

Semiotics and its branches (Syntactics, Semantics, Pragmatics)

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the study of semiotics, as the science of signs and sign systems, sections of semiotics: Syntactics, Pragmatics, Semantics. Signs and symbols are one of the forms of non-verbal communication that are used universally and widely to convey information. The article talks about the degree of study of semiotics as a science of signs, the branches of semiotics Syntactics, Pragmatics, Semantics and the significance of this branch of scientific knowledge in non-verbal communication. The article gives information about the sign theories of Charles Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure.

Key words: *signs, Syntactics, Pragmatics, Semantics, Charles Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure, icon, symbol, index.*

Аннотация

Данная статья посвящена изучению семиотике, как науке о знаках и знаковых систем, разделов семиотике Синтактика, Прагматика, Семантика. Знаки и символы являются одной из форм невербальной коммуникации, которые применяются повсеместно и распространённо для передачи информации. Статья рассказывает о степени изученности семиотики как науки о знаках, разделах семиотике Синтактика, Прагматика, Семантика и значимости данного раздела научного познания в невербальной коммуникации. В статье рассказывается о знаковых теориях Чарльза Пирса, Фердинанд де Соссюра.

Ключевые слова: *знаки, Синтактика, Прагматика, Семантика, Чарльз Пирс и Фердинанд де Соссюр, икона, символ, индекс.*

Information exists and is transmitted in absolutely diverse forms, but, nevertheless, man is the main source of transmission, preservation and use of information. In modern society, there are various forms of information transfer between interlocutors: both verbal and non-verbal types. Individuals can convey information in the verbal form of communication through words and sentences, but they can also use non-verbal means in the communication process such as voice intonation, body language (gestures, facial expressions, pantomime, eye contact systems) and various signs. According to Professor Birdwistle, verbal communication in a conversation takes up less than 35%, and more than 65% of information is conveyed through non-verbal means. One of the means of nonverbal communication is signs, which are widely used in society. In the process of conveying information, signs can be used based on the fact that they convey information over a wide range to the general public, can contain enormous context and have a more pronounced impact on the addressee. Signs and symbols such as road signs, emoticons on the Internet, music signs and so on. The science of semiotics studies the nature and properties of these signs.

A sign is a unit of information that represents something other than itself. In the 17th century, John Locke defined semiotics, using the term to mean the study of signs. This doctrine should have as its object "to consider the nature of the signs which the mind uses to understand things or to communicate its knowledge to others" [1]

The French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure also made a significant contribution to the development of this science, highlighting the symbolic nature of language and contrasting the concepts of "signifier" and "signified." Ferdinand de Saussure, in a course on general linguistics, defines the semiology he creates as "a science that studies the life of signs within the framework of the life of society" [2]. According to the sign theory of F. de Saussure, a sign has a binary structure, including a signifier and a signified. The connection between the signifier and the

signified is not motivated and conditional, conventional (especially in signs-symbols, that is, in most signs of verbal language) [3] However, despite the conventionality of the connection between the signifier and the signified, this convention firmly connects the signified and the signifier and is common for all native speakers of a given language.

Thus, any sign within a given context has only one, specific interpretation, ideally only one possible interpretation on the part of all members of a given linguistic community. The signifier and the signified in language are in a relationship of strict mutual predetermination, although conditional, but completely unambiguous, and the referent acts as an extra-textual guarantor of the unambiguous interpretation of the meaning. A native speaker does not need to make constant choices in the process of endowing a sign with meaning; the language system, which accumulates the collective experience of native speakers, does this for him.

Semiotics is a scientific discipline that studies the production, structure and functioning of various sign systems that store and transmit information [4].

Charles Sanders Peirce, an American philosopher, the founder of pragmatism and semiotics, characterized important semiotic concepts: sign, meaning and sign relations. He defined semiotics as the study of the nature and main types of sign processes. Charles Sanders Peirce developed a triad of signs: icon, index and symbol. An icon is a sign that has a physical resemblance to what it represents (for example, a photograph). An index is a sign that indicates something by physical connection or cause-and-effect (for example, smoke indicates fire). A symbol is a sign whose meaning is established through convention (for example, words and mathematical symbols).

Semiotics considers the concept of code. A code is a system of rules and conventions by which signs are combined and interpreted. For example, language codes or traffic sign codes.

Semiotics defines three main branches of study of signs and sign systems:

1) Syntactics is a branch of semiotics that studies the rules and relationships between signs within sign systems (the structure and order of signs). Syntactics studies the internal properties of sign systems without considering their interpretation (that is, the rules for constructing signs in a sign system). The task of syntactics is to describe the stock of correctly constructed texts (composite signs) for various classes of sign systems. In the general case, the task of syntactics is to formulate such a theory (a list of syntactic relations and a list of postulates) that the class of texts of a given sign system is the class of all models of this theory. In this case, the postulates of the theory exhaustively describe the stock of admissible texts. In particular, for programming languages the syntactics are so well developed that there are methods for machine verification of the correctness of program construction. In the case of natural language, a formal description of syntactics has been obtained only in fragments.

2) Semantics is a branch of semiotics that studies the relationship between signs and what they denote (the meaning of signs). Semantics studies the relationship of signs to the signified (the content of signs) or, what is the same, the relationship between signs and their interpretations, regardless of who is the “addressee” (interpreter). Semantics deals with the consideration of the relationship of signs to the objects they denote. The most important is the concept of “semantic rule”. The term "semantic rule" in semiotics means a rule that determines under what conditions a sign can be applied to an object or situation that these signs are capable of denoting.

In the semantics of signs, the meaning of a sign is distinguished (denotation - what a given sign means in a specific sign situation) and its meaning (designatum, concept, information that a sign carries about the signified, Significat). Thus, a certain sign not only acts as a mark for a given object, which allows it to be distinguished from other objects, but usually also gives a characteristic of this

object according to some of its properties. The same sign can, as a rule, in different situations denote different objects, distinguishing them on the basis of a common concept. The ambiguity of the correspondence between a sign and a concept can lead to homonymy, polysemy and synonymy.

3) The term pragmatics was introduced into scientific life by C.I. Morris in the 1930s. He divides semiotics into components such as semantics, syntax and pragmatics. The emergence and identification of pragmatics as a new object of study in linguistics, as noted above, is based on the ideas of Ch.S. Peirce, as well as on the logical-philosophical views of J.R. Austin, J.R. Searle and Z. Wendler in 1960-1970. This speech act is inextricably linked with the pragmatic analysis of the meaning of Paula Grace and the influence of the reference theories of L. Lynskey, D. R. Searle, P. F. Strauss. Pragmatics is a branch of semiotics that studies the relationship of signs to the subjects who produce and interpret them. Pragmatics is a branch of semiotics that studies the use of signs in specific situations and their influence on the behavior of participants in communication. Pragmatics considers the relationship of signs with their “addressee”, that is, it studies the problems of interpretation of signs by those who use them, their usefulness and value for the interpreter. Thus, Semantics, especially syntactic theory, deals with only some semiotic problems, while pragmatics, which needs “help” from specific sciences (for example, psychology, psycholinguistics, social psychology), explores all issues related to Semiotics as a whole. Pragmatics explores the categories of usefulness, value, and understandability of a sign, and also studies semantic information, where the question of assessing the information extracted by a given addressee from a sign plays an important role.

The definition proposed by S. Levinson seems appropriate: “Pragmatics is the study of the appropriate use of language users' words in context” [5]

Semiotics plays an important role in understanding communication and interpreting information in a wide variety of areas of human activity.

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