Online Course Catalogue

Course Title

Intercultural aspects of argumentation, persuasion, manipulation, perception, and interpretation in European media discourses. A German-language course.

Study Field

Arts and Humanities

University

Eötvös Loránd University

CHARM priority field

European values, culture and language;Transversal Skills;

Course code

BMA/BMI-NEMD-614

Faculty

Faculty of Humanities

Department

Institute for Germanic Studies

Study Level:

MA/MSc

Number of credit points:

4

Name of instructor(s):

Dr. habil Attila Péteri / Dr. habil Amália Kerekes

Short description of the course

The course "Intercultural aspects of argumentation, persuasion, manipulation, perception, and interpretation in European media discourses" offers an innovative approach to examining the complexities of media discourse in a multilingual and multicultural European context. This German-language course, structured around CHARM-EU's principles of challenge-driven, accessible, research-based, and mobile education, focuses on developing critical media literacy skills. Students practice critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and digital literacy. Students will engage with recent and contemporary German media discourses to discern methods of argumentation, persuasion, and manipulation, and their impact on public perception and interpretation. Additionally, participants will compare these German media discourses with the discourses prevalent in their own countries or in their mother languages, fostering a comprehensive understanding of cultural nuances in media communication. The course also emphasizes practical training in argumentative and persuasive text production, equipping students with the skills to create impactful and contextually relevant media content.

Full description of the course

Theoretical background: The aim of the course is to sensitize participants to the argumentation, persuasion and possible manipulative methods of media texts, in simple terms, to reading between the lines. In doing so, it is necessary to distinguish between argumentation, persuasion and manipulation, and then to go on to ask to what extent the boundaries between them can be sharply drawn in practice. In the media, argumentation is an explanatory method whereby the correctness/falsity of a proposition or conclusion is made plausible by means of ordinary logical reasoning. Persuasion is a communicative strategy whereby the author of a text uses rhetorical and multimodal means to make his subjective or collective position sympathetic to the recipient,

encouraging him to accept it, taking into account his range of feelings, ideas and actions. Manipulation is also a communicative strategy aimed at consciously changing the behavior and mindset of the recipient. Its danger lies in the fact that it is often based on unverifiable content or on a deliberate distortion of reality. All three methods are closely related to the given socio-cultural background, thus showing significant and interesting differences in cross-cultural comparisons. Course Objectives: • To sensitize participants to the argumentative, persuasive, and potentially manipulative methods in media texts in different social and cultural contexts. • To encourage discernment between argumentation, persuasion, and manipulation and to explore their practical boundaries. • To highlight the connection of these methods to specific socio-cultural backgrounds through intercultural comparison. Course Structure: 1. Preparatory Phase: • The course begins with an introduction to recent and current German-language media discourses through selected media texts (newspapers, podcasts, videos). • Instructors will demonstrate argumentation, persuasion, and manipulation tactics. • Special emphasis will be given to investigative and constructive journalism, as well as the German feuilleton tradition, illustrating the adoption of international trends. 2. Flexible Phase: a. Problem Definition (Challenge-driven) • Utilizing a challenge-driven method, students will collect questions arising from the international role of German media and compare these with the media discourse methods in their own countries. • This phase includes brainstorming sessions to organize and systematize the collected questions and problems, recognizing similar issues across different cultural and language-specific contexts. • The aim is for the participants to formulate the problems to be solved in the seminar themselves. The seminar leaders moderate and channel the discussion. b. Research-Based Working: • Students conduct micro-research in groups to find concrete examples related to their questions. • This phase provides an opportunity for applying argument analysis to digital text corpora, highlighting dilemmas associated with Big Data and AI technologies, and contextualizing argumentation techniques within various text types. c. Application Phase: • Directed discussions will focus on applying acquired knowledge to combat social inequalities, misinformation, and integration issues using digital media. • Each participant prepares a five-minute debate starter summarizing the media-related challenges specific to their country or language, which will be discussed in a guided debate format. 3. Capstone Phase: • The participants summarize the most important experiences of the seminar with the help of the seminar leaders. • Participants compile a multimedia portfolio summarizing their work and experiences during the course.

Learning outcomes

1. At the end of the course, the learner will be able to identify key methods of argumentation, persuasion, and manipulation in media texts across different cultural contexts. 2. Furthermore, the learner will be able to compare and contrast German media discourses with those in their own countries or in their mother languages, highlighting cultural similarities and differences. 3. Additionally, at the end of the course, the learner will be able to produce well-structured argumentative and persuasive texts that effectively communicate their stance while considering the target audience's cultural and linguistic backgrounds. 4. Moreover, at the end of the course, the learner will be able to critically reflect on their own media consumption and production practices, advocating for ethical standards in media discourse. These outcomes ensure that the course not only enhances students' analytical skills but also improves their practical abilities in media communication and critical reflection.

Additional information

Course requirements
The course is recommended for students of all disciplines. A good knowledge of German is a prerequisite, but no specific prior knowledge is required. The discussions are based on the participants'

Time zone
CET (Spain, France, Germany, Netherlands, Hungary, Norway)

everyday experiences as media consumers. At the end of the course, participants write a multimedia portfolio in which they summarize their seminar experiences.

Language of instruction
German

Start date of course:
2024-08-10 00:00:00

End date of course:
01/21/2025

Contact hours per week for the student:
2

Specific regular weekly teaching day/time
Tuesday, 16.15 - 17.45

Mode of delivery:
hybrid (students of the CHARM partners join online, local students on campus)

Planned educational activities and teaching methods
Aligned with CHARM-EU's commitment to innovation in education, the course integrates flexible learning structures and student-centered pedagogies. The phased structure allows for a progressive exploration and deeper engagement with complex topics, reflecting CHARM-EU's educational principles of inclusivity and adaptability to diverse learning needs and preferences. During the hands-on course, participants will first learn to recognize and identify techniques and compare the methods used in the German media with those used in the German-language media in their own country and in their mother tongue. They will also practice the techniques themselves, using self-edited texts to demonstrate to the rest of the group culturally specific methods of argumentation and persuasion in their own country and in their mother tongue. In this way, the multinational group of students interacts in a lively way and experiences learning from each other. This course not only equips students with critical analytical skills but also prepares them to apply these skills in real-world contexts, bridging cultural and linguistic divides within European media landscapes. The course is taught by two instructors, one linguist and one cultural studies expert, who take turns in leading the class, while the other continuously monitors the students' classroom activities, responds to questions and problems raised in the chat, reacts to assignments and ideas submitted during the class, and moderates the discussion that ensues.

Learning Management System
Canvas, MS Teams + OneNote (included in MS Teams)

Assessment methods
assignment

Certification
Transcript of records

Course literature (compulsory or recommended):
All literatures are recommended: Carsten Brosda: Diskursiver Journalismus. Journalistisches Handeln zwischen kommunikativer Vernunft und mediensystemischem Zwang. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften 2007. Beatrice Dernbach, Alexander Godulla, Annika Sehl (Eds.): Komplexität im Journalismus. Wiesbaden: Springer 2019 Manfred Kienpointner: Alltagslogik. Struktur und Funktion von Argumentationsmustern. Sttuttgart – Bad Cannstadt: frommann-holzboog 1992. Josef Klein: Politik und Rhetorik. Eine Einführung. Wiesbaden: Springer 2019. Michael Meyen, Maria Löblich, Senta Pfaff-Rüdiger, Claudia Riesmeyer: Qualitative Forschung in der Kommunikationswissenschaft. Eine praxisorientierte Einführung. 2., aktualisierte und erweiterte Auflage. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften 2019. Lisa Schwaiger: Gegen die Öffentlichkeit. Alternative Nachrichtenmedien im deutschsprachigen Raum. Bielefeld: transcript 2022. Thomas Wiedemann, Christine Lohmeier (Eds.): Diskursanalyse für die Kommunikationswissenschaft. Theorie, Vorgehen, Erweiterungen. Wiesbaden: Springer 2019.

Number of places available for CHARM students
20

Other relevant information

The course is open to students from all disciplines and both for undergraduate and graduate (BA/MA) level.

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