Media analyses

Glossary

Authorial intent: concept saying that each author creates their work with certain intentions and has a privileged understanding of meaning of the text. These intentions and understanding should be taken into account when interpreting the text.

Citizen journalism/media: audience creates content which is published and distributed by the media.

Cognitive dissonance theory: people follow only media that confirm their opinions.

Comparative advertising: it is showing the competitor and why it's less good than advertised product. It is also referred to as advertising war.

Connotation: additional meanings of the word, e.g. personal, emotional, cultural, etc.

Context: the background, environment, setting, framework, or surroundings of events or occurrences.

Contextual analysis: analysing what is the socio-political, historical, and cultural context of the media piece.

Customisation: need to tailor advertisement to potential customers.

Defamation: false statement that is published or communicated to damage a person's reputation.

Defence of honest opinion: journalist claims that it was fine to publish the text, because it is obviously an opinion and not fact.

Defence of public interest: journalist claims that information was published in the public interest.

Defence of truth: journalist claims that it was fine to publish the text, because the information it contains is true.

Denotation: literal or dictionary meaning of the word.

Divisive speech: statements written or said to cause disagreement between people and their separation into different groups. It can even divide (polarise) the entire society.

Engaged journalism/media: media and audience interact, they can also co-create content. This approach strengthens their relationship and increases trust in the media.

Extreme opinions: opinions which are disapproved by most of the people, because they are different from what is considered as reasonable, common, or ethical.

Falsification: proving that something is wrong.

Hate speech: words, phrases, or sentences that can harm someone or encourage hatred towards someone.

Hypodermic needle model (magic bullet theory): information provided by the media reaches its recipient directly and has an immediate effect.

Icon: sign resembles the referent, e.g. object (such as road signs).

Index: sign is associated with the referent, e.g. object (as smoke is a sign of fire).

Inverted pyramid structure: the most important information is at the beginning (first paragraph), the least important information is at the end.

Headline: one-sentence summary of the media piece.

Forward-reference headline: it is drawing a large attention to the media piece by emphasizing interesting or unknown information.

Loaded question: an author suggests the answer through the question.

Libel: written defamation (today mostly in letters, blog posts, comments, chats), which is a false statement that is published or communicated to damage a person's reputation.

Magic bullet theory (Hypodermic needle model): information provided by the media reaches its recipient directly and has an immediate effect.

Metaphor: dissimilar objects are compared without use of words such as „like" / object is referred to by mentioning another one (e.g. you are an angel; the Big Bang).

Metonymy: object represents another one that is closely associated (e.g. White House – U.S. President or administration).

Mise-en-scène: arrangement of everything that appears in front of the camera. It can convey additional, even hidden, meanings.

Negative advertising: it is showing the competitor in a bad light, mentioning it's negative sides.

Opinion leaders: people who are able to change the opinions of others thanks to their status, e.g. group leaders, successful people.

Parsing (syntactic analysis): analysis of the structure of the media piece: sentences, paragraphs, and whole text.

Positive advertising: it is portraying the product in a way that shows its advantages.

Pragmatics: study of how context (social, economic, historical, environmental, cultural, etc.) contributes to meaning.

Produsage: user-led content creation.

Prosumer: person both consuming and producing information or media content.

Question-based headline: it is posing a question about information contained in a media piece.

Satire: humour and exaggeration is used to expose issues and criticize.

Semantics: part of semiotics. It is the study of how the meaning in signs is created, communicated, and decoded.

Semantic analysis: analysing what is obvious or hidden in the text, e.g. what meanings are included in the text.

Semiotics: study of signs and sign-using behaviour.

Serious harm test: journalists/media makers ask questions to check whether their work can cause a serious harm to someone's reputation (defamation, libel, etc.). This concept is from the British law, but similar ones can be found in other countries as well.

Shocking/emotional headline: it seeks to grab the audience's attention by scandal, attempt to scare, or provoke emotions.

Sign: anything that represents the object or subject and is communicating a meaning, e.g. word, sound, image. it's divided into signified and signified.

Signifier: physical representation of concept or meaning, e.g. word, sound, image. It has three categories: icon, index, or symbol.

Signified: what is evoked in the mind. It's a mental concept or meaning that is distinguished from the sign (through which it is communicated).

Simile: dissimilar objects are compared through the use of words such as „like" or „as" (e.g. innocent as an angel).

Slander: spoken defamation, which is a false statement that is published or communicated to damage a person's reputation.

Social responsibility of media: thinking critically about own media content and its possible effects on the public. It should not be confused with a corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Spiral of silence: people/media with minority opinions stay rather silent.

Symbol: sign is related to the referent, e.g. object, only by convention (such as logos).

Symbolic leaders: people, organisations, or institutions having an indirect influence on others through symbols: celebrities, politicians, but media as well.

Synecdoche: part of something represents the whole, or vice-versa (e.g. crown – kingdom).

Syntactics: part of semiotics. It is the study of the formal relations between parts of the text (words, phrases, sentences), signs or expressions regardless of their meanings or interpretations.

Syntactic analysis (parsing): analysis of the structure of the media piece: sentences, paragraphs, and whole text.

Syntax: in media, it refers to the arrangement of components of the text in one piece (words, sentences, etc.). It is also the study of the formation of text and relationships of its component parts. In linguistics, it deals with the phrases and sentences.

Text: written or spoken words or any other forms of expression, such as photography or video.

Trope: speakers or writers express meanings of signs (e.g. words) differently than their literal meanings (e.g. metaphor).

Verification: proving that something is correct.

Wisdom of the crowd: collective opinion of a group of individuals. Aristotle is credited as the first person writing about this concept in his work titled Politics.