most of them 00:03:21-1
62
63 **Interviewer:** mhm a::: did your opinion change about the brands (.) through watching Gossip
64 Girl, (-) did you start to like them more or, 00:03:37-8
65

66 **Person 4:** I don't know (.) because(.) it is not I haven't thought about the brands in that way (--)
67 you know since both Serena and Blair (-) and all the others girls are like (-) rich girls it just if
68 would be weird (.) if they weren't wear those expensive clothes(-) so I (-) I haven't thought about
69 that <p>actually<p> 00:03:59-7
70

71 **Interviewer:** Ok m:: so you said that you (.) were inspired in so do somehow(-) the products or
72 the clothes they appeared(.) or they were portrayed in the show(.) influence on you, 00:04:16-1
73

74 **Person 4:** <p>yes<p> yeah (--).hh you know maybe (.) you saw like a nice item or:: blouse or
75 whatever (-) and then(--) I might just (.) you know try to find something similar (--)but cheaper
76 <p>so <p>00:04:31-3
77

78 **Interviewer:** Ok 00:04:32-5
79

80 **Person 3:** so:: but then like (.) for instance(-) I mentioned the<p> maraca::ns before <p>,
81 00:04:36-4
82

83 **Interviewer:** yeah:, 00:04:38-0
84

85 **Person 4:** I never tried them before (.) but when I saw Blair yhm eat them I actually wanted to try
86 them 00:04:43-4
87

88 **Interviewer:** ok 00:04:44-4
89

90 **Interviewer:** But why.hh why, what was the reason,(.) because you like the character or::,
91 00:04:54-1
92

93 **Person 4:** <f>Yeah<f> (.) yeah, (-) I like her (-) but I also I don't know(.) it is just it is (-) girly
94 you know I also wanted to lay in bed and eat <p>macaro::ns <p> (-) so I guess (.) I get influence,
95 by her character? (--)in some way 00:05:17-4
96

97 **Interviewer:** am:: so you learnt (.) so did you learn things about the show and luxury (.) products
98 by watching Gossip Girl? 00:05:20-9
99

100 **Person 4:** am:: I think I:: knew the <p> most<p> products before(.) but maybe (---) I can't come
101 up with the brand that I didn't know about before (.) watching Gossip Girl but(---) and I don't
102 think (.) It is not like for instance Sex and the city (.) where like Manolo Blahnik became really
103 popular after (.) the show (--)so I can't really think about the brand (.) that (---) became popular
104 because of (.) Gossip Girl 00:05:57-1
105

106 **Interviewer:** Ok m:: what do you think in general (.) about the luxury products, 00:05:57-9
107

108 **Person 4:** We:ll I would love to afford them (.) hh. I (.) most of the time I mean (.) not everything
109 is nice and looks nice a:: but I think if you go through more cla::ssic:? brands I would (-) really
110 love to own <p> a few pieces <p> (--)for sure 00:06:15-7
111

112 **Interviewer:** Why, 00:06:15-8

113
114 **Person 4:** .hh <p> For sure <p> 00:06:16-4
115
116 **Person 4:** I don't know (.) I think because it is luxury (-) I don't know (.) it's a: (--) and bags for
117 instance (-) I think it is investment because you can have them fo:r (-) such a long time and they
118 just become more be:autiful (-) the longer you have them and grab them (.) because they get
119 personal 00:06:42-6
120
121 **Interviewer:** ok 00:06:43-6
122
123 **Person 4:** If you know (.) what I mean 00:06:44-6
124
125 **Interviewer:** Yeah yeah (.) I know 00:06:47-5
126
127 **Interviewer:** ok am do you like am would you like to own the products that they were shown in
128 gossip girl, 00:06:57-1
129
130 **Person 4:** I: wouldn't mind? (laugh) 00:06:58-3
131
132 **Interviewer:** Ok 00:06:59-6
133
134 **Person 4:** to have them(--) but then again I think (.) like (.) if I buy something: (.) expensive, (--)
135 I wo::rship it (-) but I think they buy(.) they buy their expensive items(.) like we buy like (.)
136 normal priced <p> items<p> (-) because they don't they (.) don't they (--) don't really:: value the
137 product (.) as I would do (-) if you know what I mean 00:07:29-8
138
139 **Interviewer:** Ok but why do you want to own those products, you said that they are quite
140 expensive. What is the reason, 00:07:36-2
141
142 **Person 4:** Yeah it is not they are expensive(-) I think (--) one of the reason is because(--) if you
143 buy like (--) expensive brand (--) not everyone is walking around with that peace (.) like for
144 instance the bag (-) you get(.) you get more, unique product than if you go to the H&M and buy
145 bag there and the all because of the quality I <p>guess <p> (--) like I said it is an investment that
146 you can (.) have for years and the (--) and also because I mean I don't care? if I (.) if I found
147 something that (.) I think is nice looking I don't care? if it's (.) from H&M or if it is Gucci then
148 yeah 00:08:29-7
149
150 **Interviewer:** Are you willing (.) to spend money on them (.) then, 00:08:31-3
151
152 **Person 4:** <p>Yeah: <p> of course not right now I am student but if I had had money I would
153 definitely (--) <p>do that <p> 00:08:47-4
154
155 **Interviewer:** Ok am:: you mentioned that (-) we mentioned that some of the brands (.) they
156 appear in the show (-) do you m:: can you (.) explain how they appear, 00:08:57-4
157
158 **Person 4:** yeah wow mostly like on people (-) they wear the clo:thes and the bags and the shoes
159 and the (..) yeah? it is like (-) technological devices they also <p>use them<p> and then of course

160 there are cars and everything (---) so I guess (-) the things I have noticed from I was watching the
161 show (.) is the (.) the brands? that people actually wear 00:09:29-5

162

163 **Interviewer:** ok (.) am:: are you aware what is it a product placement, (-) and can you explain
164 what it is, 00:09:38-1

165

166 **Person 4:** a:: yeah I think I know what it is (-) it's li:ke (---) a:: (---) because in some of the
167 movies you see that they drink something (.) but you cannot really know (.) you don't really
168 know what it is because they don't show the brand but if (-) if:: they show the brand it means that
169 that company actually paid (-) the production to(-) to (-) you know 00:10:08-1

170

171 **Interviewer:** to show the brand, 00:10:10-8

172

173 **Person 4:** Yeah 00:10:12-7

174

175 **Interviewer:** M:: 00:10:13-7

176

177 **Person 4:** So I think (.) that what it is 00:10:17-8

178

179 **Interviewer:** Ok a were you aware about product placement that (.) it was (.) present in the
180 Gossip Girl before the interview (-) with me, 00:10:24-6

181

182 **Person 4:** It is nothing (.) it is not something (.) what I was thinking about (.) it is not like ok
183 we:ll she is wearing (.) that bag and this probably (.) because they place the product (.) like I said
184 there supposed to be this hm:: (--) rich girls it would be weird if they weren't wear expensive
185 brands (-) so it's nothing that I would think about (.)<p>before<p> 00:10:49-2

186

187 **Interviewer:** m:: how it what way and how do you think you were affected by this, 00:10:58-1

188

189 **Person 4:** Well:: I guess (.) I:: want that product more (--) hhh. now ok because you see them
190 in(.) in a different way of course you see them in magazines and (.) fashion magazines (-) but
191 you don't get (--) the same connection (-) or not connection but you don't see them in the same
192 way like you can see a picture of them 00:11:24-6

193

194 **Interviewer:** So: (.) they were like part of the character that you: like, 00:11:29-7

195

196 **Person 4:** Well almost of the all character are kind of mean so:: no hm:: but I don't know yeah I
197 don't know (-) what was the question again. 00:11:45-0

198

199 **Interviewer:** Am:: do you think that a::: how do you think it was affected on you (-) the product
200 placement, 00:11:50-3

201

202 **Person 4:** O:: yeah (-) yeah I think that I am more aware of different collections that they have
203 now (-) because I don't read a lot of fashion magazines like Elle 00:12:02-6

204

205 **Interviewer:** Ok 00:12:02-6

206

207 **Person 4:** Like I get more information from blogs (-) and yeah fashion shows<p> like this<p>
208 rather than from magazines 00:12:11-0
209
210 **Interviewer:** Ok 00:12:11-7
211
212 **Interviewer:** M:: do you want to add something? 00:12:14-0
213
214 **Person 4:** <p>No<p> I don't think so:: .hh 00:12:17-4
215
216 **Interviewer:** Ok so now I need just few demographic information you age, studies, level of
217 studies and:: nationality 00:12:28-2
218
219 **Person 4:** 26 years old m:: my level of studies it's (.) master and dem::ographic in:formation,
220 00:12:40-7
221
222 **Interviewer:** Nationality? (.) and what are you study, 00:12:44-9
223
224 **Person 4:** I am studying master in communication and: (--) I: am from Sweden 00:12:51-8
225
226 **Interviewer:** Thank you 00:12:53-2

2. Summarizing content analysis

Interview number	Page number	Line number	Paraphrase	Generalisation	Reduction
4	99	4	I have seen whole series	Has seen whole series	C1 Viewing patterns - She has seen whole series
4	99	4-8	I think it is seven seasons or eight seasons or nine seasons	It has seven, eight or nine seasons	
4	99	8-9	I saw all of episodes	Watched all episodes	C2 Reasons for watching - Read the books before - The books were funny with a lot of action - Because of the books she wanted to watch the TV version
4	99	14	I started reading the book	Started reading the book before watched the show	
4	99	14-16	I thought they were funny and something new happened all the time	Books were funny and the story was dynamic with a lot of action and it was one of reason to watch TV version of Gossip Girl	C3 Likes about the show - Show was romantic and dramatic - Show was diverse - Nice clothes presented in the show
4	99	16-17	I decided to watch a show and then I like the show better.	Because she likes the books she decided to watch show in TV	
4	100	21-22	I like that it was both romantic and dramatic	In her opinion show was romantic and dramatic	C4 Awareness about the brands - The product she remember the most are macaroons - She didn't remember a lot of fashion brands only few designers (Gucci and Louis Vuitton) - She remembers mostly the appearance of the products rather than brands - She remembers technological
4	100	26	And have a little bit of everything	Show raises a lot of different subjects	
4	100	26	All the nice clothes	Nice clothes in the show was a reason why she watched Gossip Girl	
4	100	32	the macaroons	Remembers macaroons from the show	
4	100	32-33	now I can't remember the brand	Doesn't remember any brand names that appeared in the show	
4	100	33	It was while ago since I watched it	Doesn't remember any brand names because watched the show while ago	
4	100	33-34	they had iPhones for instance, Samsung probably	Recalled two brand name from show: iPhone and Samsung	
4	100	34	you see all the jewellery	Jewelry products are placed in the show	

4	100	34-35	it is like Louis Vuitton, Gucci and a lot of brand in the clothing	She noticed brands which create clothes: Gucci and Louis Vuitton	products (Samsung and Iphone) and cars
4	100	39	I should watched one episode to prepare	Hasn't watched the episode to prepare to the interview	C5 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl
4	100	44	I don't think it was so that obvious that they used the brands	Product placement from her perspective was not so visible in the show	- Product placement not visible (really subtle)
4	100	45	It was not annoying more inspiring	Product placement was inspiring for her not annoying	- Product placement was inspiring - Product placement was not annoying
4	100	49	a lot of fashion	Because of product placement viewers can learn a lot about fashion	- She didn't think about brands placement through watching the show
4	100	49-50	you get a lot of inspiration, how to dress and what kind of clothes to buy even if you can't afford like Gucci	Influenced by product placement because she gets a lot of inspiration how to dress up	- Product placement is integrated with the plot
4	100	55	maybe not every item but sometimes	She tried to find something similar like that she noticed in the show	C6 Learning effects about product placement in gossip girl
4	100	56	I didn't find it annoying	Product placement in Gossip Girl was not annoying for her	- Viewers learn about fashion through product placement in Gossip Girl
4	100	61	I think most of them	She didn't learn about any brand from Gossip Girl. She had known them before she watched the show.	- She knew the brands before so she didn't learn about any brand for the show
4	101	66	I don't know because it is not I haven't thought about the brands in that way	She doesn't know if her opinion had change about brands after watching the show. She didn't think about brands through watching the show.	- Because of product placement in show she is more aware of different collections
4	101	67-68	since both Serena and Blair and all the others girls are like rich girls it just if would be weird if they weren't wear those expensive clothes	She didn't notice product placement because characters are very rich and they wear expensive clothes and products are integrated with plot.	C7 Effects of product placement on the viewer
4	101	68-69	I haven't thought about that	She didn't think about product	- She got inspired how to dress up - She tried to find something

				placement while watching the show	<p>similar like that she noticed in the show</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She doesn't know if her opinion had change about brands after watching the show. - She admitted that she got influenced by product placement - She wants to own product more <p>C8 Importance of the character for product placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She wanted to buy product because one of her favorite character uses them. - She is influenced by the character because she likes character behavior <p>C9 Effectiveness of product placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In general brands become popular because they were placed in shows (Manolo Blahnik in the Sex and the city) - She doesn't remember any brands that became popular because of Gossip Girl. - She thinks that product placement is an effective advertisement strategy because she wants the products more after having watched the Gossip Girl
4	101	74	Yes they influence on me	She admitted that she got influenced by product placement	
4	101	74-75	you saw like a nice item or blouse and then I might just try to find something similar but cheaper	Because of seeing product in the show she tried to find something similar but cheaper	
4	101	85-86	I never tried them before but when I saw Blair eat them I actually wanted to try them	Product placement influences her buying behavior. She wanted to buy product because one of her favorite character uses them.	
4	101	93	I like her	She likes character from show	
4	101	93	it is girly	Character's behavior is girly	
4	101	94	I also wanted to lay in bed and eat macaroons	She wanted to do the same as her favorite character from show	
4	101	94-95	I get influence by her character in some way	She admitted that character from show influence on her behavior	
4	101	100	I think I knew the most products before	Had known brands before she watched the show	
4	101	100-101	I can't come up with the brand that I didn't know about before watching Gossip Girl	Had known brands before she watched the show	
4	101	102-103	It is not like for instance Sex and the city where like Manolo Blahnik became really popular after the show	Some brands came popular after other shows	
4	101	103-104	I can't really think about the brand that became popular because of Gossip Girl	Doesn't remember any brand that became popular after Gossip Girl.	
4	101	108	I would love to afford them	Would buy luxury products if she could afford them	
4	101	109-110	I think if you go through more classic brands I would really love	Would buy luxury products from classic brands	

			to own a few pieces for sure		
4	102	116	I think because it is luxury	She wants to be part of the luxury world	<p>- Product placement is a better technique than advertisement in magazine because it is interactive and products are related to the characters</p> <p>C10 Opinion about luxury products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would buy luxury products if she could afford them - She likes classic brands the most - She wants to be part of the luxury world - She think that luxury products are investment - She thinks that luxury products they have better quality <p>She values the exclusivity of the luxury products regardless about the price</p> <p>C11 Distance of products in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She would worship luxury products because she cannot afford it - Luxury products are only affordable by rich people - She cannot afford the products so they are not accessible to her
4	102	116-117	bags for instance I think it is investment	She think that luxury products are investment	
4	102	117-118	you can have them for such a long time and they just become more beautiful	She thinks that luxury products are more durable and they become more beautiful after some time	
4	102	130	I wouldn't mind to have them	She would like to own products from Gossip Girl	
4	102	134-135	but then again I think if I buy something expensive, I worship it	Because she doesn't have some much money she would worship expensive product more than rich people	
4	102	135-136	they buy their expensive items like we buy like normal priced items	She thinks that rich people buy expensive products and they don't think about high price because they have money	
4	102	136-137	they don't really value the product as I would do	She values expensive products more than rich people	
4	102	142	it is not that they are expensive	High price is not a reason why she wants to own luxury products	
4	102	143	one of the reason is because if you buy like expensive brand not everyone is walking around with that peace	Unique design and that not everybody can afford luxury product are an arguments why she wants to buy luxury products	
4	102	143-144	you get more unique product than if you go to the H&M and buy bag there	Unique design is an argument for her to buy luxury products	
4	102	145	and the all because of the quality	The better quality of luxury products is an argument for her to buy them	
4	102	145-146	it is an investment that you can	Wants to spend money for luxury	

			have for years	products because they are investment	C12 Presentation of the brands in Gossip Girl - The products are shown on the characters. Characters they were and use the products C13 Awareness of the definition of product placement - She is awarded about what the product placement is
4	102	146-147	if I found something that I think is nice looking I don't care if it's from H&M or if it is Gucci	Price is not a factor when she wants to buy product	
4	102	152	not right now I am student	She has no money for luxury products because she is student and she doesn't have time to work	
4	102	152-153	if I had had money I would definitely do that	She would like to spend money for luxury products if she had money	
4	102	158	mostly like on people	The products are shown on the characters	
4	102	158-159	they wear the clothes and the bags and the shoes	The products are shown on the characters	
4	102	159	technological devices they also use them	The technological products that are placed in the show are used by characters	
4	103	160	and then of course there are cars and everything	There are also cars placed in the show	
4	103	160-161	the things I have noticed from I was watching the show is the brands that people actually wear	Mostly visible product placement in the show was in the clothes those which characters were wearing.	
4	103	166	I think I know what it is	She knows what product placement is	
4	103	166-169	because in some of the movies you see that they drink something but you cannot really know you don't really know what it is because they don't show the brand but if they show the brand it means that that company actually paid the production to show the brand	Her definition of product placement: Brands pays to the movie/show production to show their brands in shows or movie's plot.	
4	103	182	it is not something what I was thinking about	She didn't think about product placement in Gossip Girl	

4	103	184-185	there supposed to be this rich girls and it would be weird if they weren't wear expensive brands	Product placement is a part of the show and it is not so obvious because expensive products are part of life of rich people	
4	103	185	it's nothing that I would think about before	She didn't think about product placement in Gossip Girl. She didn't put attention on product placement in Gossip Girl.	
4	103	189	I guess I want that product more now	Product placement is an effective way of advertising strategy because she wants to own products presented in the show	
4	103	189-190	you see them in a different way	Different way of presenting product	
4	103	189-190	you don't see them in the same way like you can see a picture of them	Product presented in show is connected with the character in the show and it is presented better than in magazines	
4	103	202	I think that I am more aware of different collections	Because of product placement in show she is more aware of different collections	
4	103	203	I don't read a lot of fashion magazines like Elle	She doesn't read fashion magazines	
4	104	207-208	I get more information from blogs and fashion shows rather than from magazines	Blogs and fashion shows are better source of information than magazines	
4	104	214	No I don't think so	She didn't want to add anything to the interview	

3. Structuring content analysis

General information

C1 Viewing patterns

- She has seen whole series

C2 Reasons for watching

- Read the books before
- The books were funny with a lot of action
- Because of the books she wanted to watch the TV version

C3 Likes about the show

- Show was romantic and dramatic
- Show was diverse
- Nice clothes presented in the show

View of the luxury industry

C10 Opinion about luxury products

- Would buy luxury products if she could afford them
- She likes classic brands the most
- She wants to be part of the luxury world
- She thinks that luxury products are investment
- She thinks that luxury products they have better quality
- She values the exclusivity of the luxury products regardless about the price

C11 Distance of products in Gossip Girl

- She would worship luxury products because she cannot afford it
- Luxury products are only affordable by rich people
- She cannot afford the products so they are not accessible to her

Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

C13 Awareness of the definition of product placement

- She is awarded about what the product placement is

C5 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

- Product placement not visible (really subtle)
- Product placement was inspiring
- Product placement was not annoying
- She didn't think about brands placement through watching the show
- Product placement is integrated with the plot

C12 Presentation of the brands in Gossip Girl

- The products are shown on the characters. Characters they were and use the products

Effectiveness of the product placement in Gossip Girl

C4 Awareness about the brands

- The product she remember the most are macaroons
- She didn't remember a lot of fashion brands only few designers (Gucci and Louis Vuitton)
- She remembers mostly the appearance of the products rather than brands
- She remembers technological products (Samsung and Iphone) and cars

C6 Learning effects about product placement in gossip girl

- Viewers learn about fashion through product placement in Gossip Girl
- She knew the brands before so she didn't learn about any brand for the show
- Because of product placement in show she is more aware of different collections

C7 Effects of product placement on the viewer

- She got inspired how to dress up
- She tried to find something similar like that she noticed in the show
- She doesn't know if her opinion had change about brands after watching the show.
- She admitted that she got influenced by product placement
- She wants to own product more

C8 Importance of the character for product placement

- She wanted to buy product because one of her favorite character uses them.
- She is influenced by the character because she likes character behavior

C9 Effectiveness of product placement

- In general brands become popular because they were placed in shows (Manolo Blahnik in Sex and the city)
- She doesn't remember any brands that became popular because of Gossip Girl.
- She thinks that product placement is an effective advertisement strategy because she wants the products more after having watched the Gossip Girl
- Product placement is a better technique than advertisement in magazine because it is interactive and products are related to the characters

Appendix 7: Interview 5

1. Transcript

Name:

Master Thesis – Interview 5

Day of recording, time, place:

Wednesday April 19th, 13:00 a.m., library in IT building in Lindholmen, Gothenburg, minor background noises

Duration of the interview: 16:13 Minutes

Name of the person interviewing and transcribing: Monika Walicka

Name of the interviewee: Person 5

The participant is a female student in the Master of Communication at the University of Gothenburg. She is 25 years old and from Latvia. The interview is a semi-structured, qualitative interview. This interview took place in a face-to-face situation and was audio recorded. The atmosphere was friendly and the interviewed person was able to talk freely. Nevertheless she seemed to have some trouble expressing herself in English at some points.

Summary of the interview:

At the beginning the interviewee was asked to describe her Gossip Girl viewing patterns and her motives. She claimed that she has an idea about what it is product placement in general. She viewed product placement in Gossip Girl as good and effective advertising technique. She knew that some brands were presented in Gossip Girl but could not remember any names. She did furthermore not feel influenced by their placement.

The interview was transcribed on April 19th.

- 1 **Interviewer:** So (-) can you tell me (.) how often did you watch gossip girl, (.) and did you see (.)
2 like who:le show or (.) just few episodes? #00:00:10-6#
3
4 **Person 5:** I have seen:: to (.) all the episodes to (--) the new season (-) I haven't start watched
5 new season #00:00:19-7#
6
7 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) the last one (.) you mean, #00:00:21-8#
8
9 **Person 5:** Yes #00:00:22-1#
10
11 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) am:: #00:00:24-8#
12
13 **Person 5:** And I usually don't watch it on the TV (.) I have I have found a site (.) where you can
14 watch it online #00:00:31-0#
15
16 **Interviewer:** Mhm #00:00:31-6#
17
18 **Person 5:** So when I watch it then I watch it (.) for two weeks in a row (.) whole season so (.) I

19 don't follow it like (-) for a longer period #00:00:42-0#

20

21 **Interviewer:** Ok am:: so (.) why did you watch it , and: (-) what did you like the most about
22 show, #00:00:47-5#

23

24 **Person 5:** I watch it because (.) my friend suggested to me (-- what I like the most, (---) I found
25 that (.) show a bit funny (.) and realistic (---) but it's (.) it is (-) a leisure (-- you can watch it you
26 don't have to think about (---) things (.) because it is quite simple (-- it is for youngsters (.) I
27 believe (-- so yeah it is for leisure (.) this is why I like it (.) it's entertainment #00:01:27-9#

28

29 **Interviewer:** Ok (-- you said it is realistic, #00:01:30-9#

30

31 **Person 5:** not realistic #00:01:33-1#

32

33 **Interviewer:** not realistic, #00:01:31-9#

34

35 **Person 5:** not realistic #00:01:32-9#

36

37 **Interviewer:** ok (.) am:: can you name am::(.) some brands that they appear (.) in the gossip girl,
38 #00:01:39-7#

39

40 **Interviewer:** Did you notice any brand, #00:01:44-4#

41

42 **Person 5:** I know that they are wearing a lot of (-- designer clothes (-- but (.) I am quite bad
43 in(.) recognizing (.)them so I haven't actually noticed (-) <f>particular </f> names (.) but I know
44 (-- that they are also (.) this (-) made up brand (-) I think it is doesn't exist (.) but Blair's mother
45 (-)this is I think the only(---) brand I have noticed like (.) specific (.) they might be others but (--
46)you know when I watch it (.) I don't pay any much attention to (.) that #00:02:23-8#

47

48 **Interviewer:** ok a::: (---).So you said that there like (-) a lot clothes that they wear, that you are
49 aware that they were designer clothes, #00:02:40-4#

50

51 **Person 5:** yes #00:02:42-5#

52

53 **Interviewer:** am:: how do you feel about (.) this thing, it was (-- for you (.) it was (-- did you
54 like it, (.) or it was annoying, I don't know (-) what was (.) your feelings about that, #00:02:53-
55 0#

56

57 **Person 5:** No (-) I like it? (.) I like that they (---) person who is making costumes for this:: series
58 (-- he or she (-- can make good looks (-- and (.) I actually I pay more attention to that look as a
59 whole:: not a particular thing and I think (.) an I think (-) it is nice that in the move (.) or (.)
60 anywhere people are nice dressed (---) and (.) in this particular (-- movie (-- I think it is (.)
61 relevant because it is about (.) that kind of lifestyle (.) so I think it is not annoying for me (-- it
62 how it should be (.) it would be different (-) than (.) it might (-) be disturbing #00:03:47-4#

63

64 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) so:: you cannot mention (.) any brands (.) any brand (.) that appears there,
65 #00:03:54-3#

66
67 **Person 5:** N:::(---) I know (.) they wear these (-) bags (--) Louis Vuitton maybe, #00:04:04-9#
68
69 **Interviewer:** M::: #00:04:06-0#
70
71 **Person 5:** But I haven't noticed like the brand name (.) on this (-) bag but maybe because of this
72 fo:rm (.) I know (--) this is maybe the only (--) one of the some brands that I know and they are
73 this particular form (.) of the bags #00:04:22-9#
74
75 **Interviewer:** M::: #00:04:23-7#
76
77 **Person 5:** and maybe (.) because of the form (--) I think that this is Louis Vuitton but (-) I
78 haven't seen the sign on the bag or (.) something like that #00:04:32-7#
79
80 **Interviewer:** ok (.) You didn't learn about any brand that you didn't know before, that you
81 haven't know before, #00:04:39-8#
82
83 **Person 5:** hhh. (---) maybe if I would watch (.) it now and see (.) than I would realized yeah::
84 actually I have noticed that before (-) and I didn't know that there is such a brand (-) but now
85 when you ask me (-) no (.) because h. the last time I watch this (---) episode it was (.) maybe (--)
86 three:: months ago. #00:05:04-7#
87
88 **Interviewer:** ok #00:05:05-6#
89
90 **Person 5:** so (--) no (.) I don't (---) no #00:05:12-1#
91
92 **Interviewer:** ok #00:05:12-8#
93
94 **Person 5:** but (.) maybe if you named (.) that I would know (.) I would (-) remember some
95 episode (.) something like that #00:05:17-9#
96
97 **Interviewer:** so am::: When you(.) when you (.) saw the clothes or the fashion it didn't influence
98 (.) on you (-) in (-) any way, (-) you didn't try to copy, #00:05:35-8#
99
100 **Person 5:** Not the brand::: (-) I mean as I said I pay attention to looks (-) not particular brand (.)
101 and for me I for example see (.) or she has nice green skirt (-) I might have nice green skirt as
102 well (-) but it doesn't mean that I need a brand (-) green skirt(--) it doesn't influence me in that
103 way (.) the look influence me (--) how (-) yeah I might thinking o:: this is trendy now?
104 #00:06:07-6#
105
106 **Interviewer:** So::: in the same way? it affects on you, #00:06:09-5#
107
108 **Person 5:** yeah? the look (--) I think this is also a way how to follow (-) the trends (.) and style (.)
109 and fashion (.) in the industry (--) because I think they try to put all news (--) so it influence me (-
110 -) so I see what it is (--) what it is related to nowadays fashion now (.) so I could catch some
111 ideas. #00:06:40-4#
112

113 **Interviewer:** m:: So what do you (-) y:: what feelings this show in general and the lifestyle (.) of
114 the characters convey on your own life and why? #00:06:54-9#

115
116 **Person 5:** sorry, #00:06:54-6#

117
118 **Interviewer:** Like a:: (--) why(.) why(.) am:: why do think why:: (-) because what reasons the
119 things like you said about the skirt #00:07:05-6#

120
121 **Person 5:** Mhm #00:07:06-3#

122
123 **Interviewer:** Influence on (.) your own lifestyle, in what way, #00:07:11-6#

124
125 **Person 5:** I am not sure (.) if I understood the question, #00:07:17-3#

126
127 **Interviewer:** Like a:: you said that you follow the:: #00:07:25-2#

128
129 **Person 5:** I could see what it is (.) in the fashion now (.) #00:07:27-0#

130
131 **Interviewer:** ok #00:07:27-8#

132
133 **Person 5:** like (.) what is trendy now #00:07:29-3#

134
135 **Interviewer:** ok #00:07:30-5#

136
137 **Person 5:** wow (-) that I might not be the person you really follow the fashion (.) so (.) I like to
138 see (.) a look if nice if looks good (-) and maybe if I would have an opportunity (.) I would (--)
139 copy in some way (.) this look (-) but it's not that (.) I see a look and now I need it (-) and I am
140 going to (.) buy something similar (.) so (--) I am like a (--) visual aesthetic (-) I like to watch but
141 (.) it doesn't mean that I nee::d it (-) maybe because I cannot afford that (.) So I don't pay
142 attention to that (-) I see o:: it looks nice (--) people in journals also looks nice (.) It doesn't mean
143 that I just copy them (--) so I don't (.) I don't really think if (---) some bra::nds influence me (--)
144 from movies #00:08:37-4#

145
146 **Interviewer:** ok (.) so (.) a:: (--) what do you think in general about the (.) luxury products (.)
147 then, #00:08:50-9#

148
149 **Person 5:** a:: they are: I think qualitative (.) depends (-) on the designer (--) of course. More
150 qualitative then (.) general ones (-) they:: might also:: be (.) a bit more interesting (-) as (--) they
151 are (.) or should be original (-) This is why they are expensive (--) yeah (.) they are very
152 expensive (-) maybe too expensive (---) and (.) I think there is (.) a this particular group in
153 sociality who needs that but (.) I might not be in that particular group (-) yet. Maybe I will have a
154 lot of money (.) then I will spend it for brand clothes but #00:09:38-7#

155
156 **Interviewer:** why, #00:09:39-6#

157
158 **Person 5:** why, (--) because of the quality (.) I think (-) well:: it depends what you mean brand,
159 (-) Diesel is brand (.) and (-) I don't know (-) Prada is brand #00:09:53-3#

160
161 **Interviewer:** mhm (.) yeah:: I mean about the luxury products (--) so they are quite more
162 expensive like Prada or:, #00:10:03-5#
163
164 **Person 5:** yeah:: You know I don't(.) I might (-) because I don't come from very luxury family
165 (.) so:: that (.) all the expensive clothes for me (--) like (-) sometime or on very special event I
166 would wear it (-) but in everyday (.) so (---) I think I wouldn't buy those luxury products because
167 (-) I wouldn't wear them (.) because for me: (-) it is something (.) for very special event which
168 might never come hh. #00:10:39-1#
169
170 **Interviewer:** ok (.) so:: even if you can afford for that, like you have money, #00:10:46-1#
171
172 **Person 5:** o:: I don't know (.) (laugh) I don't know (--) so:: we will see, #00:10:48-9#
173
174 **Interviewer:** ok (.) would you like to own the products that they show in gossip girl, #00:10:55-
175 0#
176
177 **Person 5:** I would like to own the looks (--) as I said I don't pay attention to (.) brands or
178 products (.) I see look (.) how they (.) look together #00:11:08-7#
179
180 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) so if the one of the characters will have nice (--) t-shirt or something (.) you
181 would like to have it? if it.. #00:11:18-3#
182
183 **Person 5:** I would like to have similar (.) I don't need that particular (-) maybe that is very
184 expensive (--) As I believe (.) I can find something similar #00:11:28-5#
185
186 **Interviewer:** ok #00:11:29-6#
187
188 **Person 5:** to (.) copy that look. #00:11:30-6#
189
190 **Interviewer:** w:hy, #00:11:32-8#
191
192 **Person 5:** Because I like how it looks together. #00:11:34-9#
193
194 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) so you want to copy, this is the reason, #00:11:38-0#
195
196 **Person 5:** What, #00:11:40-9#
197
198 **Interviewer:** the clothes (-) the look (.) of the character? #00:11:44-6#
199
200 **Person 5:** ah:: the chara (--) yeah, (.) maybe (---) I want to copy the look. #00:11:56-3#
201
202 **Interviewer:** yeah yeah yeah... #00:11:56-6#
203
204 **Person 5:** not the clothes (.) itself (---) maybe I like for example how the colours go together
205 #00:12:03-9#
206

207 **Interviewer:** ok #00:12:04-5#
208
209 **Person 5:** I don't even need (-) maybe she is worki (.) yh wearing the shirt (-) I need the jumper
210 in the same colour because I see that she has blue jeans and (-) I don't know (--) green shirt (.) I
211 need green jumper and (.)it looks good (.) because those colours I going together (.) not because I
212 need (--) the same thing #00:12:26-8#
213
214 **Interviewer:** Ok (.)am: Can you explain me how (.) brands appear in gossip girl, (.) because you
215 said that (.) there for sure some brands that they appear, (.) so (-) can you explain me in what way
216 they appear there, #00:12:44-3#
217
218 **Person 5:** Like in everyday situation (.) like they are wearing designer clothes (---) because it is
219 re (.) relevant for their lifestyle (--) yeah (.) this is (.) basically how they appear #00:12:59-5#
220
221 **Interviewer:** ok.. am: are you aware what it is product placement (.) and you can explain what it
222 is, if yes, #00:13:09-5#
223
224 **Person 5:** Product placement it is like (--) Yeah (.) I have an idea what is that (-) how to explain,
225 (---) It's so when you want to put this brand into some episodes (-) maybe (---) for (.) a particular
226 reason (-) maybe for: like general (.) I think (--) for example in this particular episode they need
227 (-) Blair to wear this and this brand (.) because it is somehow related (-) I don't know (.) to idea
228 their (--) trend #00:13:48-4#
229
230 **Interviewer:** Ok (-) am:: aaa:: were you aware that product placement was present in gossip girl
231 before (.) the interview with me? #00:14:01-3#
232
233 **Person 5:** yes #00:14:02-8#
234
235 **Interviewer:** ok e:: did you think about it (.) before, #00:14:08-3#
236
237 **Person 5:** no #00:14:09-1#
238
239 **Interviewer:** ok (.) a:: what it is your opinion about product placement in gossip girl, (---) is it
240 good, (.) or; #00:14:19-6#
241
242 **Person 5:** a:: ok (---) I don't mind (-) Oh:: but if this is good, (---) maybe it's not that good (-)
243 wo:: as I said it doesn't affect me (.) but I believe that many young people watch this (-) and then
244 they want (-) and then they ask their parents (-) maybe in that case (.) it's not that good (--) yes I
245 don't think that #00:14:47-3#
246
247 **Interviewer:** I mean that (.) if the product placement is effective, #00:14:49-8#
248
249 **Person 5:** is this effective, #00:14:52-1#
250
251 **Interviewer:** Effective way of the selling the products, #00:14:56-3#
252
253 **Person 5:** yeah:: yeah::? I think so (.) For people who are interested in fashion (.) I think it's very

254 effective (.) for them (-) for people like me, (--) yeah, (.) in some way (--) as I said (.) I still notice
255 something (.) so (---) #00:15:19-7#
256
257 **Interviewer:** So:: do you think (.) that product placement in gossip girl (.) is effective
258 advertisement strategy, #00:15:25-7#
259
260 **Person 5:** I think so #00:15:30-3#
261
262 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) how do you think you (.) were affected by this, if you were, #00:15:35-6#
263
264 **Person 5:** I don't think I am (.) I:: (--) wo:: maybe I am (.) I just don't realize that #00:15:44-4#
265
266 **Interviewer:** Ok (.) am:: do you want to add something, do you want to add something (.) more,
267 #00:15:51-5#
268
269 **Person 5:** I don't think so #00:15:53-7#
270
271 **Interviewer:** Ok (-) I need a:: some demographic information (.) like your age (.) what you are
272 studying (.) in which level (.) and your nationality #00:16:02-8#
273
274 **Person 5:** I am 25 years old (.) from Latvia (.) studying Master in Communication #00:16:13-4#
275
276 **Interviewer:** Thank you #00:16:11-8#
277
278 **Person 5:** You welcome #00:16:13-3#

2. Summarizing content analysis

Interview number	Page number	Line number	Paraphrase	Generalisation	Reduction
5	113	4-5	I have seen all the episodes to the last season I haven't start watched last season	Have seen all episodes till last season	C1 Viewing patterns - She has seen all episodes apart of last season of the Gossip Girl - Watched it on very frequent basis C2 Reasons for watching - Because of the friend suggestion C3 Likes about the show - Surreal part of the show - Show was funny for her C4 Awareness about the brands - She is aware that brands were presented in the Gossip Girl - She did not remember a lot of brands portrayed in Gossip Girl, she named only one brand (Louis Vuitton) - She remembers the fictional brand from the show - She recognized the brands because of the product's shape - She did not learn about any brand that she have not known before - Maybe while watching the show consciously she would be able to
5	113	13-14	I usually don't watch it on the TV I have I have found a site where you can watch it online	She watches it on internet website	
5	113	18	I watch it for two weeks in a row whole season	Watched it on very frequent basis	
5	114	24	I watch it because my friend suggested to me	Watched it because of friend suggestion	
5	114	24-25	I found that show a bit funny	Watched it because it was funny	
5	114	25	it is a leisure	Watched it in a free time	
5	114	25-26	you can watch it you don't have to think about thing because it is quite simple	Quite simple plot	
5	114	26	it is for youngers	It is for young people	
5	114	27	it's entertainment	Watched Gossip Girl as a means of entertainment	
5	114	31	It's not realistic	Likes the most surreal part of the show	
5	114	42	I know that they are wearing a lot of designer clothes	Knew that some of the brands are present in show	
5	114	42-43	I am quite bed in recognizing them	Doesn't remember any brand names that appeared in the show	
5	114	43	I haven't actually noticed particular names	Doesn't remember any brand names that appeared in the show	

5	114	43-44	I know that they are also this made up brand I think it is doesn't exist	Noticed the brand that was created for show needs	recognize the brand that she had not known before
5	114	44-45	but Blair's mother this is I think the only brand I have noticed like specific	Noticed the brand that was created for show needs	- She did not put attention to the brands and products because she knows that she cannot afford them
5	114	45-46	they might be others but when I watch it I don't pay any much attention to that	Didn't pay attention to brand names	- She puts more attention to the look rather than brand
5	114	57-58	I like that the person who is making costumes for this series he or she can make good looks	She likes the looks of the characters from Gossip Girl	C5 Perception of the product placement
5	114	58-59	I pay more attention to that look as a whole not a particular thing	She puts attention to the whole look of the character not to the particular brand	- Products are integrated with the plot of the show
5	114	59-61	in this particular movie I think it is relevant because it is about that kind of lifestyle	Expensive products are integrated with the plot and character's lifestyle	- She did not think about the product placement portrayed in the show before the interview
5	114	61	so I think it is not annoying for me	Product placement in Gossip Girl does not annoyed her	- Product placement portrayed in Gossip Girl was not annoying for her
5	115	67	I know they wear these bags Louis Vuitton maybe	She remember brand name. She mention about Louis Vuitton.	- She is aware that product placement is presented in Gossip Girl
5	115	71-72	But I haven't noticed the brand name on this bag but maybe because of this form	Did not notice the brand. Recognized brand name because of the form of a product	C6 Opinion about the fashion presented in the Gossip Girl
5	115	77-78	and maybe because of the form I think that this is Louis Vuitton but I haven't seen the sign on the bag	Recognized brand name because of the form of a product	- She likes the looks of the characters from the show
5	115	83-84	maybe if I would watch it now and see than I would realized that actually I have noticed that before and I didn't know that there is such a brand	If she had watched the Gossip Girl and had look for the brands consciously maybe she would be able to recognize some of the brands those she haven't known	- she puts attention to the whole look of the character not to the particular product
					-She would wear expensive clothes only for special occasions

				before	
5	115	84-86	but now when you ask me - no because the last time I watch this episode it was maybe three months ago	She did not notice any brand that she haven't known before watching he Gossip Girl	C7 Learning effects about product placement in Gossip Girl - People can learn about new products on market from Gossip Girl - She did not learn about any brands from the show - She learns about fashion from Gossip Girl
5	115	90	so no I don't learn about any brand from Gossip girl	She didn't learn about any brand from Gossip girl	
5	115	94-95	maybe if you named that I would know I would remember some episode	She does not actively remember any brand form Gossip Girl	
5	115	100	I mean as I said I pay attention to looks not particular brand	She puts more attention on the look of the character rather than on brand	C8 Effects of product placement on the viewer - She gets inspired by products presented in the show - Learning effects about product placement is not so strong because she is not interested in fashion and luxury products - She is more influenced by the look rather than brand - She thinks that product placement does not affect her
5	115	101-102	she has nice green skirt I might have nice green skirt as well but it doesn't mean that I need a brand green skirt	She puts more attention on the look of the character rather than on brand	
5	115	103	the look influence me	She is influenced by look of the character	
5	115	103	I might thinking this is trendy now	Because of the looks presented in Gossip Girl she learns more about fashion	C9 Opinion about luxury products - Luxury products are qualitative - Luxury products are expensive and sometimes not worth the price - Luxury products supposed to be more unique - She is undecided if she would spend money for the luxury products - Some brands have better quality than
5	115	108-109	I think this is also a way how to follow the trends and style and fashion	She gets inspired by the products presented in the Gossip Girl	
5	115	109	I think they try to put all news so it influence me	She learns about new products on the market from the show	
5	115	110-111	I see what it is related to nowadays fashion now so I could catch some ideas	She gets inspired by the products presented in the Gossip Girl	
5	116	137	I might not be the person you really follow the fashion	In her opinion she is not the person who follow the fashion	

5	116	137-139	I like to see a look if nice if looks good and maybe if I would have an opportunity I would copy in some way this look	Sometimes she tries to copy the look of the characters from Gossip Girl	others
5	116	139-140	it's not that I see a look and now I need it and I am going to buy something similar	Very frequent change of clothes in Gossip Girl	C10 Distance of products from Gossip Girl - For her luxury products are only for special occasions
5	116	140	I am like a visual aesthetic	She appreciated nice looks	- She is not a part of social group which buys luxury products
5	116	140-141	I like to watch but it doesn't mean that I need it maybe because I cannot afford that	Probably she does not put attention to the brands because she knows that she cannot afford them	- She substitutes expensive products by cheaper ones
5	116	141-142	So I don't pay attention to that	Does not pay attention to expensive brands	C11 Awareness what product placement is
5	116	142	people in journals also looks nice it doesn't mean that I just copy them	Usually does not copy the look she saw in the media	- She thinks that she has an idea about what product placement is but her definition is not correct
5	116	143-144	I don't really think if some brands influence me from movies	She thinks that brands does not influence her	
5	116	149	they are I think qualitative depends on the designer of course	Luxury products are qualitative	C12 Presentation about the brands in Gossip Girl
5	116	150-151	they might also be a bit more interesting as they are or should be original	Luxury products supposed to be more interesting because they have unique design	- The products are placed in everyday situation
5	116	151-152	they are very expensive maybe too expensive	Luxury product are expensive and sometimes not worth the price	- The products are shown on the characters
5	116	152-153	I think there is this particular group in society who needs that but I might not be in that particular group yet	She is not a part of the group in society which buys luxury products	C13 Opinion about product placement
5	116	153-154	Maybe I will have a lot of money then I will spend it for brand clothes	She would like to spend money for she luxury products if she can afford them	- She believed that product placement can be effective way of advertisement but only for people that they are interested in the product presented in the show
5	116	158	because of the quality I think	Quality is the reason why she wants	

				to own luxury products	- Even if she is not interested in fashion she still noticed product placement in the Gossip Girl
5	116	158-159	well it depends what you mean brand, Diesel is brand and I don't know Prada is brand	There is a difference in the quality of different products from different brands	
5	117	164-165	I don't come from very luxury family so that all the expensive clothes for me like sometime or on very special event I would wear it	She comes from rather poor family that is why she wears expensive clothes only for special occasions	
5	117	166	I think I wouldn't buy those luxury products	She cannot afford luxury products that is why she does not buy them	
5	117	166-167	I wouldn't wear them because for me it is something for very special event which might never come	She would wear expensive clothes only for special occasion	
5	117	172	I don't know if I would buy luxury products if I had money	She is undecided if she would buy luxury products	
5	117	177	I would like to own the looks	She is interested in the character's look	
5	117	177-178	I don't pay attention to brands or products I see look	She is interested in looks not in the brands or products	
5	117	183	I would like to have similar I don't need that particular	She substitutes some of the products that she saw in the Gossip Girl	
5	117	183-184	maybe that is very expensive as I believe I can find something similar	She substitutes expensive products by cheaper ones	
5	117	192	Because I like how it looks together	She puts attention to the look	
5	117	200-204	I want to copy the look not the clothes itself maybe I like for example how the colours go together	She gets inspired by the look of the character and she tries to copy it	
5	118	218	Like in everyday situation	The products are placed in	

				everyday situation	
5	118	218-219	like they are wearing designer clothes because it is relevant for their lifestyle	The characters wear the products presented in Gossip Girl	
5	118	224-228	It's so when you want to put this brand into some episodes maybe for a particular reason I think for example in this particular episode they need Blair to wear this and this brand because it is somehow related I don't know to idea their trend	Her definition about what product placement is. She does not really know what products placement is.	
5	118	233	Yes (I was awarded that product placement is present in Gossip Girl)	She is awarded that product placement is presented in show.	
5	118	237	No (I didn't think about product placement in Gossip Girl before)	She didn't think about product placement in show before the interview	
5	118	242	I don't mind	She in not bothered by product placement presented in Gossip Girl	
5	118	242-243	maybe it's not that good as I said it doesn't affect me	Product placement is a not good advertisement strategy because it didn't affect her	
5	118	243-245	I believe that many young people watch this and then they want and then they ask their parents maybe in that case it's not that good	She believes that product placement may affect others viewers	
5	118-119	253-254	for people who are interested in fashion I think it's very effective for them	Product placement is effective way of advertising if the viewers are interested in this specific field	
5	119	254-255	for people like me, in some way as I said I still notice something	Even if she is not interested in fashion and luxury products she	

				still noticed that product placement is presented in Gossip Girl	
5	119	260	I think so. (Product placement is effective way of advertisement strategy)	Product placement is effective way of advertisement strategy	
5	119	264	I don't think I am affected by product placement maybe I am I just don't realize that	Product placement in Gossip Girl does not affect her or affect her unconsciously	

3. Structuring content analysis

General information

C1 Viewing patterns

- She has seen all episodes apart of last season of the Gossip Girl
- Watched it on very frequent basis

C2 Reasons for watching

- Because of the friend suggestion

C3 Likes about the show

- Surreal part of the show
- Show was funny for her

View of the luxury industry

C9 Opinion about luxury products

- Luxury products are qualitative
- Luxury products are expensive and sometimes not worth the price
- Luxury products supposed to be more unique
- She is undecided if she would spend money for the luxury products
- Some brands have better quality than others

C6 Opinion about the fashion presented in the Gossip Girl

- She likes the looks of the characters from the show
- She puts attention to the whole look of the character not to the particular product
- She would wear expensive clothes only for special occasions

C10 Distance of products from Gossip Girl

- For her luxury products are only for special occasions
- She is not a part of social group which buys luxury products
- She substitutes expensive products by cheaper ones

Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

C11 Awareness of product placement

- She thinks that she has an idea about what product placement is but her definition is not correct

C5 Perception of the product placement

- Products are integrated with the plot of the show
- She did not think about the product placement portrayed in the show before the interview
- Product placement portrayed in Gossip Girl was not annoying for her

- She is aware that product placement is presented in Gossip Girl

C12 Presentation about the brands in Gossip Girl

- The products are placed in everyday situation
- The products are shown on the characters

C13 Opinion about product placement

- She believed that product placement can be effective way of advertisement but only for people that they are interested in the product presented in the show
- Even if she is not interested in fashion she still noticed product placement in the Gossip Girl

Effectiveness of the product placement in Gossip Girl

C4 Awareness about the brands

- She is aware that brands were presented in the Gossip Girl
- She did not remember a lot of brands portrayed in Gossip Girl, she named only one brand (Louis Vuitton)
- She remembers the fictional brand from the show
- She recognized the brands because of the product's shape
- She did not learn about any brand that she has not known before
- Maybe while watching the show consciously she would be able to recognize the brand that she had not known before
- She did not put attention to the brands and products because she knows that she cannot afford them
- She puts more attention to the look rather than brand

C7 Learning effects about product placement in Gossip Girl

- People can learn about new products on market from Gossip Girl
- She did not learn about any brands from the show
- She learns about fashion from Gossip Girl

C8 Effects of product placement on the viewer

- She gets inspired by products presented in the show
- Learning effects about product placement is not so strong because she is not interested in fashion and luxury products
- She is more influenced by the look rather than brand
- She thinks that product placement does not affect her

Appendix 8: Interview 6

1. Transcript

Name:

Master Thesis – Interview 6

Day of recording, time, place:

Wednesday April 24th, 12:25 p.m., IT University, Lindholmen, Gothenburg, rather loud background noises

Duration of the interview: 12:19 Minutes

Name of the person interviewing and transcribing: Carolin Moll

Name of the interviewee: Person 6

The participant is a female student in the Master of Communication at the University of Gothenburg. She is 24 years old and from Italy. The interview is a semi-structured, qualitative interview. This interview took place in a face-to-face situation and was audio recorded. The atmosphere was friendly and the interviewed person was able to talk freely.

Summary of the interview:

At the beginning the interviewee was asked to describe her Gossip Girl viewing patterns and her motives. She claimed not really being aware of product placement in Gossip Girl before the interview. Product placement in Gossip Girl is not bothering her although it gives her the feeling of not being part of that world. She wishes to own the products shown in Gossip Girl mainly because she likes fashion. She recalled a lot of brands placed in Gossip Girl but does not feel very much influenced as she cannot afford those products.

The interview was transcribed on April 24th 25th and 26th.

1 **Interviewer:** Okay so to start (.) can you tell me how often do you watch Gossip Girl in
2 general have you seen all the seasons: and (.) how regularly #00:00:08-4#

3
4 **Person 6:** Eh there was a period (.) I was (.) watching it like every night I was (.) watching on
5 streaming a:nd now I don't see it (.) I don't watch it anymore it's just when (-) it happens that
6 it's on tv #00:00:22-5#

7
8 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) have you seen all the seasons, #00:00:24-6#

9
10 **Person 6:** Ehhm (.) no I I saw some seasons, (.) entirely but not every season #00:00:31-3#

11
12 **Interviewer:** Okay .h can you tell me why you chose to watch it and what you liked the most
13 about the show, #00:00:36-6#

14
15 **Person 6:** Because there were many people talking about it and I saw many advertisement in
16 tv .h and then I started to watch it #00:00:44-5#

17
18 **Interviewer:** What did you like the most #00:00:46-8#

19
20 **Person 6:** It's (.) I think it's that it was so (.) un(.)real for me and so distant and:: it's
21 something that never happens at least where I live .h so: for me it was just fascinating to see
22 these (.) other perspective of life and (.) yeah (--) and then fashion and all those things
23 #00:01:09-4#

24

25 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) so now that you just mentioned like the fashion can you maybe name
26 some brands that appeared in Gossip Girl? #00:01:15-8#
27
28 **Person 6:** Ehm (.) Prada (laughs) Chanel I think Burberry (-) ehm (.) I am sure there are many
29 other cause (.) yeah (-) yeah #00:01:28-3#
30
31 **Interviewer:** Okay .hh so did you know these brands before, #00:01:31-3#
32
33 **Person 6:** Do you mean (.) in: #00:01:34-8#
34
35 **Interviewer:** Yeah before watching the show did you ever hear of those brands did you know
36 them #00:01:37-8#
37
38 **Person 6:** Oh yeah of course yes #00:01:39-0#
39
40 **Interviewer:** And eh (.) by watching Gossip Girl did your opinion or view on these brands
41 change in any way #00:01:44-5#
42
43 **Person 6:** I discovered many other brands and I wanted to have more (laughs) of those brands
44 (-) ehh::m yeah maybe you recognize I mean I can recognize (.) many other brands more
45 easily and (.) maybe desire some of those things (.) too (laughs) #00:02:00-3#
46
47 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) why do you want those things (.) is this related to Gossip Girl, do you
48 feel influenced there, #00:02:05-3#
49
50 **Person 6:** No I think (.) I mean (-) in a way probably it does (.) but I (.) really (.) like those
51 things (.) I I mean I like fashion I like clothes I like bags (laughs) .h so: it's something like (.)
52 a reason more (.) to buy those things maybe yeah #00:02:24-6#
53
54 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) in in what you say maybe it's a reason more that you want to buy those
55 things can you say in what way it influenced you there? #00:02:31-1#
56
57 **Person 6:** Oh yes probably because Gossip Girl is something unreal for me cause it's so (.)
58 distant from my reality and I mean (.) for in a way it's like (.) a dream cause their problems
59 are like stupid things .h and: they don't face real problems .h so I think it's a way to get closer
60 to them and: .h like (.) simulating you're living another life and (.) yeah (.) with different
61 preoccupations and things (.) to care #00:03:01-7#
62
63 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) so (.) are you saying that you would like to have a life like they have,
64 #00:03:06-6#
65
66 **Person 6:** .hh not exactly because in (.) somehow I like (.) their life because it's like (.) they
67 don't have many things to worry about, .h but I do:n't (.) I don't share many of their behaviors
68 and attitudes or behavior like ehm (.) you know when you have (.) like (.) a list of important
69 things in life (.) and (.) yeah I don't share that (.) with them (.) so: (.) in a way it would be (.)
70 funny it would be (.) nice to try but not to (.) exactly lead their life #00:03:41-5#
71
72 **Interviewer:** Okay: (.) so in ah in the sense that they are like very rich and they can buy
73 whatever they want eh when you see that in the show how do you feel about your own life
74 does it influence you in any way #00:03:52-5#
75

76 **Person 6:** No I just feel that (.) they don't realize how much (.) money are important for other
77 people (.) because I just (.) sometimes it just a wasting of money (.) ehm (.) this is probably (.)
78 also a reason why I would like to (.) I mean get closer to them because .h I cannot (.) afford it
79 wasting of money (-) eh yeah that's my perception #00:04:15-6#

80

81 **Interviewer:** Can you tell me what you think in general about luxury products not just the
82 products you can see in Gossip Girl #00:04:22-2#

83

84 **Person 6:** Eh of course I like them (laughs) .h but yeah sometimes I feel (.) if I have (.) for
85 example to choose .h between a (.) very (-) ah expensive bag and maybe some travels or
86 something like that .h then (.) I prefer to travel or (.) something that can make me (.) rich as a
87 person and not (.) ehm doesn't make rich just my wardrobe (laughs) #00:04:45-7#

88

89 **Interviewer:** Yeah okay okay (.) ehm why do you think that in general people are attracted to
90 such products and and you as well why are you attracted to such products #00:04:54-9#

91

92 **Person 6:** .h I think because it's a way to get accepted from other people (.) in a way ah
93 yesterday I was discussing with my boyfriend that (.) some the place (.) in the place where I
94 come from (.) ah it's like (.) people (.) ah have the only ambition to (-) like look better and buy
95 .h expensive stuff and all those things because they don't have other people to (.) compare
96 with and talk about .h something really interesting or like their ambitions they just their main
97 ambition is to buy .h eh something new each week or something like that (--): so:: yeah I think
98 it depends on these because in some (.) cultures in some environment then having something
99 new it's (.) like a new way to get accepted or (-) socialized with people sometimes #00:05:46-
100 2#

101

102 **Interviewer:** Yeah ok (-) ehm: (-) so: (.) you said that you wanted to products in Gossip Girl
103 if I understood right (.) did you ever buy something like this? like you saw in the show?
104 #00:05:58-6#

105

106 **Person 6:** No because they are to this (.) expensive (laughs) #00:06:01-0#

107

108 **Interviewer:** But (.) w would you be willing to spend so much money on things if you had it,
109 #00:06:05-0#

110

111 **Person 6:** Ehm I think it (.) depends because then when you have money cause I could do that
112 (.) I had the choice to do that and I preferred to (-) spend my money in a different way than
113 buying those things (.) ah so (.) yeah #00:06:20-9#

114

115 **Interviewer:** Ehm but when you say you like fashion like such products do you have any
116 substitution behavior, like that you try to find something similar but (.) cheaper, (.) for
117 example #00:06:30-9#

118

119 **Person 6:** Yeah I do that (.) I mean I have something (.) which is not that cheap and: maybe
120 sometimes I buy those (.) kind of products .h but then I try like to compensate with other
121 products that (.) yeah (.) are (.) real really nice and yeah but ah (.) cheaper #00:06:47-8#

122

123 **Interviewer:** Okay (-) so now that we talked that a lot of brands appear in Gossip Girl can
124 you maybe mention some examples of how the brands appeared in the show, you remember
125 something about that, #00:06:57-7#

126

127 **Person 6:** Eh the picture of Prada in the eh one of the apartments (-) and: Chanel I think in (.)
128 some bags and (.) jewelry and about jewelry even (.) it's funny (.) and then eh (.) Burberry I
129 think yes clothes b but most of them most of them are clothes or bags or shoes #00:07:21-3#
130

131 **Interviewer:** Okay(.) and how do you feel that they are incorporated in the show do you have
132 any example how they: (.) actually appear in the show you know what I mean, #00:07:29-6#
133

134 **Person 6:** Not exactly #00:07:30-7#
135

136 **Interviewer:** Like for example that people just wear them or people mention them or you see
137 it do you have some examples about that #00:07:36-1#
138

139 **Person 6:** Okay I think they (.) I mean they wear them but they also .h in a way make this
140 explicit yeah where something very maybe they don't name the the brand but they (.) ah make
141 some referments to such that (.) it's something re really expensive and not that cheap that (.)
142 not everybody can allow those (.) kind of (.) clothes or whatever #00:07:55-6#
143

144 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) eh were you actually aware that there is product placement in Gossip
145 Girl before: this interview #00:08:01-9#
146

147 **Person 6:** No #00:08:03-0#
148

149 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) so you actually never thought about it #00:08:05-8#
150

151 **Person 6:** I mean (.) ah (-) yeah (-) I thought (.) something (-) yeah cau (.) I don't know but (.)
152 in Italy it happens and sometimes .h that it's not exactly: allowed (.) but it happens anyway (.)
153 so: I I noticed it but it didn't know if it was on purpose or not #00:08:23-9#
154

155 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) did it bother you in any way, or how do you feel about product
156 placement in Gossip Girl #00:08:30-0#
157

158 **Person 6:** .h ah I mean sometimes cause (.) yo you know I sometimes you feel that (-) that
159 that isn't why they do that it's like you will never (.) be like them (laughs) so: .h that's
160 annoying .h but ah not not that much I mean (.) that (--)) depends on the moments I think
161 (laughs) #00:08:51-8#
162

163 **Interviewer:** Okay so in general you are aware of what it is product placement you know (.)
164 what it means #00:08:57-2#
165

166 **Person 6:** Yeah #00:08:57-4#
167

168 **Interviewer:** .h okay .hh ehm: can you maybe: tell me if you learned some things? about
169 fashion and luxury products by watching Gossip Girl or if you have heard about other people
170 who learned things and were affected by this #00:09:09-3#
171

172 **Person 6:** Ehh my cousin she created her own em (.) ehh like line of (.) those bands Blair is
173 always wearing #00:09:18-3#
174

175 **Interviewer:** Ok okay (laughs) #00:09:18-7#
176

177 **Person 6:** Yeah she: developed like her business (.) making these (.) bands #00:09:23-7#

178
179 **Interviewer:** Okay and why did she do that (.) just because of Gossip Girl? #00:09:26-9#
180
181 **Person 6:** Yeah cause she really liked it (.) and she I think she is (.) fond of these (.) tv series
182 so: (-) yeah (.) and it it's not it wasn't that easy to find something like that (-) ah so she started
183 to (.) make her of that #00:09:41-7#
184
185 **Interviewer:** Okay and is is the business working, #00:09:44-0#
186
187 **Person 6:** No no (.) not (.) no anymore she tried but yeah (.) it was just something she was
188 doing for fun and (--) she stopped there #00:09:52-3#
189
190 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) so do you think in general that (.) product placement is an effective
191 advertising strategy in (.) like in general and in Gossip Girl in particular #00:10:02-1#
192
193 **Person 6:** Eh (.) I think it depends on the people because not everybody are (.) not everybody
194 is interested in those kind of things so: it depends on the context on the environment (.) yeah
195 on the societies #00:10:13-8#
196
197 **Interviewer:** Yeah okay but now on the example in Gossip Girl like the main target group
198 from Gossip Girl is like younger girls from the age between like fourteen and ah (.) thirty I
199 think .h and ah (.) obviously most of them are interested in stuff that so do you think there it is
200 effective, #00:10:31-1#
201
202 **Person 6:** Yeah (.) yeah it probably it is #00:10:33-7#
203
204 **Interviewer:** How do you think it can work on people #00:10:36-3#
205
206 **Person 6:** That's (.) the thing I don't I'm not sure if it can work because .h ah comparing (.)
207 Gossip Girl with OC (.) in OC you can (.) also see many (.) brands .h but (.) ah:: (.) there were
208 (.) I mean (-) some (.) some of these things were (.) still cheaper and: more affordable than in
209 Gossip Girl (.) so (.) it could affect people with money but (.) it cannot affect people without
210 money because (.) those things are very expensive I think #00:11:06-4#
211
212 **Interviewer:** Okay #00:11:06-8#
213
214 **Person 6:** Yeah #00:11:07-0#
215
216 **Interviewer:** So (.) but do you think it can affect in any way people's feelings about
217 themselves that they want it more they will have (.) like act as a substitution behavior trying
218 to find things or f feel frustrated about it <p> do you think <p> #00:11:18-7#
219
220 **Person 6:** Yes (.) yeah #00:11:20-8#
221
222 **Interviewer:** Do you feel like that, in any way #00:11:22-6#
223
224 **Person 6:** .h I think it's sometimes maybe with something I really like or something (.) eh
225 maybe it's just a bad period for me and I'm so stressed about other things and then I see these
226 (.) people wor worried about the bags or the shoes and then I .h yeah (.) it's a bit frustrating in
227 that sense #00:11:40-6#
228

229 **Interviewer:** Okay #00:11:41-8#

230

231 **Person 6:** It can be (.) not always (.) but yeah (.) it can be #00:11:44-9#

232

233 **Interviewer:** Okay (-) .h do you have more comments about product placement in general
234 you would want to make or product placement in in Gossip Girl (.) or to the (.) gen in general
235 to the topic any more things you would want to add #00:11:58-0#

236

237 **Person 6:** n::: no (.) no #00:12:01-0#

238

239 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) .hh so ah now I would need some (.) basic demographic information,
240 your age (.) what you study and: like the programme and the level and your nationality
241 #00:12:10-1#

242

243 **Person 6:** 24 (.) Master in Communication (.) Italian (.) <p> and <p> #00:12:16-0#

244

245 **Interviewer:** Okay (.) yeah? that's it (.) thank you

2. Summarizing content analysis

Interview number	Page number	Line number	Paraphrase	Generalisation	Reduction
6	129	4	There was a period I was watching it every night	Used to watch Gossip Girl every night	C1 Viewing patterns - Used to watch Gossip Girl every night - Streamed the episodes - Does not watch it regularly anymore - Watched the show occasionally when it is on television - Saw most of the seasons but not all of them C2 Reasons for watching Gossip Girl - Influence of other people who talked about the show - Influence of television advertisements about the show C3 Likes about the show - Gossip Girl is unreal and distant - The story of Gossip Girl is different than her own life - The lifestyle in Gossip Girl is fascinating - Likes the fashion in the show
6	129	4-5	I was watching on streaming	She steamed the episodes	
6	129	5	I don't watch it anymore	Does not watch it regularly anymore	
6	129	5-6	Just when it happens that it's on TV	While watching TV and Gossip Girl is on she watched it	
6	129	10	I saw some seasons entirely but not every season	Saw most of the show but not every season	
6	129	15	Because there were many people talking about it	A main reason for starting to watch Gossip Girl was the influence of other people who talked about the show	
6	129	15-16	I saw many advertisements on TV	Another reason for starting to watch Gossip Girl were the advertisements on TV	
6	129	20	I think it's that it was so unreal for me so distant	What she liked the most about Gossip Girl is that it is unreal and distant like a fantasy world	
6	129	21	It's something that never happens at least where I live	The story of Gossip Girl is unfamiliar to her and different to her own life	
6	129	21-22	For me it's just fascinating to see these other perspectives of life	The lifestyle in Gossip Girl is fascinating	
6	129	22	And the fashion and all those things	The fashion in Gossip Girl is fascinating	
6	130	28	Prada Chanel I thin Burberry	Remembers a lot of brands that	

				appear in Gossip Girl	<p>C4 Awareness of the brands in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remembers a lot of brands that appeared in Gossip Girl - Examples are Prada, Chanel, Burberry <p>C5 Learning effects of product placement in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She knew many of the brands placed in Gossip Girl before watching the show - She also discovered many brands she did not know before - She has learned to recognize brands through Gossip Girl <p>C6 Effects of product placement in Gossip Girl on the viewer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The wish to own products from the brands appearing in Gossip Girl has increased by watching the show - This wish was probably influenced by Gossip Girl in an unconscious way - Gossip Girl is not the only reason why she wishes to own these products - She wishes the products in general because she is interested in fashion - Gossip Girl is a reason more why she wishes to own these products
6	130	28-29	I am sure there are many others	There are a lot of brands in Gossip Girl	
6	130	38	Oh yeah of course yes I knew the brands	Knew the brands she mentioned before watching Gossip Girl	
6	130	43	I discovered many other brands	Discovered brands she didn't know before by watching Gossip Girl	
6	130	43	I wanted to have more of these brands	The wish to own the brands shown in Gossip Girl increasing by watching the show	
6	130	44-45	I can recognize many other brands more easily	Has learned to recognize brands through Gossip Girl	
6	130	45	Maybe desire some of those things too	Desires the brands she has learned about because of Gossip Girl	
6	130	50	In a way my wish to own those things is probably related to Gossip Girl	Somehow wishes to own the products shown in Gossip Girl because of the show (unconscious)	
6	130	50-51	But I really like those things	Wants these products in general	
6	130	51	I like fashion I like clothes I like bags	Interested in fashion	
6	130	52	It's a reason more to buy those things	In addition to her interest in fashion Gossip Girl is a reason more why she wishes those products	
6	130	57	Gossip Girl is something unreal for me	Gossip Girl is unrealistic	
6	130	57-58	Because it's so distant from my reality	Gossip Girl is very different from her own life	
6	130	58	For me it's like a dream	The lifestyle in Gossip Girl is like in a dream	
6	130	58-59	Their problems are stupid things they don't face real problems	The problems of the characters are not real problems	
6	130	59-60	It's a way to get closer to them	Buy owning the products they have	

				you get closer to them	
6	130	60-61	Simulating you're living another life with different preoccupations and things	Buy owning the products they have people simulate their lifestyle and forget about their problems. It's a way to escape reality	<p>C7 Opinion on the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is unrealistic - Very different from her own life - It is like a dream - Likes the lifestyle but would not wish to lead the exact same life - She would like to try this lifestyle <p>C8 Owning luxury products gives a glimpse of the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Owning the products the characters own is a way to get closer to them - It is a way to escape reality - It is a way to simulate the characters' life <p>C9 Distance to the characters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not share the characters' behaviors and attitudes - Does not have the same priorities in life - The problems of the characters are not real life problems - The characters do not have to worry about anything as they are so rich - The characters do not know the value of money - She wishes to know how it feels to be able to spend so much money
6	130	66	I would not exactly like to have a life like theirs	Does not really wish to have a life like the characters of Gossip Girl	
6	130	66	Somehow I like their life	Likes the lifestyle of the Gossip Girl characters	
6	130	67	Because they don't have many things to worry about	A reason for liking their lifestyle is that they don't have to worry about anything	
6	130	67-68	But I don't share many of their behaviors or attitudes	She does not share their behaviors and attitudes	
6	130	68-69	When you have a list of important things in life I don't share that with them	Does not have the same priorities in life as the Gossip Girl characters	
6	130	69-70	It would be funny and nice to try	It would be nice to try their lifestyle	
6	130	70	But not exactly lead their life	Would like to have such a lifestyle but not exactly the same as the characters in Gossip Girl	
6	131	76-77	I just feel that they don't realize how much money is important for other people	The characters don't know the value of money	
6	131	77	Sometimes it's just a wasting of money	The characters don't know the value of money	
6	131	78	This is also a reason why I would like to get closer to them	She wishes to know how it feels to be able to spend so much money	
6	131	78-79	Because I cannot afford such a wasting of money	She cannot afford to spend so much money	
6	131	84	Of course I like them	Likes luxury products	
6	131	84-85	If I have for example to choose	Luxury products are not her priority	

			between a very expensive bag and maybe some travels I prefer to travel	when it comes to spending money	- She cannot afford to spend so much money - She is annoyed by the fact that she will never be as rich as the characters
6	131	86-87	Something that can make me rich as a person and does not make rich just my wardrobe	Immaterial things that make someone rich as a person are more important than material richness	C10 Opinion about luxury products
6	131	92	I think because it's a way to get accepted by other people in a way	Luxury products are a way to get accepted by other people	- Likes luxury products
6	131	93-95	In the place where I come from people have the only ambition to look good and buy expensive stuff and all those things	Where she comes from people are very eager to buy luxury products	- Luxury products are not her priority when it comes to spending money - Immaterial things that make someone rich as a person are more important than material richness
6	131	95-96	Because they don't have other people to compare with	A reason for this consumption behavior might be because all the people act like that and therefore you acquire the same consumption patterns	C11 Reasons why people buy luxury products
6	131	96	Or to talk about something really interesting or their ambitions	People don't meet people who broaden their horizons and therefore copy the mainstream consumption behavior	- Luxury products are a way to get accepted by others in some environments - Where she comes from people are very eager to buy luxury products because everyone acts like that and therefore everyone acquires the same consumption behavior
6	131	96-97	Their main ambition is to buy something new each week or something like that	Where she comes from people are very eager to buy luxury products	- If people do not meet others who broaden their horizons they will copy mainstream consumption behavior
6	131	98-99	In some cultures in some environments having something new is like a new way to get accepted and socialized with people sometimes	In some environments owning a lot of material product will help people to socialize and get accepted	C12 Distance to the products placed in Gossip Girl
6	131	106	No because they are too expensive	She does not buy any of the products shown in Gossip Girl because they are too expensive	- Does not buy the products placed in Gossip Girl because they are too

6	131	111	It depends	She might be willing to spend a lot of money on luxury products at some point	<p>expensive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In some cases she might be willing to spend a lot of money on luxury products - In general prefers to spend her money elsewhere - She has a substitution consumption behavior by trying to buy similar products that are cheaper - She has only a few items that are rather expensive -The brands placed in Gossip Girl are reserved to an elite <p>C13 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the brands appear in form of clothes, shoes and bags - The characters wear those products placed in the show - Product placement is obvious and explicit - Brands are not always explicitly named - She was not aware that there is product placement in Gossip Girl while watching the show - She noticed that brands were featured in the show but did not
6	131	112	I had the choice to do that	At some point she could afford luxury products	
6	131	112-113	I preferred to spend money in a different way than buying those things	She preferred to spend her money elsewhere	
6	131	119	Yes I do buy something similar but cheaper	She has a substitution consumption behavior as she buys similar products but cheaper	
6	131	119	I have things that are not that cheap	Owns some products that are rather expensive	
6	131	120	Sometimes I buy those kind of products	When she cannot afford the products she sometimes buys similar products that are cheaper	
6	131	120-121	Sometimes I try to compensate with other products that are really nice but cheaper	When she cannot afford the products she sometimes buys similar products that are cheaper	
6	132	127-128	The picture of Prada in one of the apartments and Chanel I think some bags and jewelry and then Burberry	Remembers a lot of brands that appeared in the show	
6	132	129	Most of them are clothes or bags or shoes	Remembers that brands appeared in form of clothes shoes and bags in the show	
6	132	139	They wear the clothes	The clothes of the brands are worn by the characters in Gossip Girl	
6	132	139-140	They also in a way make this explicit	Obvious product placement	
6	132	140	They don't name the brand	The brand is not always explicitly named	

6	132	140-142	But they make some references that the it's something really expensive and not that cheap for everyone to buy	The way the brands are placed in Gossip Girl shows that the brands are reserved to an elite	know whether it was for an advertising purpose or only part of the plot - Product placement bothers her sometimes but usually it is not the case	
6	132	147	No I was not aware that there is product placement in Gossip Girl	She was not aware that there is product placement in Gossip Girl		
6	132	152	It Italy it happens but it is not exactly allowed	Product placement is present in Italy even though it is not exactly allowed		
6	132	152	But it happens anyway	Product placement is present in Italy even though it is not exactly allowed		
6	132	153	I noticed it but I didn't know if it was on purpose or not	She noticed that products were placed in Gossip Girl but she did not know whether it was for an advertising purpose or not		
6	132	158	I mean sometimes it bothers me	Product placement in Gossip Girl sometimes bothers her		C14 She is aware of the definition of product placement
6	132	159	You will never be like them	The viewers will never be like the characters		
6	132	159-160	That's annoying	Is annoyed by the fact that she will never be like the characters in the show		
6	132	160	But not that much it depends on the moments I think	Product placement in Gossip Girl usually does not bother her, only sometimes		C15 Effects of product placement in Gossip Girl on others - Her cousin created her own line of headbands because of Gossip Girl - She developed a business out of the headbands the character Blair is wearing - She really liked the series and the headbands - Difficulties to find such headbands
6	132	166	Yeah I am aware of what product placement is	She is aware of what product placement is		
6	132	172-173	My cousin created her own line of the headbands Blair is always wearing	Her cousin created her own line of headbands because of Gossip Girl and particularly the character Blair who always wore headbands		
6	132	177	She developed her business making these bands	Her cousin developed her own business making headbands like		

				those worn by Blair in Gossip Girl	<p>- It was not a serious business it was more for fun</p> <p>C16 Opinion on effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl as an advertising strategy</p> <p>- For product placement in Gossip Girl to be effective people have to be interested in fashion and luxury</p> <p>- The effectiveness depends on the culture and the context in which people watch the show</p> <p>- She is not sure if product placement can be effective in Gossip Girl because it can only affect people who can afford these products</p> <p>- Product placement in The OC was more effective because the brands were cheaper and more affordable</p>
6	133	181	Yeah because she really liked it	Her cousin liked the headbands a lot because of Gossip Girl	
6	133	181	And I think she is fond of these TV series	Because her cousin loves the series she created her own headband business	
6	133	182-183	It was not easy to find something like that so she started to make her business of that	It was difficult to find headbands like those in Gossip Girl which is why her cousin created her own business out of it	
6	133	187	No not anymore	Her cousin stopped the business as it was not working	
6	133	187-188	She tried but it was just something she was doing for fun and she stopped there	The business project was not serious just for fun	
6	133	193-194	I think it depends on the people because not everybody is interested in this kind of things	For product placement in Gossip Girl to work people have to be interested in luxury and fashion	
6	133	194-195	It depends on the context on the environment on the societies	The effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl depends on the culture and the context in which people are watching it	
6	133	202	It probably is effective for people who are interested in fashion and luxury	Product placement in Gossip Girl is probably effective for people who are interested in luxury and fashion	
6	133	206	I am not sure if it can work	She is not sure whether product placement in Gossip Girl can work in general	
6	133	206-209	Comparing Gossip Girl with The OC in The OC you can also see many brands but some of these things were still cheaper and more	The brands placed in The OC are cheaper and more affordable in comparison to those placed in Gossip Girl	

			affordable than in Gossip Girl		<p>C17 Product placement in Gossip Girl affects people's feelings about their own life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She sometimes feels frustrated when she really likes a product in Gossip Girl which she cannot afford - When she is in a bad period and stressed she feels negatively influenced in her emotions by product placement in Gossip Girl - Then she feels frustrated because the characters in Gossip Girl have no worries except about what they are going to buy next
6	133	209-210	It can affect people with money but it cannot affect people without money because those things are very expensive	Product placement in Gossip Girl will only affect people with money who can afford buying such expensive products	
6	133	220	Yes it can affect people's feelings about themselves	Product placement in Gossip Girl can affect people's feelings about themselves	
6	133	224	Sometimes maybe with something I really like I feel frustrated	She sometimes feels frustrated when she really likes a product shown in Gossip Girl which she cannot afford	
6	133	225	Maybe it's just a bad period for me or I'm stressed about other things	She feels more influenced in a negative way by product placement in Gossip Girl when she is in a bad place and stressed	
6	133	225-227	And then I see these people worried about bags and shoes and then it is a bit frustrating in that sense	When she feels stressed she feels frustrated because the characters in the series have no worries except what to buy next	
6	134	231	It can be but not always	It happens that she feels frustrated because of product placement in Gossip Girl but it is not always the case	

3. Structuring content analysis

General information

C1 Viewing patterns

- Used to watch Gossip Girl every night
- Streamed the episodes
- Does not watch it regularly anymore
- Watched the show occasionally when it is on television
- Saw most of the seasons but not all of them

C2 Reasons for watching Gossip Girl

- Influence of other people who talked about the show
- Influence of television advertisements about the show

C3 Likes about the show

- Gossip Girl is unreal and distant
- The story of Gossip Girl is different than her own life
- The lifestyle in Gossip Girl is fascinating
- Likes the fashion in the show

View of the luxury industry

C10 Opinion about luxury products

- Likes luxury products
- Luxury products are not her priority when it comes to spending money
- Immaterial things that make someone rich as a person are more important than material richness

C11 Reasons why people buy luxury products

- Luxury products are a way to get accepted by others in some environments
- Where she comes from people are very eager to buy luxury products because everyone acts like that and therefore everyone acquires the same consumption behavior
- If people do not meet others who broaden their horizons they will copy mainstream consumption behavior

C7 Opinion on the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl

- It is unrealistic
- Very different from her own life
- It is like a dream
- Likes the lifestyle but would not wish to lead the exact same life
- She would like to try this lifestyle

C8 Owning luxury products gives a glimpse of the lifestyle portrayed in Gossip Girl

- Owning the products the characters own is a way to get closer to them
- It is a way to escape reality
- It is a way to simulate the characters' life

C9 Distance to the characters

- Does not share the characters' behaviors and attitudes
- Does not have the same priorities in life
- The problems of the characters are not real life problems
- The characters do not have to worry about anything as they are so rich
- The characters do not know the value of money
- She wishes to know how it feels to be able to spend so much money
- She cannot afford to spend so much money
- She is annoyed by the fact that she will never be as rich as the characters

C12 Distance to the products placed in Gossip Girl

- Does not buy the products placed in Gossip Girl because they are too expensive
- In some cases she might be willing to spend a lot of money on luxury products
- In general prefers to spend her money elsewhere
- She has a substitution consumption behavior by trying to buy similar products that are cheaper
- She has only a few items that are rather expensive
- The brands placed in Gossip Girl are reserved to an elite

C17 Product placement in Gossip Girl affects people's feelings about their own life

- She sometimes feels frustrated when she really likes a product in Gossip Girl which she cannot afford
- When she is in a bad period and stressed she feels negatively influenced in her emotions by product placement in Gossip Girl
- Then she feels frustrated because the characters in Gossip Girl have no worries except about what they are going to buy next

Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

C14 She is aware of the definition of product placement

C13 Perception of product placement in Gossip Girl

- Most of the brands appear in form of clothes, shoes and bags
- The characters wear those products placed in the show
- Product placement is obvious and explicit
- Brands are not always explicitly named
- She was not aware that there is product placement in Gossip Girl while watching the show
- She noticed that brands were featured in the show but did not know whether it was for an

advertising purpose or only part of the plot

- Product placement bothers her sometimes but usually it is not the case

Effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl

C4 Awareness of the brands in Gossip Girl

- Remembers a lot of brands that appeared in Gossip Girl
- Examples are Prada, Chanel, Burberry

C5 Learning effects of product placement in Gossip Girl

- She knew many of the brands placed in Gossip Girl before watching the show
- She also discovered many brands she did not know before
- She has learned to recognize brands through Gossip Girl

C6 Effects of product placement in Gossip Girl on the viewer

- The wish to own products from the brands appearing in Gossip Girl has increased by watching the show
- This wish was probably influenced by Gossip Girl in an unconscious way
- Gossip Girl is not the only reason why she wishes to own these products
- She wishes the products in general because she is interested in fashion
- Gossip Girl is a reason more why she wishes to own these products

C15 Effects of product placement in Gossip Girl on others

- Her cousin created her own line of headbands because of Gossip Girl
- She developed a business out of the headbands the character Blair is wearing
- She really liked the series and the headbands
- Difficulties to find such headbands
- It was not a serious business it was more for fun

C16 Opinion on effectiveness of product placement in Gossip Girl as an advertising strategy

- For product placement in Gossip Girl to be effective people have to be interested in fashion and luxury
- The effectiveness depends on the culture and the context in which people watch the show
- She is not sure if product placement can be effective in Gossip Girl because it can only affect people who can afford these products
- Product placement in The OC was more effective because the brands were cheaper and more affordable