


Semiotics and language: A philosophical-linguistic vision

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2024.002-034>

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ABSTRACT

This text talks about describing and interpreting the world and reality, inviting readers to think about the symbolic processes through which social scenarios and practices are constructed. Semiotics, Philosophy and Language are the indispensable tripod of the evolution of social models. Semiosis would be the fundamental process of building a universal spirit - of which Philosophy is the expression - that would allow communication between beings, understanding. It tries to identify the links between Semiotics and Philosophy of Language, so that we can seek to understand how to use the elements of these sciences to produce a fairer and more comfortable social paradigm for contemporary subjects. Linguistics is treated as a special kind of semiotics, whose exclusive object is human language. Semiotics, then, is understood not only as a science that investigates the production of meaning, but also, or mainly, as an intelligent paradigm for reading the world. The philosophy of language is responsible for understanding and interpreting communicative processes and their strategies used to negotiate meanings between the participants in the community in question, seeking to expand their meanings to the realm of human thinking-saying. Semiotics, Linguistics and Philosophy are thus articulated as observers of language and its events.

Keywords: Language, Semiotics, Philosophy, Linguistics, Meaning processes.

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INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF REFLECTION ON LANGUAGE AND PHILOSOPHY

What is the historical relationship between language and philosophy, from which a great deal of anguish has arisen in the social mind in the face of socio-historical changes, especially communication problems that are reflected in the reorganization of social, ideological, political, and economic models?

The times we are living in now indicate a pressing need for new readings and understandings of human action. There are movements towards global interaction between nations due to changes in the economic model and, as a result, individuals are disoriented in the face of new practices and new demands for increasingly sophisticated skills, especially with regard to communications and languages.

The age-old problem of communication has been pursued and observed from many different angles. Substantial progress has been made. However, the scenario of endless wars and intolerant and fundamentalist behavior is a sign that something is very wrong with human interaction. This is because interaction depends primarily on broad and, at least, satisfactory communication. But the disagreement that rages between nations and that does not reach any level of adjustment, despite the varied interventions of external elements, demonstrates that man is still a long way from the expected interaction: one in which solidarity would be the great emblem.

Language and communication professionals are increasingly preoccupied with finding ways to improve interaction processes. Numerous research projects have been carried out to not only improve theoretical models that have already been built, but also to produce new paradigms that make it possible for people to understand each other better. Since classical antiquity, thinkers have discussed the great human dilemma: who we are, where we came from and where we are going. However, despite the great and significant achievements in space, advances in cybernetics and discoveries in genetic medicine, human affliction remains at levels that are somewhat out of control, and the paradigm nations of development end up showing increasingly selfish, intolerant, and extremist behavior.

This situation indicates that we need to advance in the study of languages and communication but refining the focus to the space of philosophical reasoning, so that we can combine advances in knowledge of signs, codes, languages, and communication processes with the current stage of philosophical thought, in which language is increasingly gaining prominence.

TRACING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOME PHILOSOPHERS

According to Wittgenstein (1999, p. 29), from childhood onwards, individuals learn a multitude of language games through which they act in the contexts in which they participate. When



we use language, we are acting in a social context, and our actions are meaningful and effective only to the extent that they correspond to the determinations of "forms of life" inscribed in the social practices and institutions in which we participate. Thus, knowledge of a language, linguistic *competence*, and the ability to participate in language games form the horizon of our vision of reality, the backdrop to our behavior, both from the point of view of our actions and from the point of view of our ability to interpret the meaning of the actions of other members of the community and the way in which they relate to us. Ordinary language is thus seen as the original source of our *experience* since it constitutes its horizon and is a presupposition for our behavior.

From Aristotle to Heidegger, language is seen to be both the origin and the means of thinking. According to Marcondes (1992, p. 103), Habermas makes relevant contributions to the Theory of Communicative Action and universal pragmatics and demonstrates that the basic notions of the Philosophy of Ordinary Language and the Theory of Speech Acts can contribute to the construction of a method for the critical analysis of social reality as a fundamental task of philosophy (Marcondes (1992, p. 106). This is because it is necessary to understand man and the world in order to find new ways of managing human relations and resolving or minimizing conflicts of interest.

According to the Philosophy of Ordinary Language, language must be understood primarily as a concrete social practice, as a system of symbolic acts carried out in a certain social context with a precise objective and producing certain conventional effects and consequences. In this line of reasoning, language moves away from the classic concept of a means of describing the world and interpreting reality. Language is now seen as a mode of action and social interaction. It becomes constitutive both of reality and of understanding the contexts in which we participate.

Still in line with this reasoning, the semiotic process takes center stage. The semiotization of cultural objects is a prerequisite for understanding social interactions and improving human relations. When we talk about describing and interpreting the world and reality, we need to think about the semiotic processes through which social scenarios and practices are constructed. Semiotics, Philosophy and Language are the indispensable tripod for the evolution of social models. Through these sciences, man can deepen his self-knowledge and knowledge of the world around him and the consequences of human relationships at all levels.

Going back to Aristotle, we can see that the semiotic process is the great knot in the studies of the Philosophy of Language. Individuals are innumerable, there is an infinitude of things, and the words of a language are (at first) finite. Therefore, understanding the double articulation of signs (at the level of external reference - the context - and internal relations - the co-text) is an indispensable and endless semiotic exercise since the same signs are combined and recombined in order to represent everything thinkable. Despite an original iconicity (through which reference would occur in



an almost biunivocal way) that is not present in abstract things, according to Aristotle, categorematic³ — "terms that have a semantic and referential function" — and syncategorematic⁴ - "terms that do not refer to anything - are functions internal to the syntax of language and can only be defined contextually" (Guerreiro, 1985, p. 60), would allow any and all thought content to be represented by language. However, considering the arbitrary sign associations available, one can deduce the complexity of the semiotic process in both the production and interpretation of meanings. This is where the necessary relationship between semiotics and philosophy comes in, as far as communication is concerned. According to Proust, "Philosophy is like the expression of a universal spirit that agrees with itself to determine explicit and communicable meanings" (Deleuze, 2003, p. 89). As such, semiosis would be the fundamental process of building this universal spirit that would allow communication between beings and the understanding. It is therefore necessary to appreciate the links between Semiotics and Philosophy of Language so that we can seek to understand how to use the elements of these sciences to produce a fairer and more comfortable social paradigm for contemporary subjects.

SOME THOUGHTS ON PHILOSOPHY

Before embarking on the Philosophy of Language, a simple review of what the term *philosophy* encompasses is in order. First look in the dictionary:

feminine noun - 1 - Rubric: philosophy. love of wisdom, experienced only by human beings aware of their own ignorance [According to classical authors, the original meaning of the term, attributed to the Greek philosopher Pythagoras (6th century BC)]. - 2 - Heading: philosophy. in Platonism, investigation of the essential and ontological dimension of the real world, going beyond the mere unreflective opinion of common sense which remains captive to empirical reality and sensible appearances. - 3 - Heading: philosophy. in the context of relations with scientific knowledge, a set of theoretical principles that underlie, evaluate, and synthesize the myriad of particular sciences, having contributed directly and indispensably to the emergence and/or development of many of these branches of knowledge - 4 - Heading: philosophy. in the metaphysical dimension, a set of theoretical speculations that share with religion the search for the first and unconditioned truths, such as those relating to the nature of God, the soul, and the universe, while differing from faith by using argumentative, logical, and deductive procedures - 5 - Heading: philosophy. In the context of the relationship between theory and practice, thought is initially contemplative, in which human beings seek to understand themselves and the surrounding reality, and which will then determine its prescriptive or practical character, focused on concrete action and its ethical, political, or psychological consequences. [Houaiss, s.u.]

The Philosophy, traced back to Pythagoras (6th century BC) as a "love of wisdom, experienced only by human beings aware of their own ignorance", to initially contemplative

³ In medieval grammar and logic, these are the parts of speech that have no meaning in themselves, but only acquire it in contact with the other parts of speech: examples are conjunctions, prepositions, adverbs, etc. Prisciano (II, 15) says: "According to the dialecticians, there are two parts of speech: the name and the verb, because together, and only they, constitute a complete discourse; they call the others syncategoremata, that is, co-significants". (Abbagnano, 2007, p. 902)

⁴ A word which, on its own, cannot be used as a term, but only in conjunction (explicit or not) with other word(s) [e.g. quantifiers (all, some, none) or adverbs, prepositions, or conjunctions] (Houaiss, s.u.).



thinking, in which human beings seek to understand themselves and the surrounding reality, and which will then determine its prescriptive or practical character, focused on concrete action and its ethical, political, or psychological consequences. Philosophy is the collection of human perplexities in the face of existence. The desire to know the world and to know oneself has occupied the human mind since the dawn of humanity in an incessant search for answers about its origin, its destiny and its being-here.

Considered an exercise in intelligence, the philosophical attitude makes man an observer of himself and his surroundings. And thanks to the philosophical attitude, the scientific method has been developed, through which great discoveries have been made on the physical and metaphysical plane, from which we can already glimpse ways and means of prolonging life on Earth and perhaps beyond.

If thought is an indicator of intelligent existence, it is possible to infer that Philosophy is a Special Semiotics through which signs are constructed to explain human existence and its consequences. In this way, semiotics comes to be understood not only as a science that investigates the production of meanings, but also, or mainly, as an intelligent paradigm for reading the world.

Abbagnano presents many definitions of philosophy. However, Plato had already made an excellent contribution, defining it as follows:

Philosophy is the use of knowledge for the benefit of man. Plato observes that it would be useless to have the ability to turn stones into gold if you didn't know how to use gold; it would be useless to have a science that makes you immortal if you didn't know how to use immortality, and so on. What is needed, therefore, is a science in which doing and knowing how to use what is done coincide, and this science is Philosophy (Abbagnano, 2007, p. 442).

Thus, it is possible to understand philosophy "as a set of theoretical principles that underlie, evaluate and synthesize the myriad of particular sciences, having contributed directly and indispensably to the emergence and/or development of many of these branches of knowledge" (Houaiss, s.u.), which corroborates the classification of Philosophy as a Special Semiotics, since, ultimately, Semiotics can be translated as a theoretical model of sign analysis; while the other sciences (including Philosophy) would be generators of signs to be discussed and interpreted semiotically, according to a framework of values emerging from the context in which the generated signs are framed. But this view is not settled. Houser, in his article, *Semiotics and Philosophy*, makes the following comment:

Contemporary philosophers, especially those trained in the English empirical tradition, often regard semiotics as a relatively new, and not always welcome, field of research. However, if we admit that the main object of study of semiotics is signification and representation, it should be clear that, so characterized, semiotics has always been an important area of concern for philosophy. (Houser, 2016, p. 314) ⁵.

⁵ Original text: Contemporary philosophers, especially those trained in the English empirical tradition, often regard semiotics as a fairly new field of research, and not always as a welcome one. However, if we concede that the principal



Moving on to summarize what has been presented so far.

WHERE HAVE WE ARRIVED FROM THE CONTRIBUTIONS LISTED?

Once we have seen the questions raised by the philosophers in question, we need to bring a special and specific philosophy to the scene. This opens the door to a philosophy with an adjective, defined by a cut-out of the object, calling Philosophy of Language back to the scene. This has currently been the subject of many studies in various areas, as it is clear that scholars are concerned about the search for explanations that will support the improvement of the quality of life on Earth.

Therefore, once we return to the definition of a philosophy focused on the search for an understanding of man in himself and the surrounding reality, we can see the importance of deepening its relationship with language.

As a result, human anxieties and expectations are not satisfied with their temporary findings, and they are running eagerly and voraciously towards definitive answers, even when they foresee their pre-impossibility.

This insane race for definitive answers has led man to maximum intolerance and, instead of finding comfort and happiness with the advance of discoveries, what we see is the amplification of despair, greed, selfishness, and irrational radicalism.

We continue in search of a way forward.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Semiotic processes applied as auxiliary resources to Philosophy of Language studies seem to be able, at least at first, to produce plausible, credible explanations for the relationships and consequences of human interaction through languages. Returning to Heidegger and his premises of man as a being of language⁶ or language as the dwelling place of being, it seems possible to reiterate the arbitrary and ephemeral nature of language.

This is how Heidegger thinks about language:

Man speaks. We speak when awake and in dreams. We speak continuously. We speak even when we don't let any words sound. We speak when we listen and read. We also speak when we don't listen or read and instead do a job or sit around idly. We always speak in one way or another (HEIDEGGER, 2003, p.7)

subject for semiotic study is signification and representation, it should be apparent that, so characterized, semiotics has always been an important area of concern for philosophy.

⁶ Continuidade e descontinuidade na filosofia de Wittgenstein - Revista Cult (uol.com.br) Accessed February 20th, 2024



With this statement, the author of *The Way of Language* clearly indicates how he understands language. For him, man is constituted by language, which, even if not externalized, exists, and founds the mental organization from which man actually comes into existence.

Heidegger considers language to be a very characteristic element of our humanity, from which the truth of being is revealed. Language is the basis of our reality because it clarifies phenomena and is the privileged place for us to respond as being-there (*Dasein*⁷), as beings in the world. Language is the dwelling place of being because it allows for the de-occultation of beings through discourse, a discourse that resists being framed in the terms of metaphysical conceptual theory.

According to Heidegger, the question of being has been discussed throughout the history of philosophy under the prejudice of presence. In other words, from Parmenides to the philosophers of the 20th century, being has been understood as something that is present in its totality, as objective and complete. The paradigm of this way of thinking is found in the idea of God as omnipresent. With his existential analysis of *Dasein*, Heidegger sought to inaugurate a new way of understanding being and metaphysics.

The term *Dasein*, coined by Heidegger, is not easily translatable. It invites us to transcend the superficial dimension of the word and delve into the heart of thought and existence. *Dasein* allows man to open up, to know and understand himself in the world. Language, in this context, is the way in which *Dasein* manifests itself. It is the bridge between inner being and the outside world.

Although linguistic communications are built on codes, these are at the mercy of their users (therefore, recreators), who, in turn, are subject to contextual interventions. From Peirce's perspective, the collective interpretant (the set of value-functions in force in a discursive community) is the conductor of the representative and interpretative arrangements through which communication takes place. So, let's re-read Heidegger's man-language as a reference to arbitrariness, ephemerality and, therefore, the infinite mutation available to language processes. As such, the role of the Philosophy of Language would be the in-depth study of human cogitation about itself and its relationships translated into signs that could represent different ideologies and epistemologies and, therefore, would be susceptible to different semiosis.

In the pursuit of semiosis, it is necessary to define the spaces of Linguistics and Philosophy of Language. Different sciences operate with different objects. It should therefore be remembered that the object of Linguistics (a semiotic variety) is human verbal language; the object of Philosophy is thinking. Some say that philosophy is neither science nor technique, but a perpetual exercise in thinking, seeking the meaning that things may have for human experience (Hryeniowicz, 2002). It is then necessary to examine what Philosophy of Language is all about.

⁷ SER-AI (in. *There-being ou Reingthereness*; fr. *Réalité-humaine*, ai. *Dasein*; it. *Esserci*). (Abbagnano, 2007, p. 888.



See the excerpt:

Philosophy of language is even less well defined and has an even less clear principle of unity than most other branches of philosophy. The problems of language that are typically dealt with by philosophers constitute a loosely connected collection, for which it is difficult to find any clear criteria to distinguish it from the problems of language that are dealt with by grammarians, psychologists, and anthropologists. We can get an initial sense of the breadth of this collection by surveying the various points where, within philosophy, interest in the problems of language arises (Alston, 1972, p. 13).

There is a lot of speculation around language, from very different points of view and, in this case, the problems take on very different configurations. Observing Alston's considerations, it is possible to deduce the complexity of the phenomenon of language and of a cut of it to characterize a science. The Philosophy of Language is one of the branches of Philosophy that reflects on the problems of language, but in a different way from the questions that grammarians, psychologists, and anthropologists deal with. Alston (op. cit.) presents a survey of the various issues involved in defining it, justifying the fact that there are no clear criteria for maintaining a principle of unity as in most other branches of philosophy.

Branches of Philosophy such as Logic, Metaphysics and Epistemology work with the formulation of concepts, and therefore have language as the referential object of such formulations. If philosophy's primary, if not integral, task consists of conceptual analysis, it is always interested in language. And if a large part of the philosopher's task is to bring out the characteristics of the use or meaning of various words or forms of utterance, then it will be essential for him to proceed according to some general conception of the nature of linguistic use and meaning.

Auroux also reflects on the different approaches that literature devotes to the Philosophy of Language and exposes some issues that refer to its historical process and the attribution of a central place to the Language Sciences. In general terms, he argues that, in trying to understand the Philosophy of Language, we are reflecting on Philosophy and adds "philosophy is neither a ready-made thought nor a presentation of standardized doctrines; it consists above all in messing with people's heads!" (Auroux, 1998, p. 24).

Language is often considered imprecise or too limited to describe or represent the force of reality. This awareness of limitation occurs acutely in mystical authors such as Plotinus or Bergson. In view of this deficiency, from the end of the 19th century onwards, a current of philosophers came to the fore, the analytical philosophers. They say that Logic (which etymologically means the Science of Language) and the Theory of Meaning are the most important part of Philosophy, whose basic task is the logical analysis of sentences and inferences, through which philosophical problems are solved. From mathematical language, Frege developed reflections on language and meaning, paving the way for the philosophy of language of Russell, Carnap and Wittgenstein.



As can be seen from this brief foray into philosophy, the philosophy of language is an imposition of the nature of the philosophical objectives with which the representations of different worldviews are interpreted by means of systems of signs. Therefore, the boundaries between Semiotics and Philosophy of Language are sometimes no more than smokescreens, since both seek to interpret the process of producing signs that lend themselves to describing the origin, conditions and functions of human language and its relationship with thought.

THE IMPRECISION OF LANGUAGE AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF SEMIOTICS

Language contains an indeterminacy arising from a fundamental characteristic of the sign. It is a sign, a trace that stands in the place of something else, which can be a concrete object or an abstract concept. In Derrida's philosophical language, we could say that the sign is not a presence, that is, the thing or the concept is not present in the sign, it is a trace. But the nature of language is such that we can't help but have the illusion of seeing the sign as a presence, that is, of seeing in the sign the presence of the "thing" or the "concept"⁸. This is what Derrida (2000) calls the "metaphysics of presence" (cf. Husserl⁹). "Husserl, in fact, traditionally determined the essence of language on the basis of the logicity and normality of its telos. That this telos¹⁰ is that of being as presence is what we wanted to suggest here" (Derrida, 1994, p. 14). This illusion is necessary for the sign to function as such: after all, the sign is in the place of something else and, although in the full presence of the sign, the concept of something is definitively postponed. For him, the sign carries not only the trace of what replaces it, but also the trace of what it is not, that is, precisely of difference. In short, the sign is characterized by postponement (of presence) and difference (of absence, in relation to other signs). These two characteristics are synthesized in the concept of *différance* - which occurs in a number of heterogeneous characteristics that govern the production of signifieds of the texts.

Derrida's *différance* suggests that, because the mental state of the observer is constantly in a state of flux and differs from one reading to another, a general theory describing this phenomenon is unattainable. Derrida developed *the theory of deconstruction*¹¹, which questions the existence of a concrete structure and emphasizes that there is no fixed center. According to Cossette and

⁸ "We should perhaps conclude that (...) the concept of intentionality remains tied to the tradition of a voluntarist metaphysics, that is, perhaps simply tied to metaphysics. The explicit teleology that commands all transcendental phenomenology would be, at bottom, just transcendental voluntarism. Meaning wants to mean itself, it only expresses itself in a will-to-say that is nothing other than a will-to-say of the presence of meaning".

In https://www.maxwell.vrac.puc-rio.br/11425/11425_3.PDF p. 50 Accessed February 26th, 2024

⁹ (...) Husserlian phenomenology maintains and refines the domain of the now that continues from the Greek metaphysics of presence, through the "modern" metaphysics of presence as self-consciousness to the metaphysics of the idea as representation (Vorstellung). https://www.maxwell.vrac.puc-rio.br/11425/11425_3.PDF p. 49 Accessed February 26th, 2024

¹⁰ Telos - point or state of an attractive or conclusive character towards which a reality moves, purpose, objective, target, destination.

¹¹ "Deconstruction thus aims to dissolve language so that it gives way to what Derrida calls writing." (Japiassú e Marcondes, s.d. p. 167)



Guillemette (2006)¹², "Deconstruction questions the stability and certainty of the meanings attributed to words, texts and concepts. Instead of considering meaning as something fixed and objective, deconstruction suggests that it is fluid, contextual and subject to multiple interpretations." This theory remains active in contemporary literary research.

Some post-modern, post-structuralist philosophers, such as Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Lyotard and Jean Baudrillard began to worry about social and human phenomena and deconstructed the philosophical discourse on Western values of the principles and conceptions of God, Reason, Subject, Truth, Order, Science and Being. For these authors, deconstructing the discourse doesn't mean destroying it, or showing how it was constructed, but rather reflecting on the unspoken as underlying what was said, looking for the silenced underneath what was said. From this it can be drawn that the imprecision of what is said (of language) needs to be compensated for by technical-theoretical strategies capable of penetrating the space of semiosis and, above all through abduction, formulating paths of interpretation that answer the classic semiotic question: why this means what it means.

From this perspective, there is immediate contact between Philosophy of Language and Semiotics since both operate with *knowledge*¹³ and *truth*¹⁴. From a semiotic point of view, knowledge serves as an interpretative basis for the production of meanings and senses. In Philosophy, knowledge represents a guarantee that what is being identified in reason by the understanding actually corresponds to a reality. In the Philosophy of Language, knowledge is represented by statements whose components must contain sufficient logical data for them to be validated in relation to the truth represented.

Nowadays, the question of truth no longer marks a relevant philosophical and semiotic opposition, since truth today is undoubtedly relative, partial, and temporary. However, from the point of view of information and communication, truth is still a condition of great value or interest, as it acts on the formation of opinion, for example. It is therefore necessary to bring into the text notions relating to the field of linguistics, in order to build an indispensable link between the thematic contents of this article: semiotics, linguistics and philosophy of language.

¹² <http://www.signosemio.com/derrida/deconstruction-and-difference.asp> Accessed February 26th, 2024

¹³ "KNOWLEDGE (gr. *yvwaic*; lat. *Cognitio*; in. *Knowledge*, fr. *Connaissance*, ai. *Erkenntniss*; it. *Conoscenza*). In general, a technique for verifying any object, or the availability or possession of a similar technique. By verification technique is meant any procedure that enables the description, calculation or controllable prediction of an object; and by object is meant any entity, fact, thing, reality or property." (Abbagnano, 2007, p. 174)

¹⁴ "TRUTH (gr. *áW*)*0eia*; lat. *Ventas*; in. *Truth*; fr. *Vérité*, ai. *Wahrheit*; it. *Venta*). Validity or effectiveness of cognitive procedures. In general, *V.* is understood as the quality by virtue of which any cognitive procedure becomes effective or succeeds". (Abbagnano, 2007, p. 994)

LINGUISTICS AS SEMIOTICS

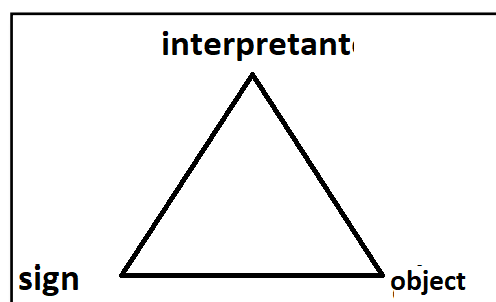
According to Petter (2002), the breadth of the term language (which encompasses verbal and non-verbal) means that the object of linguistics must be defined not as the study of language, but as the scientific investigation of human verbal language. However, the fact that all languages are systems of signs used for communication made it possible to conceive of a more general science that would study any system of signs. Linguistics is a general science that guides the description of particular language systems and specializes in them through the applied modalities of this science.

Linguistics is not to be confused with the study of one particular language or another; on the contrary, linguists must be able to describe various systems in order to compare them and thereby demonstrate their similarities and differences. Linguistics cannot be understood as synonymous with grammar teaching either since its function is to describe natural language systems and not to dictate rules for their implementation. Linguistics is also concerned with language variation as a function of its diachronic, diatopic, diastratic and diaphasic conditioning factors. Linguistics is therefore a general science that guides the description of particular language systems and specializes in these through the applied modalities of this science.

The study of linguistic signs and their conditioning allows linguists to analyze semiosis at the verbal level and thus project their research into broader areas such as the Semiotics of Cultures. The expression of thought in verbal language provides elements for a productive investigation of the relationships between signs and users, as well as between signifiers and signifieds, marked by dynamic interpretants (what is immediate to the context) and final interpretants (what results from the relationship between the context and the co-text).

First of all, it is important to remind ourselves of what a sign is for Peirce (1984): a constituted triadic unit, i.e. one that requires the cooperation of three instances: the sign S (representation), the object O (what is represented) and the interpretant I, which produces the relationship.

See the diagram:





Note that the diagram demonstrates the power of the interpreter over the other members of the triad. It is he, the interpreter, who defines the signic resultant, that is, the meaning. It is worth emphasizing that, in the diagram, sign corresponds to representation; object is the same as referent. Necessary explanation for confrontation with other presentations of the same diagram, in the Peircean perspective.

See what Peirce says (1897):

2.228. A sign, or representamen, is something that is by something for someone in some aspect or capacity. It addresses someone, that is, it creates in that person's mind an equivalent sign or, perhaps, a more developed sign. That sign that it creates I call the interpreter of the first sign. The sign is for something: its object. It is for that object not in every respect, but in reference to a kind of idea, which I have sometimes called the ground of the representamen. "Idea" is to be understood here in a sort of Platonic sense very familiar in everyday speech, I mean in the sense in which we say that one man takes another's idea, or in which we say that, when a man remembers what he was thinking at a previous time, he remembers the same idea, or in which, when a man continues to think anything, say for a tenth of a second, so long as the thought continues to agree with itself during that time, that is, to have a similar content, it is the same idea, and is not at every instant of the interval a new idea.

This fragment seems to clarify the notion of the interpretant as the basis of semiosis in a given context. Sometimes taken simplistically as a synonym for common sense, the interpretant is the set of value-functions that a discursive community constructs based on its uses and customs, thus guiding the interpretation, and understanding of the facts and phenomena that occur within its sphere. Therefore, having semiotized the objects under analysis, Linguistics is concerned with language-based interpretation, and Philosophy with the organization of the same signs in the logical bases of thought. Finally, the philosophy of language is responsible for understanding and interpreting communicative processes and their strategies used to negotiate meanings between the participants of the community in question, seeking to broaden their meanings to the scope of human thinking-saying. This is how semiotics, linguistics and philosophy come together as observers of language and its events.

AN IMPORTANT REFLECTION BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

Considering that scientific or technical discoveries are translated through languages, the study of semiotics is an imperative of the contemporary world. How can the stories of new human creations be understood in greater depth if not through the semiotization of their objects and an understanding of the scenarios in which they take place? This makes a philosophical rethinking of knowledge indispensable since the semiotics we are referring to emerges from formal logic. See what Peirce says in "*Why study logic?*", 1902:



In the long discussion about the classification of sciences, to which I dedicated the last section¹⁵, I wanted to clarify the way in which logic relates to other theoretical investigations; or, at least, to make the author's opinion explicit, because the truth of what I said still remains to be proven. It is not, however, a heresy, but a widely extended doctrine, since Auguste Comte [2] explained that the sciences form a kind of scale that descends to the level of truth, each of them leading to the other, the more concrete and special ones extracting their principles from the more abstract and general ones. ("Why study logic?")

Observing these considerations about the relationship between logic and the other sciences, according to Peirce, it is not difficult to deduce the impossibility of constructing absolute truths. Therefore, from a social-political point of view, the logical foundations underlying a philosophical take on reality are not suitable for government projects, social projects or socio-political control paradigms that pretend to be definitive solutions to humanity's discomfort. Therefore, totalitarian regimes have tried to reduce (or even erase) the space for philosophical thought, especially by expelling philosophy from school curricula.

However, the strength and vigor of human thought does not surrender to totalitarian attitudes and philosophy returns to classrooms (among other spaces for reflection and action) in order to shake up pseudo-accommodations and promote new elucidations about being-in-the-world. In this way, languages, semiotics, and philosophies come together in favor of a more comprehensive understanding of human relations and interactions. There is no way of isolating these domains except for didactic purposes.

Contemporary discoveries have even deluded man into believing that he has sufficient control over life and death. However, the answer to *Quo vadis?* is still nowhere near being produced. The questions are always bigger than the answers. But man has the gift of deluding himself with his productions and that's why he manages to get caught up in technical-scientific follies that turn into political problems of the utmost gravity.

Why such comments? Because I believe in the need for permanent interaction between the sciences and philosophy, since it is through philosophy that thinking takes place; and it is through philosophy that a deeper understanding of what man might be becomes possible, opening up the space for understanding the whys that would make the basic semiotic problem explicit: why does this mean what it means?

¹⁵ "Una clasificación detallada de las ciencias" (CP 1. 203-283), que corresponde a la sección I, cap. 2, de la *Minute Logic* (1902). Fin de "¿Por qué estudiar lógica?", C. S. Peirce (c. 1902). Traducción castellana y notas de José Vericat. En: *Charles S. Peirce. El hombre, un signo (El pragmatismo de Peirce)*, J. Vericat (tr., intr. y notas), Crítica, Barcelona, 1988, pp. 332-391. "Why Study Logic?" corresponde a CP 2. 119-202.



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