

MEDIA CONTENT:

The form of novels, newspapers, articles, radio broadcasts, television programs or pieces of music, the units of content that carry such messages are referred to as 'texts'. The analysis of the content is not concerned with an understanding of content for its own sake. Media gives highly selective representation of the world that have some capacity to influence or shape the future. Textual analysis tends to be used as a way of drawing attention to the particular ways in which media content selects and constructs the world and ways selective representations might influence the future.

Media texts as arrangements of signs:

Mass media texts by European structuralist theorists such as Roland Barthes (1968), semiology regards all communication from speech to images to TV programs- one made up of signs. So according to Saussure, all signs are made up of two core elements: a signifier which means of representation and a signified which is a concept that is represented.

EXAMPLE: A smile acts as a signifier and its signified is concept of happiness or amusement of its bearer. It also includes many signifiers such as emotion concepts- fear, anger, or joy.

Signs as arbitrary:

The relationship between signifier and signified is culturally specific. In many societies we have become use to equality black with the concept of evil and white with good but this is based on historically established convention and in different society with different history and association between signifier and signified all be reversed and no semiotic converts at all between color and morality. So signs are arbitrary.

- **ICON:** Physical resemblance between signifier and signified (sign in object).
- **INDEXES:** Connection between signifier and signified (the correspondence relates to prior association between them of seasoning or casual kind).

Example: Smoke to signify fire. Dark clouds to signify rain. Tears to signify sadness.

- **SYMBOLS:** Symbols entirely arbitrary and there is no obvious initial connection (with exception of words that imitate their object, language works on symbolic rather than iconic or indexical level, because there is no logical connection between the appearance or sound of words and concepts to which they refer).

Signs as Relational:

To analyse the ways in which meaning is conveyed, we have to understand how signs work in relation to one another. Two relational axes on action to focus- paradigmatic and syntagmatic.

PARADIGMATIC AXES:

It concerns the relationship of each individual signifier in a text with the set of alternative signifier that could have been used instead. The set of alternatives is known as paradigm.

PARADIGMATIC ANALYSIS:

That involves breaking up the text into its components and assessing the significance of each element by considering how the meaning would have been different by alternative signifier had been used instead. The idea is to compare what was selected by the producer of the text with what was not selected.

EXAMPLES:

Different paradigms or types of clothing under headings such as headwear, footwear, above waist garments, below waist garments, underwear and so on. So significance choices of person are made by comparing them with alternative within their paradigms. Use of color gives plenty views for paradigmatic analysis. Red -> creates different view than predominance green, yellowish blue color gives meaning in situation.

For EXAMPLE: Napkin products- use blue liquid being absorbed by the product. Another example: Women in magazine front cover, No. of. Paradigm, choice of model, lighting, hairstyle, gaze, expression. So it concerns the comparison of what is present with what is absent.

SYNTAGMATIC ANALYSIS:

To consider the way in which different signs present in text interact with one another. **EXAMPLE:** Pair of jeans convey a different message if worn with a t-shirt and if combined with buttoned shirt, tie, blazer and smart shoes. Red signifies danger, fire, heat, horror or sex, while yellow signifies heat, summer, happiness, cowardice or illness. The meaning is also clarified by relationship between the color and other signifiers with which it is placed. Traffic light is warning sign, red convey danger and backdrop footage couple gazing at one another connotes sexual desire.

NARRATIVE, GENRE AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Roland Barthes,

To study the ways in which their meaning one anchored by other signifiers- particularly by headlines, captions or voice over's but also by sound, music, and various other features.

Some of the analysis of text under index semiology,

- Narrative
- Genre
- Discourse analysis

1. Narrative analysis:

Narrative analysis treats media texts are diverse as films, adverts, documentaries and newspaper columns as composed of different forms of storytelling and seek to identify the conversion and diversion with such narratives are constructed. Narrative analysis is particularly convinced with understanding the narrative convention on which stories draw and in doing so, deconstruct the way in audience are being asked to make sense of content.

TZVETAN TODOROV (1978):

Storytelling often activates a standard plot structure in which a state of equilibrium or normality is established at the beginning that is disrupted in some way by a casual event and reinstated in a slightly different form. At the end as a result of corrective action

EQUILIBRIUM → DISRUPTED → REINSTATED
(Casual event)

VLADIMIR PROPP (1968):

Narrative also involves standard character types. For example: identification with 7 character types that operates within Russian folk tales as follows,

- Villain (who disinterprets normality)
 - The sharpest contrast against the hero is the villain, who struggles directly against the hero. The Villain may seek to prevent the Hero from achieving the goal or may quest after the same artifact. This turns the audience against him and drives them to support the hero. The Villains' lack of morals serves to highlight the goodness of the Hero.

- Donor (who gives the hero a gift to enable normality to be restored)

- The Donor is a person who gives the Hero something special, such as a magical weapon or some particular wisdom, a clue or a special power. This gift enables the Hero to complete their quest.
- ➔ Helper (who accompanies the hero)
 - The Helper may also be found in a support role, helping the hero throughout the story. The limitations of the helper often help to highlight the hero's defining characteristics such as intelligence, determination, courage,
- ➔ Princess (in need of rescue from the villain)
 - First, he/she may be the object which is deliberately sought by the Hero, perhaps finding where the Villain has taken him/her. Secondly, she may be the reward, such that after completing some other mission, they gain his/her affections or hand in marriage. The Princess may be seen very little in the story, perhaps appearing only at the end, or may be an important character, accompanying the Hero on their mission. The Princess may be pursued by many, in particular by the False Hero.
- ➔ Dispatcher (who initiates the hero's journey)
 - Dispatcher who sends the Hero on the mission. This may be a family member such as a mother or father. It can also be the Princess's Father, who gives the Hero a set of quests to be completed before he gains the hand of the Princess
- ➔ Hero (who restores normality)
 - The Hero Generally the hero leads the narrative. The story being told is the story of the hero. They are usually looking for something - a quest, or trying to solve something- a mystery. Usually they are the person we want to succeed in the story.
- ➔ False hero (who takes on the guise of hero- false claims of the hero)
 - The False Hero appears to act heroically and may even be initially mistaken for the real Hero. The False Hero will try to steal the Hero's thunder, grabbing the credit and perhaps trying to marry the princess instead. The False Hero may also gain the respect or other control of the Princess's Father, thus frustrating the Hero's ability to gain the hand of the Princess.

The aim to understand in extensive detail the ways in which different stories are structured the explicit and implicit device used to convey different events and ways in which different emotional responses are generated.

2. Genre Analysis:

Analysis is focused acutely on the relationship of different texts to one another and the ways in which they are clustered into particular types or genres. Examples of genres include romance, comedy, science-fiction, news and soap opera. It is concerned with looking at establishment and operations of distinct conventions that relate to audience expectations about narrative structure, subject matter, setting, editing, music, and visual features and so on.

EXAMPLE: Soap opera typically involves a series of overlapping and ongoing narration about different members from episode to episode.

They seek to generate credible and serious set of representation of relationships, dilemmas and personal crises. Sitcoms centered on particular family or small group friends and focus on representations that are exaggerated for comedic value. Every episode have beginning, middle and end narrative form in which consistent with Todorov's standard structure, each episode begins and ends with the state of normalcy. Even 24hours news programs, for example have developed a somewhat unique set of conventions of their own. The emphasis in fast-moving liveness, breaking stories, graphics, logos, on- screen tickers and two- way question and answer sessions between anchors and reporters 'at the scene'.

3. **Discourse Analysis:**

Associate with study of image based media than in- depth examination of the minutia of language use. There has been a growth of interest among some theorists in the specific construction of meaning by means of arrangement of words and sentences in media. Discourse analysis is concerned with world views and social structures are embedded in and re-inforced in the use of verbal or written communication. Focusing on various elements of vocabulary, grammar and syntax, analysts ask questions about how the particular formulation used position the speaker and audience what they invite us to understand events, individuals, groups and identities. EXAMPLE: Focal point for discourse analysis is construction of communities through formulation of language and positioning of speaker and audience in relation to there. 1995 -> Michael Prillig studied construction of national identity in UK newspaper by means of repeated use of words such as 'us', 'our' and 'we' headline and article phrasing.

CONCENTRATION OF OWNERSHIP = CONCENTRATION OF IDEAS?

Control of our channels of mass communication by such a small number commercial organization has gave implications for the circulation of ideas and culture. EXAMPLE: Priz Five Transnationals (Time Warner, Disney, News Corporation, Viacom, and Bertelsmann) has more communications power than was exercised by any dictator in history and that their tendency to co- operate with one another in pursuit of mutually beneficial outcomes makes their influence owner populations, governments and policies around the world immense. Many nation states find that they dwarfed by such power and consequence have diminishing control over the distinct of culture in their territory.

It is specifically argued by some that concentrates ownership leads concentration of media ownership leads to concentration of culture and ideas- that instead of engaging with diversity of competing perspective and innovative forms of expression, population are subject to narrow and monolithic set of message. The notes of an automatic or exclusive link between

concentrate of ownership and concentrates of ideas may over simply things. It is true that certain ideas are consistently emphasized and other marginalized, the overall contemporary media environment, including books, music, and internet offer wide range of perspective even if many of them are controlled by large corporations.

OWNERSHIP AND CONTROLLING COMPANIES:

It is often difficult to pin down the precise influence that the individual owners and controlling companies have upon the media since a great deal of that influence is likely to be covert, indirect, structural, and long-term. There are two views on the influence of owners and controlling companies-

According to Tony Benn, in general the media owners and top level administration find it easy to impose their views into print, television, or radio they own.

But according to John Whale, even if ownership influence exists, the main influence is that of the readers and thus the nature of the press is ultimately decided by its readers.

All of the Indian broadcast media and most of the print media as well, are owned primarily by wealthy individuals. Direct ties to the biggest of big businesses are almost unbelievably extensive, and, we believe, these ties cannot help but seriously bias and compromise news coverage. Moreover, the media empires are, first and foremost, profit-making corporations that conduct themselves like other corporations when it comes to corrupting Indian politics. That is, the parent corporations of many make so-called "campaign contributions" and also act against the public interest in other ways. As big winners in the corruption game, they show no signs of serious interest in political reform. (As large corporations themselves, the mass media want the same preferential treatment, and have the same desire to grow without bounds, as all other corporations.)

Ex: In Tamil Nadu the leading channels are supported by various political parties and because of that the same news is shown from different perspectives by the different channels in order to support the political party that supports them. Sun TV is biased towards the DMK party, Jaya TV is biased towards the ADMK. The Doordarshan channels are supposed to be unbiased channels

but at times the channels tend to support the present ruling party as the channels are run by the government (present ruling party).