

Meaning and Interpretation in a Context of Semiotics

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Abstract This article is devoted the semiotics analysis of concepts «meaning» and «interpretation». On the basis of the analysis the conclusion becomes, that the sign can display a reality only in the course of human activity. Meaning of a sign is a way of its use and interpretation. From the point of view of the theory of interpretants are checked and described conformity, associated with other sign. Thus, the maintenance analysis becomes the cultural-caused operation which is carried out only with physically checked (perceived) products of culture, i.e. with other signs and their mutual correlations. Process unlimited semiotics shows, how signification, constantly correlating one sign with another or with a number of other signs, depicts culture elements.

Keywords: *sign, denotation, reference, meaning interpretant, signification*

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1. Introduction

To understand a sign, it is necessary to interpret it. Sign interpretation is the operation reached at replacement of an initial sign by other sign or a character set. The denotation of any sign, in particular words, non-defined without the reference to a verbal code. Besides no sending to objects can explain a value phenomenon though can help to establish separate denotation of a name. Cardinal property of a sign - to transfer denotation - can be shown to concept of interpretation or translation of a sign, i.e. to possibility to present its maintenance other, more explicit, developed signs. Sign function correlates the given expression to the given maintenance. The maintenance is defined by culture without dependence from that, it will be co-ordinated or not with the given state of peace. «Unicorn» - the same *sign*, as well as «dog». Possibility to speak about each of these signs is provided with certain *index receptions* though about "dog" it is possible to speak as about individually existing object, and about "unicorn"- it is impossible. The same concerns for images of a dog and a unicorn. Those images which in semiotics are called *as graphic* or *iconic signs* also an essence the expressions correlated with certain maintenance. If they possess properties something (or are similar to something), it something - not object in the world or a state of peace in which it is possible to specify, but the certain structured and analytically organized maintenance. The image a unicorn is not similar to a "real" unicorn; we learn it not thanks to our experience of perception of "real" unicorns but because it has the lines entering into definition of a unicorn, developed by the given culture within the limits of concrete system of maintenances. The same it is possible to tell and in connection with index receptions.

2. Sign and Representament

According to U. Eco, self-sufficiency of a universe of the maintenance given by given culture, explains, why signs can use so that by means of them to tell a lie. «We have the right to speak about sign function when something can be used to lie (and, hence, for working out of ideologies, for creation of works of art and etc.). That is called as a sign (i.e. that for someone acts instead of something other in a certain relation or quality), is that only because we can use a sign for sending to a fictitious state of peace. Even the *index* can be forged so that it designated event which had no place and actually never generated the prospective sign. Signs can be used to lie because they send to objects or world conditions only mediated. Directly they send only to the certain maintenance. Thus, it is possible to tell that the relation between *significant* and *signify* (or between a *sign-carrier* on value and *meant*, or between a *sign* and *its meaning*) independently and does not demand presence of a certain designated object as element of the definition. Therefore probably to develop the theory of signification on a basis it is pure intentional semantics. Thus it is impossible to tell that at extensional semantics is not present any function. On the contrary, it supervises parity between sign function (a sign-function) and the given state of peace when signs are used to speak or mention about something. But any extensional semantics can be developed (and procedures of the statement or a mention about something can be provided) only because intentional semantics is possible as self-sufficient cultural design (i.e. as a code or system of codes) » [1].

C. S. Pierce enters distinction between a *sign* and *representamen*. When he says that uses words «sign» and «representamen» differently, he, obviously, means that

sign is some *token*, something concrete, said - the concrete occurrence of expression used in concrete process of communications and/or reference whereas *representamen* is *the type* to which the given code attributes the certain maintenance by means of defined interpretants.

Pierce writes: «Under the sign I understand everything that in any way transfers any certain notion about a certain object as we know such transmitters of thought under this name. And here I begin with this familiar idea and I make as it is possible the best analysis of that is essential to a sign, and [then] I define representamen as all that approaches under this analysis... In particular, all signs transfer concepts to human consciousness's; but I do not see the reason why it should be true for all representamen» [2].

Eco makes comments on this fragment as the assumption of distinction between the signification theory and the communications theory. Representamens are typical expressions, correlated in the given culture with that or other typical maintenance, without dependence from, whether they are used for the valid communications someone with someone.

In this sense value is, in the primary understanding, sign transfer in other system of signs, and value of the given sign is that sign, in which given sign should be translated. Thus, interpretation by means *interpretants* is a way by which the sign is demonstrated (is shown) as denotation.

Interpretant is that the sign generates in the interpreter, but as interpreter presence is not included an essential part into definition *interpretant*, this last should be considered first of all as *interpretant*, opening in correct understanding of the sign and usually named the *meaning* of a sign.

So, differing as formal objects of various semiotics approaches and as considered from the various points of view, value and *interpretant* is, as a matter of fact, same as it is impossible to define value differently, than as a number interpretants.

However, underlines Eco, interpretant is not only value of the term, but also the result of conclusion deduced from certain parcels. Whether we should believe, what interpretant has wider and more difficult sense, than meaning? Meaning of a certain statement, as well as it interpretant, do not settle all possibilities of the given statement to be transformed to other statements [1].

3. Meaning and Signification

So, meaning somehow follows from a parcel. Even more generalizing, it is possible to tell that value is everything that semantics it is meant a sign. In other words, according to the Pierce the meaning of a sign comprises all those texts into which the given sign can be inserted in the rudimentary form. The sign is a text matrix.

However in that case the concept «*the meaning*» appears too wide. It is applied not on separate terms, and to parcels and conclusions. Differently, the theory of value and interpretants concerns not only conclusions, but also to separate terms, and - in the light of this theory - the maintenance of the separate term becomes something similar to the encyclopedia.

Thus, the symbol denotes something individual and signifies a certain property, what property and is a general

meaning. Distinction between a denoting and signifying is connected with distinction between extensional and intentional, between width and depth, or between denotation and meaning, i.e. between sending, reference to something and signifying of something. The concept "depth" is connected with concept "information" which is a measure predicate.

Signs of the given term include all depth of other term; substantial definiteness of the first term thereby increases. The term can have both necessary, and casual ("accidental") signs, these signs make substantive depth of the term. In this sense depth of the term (or it intentional) is the sum intentional or semantic signs (dung) which characterize its maintenance [4].

This set of signs (or dungs) should expand in process of growth of our knowledge of objects. Sign, like a magnet, draws to itself all those new lines and signs which process of knowledge to it attributes. As writes Pierce: «Each symbol is something live, in the most direct, completely not figurative sense. The symbol body changes slowly, but its value inevitably grows, incorporating new elements and rejecting old» [2]. Thus, the term in itself is the article of the encyclopedia containing all those characteristics which it gets with each new general statement.

The term is a rudimentary statement, because it - empty the statement form.

Thus, any sign interprets other sign and the basic condition of semiotics - it is sending from one sign to another, infinite regress. At such approach everyone interpretant the given sign, being in turn also a sign, becomes time metasemiotics construction, acting (and only in this case) in quality explains no to the relation to interpreted explicator, - and, in turn, can be interpreted by other sign which will act in relation to it in quality interpretant.

The infinity of it of some, however, could make the semantic encyclopedia impracticable, again and again depriving of attempt of the semantic analysis of any hope of successful end. But, according to Eco, the encyclopedia has a logic limit, it cannot be infinite: this limit - a discourse universe [1].

The unlimited universe would capture all area logically possible. Our discourse seldom corresponds with this unlimited universe: we mean either physically possible, or historically existing, or the world of any art fiction, or still any limited universe.

4. Conclusions

The concept «a discourse universe» along with concept «the possible world» connects a problem semantic representation with a problem of contextual preferences and opens interesting prospects in the field of the modern theory of sign systems.

How the sign can display a reality concerning an external world if by the nature of things it is not capable of it? How probably to connect a sign with object if to distinguish object, it is necessary to have former experience of its perception, and the sign does not provide neither acquaintances, nor object recognitions? It is possible only in the course of activity. Value of a symbol consists in a set of the actions, called to make certain notable effects.

Sign, causing a number of direct reactions (power interpretant), gradually creates a certain habit, a certain regularity of behavior at the interpreter (or the user) this sign. Differently, the parity between meaning and representamen gets the form of the law; on the other hand, to understand a sign means to understand the nobility that it is necessary to do to create such concrete situation in which it is possible to find sensual experience of that object to which sends the given sign.

The sign can make interpretants two kinds: emotional interpretant and the power interpretant. Thus power reaction itself does not demand interpretation; more likely she creates (obviously, at the further repetitions) a new habit. In other words having apprehended a number of signs, we change our behavior, our activity in the world - forever or for a while. In this point unlimited semiotic stops (stops: a stop not unlimited in time, chronological sense because all our ordinary life is penetrated by such changes of habits). The exchange of signs leads to experience change; absent a link between semiotic and a physical reality as practical action it is found.

To understand a sign as a rule (which speaks by means of a number interpretant of the given sign) is means to get a habit to operate according to the instruction proceeding from the given sign [3,5,6].

Thus, the action repeatedly made in reply to the given sign, becomes, in turn, a new sign, representamen of the law, interpreting the first sign both to beginning new and never-ending process of interpretation.

The circle considered in this prospect semiotic becomes isolated during each instant - and does become isolated never. The system of semiotics (sign, code) systems which can seem the unreal world of culture idealistically separated from the validity actually induces people to influence the world; and everyone such reformative the world influence, in turn, always and itself turns to new signs and begins new process of semiotic.

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