

CLASSIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SIGNS IN SEMIOTICS

Shamsutdinova Nazokat Alisherovna

*student of master's degree English language and literature Andijan State Institute
of Foreign Languages nazokatshine@gmail.com*

Abstract: *Non-verbal communication uses various paralinguistic means to convey information, such as gestures, facial expressions, signs and symbols. This article is devoted to the study of the characteristics and classification of signs proposed by various scientists.*

Key words: *semiotics, signs, symbols, Charles Pierce, Charles Maurice, Ferdinand de Saussure, denotation, interpreter, referent*

Аннотация: *В невербальной коммуникации используются различные паралингвистические средства для передачи информации, такие как: жесты, мимика, знаки и символы. Данная статья посвящена изучению свойств и классификации знаков, предложенные различными учеными.*

Ключевые слова: *семиотика, знаки, символы, Чарльз Пирс, Чарльз Морис, Фердинанд Де Соссюр, денотат, интерпретатор, референт*

We encounter various signs and symbols every day: road signs on the roads, emoticons and symbols on the Internet, bright and colorful images on advertising posters. We are surrounded by various signs, and we get information about the concrete situations and surroundings by looking at them and interpreting the information and the meanings that they are coded. The study of signs and their classification is carried out by Semiotics. But what is a sign?

Signs are material, sensually perceived objects that are used to convey and store the meaning and content of other objects. Signs are the smallest unit of sign system that contain and carry information. Signs serve as representatives of other objects.

“Objects of various types can act as a sign: objects, phenomena, properties, relationships, actions.”, and also that “the material nature of objects used as signs turns out to be not fundamental for cognitive processes and the functioning of the language, but it is determined mainly by the convenience or accessibility of the production and perception of signs. [1]

The Linguistic Encyclopedic Dictionary defines a sign as a material-ideal formation, which is a unity of a certain mental content (signified) and a sensually perceived form (signifier), used to represent an object, features and relationship of reality.

A sign is a universal tool which helps a person to adapt to the reality, it is “the only thing a person has to navigate in this world” [2]

In semiotics, a sign is everything that informs the interpreter of a sign of a meaning that is not the sign itself. Meanings can be intentional, such as when a word is

pronounced with a particular meaning, or unintentional, such as when symptoms are taken as a sign of a particular medical condition.

Each sign has, firstly, a material side - this is its signifier (lat. signans), or a plane of expressions, and secondly, an ideal side - this is the meaning of the sign, or content, in terms of semiotics - the signified (from lat. signatum), or content plan.[3]

A sign is any physical form that has been imagined or created externally (with the help of some physical medium) to denote an object, event, feeling, etc., known as a referent, or to denote a class of similar (or related) objects, events, feelings, etc., known as the referential area.

In human life, signs perform many functions. They allow people to recognize patterns in things; they act as predictive landmarks or action plans; they serve as examples of certain kinds of phenomena; and this list is endless.

In semiotics, a sign is understood in a broad sense as a material object, which, under certain conditions (as scientists say: forming a sign situation), corresponds to a certain "meaning", which can be anything - a real or fictional thing, phenomenon, process, fantastic or fabulous creature, abstract concept. [4]

"The problem of the sign," the philosopher A. Vetrov wrote in his book on semiotics, "is the central problem of semiotics. Its solution to some extent predetermines the nature of the approach to other semiotic problems. That is why the problem of the sign forms the beginning of semiotic research. [5]

The content (meaning) of any symbol is not a "replaceable object", but a representation of it (for example, a road sign: "Dangerous turn").

According to Augustine, a sign makes us think about something that is outside our immediate perception. A. Solomonik believes that the sign means and encodes the subject with which it correlates.

An important characteristic feature of a sign is that it can denote or replace not a single object or a specific phenomenon, but a whole multitude of objects or phenomena. In this regard, the concept of the volume of a sign is introduced. The more specific objects of the real world a given sign represents, the greater its volume. For example, the word "tree" as a linguistic sign has a much larger volume than the word "poplar".

The collection of loaded familiar objects is called its denotation.

Modern semiotics believes that a sign has the following features:

1. sign has concrete meaning.
2. the sign informs not about itself, but about something outside it.
3. the sign is used to store and transmit information.
4. the sign functions in a sign situation, i.e. provided that the addressee is included in this sign system .
5. the meaning of the sign is singular and stable (at least in this context).
6. the borders of the sign are clearly delineated so that it can be separated from other signs.

7. its shape can vary greatly, but it must be recognizable.

8. the form of the sign is partially or completely arbitrary in relation to the denotation.

The most important characteristics of a sign can differ significantly depending on whether we are talking about it within the semiotics of Charles Peirce or the continental semiology of Ferdinand de Saussure. So, for C. Peirce it is clear that the sign:

-points to something outside of itself, while the object of indication is always absent in the direct experience of communication. It is enough that the word (sound or graphic matter) replaces for the interlocutors its image of the concept;
- unthinkable outside of use and understanding. Nature knows no signs. The half-open calyx of a flower is not a sign, but a thing, just a flower. And only a person is able to see it as evidence of the season (spring or summer), a sign of early morning or a symbol of birth, the triumph of life, etc.;

-has a material expression. A person perceives signs empirically, with the senses: drops of water (as a sign of rain, for example) we see, feel with our skin, hear. An idea that has not received expression loses its meaning, since it turns out to be inaccessible to perception.

Modern semiotics accepts the two-term sign formula, but only as a simplified working model, while semiotic philosophy operates with a three-term model: signifier - signified - object of designation (the so-called semiotic triangle of Gottlob Frege).

The typology of information (= sign) systems of V. N. Ageev echoes Peirce's classification

1) Natural (index): collections of minerals, traces of animals, starry sky, signals of the animal world, symptoms of diseases, genetic information, etc.

2) Figurative (iconic): painting, music, dancing, facial expressions, gestures.

3) Conventional (conditional): a) natural languages (oral speech, written speech); b) formal languages (algorithmic, informational, specialized (mathematics, chemistry), artificial (Esperanto, Volapuk, etc.); c) notation systems (notation, formulas, chess notation, etc.); d) works in natural and artificial languages: literature, writing, all written literature, including scientific (history, mathematics, chemistry, physics, etc.).

4) Combined communication systems - for example, theater, cinema, television, reading the author's work in natural language. [6]

N.B. Mechkovskaya classifies sign systems and signs in accordance with the type of sensory modality with which the perception of the signifying sign occurs, that is, the formation of an image, behind which there is a certain meaning.

1) visual (optical), including paralinguistic - gestures (kinesics), distance and position relative to the interlocutor (proxemics), facial expressions, etc.;

2) Olfactory (the most primitive signs corresponding to the most ancient channel of distant communication);

3) tactile (kinesthetic);

4) taste

5) auditory (auditory, sound);

Daniel Chandler gave the following classification of signs:

1. Social sign systems:

- verbal language (with its phonological, syntactic, lexical, prosodic and paralinguistic subcodes);

- proxemico-kinesthetic (distance between speakers, physical orientation, appearance, facial expression, head turn, posture, gestures, movements and eye contact);

- consumer goods (fashion, clothes, cars);

- behavioral (etiquette rules, rituals, social roles, games);

- regulatory signs (traffic rules, professional codes).

2. Text sign systems:

- scientific (mathematical, chemical, physical);

- literature and art (with subsystems such as poetry, dramaturgy, fine arts, sculpture, music, etc.);

- genre, rhetorical and stylistic: narrative (classicism, romanticism, realism; plot, characters, action, dialogues, etc., figures of argumentation, etc.);

- Media, including television, cinematography, radio broadcasting, newspapers and magazines, etc.

3. Sign systems of interpretation:

- perceptual - visual, auditory, gustatory, olfactory and tactile;

- cultural and symbolic, determining the reading of texts; this also includes ideological codes, which are a grid of basic concepts expressing the credo of a particular community, social group, etc.

We would like to propose the following classification of signs, taking into account the facts: 1) according to the place of use of signs and the function they perform in communication processes:

1) Warning signs

Road signs are warning. Signs inform participants about a specific traffic situation.

2) Incentive signs

Advertising signs are motivating. Signs are used to stimulate the purchase of a product that has a bright, memorable structure.

3) Scientific signs: a) signs used in linguistics (letters, punctuation marks) b) mathematical signs c) chemical signs d) physical signs e) economic signs

4) Political signs: symbols, flags emblems, military symbols - having a clear and characteristic structure

5) Signs of social messengers. Emoticons, symbols, icons used in social networks and sms.

6) Signs and symbols of programming. Signs are used for encoding and creating various programs

7) Natural or biological signs. These signs are produced naturally. For example: symptoms of diseases

8) Signs of art - paintings, sculptures, architectural structures

9) Signs of sport events

Signs have the following features:

1) The ability to replace

2) Communication

3) The sign is social

4) Ability to generalize

5) Consistency

6) Intentional, conscious use by people

7) The situational nature of its meaning

8) Reproducibility

There are the following characteristics of the meaning of the sign:

1. objective meaning

2. semantic meaning

3. expressive meaning of the sign.

A sign denotes a given object (objects) and expresses its semantic and expressive meaning. The object denoted by a sign is called its objective meaning. The concept of objective meaning is directly linked to the concept of denotation or referent of a sign.

The semantic meaning of a sign is its property to represent, fix certain sides, features of the designated object, which determine the area of application of the sign; it is what the person who perceives or reproduces the given sign understands." [7]

This meaning (meaning) of the sign serves to highlight in the minds of the subjects of sign activity its (sign) objective meaning - to specify the object (class of objects) denoted by the sign. The category of semantic meaning is connected with the category "concept". It is possible for signs to function that express only meaning, but have no objective meaning, i.e. are devoid of denotation and have only a concept.

The expressive meaning of a sign, in accordance with its expressive function, is understood as the emotions and assessments of the subject using this sign expressed by this sign (when it is used in the appropriate context in a given situation).

In semiotics and logic, the meaning of a linguistic expression is the object or class of objects that is designated (called) by this expression (objective or extensional meaning), and the meaning of the expression (semantic or intensional meaning) is its conceivable content, i.e. the information contained in the expression, due to which the expression is attributed to one or another object (objects)." [8]

In non-verbal communication, we use signs and symbols to convey and store information. Since ancient times, mankind has been using a material object as a sign, and many scientists have proposed their own classification and interpretation of the

concept of signs. The works of such famous scientists as Aristotle, C. Peirce, F. Saussure, Charles Morris, S.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards and many other prominent scientists gave rise to the development of theories and science of Signs, as well as their classifications. Since the sign is an integral part of our non-verbal communication, the study of the sign situation becomes one of the important tasks for scientific, social and cultural environments.

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