

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

MODULE TITLE	ANALYZING TEXTS		
MODULE CODE	LG1104 (L4)	CREDIT VALUE	20 UK / 10 ECTS
SCHOOL	SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT		

MODULE AIMS

This module aims to:

- Teach students to analyze a wide range of texts, illustrating a wide range of genres, from a variety of perspectives – rhetorical, stylistic, critical-discourse analytical.
- Introduce students to the multi-modal analysis of texts, teaching them how to combine analysis of language with analysis of visual and audio-visual semiotics.
- Develop students' critical awareness of the social uses of texts and their ability to engage in critical analysis and discussion.

MODULE CONTENT

The module aims to offer a primer of discourse analysis and stylistics, a hands-on practical introduction to a wide range of approaches, intended to serve as a starting point for further, more advanced study over the next years. It also aims to develop students' academic writing and oral presentation skills. We will look at short literary texts (poems, prose, drama), commercial adverts, publicity and political campaign material, short media texts, and discuss them in terms of their stylistic, argumentative and rhetorical features. Half of the module addresses the language of newspapers, advertising and various political genres (leaflets, campaign material), focusing on the analysis of short texts with the instruments of critical discourse analysis, argumentation and rhetorical theory. Topics include:

- The functions of advertisements; myths about advertising
- The multimodality of adverts: linguistic and visual semiotics
- Constructing audiences: ads, brands and strategies of address
- The argumentative logic of advertising: persuasion strategies in adverts
- Newspaper genres
- The presentation of speech in news reports
- Multimodal analysis of news texts
- Framing and ideology in newspaper articles
- Fallacious reasoning in advertising and media texts.
- The rhetoric of charitable appeals (e.g. leaflets produced by non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam).
- The rhetoric of political campaigns (e.g. electoral campaign leaflets)

The other half offers an introduction to the stylistics analysis of texts. It focuses on trying to explain how, when we read texts, we get from the words on the page to an understanding of the text, and how the words on the page succeed in affecting us cognitively and emotionally the way they do. Topics to be addressed include:

- Coherence and cohesion in discourse
- Style as the result of consistent particular choices, e.g. lexical or syntactic choices.
- Deviation, parallelism, foregrounding
- Figures of speech: metaphor, metonymy
- Point of view in fiction
- Cognitive approaches to literary discourse: schema theory
- Genre theory
- Narrative theory

We will analyze a wide range of short (and typically multi-modal) texts (i.e. involving words, image and sound), using a variety of analytical instruments, and placing them in the context of discursive practices and, more widely, in their wider social, political and cultural context. Sessions will be mainly practical and will be conducted as workshops, mixing theoretical input with hands-on analysis.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module a student will be able to:	
1.	Use a wide range of basic theoretical concepts in stylistics, rhetoric and discourse analysis in the analysis of a wide range of text types.
2.	Demonstrate critical awareness of the social uses of texts, of the purposes of text producers, and an ability to take a critical perspective on a wide range of text types.
3.	Deliver an effective short academic presentation to one's peers.

TEACHING METHODS

The module will employ both formal lectures and seminars which will include discussion, question/answer sequences, problem-solving activities, as well as theoretical engagement with, and critical application of the ideas introduced. Students will learn through practical engagement with various tasks, as well as by discussing relevant approaches in the literature. Teaching and learning on this module may also comprise class and group discussions, class-based group work, and face-to-face feedback with the tutor. There is an expectation that students will engage interactively with the tutor and their peers during the sessions, and undertake additional reading and preparatory work outside of the lecture and seminar sessions.

Weekly sessions are designed to maximize opportunities for in-class discussion of concepts and theories that form the object of module assessment, as well as introduce some of the relevant academic literature in both fields. Weekly lecture sessions will be run as workshops, involving a mix of theoretical input and practical application of theory to actual texts examples. Seminars will focus on discussing relevant literature, but will mainly aim to teach students how to apply theoretical frameworks to language data. A wide range of audio-visual material will be used to illustrate theory and offer models of analysis. Students will also be required to prepare certain topics by reading relevant literature in preparation of (or during) seminars and then summarize, discuss and evaluate existing academic literature in class. Independent work includes library work, preparation for weekly sessions and for written assessment, as well as self-managed group-work, in preparation for joint assessed oral presentations. Oral presentations aim to develop students' academic speaking skills, including the ability to take part in critical discussion by asking and answering questions, as well as increase their overall confidence.

In common with other English modules, this module is designed to foster an active, participatory, independent approach to learning, to develop critical faculties and to consolidate and develop written and oral communication skills. By taking part in classroom discussion, students will gain the ability to engage in critical debate and will develop their argumentative and presentation skills. They will also develop problem-solving skills, the ability to manage time and work to deadlines, and will be encouraged to adopt reflective practices.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

This module is assessed through an in-class written test (50%) and an oral presentation (50%).