

Media and Semiotics

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Abstract:

Media literacy is related to semiotics which is an important part of social life. It is communication of representations, perceptions and interpretation. Various contexts of media messages effectively alter the interpretation of meanings. Semiotic analysis is identifying the relationships with structurally organized groups of signs. Semiotics interprets in numerous media domains. It has developed in relation to socio cultural issues. Semiotics deconstructs the communicative visuals to attain the meaning and ideology. We are surrounded by logos and signs all around us and so we human beings can analyze by the skills of ourselves. There are limits to the semiotics in our life. There is relationship between linguistics and semiotics, it is considered as trans-disciplinary tool and applied to all scientific fields. It can be developed with logics and philosophy. Semiotics is related to education. Knowledge is interconnected and varies with culture. We are surrounded by virtual world around us. We are constantly affected psychologically and socially.

Keywords:

media literacy, visual semiotics, literature semiotics, rhetoric, virtual world.

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Introduction

Media literacy is largely about reading and understanding the signs that the media produce and manipulate. The media are engaged in signifying practices a kind of symbolic work that gives meaning to things and communicate the meaning to someone else. It sets forth how media texts are constructed and how signs are produced or selected and combined into messages. Culture consists of the symbols of expression that individuals, groups and societies use to make sense of daily life. We take symbolic action thousands times a day. Each action involves interpreting and using the signs common to us and others living in our culture. Media literacy practices use semiotic theory to sort out the sign systems used and produced by the mass media and to interpret those systems. Semiotics that is the study of signs is part of social life and is used to refer to both traditions. It involves the theory and analysis of signs, codes and practices. Every sign represents different meaning and we have to capture the idea of what the meaning signifies. (Semiotics- the theory behind media literacy)

How it is interpreted and expressed

Communication is a continuous process of representations, perception and interpretation. Media are forms of communication that extend our capacities to express ourselves beyond an individual's

solitary experiences. Individuals form societies for sharing thoughts and understandings from one mind to the minds of others. Media change and develop; humans need to be able to reason and to understand what media represents the world. Individuals experience media directly but the words, sounds and images receive directly and indirectly. Various contexts of media messages effectively alter the interpretation of meanings. An important aspect of semiotic analysis is identifying the relationships between specific sign types within structurally organized groups of signs in order to examine the way in which meanings are produced by both authors and readers. Semiotics is a critical theory that explores all sign making and interpreting activity in numerous media domains. Semiotics has developed in relation to socio-cultural issues. Meaning is no longer considered to be an individual; rather it is seen as the result of a process in which an individual takes part in society through the coding and decoding with the cultural values and societal norms of the time. Semiotic concepts offer potential for further understanding of old media in all its new forms. They offer different perspective for understanding how meaning is derived through interpretation and interaction with media. (Neill, 2005)

What we mean by visual semiotics?

We are surrounded by symbols, signs, images and this is utilized for

communication. The meaning comes out of an interaction between the message and its reader. We must be aware of the components and the relation between them. We have to be aware of the hidden impressions and its meanings embedded in the images. Only through sophisticated analysis the hidden meaning can be recognized. Visual semiotics deconstructs the communicative visuals to attain the meaning and ideology. We human beings are surrounded by signs which are a process in the entire life as a learning to use and signify them. Reading is one of the most essential activities carried out by humans because by reading we can encounter the meanings in our environment. In newspapers and magazines we are very much aware of the visual semiotics which we can identify by the signs and symbols or pictures. We can immediately identify the logo of any brand. This is how semiotics works in and around us. It can be read and analyzed by the skills of the reader. The entire world is tied up by information and communication which is again bound by semiotics which is science of signs. Semiotics was first defined by the founder Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure as a science that studies the life of signs within a society. This branch of semiotics evolved in 1990s. The sign is the key term in any semiotics. Sign stands for both encoding and decoding. Signs are understood by the receiver or reader where images are more memorable and interesting. Signs mean different meaning to different people. Therefore, visual signs are not arbitrary. (Parsa)

Limits of semiotics

Semiotics is generally accepted as a science and different forms of semiotics have been developed. Signs are observed by different disciplines such as logics, linguistics, philosophy, biology, and sociology. Semiotics is assessed as science, method, fashion, movement, theory, meta-theory or even ideology. Therefore it is difficult to structure a manual version of semiotics. The field of semiotic is outreaching the field of language and linguistic signs. Noth summarizes physio-semiotics, eco-semiotics, bio-semiotics, zoo-semiotics, he lines out the evolution of semiotics and drafts the relevancy of time and space regarding semiotics. He demonstrates its applications in different scientific fields. There is a relationship between linguistics and semiotics and it is controversial in the sense that that semiotics is superior to linguistics or vice-versa. There is a form of text semiotics. It includes instance literature semiotics. Text semiotics coincides with traditional topics such as rhetorics. Semiotics can be used from our daily life, in comics and film. There are different semiotic approaches and applications. Semiotics can be considered as trans-disciplinary tool and can be applied in all kinds of scientific fields. Semiotics can be developed with logics and philosophy. Semiotics is observed as general and uniform phenomenon that connects all forms of living nature, social and cultural life. (Ort, 2001)

How education is related to semiotics

Semiotics cannot be detached from education. All knowledge is interconnected and knowledge is interrelated textual. Now this interconnectivity of related knowledge is to construct new knowledge. When there is interaction between teachers and students in the classroom there is own system to represent signs and meanings. Thus there is a relationship between signs and this signs operate within different sign systems. Every sign contains multiple meanings. The meanings change from culture to culture. According to Smith-Shank, reasoning from sign to sign is semiosis, and semiosis is the subject matter of semiotics. Semiotic is nurturing of semiosis within unlimited arena of signs. Unlimited semiosis is lifelong learning. The learning is a lifelong process; it is related to how we think. Popular culture among students is that they have broad knowledge about recent technology. Smith Shank states that all thinking processes involve signs; this signs are connected through a triadic relation. The meaning involves understanding, thinking and making connections. Students should be connected to new information to make the information meaningful for them. They should have deeper understandings and develop their own critical thinking abilities. All images contain meaning and these meanings differ for people from different backgrounds. A fully virtual world is a great place for studying semiotics as this is created by virtual world residents. Virtual world images contain multiple meanings. Semiotics helps us decode the deeper

meaning of images even though we may be different from cultural aspect. Visual culture is an arena of study for semiotics. Images are studied as complex and meaningful entities. Teachers are developing new concepts to introduce new images for better understanding of the students. Visual language has its roots in semiotics. (Han, 2011)

How semiotics effects psychologically and socially

When we observe media we consume it rather in our own way with sequences of images and ideas which appeals to our senses that build our identification. Identification is a psychological that is necessary for formation of personality. Our personality is our nature. Semiotics represents the way how meaning is interpreted. The meaning of signs is interpreted according to ones nature. Generally signs are interpreted and generate meaning to an interpreter. Social affects individuals and there are always alternative interpretations of things. Human kind misinterprets sometimes to understand the meanings. If society restricts a person's development due to various reasons he or she can overcome to fulfill his or her vision. Self determination creates the potential to overcome social limitations. Media acts as a catalyst agent in the process of reproducing culture. Media represents the nature of groups and individuals in a democratic society. Meanings imparted through semiotics are recognized with intended

meanings of messages for a particular purpose. (Gaines, 2010)

Conclusion

Thus, we can say that semiotics is discussed and deconstructed in a way that acknowledge the need for further exploration that may be useful for technological and post-modern cultures. It is nothing but to uncover the deeper meaning.

Images contain meaning and this differs from different backgrounds. The ideal place for studying semiotics is a fully virtual world where images are created virtually from all parts of the globe. Different meanings are generated by different visualizes. Semiotics helps us decode the deeper meanings in every culture in spite of human relationships, myths, belief system and other norms. We are bound by semiotics in every sphere of our life, bound by the restrictions.

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