BASIC PRINCIPLES

LINGUISTICS: manifestations of human speech are all concerned

SOUND + IDEA = PSYCHOLOGICAL UNIT

Speech < Individual / Social

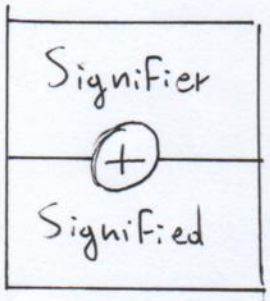
LANGUAGE: System of distinct signs corresponding to distinct ideas
→ Exists perfectly only within a collectivity

SEMIOLOGY: Science that studies the life of signs within society

SIGN: Something that we can perceive through which we are lead to know something that is hidden.

Consequences:
- Knowledge (passing on of knowledge)
- Philosophical thinning: think of non-existing concepts eg. through negation
- Creativity (through language)
- Lies

Sign:



Both are "mental models"

Signifier: Concept
Representation common to more people and more instances

Signified: Sound-Image
Different instances, recognised together

Signs are arbitrary ←
- Signifier has no natural connection with the signified (Chosen w.r.t. the idea it represents)
  The bond between them is the result of a convention
- The signified is arbitrary, it may differ according to needs
  e.g. "Ice" in english vs in eskimo where there are more words to say more signified that in english are all grouped under "Ice"

Sign < Immutable: accepted as heritage / Mutable: unavoidable shifts in the relationships between signifier and signified

TEXT: every meaningful and concrete linguistic production
(An extended structure of syntactic units)

Objective: produce a meaningful linguistic unit
→ Put together signs, giving them concrete meaning
→ The real "sign" is text

Interpretation of texts < Verbal components / Non verbal components

CO-TEXT : « text around » makes clear the whole
e.g. "we won the match" vs "light a match"
+ other sentences giving different connotations to one
+ The arrangement of the sentences

CON-TEXT : « world around the text », the environment in broad sense
Gives meaning according to the environment
e.g. "Give me the boon" what book

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE : To interpret stuff according to what we know
e.g. red eyes vs blue eyes

Relevance

The appropiateness of the text (the communication) in respect to the question it wants to answer

Most relevant ⟺ Answers its question best

Every element introduced in a text should be some way re-traceable up to the question the text is answering.

An irrelevant text is not a qualitative one.

Informative-ness

The extent to which a text informs, or puts forth pieces of content that are new for the addressee.

Informativeness is a pre-requisite of relevance

Reference

For communication to be understandable, individuals taking part must share a common knowledge, a "common ground", in order to be understood and have a meaningful conversation.

↖ A well-defined set of common knowledge

Jargon / technical (hard to grasp by non technicals)
\ Internal (to a group)

Two mistakes:
- Taking information that is not shared for granted
- Not taking for granted information that is shared → verbose communication

RHETORIC

The art of speaking and persuasion, the study of effective speaking and writing.

COMMUNICATION = CONTENT (what) + FORM (How)

Persuasion happens through:

- LOGOS : the appeal to reason
- PATHOS : the appeal to emotion
- ETHOS : the persuasive appeal of one's character, to establish one's credibility with the audience

CANONS OF RHETORIC:

1) INVENTIO (Invention)
   - Find what to say and what arguments
   - Brain-storming + Brain-mapping
   - Use ethos, pathos, logos
   - Anticipate — Objections / wishes of the audience
   - Chose what should be — Explicit / Implicit

   Key messages: what you want your addressee to remember
   Key values: what you want your addressee to feel

2) DISPOSITIO (Arrangement)
   How to order and organize the arguments
   - Depends on the context

   Nestorian order: strong - less strong - strong
   - Both written and oral communication
   - Requires full and continuous attention by the audience

   Descending climax: strong - less strong - less strong
   → Catch the attention at the beginning and not lose the opportunity to say the most important things
   - Short span of attention of the audience

   Ascending climax Less strong - scaling up - strong
   - When there are (high) expectations
   - Requires continuous attention or a captive audience

   Beginning of the speech: CAPTATIO BENEVOLENTIAE "winning of Favor"
   a) Praise the audience
   b) Show understanding towards the audience
   c) Be humble and/or self-ironic

   NB: do not overdo!

3) ELOCUTIO (Style)

- << Dress >> ideas in words
  ↳ How it is done will make a difference

3 VIRTUES OF STYLE:

1) Correctness (Vocabulary and syntax)
2) Clarity (Lack of ambiguity and obscurity)
3) "Evidence" (To create vivid depictions)
4) Propriety (Being appropriate to context)
5) Ornateness (Aesthetic qualities)

+ Figures of speech:
  Metaphor, Analogy, Anaphora, ...

4) MEMORIA (Memory)

- Keep in mind the arguments and their order
- Use << aides memoires >> / associate arguments to things you know
  \ create a "scene"
- Store in memory material to use as called for in a given occasion
- Meet (be prepared to) improvisational necessities

5) ACTIO (Delivery

Attention to how the things are said

- Use of pathos and ethos

/ Voice
— Gestures
\ Movements

- Pay attention to:
  - Audience (Free or captive?)
  - Tools
  - Unforseen events
  - Expectations
  - Space
  - Time

NOTE ON SLIDES

Attention to: context, aim, speaker's confidence → Slides are both helper and competitor

- No too many elements or text
- Must be readable (Char dimension, colors, contrast, room light, ...)
- Not too generic title
- Highlight crucial points
- Summarize graphs with sentences

Luca Gerin

Arguments from IT field

Introduce 4 examples of arguments of 4 different kinds taken from your field of study

To explain how smart contracts work, during a Ted speech the speaker compared them to very secure vending machines, where you put the money, some checks are done and automatically you get what you paid for without the need of any intermediary. It's then possible to treat smart contracts like vending machines, expecting from them the same you would expect when buying a snack. This argument makes use of the **analogy** topoi, using similarity to deliver a more complex concept.

Talking about how to utilize smart contracts, during a speech the scenario of Finland's government giving a prepaid card to refugees while storing their identity using blockchain is utilized as virtuous example. This is a display of reasoning with **generalization**, saying that because something already works in one context then it must work also in others.

In order to prove the capabilities of AI, the case of a computer beating a human in one of the most complex activities we know, a chess game, against Garry Kasparov, humanity's leading grandmaster in 1997, is presented. Consequently, it is argued that AI is better than humans in all tasks. This is a **Generalization** argument, where one single case is utilized to extend the result to a broader range of situations.

After explaining the serious risks of using AI in political campaigns, it is said that it is unlikely that politicians will forswore to avoid using it, because of how politicians usually behave. This is an **appeal to common belief**, in particular of stereotypes (true or not) regarding politics.

To argue against the EU rule that states that all small electronics should have the same kind of charging port, it is pointed out that eliminating and disallowing the alternative technologies will slow down development of new technologies in this field. This is an **argument of quantity**, whose logic is that having a bigger number of technologies in development will benefit technological progress more than having just one evolving standard.

To prove that AI will eventually become more intelligent than humans, some newspapers argued that it will surely be the case, because Geoffrey Hinton, one of google pioneers in this field, said so when leaving his job. This is an **argument from authority**, where a claim is supported by the status of the person making it.

Silicon chips will, one day or another, reach their physical limit and will also run out of primary material to be produced. Experts think that this moment is getting closer, and it's time to start investing in new technologies to allow further technological development before it's too late and we suffer a crisis due to the stop of advancement. This is an **argument of irreparable direction**, in which a scenario is presented as unavoidable, and a solution is proposed as the only way to face it.