Critical Discourse Analysis Essay

Unit 2: How is power communicated through language?

Weight: 15% of final grade

SLOs:

- Interpret and analyze discourse that deals with issues of cultural and/or global diversity in a variety of forms.
- Develop an advanced understanding of critical discourse analysis and critical language awareness.
- Use written and oral discourse to develop and present meaningful and interesting ideas that show the students' voices, a willingness to take intellectual risks, and an ability to enter an academic conversation.
- Communicate competently in several genres and in response to the needs of different audiences.
- Create discourse through a more sophisticated process that includes editing, proofreading, and revising multiple drafts.
- Critique their own and others' works and assess their own development as producers of discourse.
- Appropriately cite sources using a consistent professional style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) at an intermediate level.

Assignment:

In this essay, you will create an argument to answer the questions: How do different authors use language, rhetorical strategies, and power to persuade their intended audiences? What does an author's use of language, rhetorical strategies, and power say about the values of their respective discourse communities?

Begin your work by selecting 2 articles related to the field of technology. You will have to use the library's databases, as demonstrated in class, to locate the articles. I encourage you to try and find a niche of the broad technology subject that interests you, so as to make your analysis more meaningful to you. Once you have read through each article, you are ready to begin analyzing them. Questions you should investigate for each article include:

- Who is the author? What can you find out about them?
- What "discourse group" does this author belong to?
- Who is the intended audience (Who did the author intend to persuade/speak to when writing this article)? How do you know?
- What discourse group would members of the intended audience belong to? Is it a different group than the one the author belongs to? If so, did the author make adjustments to better persuade someone outside their group?
- Where/when was the article published? What does that tell you about the intended audience?
- What is the author's thesis? What did he/she intend to convince readers of?
- How is jargon being used/not used in the article?

- How does the author appeal/not appeal to ethos? Logos? Pathos? Find concrete examples of each. If examples are not present, consider what that says about the author's intentions.
- How effectively is the argument presented? Do you think readers would be convinced of the author's thesis after reading? Why/why not?
- How does the author make use of power in their writing? What rhetorical moves are at play?

Once you've thoughtfully analyzed each article using the above questions, you can begin to consider the similarities and differences in the two articles. To get you started, think about these example comparisons: How does the author of article 1 present their argument differently than the author of article 2? Are they written to the same audience? How would article 1 be different if it had been directed, instead, to the audience of article 2?

From here, you will work to create a thesis related to the presence of language, rhetorical strategies, and power in the articles. Though, by this point, you've done some extensive comparing and contrasting, **this is not meant to be a comparison/contrast paper**. Rather, use your comparisons as evidence for your argument. You, like the article authors, should have something somewhat doubtable to prove to your readers (your classmates and myself). The thesis you create needs to be provable by at least three (3) main supporting points. (Note: The questions above are not all intended to be part of your paper. Use them to help generate your refined thesis).

As with all of your papers, the supporting points, and thereby, your argument, should rely heavily on textual evidence from the articles to prove your thesis. Be sure, however, to adequately explain any evidence from the texts you provide. Remember that your explanations of the evidence and showing readers how it relates to your point should be at least 2-3 times longer than the evidence itself. You will use a **combination** of direct quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing from your texts; however, **any time** you reference the articles, you must:

1. Introduce the source (the first time you use it)
2. Provide the textual evidence (quote, summary, or paraphrase)
3. Cite the information (in-text citations)
4. Explain what the textual evidence you provide means (what is the author saying here?)
5. Discuss how it connects to the point you are making (do not assume your readers see the connection)

And, as always, your paper should demonstrate careful proofreading, follow MLA formatting, have proper in-text citations, and contain an MLA Works Cited page. Resources you should consult in these matters include Purdue's Online Writing Lab ([Purdue OWL](#)), *Everyone's an Author*, and the "Essay Guidelines" document posted on Bb.

Length requirement (not including Works Cited): 1500 words minimum