Course: Media Discourse

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Language of Instruction: English

Syllabus

Description

Media Discourse stems from the analysis of journalistic, political, and advertising discourse and encourages students to develop their critical thinking skills with a focus on raising their cross-cultural awareness. Contents will be accessed on an emotional and a cognitive level and ideas will be approached from different perspectives. Updated and authentic newspaper headlines, editorials and opinion articles, political speeches, extracts from radio, television and films, billboard, newspaper and magazine print advertisements and television commercials will be studied.

Contents

The course comprises four main units:
- **Unit I** provides students with information about the characteristics of the language of newspapers and its different subgenres and offers them techniques to identify the characteristics of written journalistic discourse in a compilation of texts selected from British and North American newspapers with dissimilar political orientations.
- **Unit II** draws from the language of politics and it is intended to help students identify the linguistic devices most used as positioning strategies in political discourse. They will be asked to read, watch, analyze and compare political speeches, enhancing their critical thinking skills.
- **Unit III** provides students with information about the characteristics of the language of broadcasting. Techniques for the analysis of authentic and updated examples will be given so that students can learn to dissect broadcasting-based texts taken from the radio, the television, and the Internet.
- **Unit IV** focuses on advertising discourse. Billboard, newspaper and magazine print advertisements and television commercials will be the object of analysis. Special attention will be paid to the role of visual and multimodal metaphors in advertising.

Methodology

This course is based on the practical application of theoretical techniques and strategies central to the student-centered analysis of authentic and updated examples of media discourse. Classes are 25% lecture-based and 75% participatory seminar-based, and therefore student discussion, questioning and practical tasks in pairs or small groups are paramount.
Lectures will consist in the brief exposition, explanation and illustration of the course contents, based on debating about four main topics: *The Language of Newspapers*, *The Language of Politics*, *The Language of Broadcasting*, and *The Language of Advertising*.

In this part of the course, factual information will be transmitted through lectures based on readings that will be available for students on the virtual space of the course. Students will be encouraged to contribute to the class.

The practical part of the course will consist in solving analytical exercises of different examples of authentic and updated written and spoken media discourse by applying the

techniques and strategies seen in the lectures.

Outside the class, students will be asked to prepare some readings on the four main topics of the course and one group oral presentation based on extra readings made available to them on the virtual space of the subject. They will be also asked to submit two short papers.

To get support for the oral presentations, and to solve doubts and queries about the papers, students will be invited to attend personalized tutorials and use the fora opened on the virtual space for each of the units.

Assessment criteria

The evaluation procedures include continuous student assessment. This means that marks will be obtained not only for practical exercises but also for active and positive participation and individual and group work in class during the course.

- Active class participation (20%): Students are expected to take an active part in class when the contents are being explained and when they complete and correct the worksheets and tasks.
- Worksheets and tasks (20%): Both in class and outside class, students are expected to do practical activities to apply the theoretical concepts seen in class. These activities will be corrected in class.
- Short papers (30%): Students are expected to submit two short papers to the virtual space of the course following a link provided. The first paper will consist in the analysis of a group of headlines on the same topical issue to show an understanding (both from a theoretical and practical perspective) of the main concepts seen in the units *The Language of Newspapers* and *The Language of Politics* units. The second short paper will involve the analysis of a printed advertisement. Students will be expected to show an understanding of the main concepts seen in the unit *The Language of Advertisement*.
- Group oral presentation (30%): In groups, students are expected to select one of the topics provided in a selection of extra readings and apply new theoretical notions to the analysis of a self-compiled corpus of analysis. Each group will comprise 5 students maximum, and once the presentation is delivered, one member of the group will upload the presentation materials following a link provided. The mark will be equally shared by all the members of the group. Self, group and class assessment will be considered.

References

Materials will be provided by the teacher during the course.