

COURSE:

MULTIMODALITY IN LITERARY TEXT

Social Semiotics: Text Image Relations

Lecture 2

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Learning Objectives

1. The basic concept of social semiotics
2. Semiotic resources in social semiotics
3. The researchers of social semiotics and their approaches
4. Text-image relations in media framing
5. The examples of social semiotic analysis in literary works





Basic Concept of Social Semiotics

Social Semiotics

It is the study of how signs and symbols are used in society to create meaning. It looks at how language, image, and other communication modes are used to convey messages and ideas.

Furthermore, social semiotics studies how the modes of communication are developed to represent people's understanding about the world and how the power relations are shaped with others

(BEZEMER & JEWITT, 2009)

Two main principles of Social Semiotics:


(van Leeuwen, 2005)



1. Social semiotics is not a 'pure' theory or independent field.
2. Social semiotics is a structure of 'investigation'

three objectives of a social-semiotic theory of communication:

(Kress, 2010)

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1. Participants have the same entry to the semiotic resources and cultural resources.
 2. Participants can contribute to the common purposes.
 3. Participants are aware of how the actions would affect others.

5 aspects of meaning based on the theoretical framework of social semiotics

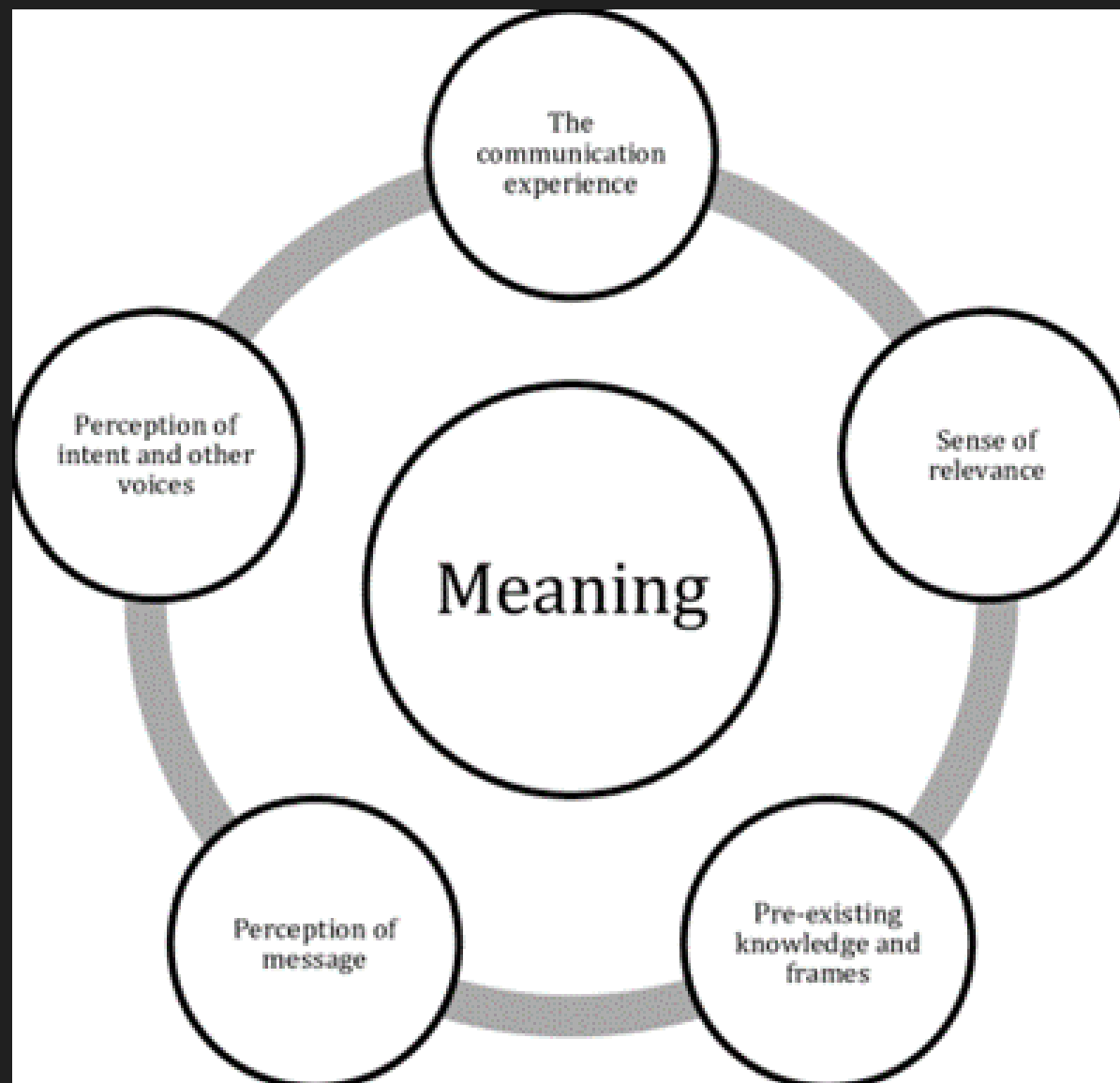


FIGURE 1 (BALLANTYNE, 2018)



Semiotic Resources as The Key Aspects in Social Semiotics

Semiotic Resources

It refers to all signs used to communicate

This includes:

actions, facial expressions, gestures, speech, and other signs appear.



"I extend this idea to the 'grammar' of other semiotic modes, and define semiotic resources as the actions and artefacts we use to communicate, whether they are produced physiologically – with our vocal apparatus; with the muscles we use to create facial expressions and gestures, etc. – or by means of technologies – with pen, ink and paper; with computer hardware and software; with fabrics, scissors and sewing machines, etc."

(VAN LEEUWEN, 2005)

Examples semiotic resources and their relations to social semiotics

Walking

From this simple activity of walking, people express who they are, what they do, how they perceive themselves, etc

Communication

The semiotic resources in communication is multimodal by its speech, gaze, actions and touch.





Researchers and Their Approaches

1. Michael Halliday
2. Theo van Leeuwen
3. Robert Hodge and Gunther Kress

Michael Halliday

Systemic Functional Language (SFL):

1. Ideational metafunction: They convey information about the world.
2. Interpersonal metafunction: They establish the interpersonal relations between individuals.
3. Textual metafunction: They bring the connections with other signs to build a cohesive text.



Theo van Leeuwen

Social semiotics is geared towards several key objectives:

1. it encourages observation and analysis
2. fostering a deeper understanding of the richness and complexity of semiotic production and interpretation
3. it promotes social intervention by facilitating the discovery of new semiotic resources for certain communication purposes.



Robert Hodge and Gunther Kress

Social semiotics is a field of study that focuses on how meaning is created and communicated through social and cultural practices.

It examines the ways in which signs, symbols, and language are used to convey messages and construct social identities





Text-Image Relations

The Power of Image

By analyzing the visual grammar of images, we can better understand how they work and what they mean. Even though, there are no words in an image but there is a depiction which consists of semiotic relations from its vectors or lines which connect all the participants in the image itself.





The dangers of a one sided story



Figure 2. (Caunt, J., 2018)



Figure 3. (Caunt, J., 2018)



Figure 2 shows Prince William from two different angles. The top is from the side angle while the below is from the front angle. The top photo of the side angle shows as if he is raising his middle finger which is controversial to public because he is part of Royal family. However, the front angle shows that it is not a middle finger but he is showing three fingers at the same time.

Figure 2. (Caunt, J., 2018)



The real and complete version of the situation of figure 3 is shown in the middle picture. However, media can manipulate it by taking only the half part of the picture. If the media is pro to the Iraqi soldier, then they will take the left angle where the US marine is represented as if he is going to kill the Iraqi soldier with his rifle. On the other side, if the media is pro to the US marines, then they will take the right angle where the US marine is represented as if he helps the Iraqi soldier by giving him some water to drink.

Figure 3. (Caunt, J., 2018)

Text-image Relations

. By analyzing the inter-semiotic relations between text and image, we can better understand the messages being conveyed or the hidden agenda they try to conceal.





Figure 4. (tirdoid, 2023)



Figure 5. (mixueindonesia)

This post is dedicated to parents on how to prevent their children from diabetes

What makes this post interesting is because the text and image are contradictory one to another but somehow implicitly frame a certain representation and message to the viewers.

05

Social Semiotics Analysis



Daily Mail

1. Three sections of headlines
 - a. font
 - b. size
 - c. color
2. Cover Picture:
 - a. side low angle
 - b. stronger color contrast
3. Full size of headlines and picture



Figure 6 (ABC/wires, 2020)



The Guardian

1. One simple headline
2. Cover Picture:
 - a. front angle
 - b. eye level shot
 - c. warm color tone
3. Not in full size of headline and picture



Figure 6 (ABC/wires, 2020)



Antara News

1. This issue becomes an interesting case study of social semiotics. Their expectation is that people would have more pity on them when they bring their children or babies. Then these beggars take advantage from the society's empathy to get more money from them
1. Sometimes the children or baby that they carry are not even their own children but they rent it. Which means, what is even worse is that there are parents out there who rent out their children to get money.



Figure 7 (Pasaribu, Saputra, 2015)



Summary and Conclusion

Summary and Conclusion

1. Social Semiotics
2. Semiotic Resources
3. Three related researchers
4. Power of an image
5. Text-image relations



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Figure 6

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