B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	: Critical Approaches to Media Discourse
Course Code	: ENG3010
Recommended Study Year	: Any
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial mode
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week
	1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Disciplinary Elective
Prerequisite(s)	: ENG3203 Discourse Analysis
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	: Nil

Brief Course Description

In the course ENG3203 Discourse Analysis, we have learnt that critical discourse analysis (CDA) connects language and social context, demystifying power at play and hidden ideologies in discourses. However, amongst various CDA approaches, how should we select the appropriate one to refine our analysis, making it more critical and focused? In addition, how can we apply CDA approaches to media genres, which have been gaining increasing importance in our daily life? This course aims to answer these questions by equipping students with the knowledge and skills for conducting critical analyses in different ways. We will explore issues such as the identity work of Instagram influencers, the (de)legitimation of political leaders and policies, and the discursive representation of marginalized groups (e.g., refugees and migrants) in online commentaries.

Aims

1. To understand how social actors discursively represent themselves and others in media texts
2. To understand how media texts help construct and (de)legitimate identities
3. To be able to analyse sociocultural and sociopolitical issues by using different CDA approaches

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course, students will be able to:
1. Identify the mediated role of language between text and society (LO1)
2. Analyse media discourses using different CDA approaches (LO2)
3. Discuss how ingroups and outgroups are discursively represented in various sociocultural and sociopolitical issues (LO3)
4. Discuss how identities are discursively (de)legitimated in different sociocultural and sociopolitical issues (LO4)
5. Propose how to reduce social stigma and marginalisation in online contexts (LO5)

Indicative Contents

This course will introduce students to several widely used CDA approaches, including Wodak's (2001) Discourse Historical Approach and Van Leeuwen's (2007) Legitimation Framework, when analysing media texts. We will explore a number of traditional media and social media genres and features, such as news articles, online commentaries, and blogs.

      Online participatory culture and discursive positioning
      The influencer phenomenon
      Discourse Historical Approach
      Legitimation Framework
      Proximisation theories
      Discursive construction of social categories
      Voices of Self- and Other-Identification
      Co-construction of expertise
      Discursive illusion
      (De)legitimation and manipulation
      Doxxing and trolling as discursive actions

Teaching Method

The course will consist of a lecture in which the key concepts and skills are introduced and a one-hour tutorial in which the students apply the concepts and skills to analyse texts (LO1, LO2, LO3). In class, students will have the opportunity to work both individually and in groups as well as give feedback to their peers. Whereas individual tasks (LO2, LO3, LO4) enable students to think critically and work independently, group tasks (LO3, LO4, LO5) allow students to exchange ideas and work together to tackle more complex problems, leading to deeper learning.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Short paper: Students will be asked to complete a written analysis based on the topic of their choosing and identify linguistic features as specified on the guidelines. This assessment will measure the extent to which students understand and can apply concepts for the purpose of the analysis and critique of texts. (LO1)

Individual presentation 1: Students will be asked to focus on social actors or issues and present their findings regarding the discursive representation of identities. This assessment will measure the extent to which students can demonstrate their knowledge and analytical abilities. (LO2, LO3)

Individual presentation 2: Students will be asked to focus on social actors or issues and present their findings regarding the use of (de)legitimation strategies. This assessment will measure the extent to which students can demonstrate their knowledge and analytical abilities. (LO2, LO4)

Final term paper: Students will be asked to identify a social issue and establish a research topic. They will analyse the relevant discourses using the concepts and approaches learnt. This assessment will measure the extent to which students understand concepts and can

critically engage with texts by demonstrating knowledge of their structure, functions, and meanings. (LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5).

Assessment

Continuous assessment: 100%
- Short paper (20%)
- Individual presentations (20% + 20%)
- Final term paper (40%)

Recommended/Supplementary Readings

The handouts will supply most of the materials that students need. If they wish to consult further texts (e.g., for their own interest or for their presentation), the following resources may help.

Baker, P., Gabrielatos, C., Khosravinik, M., Krzyżanowski, M., McEnery, T., & Wodak, R. (2008). A useful methodological synergy? Combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to examine discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press. *Discourse & society*, *19*(3), 273-306.

Charteris-Black, J. (2005). *Politicians and Rhetoric: The Persuasive Power of Metaphor*. London: Macmillian.

De Fina, A. E., Schiffrin, D. E., & Bamberg, M. E. (2006). *Discourse and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. London: Routledge.

Ho, J. (2020). Discursive representations of domestic helpers in cyberspace. *Discourse Studies* 22(1), 48-63.

Ho, J. (2021). Purpose life or sugar-coated lies: how Elizabeth Holmes legitimised her fraud. *Language & Communication 77*, 106-120.

Koller, V., Kopf, S., & Miglbauer, M. (Eds.). (2019). *Discourses of Brexit*. London: Routledge.

Ladegaard, H. J. (2017). *The Discourse of Powerlessness and Repression: Life Stories of Domestic Migrant Workers in Hong Kong*. London: Routledge.

Leppanen, S., Westinen, E., & Kytola, S. (Eds.). (2016). *Social media discourse,(dis) identifications and diversities*. London: Routledge.

Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (2005). *Discourse and discrimination: Rhetorics of racism and antisemitism*. Routledge.

Ross, A. S., and Rivers, D. J. (eds) (2019) Discourses of (de)legitimization: Participatory culture in digital contexts. London: Routledge.

Van Dijk, T. (1993). Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 4(2), 249-283.

Van Leeuwen, T. (2008). *Discourse and practice: New tools for critical discourse analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wodak, R and Meyer, M (eds) (2002). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Sage.

Important Notes:
(1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
(2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is "the presentation of another person's work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student's own work". Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
(3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
(4) To enhance students' understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course "Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness" is available on https://pla.ln.edu.hk/.