

LANGUAGE – TOOL AND SIGN

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Abstract: *Communication theory and ontology are in general closely connected: all communication theories have their ontologies, a part from whether they remain implied or explicated; vice versa, all ontologies refer to a theory of communication, even if it is not explicated.*

This is where language comes into play (and speech, verbal language, is only one of its many expressions). Language implies that the human being is not only a semiotic being like all living beings insofar as they communicate, but is also a semiotic animal, that is, capable of semiotics, in other words, of meta-semiotics, reflection and consciousness. Language is the characteristic prerogative of hominids and as such has determined our evolutionary development, the evolution of the semiotic animal — not just biological evolution, but also historical-social evolution.

The current phase in the development of world communication today does not weaken the individualistic, private and static conception of the body, but, on the contrary, reinforces it.

The purpose of our paper is precisely to provide a refinement of the theories of communication in a global linguistic environment of today.

keywords: *semiotics, global language, communication theory*

In general, the phenomenon of "communication" is perceived in terms of an outer manifestation of an interior which manifests, reveals, exhibits, exposes its content. Starting from this point, we may say that communication is e-mission by a being, the emitter, and takes place between this e-mitter and another being, that is, the receiver, the two of them forming this process. Communication is what happens between the being that acts as the emitter and the being that acts as the receiver. There is a being that communicates, that first is and then communicates and, therefore, that is before and independently of its communication.

This conception of communication is commonly accepted by ordinary opinion, but even more than this it is supported by different theoretical trends such as innatism and empiricism, mentalism and behaviourism, which on other accounts contrast each other. It is possible to analyse the processes of exteriorisation forming communication without questioning either the exteriorising being or the being of the receiver in such processes; however, the other possibility is that we interrogate this exteriorising being, that we analyse this interior externalised in communication as well as the being of the receiver. In other words: there are two beings which enter into communication and we may either limit ourselves to analysing what these communicants do, or we may choose to interrogate their being and therefore study them, describe how they are formed. In any case, the conception of communication as the e-mission of a being which another being receives remains.

Obviously, this conception of communication is connected with a given conception of being, a given certain ontology. Just as communication in general is considered as a process beginning from a being, as its e-mission, being in general is considered as the presupposition and foundation of communication. Communication theory and ontology are in general closely connected: all communication theories have their ontologies, a part from whether they remain implied or explicated; vice versa, all ontologies refer to a theory of communication, even if it is not explicated.

Communication is not only the condition of life but also the criteria of its identification: a being that is alive is a communicating being. Life = semiosis, a process characterised in terms of signs (precisely, "signs of life").

In this perspective it becomes clear that communication is not simply an externalisation of the living being, from bacteria or prokaryotes to cells with a membrane and nucleus or eukaryotes, from micro-organisms to organisms belonging to the three (or four) great kingdoms; on the contrary, communication is the living being itself. In the organic world, communicating is being and vice versa. To communicate is to persist in being, to maintain being, to confirm self as being, *conatus essendi*.

Similarly, in the sphere of economy, communication is identified as being and persistence in being. Following this path, we are passing from the very vast sphere of biosemiosis and the

more restricted but still general sphere of zoosemiosis (to both of which man belongs) to the more specific sphere of anthroposemiosis where being is not only a living being, but is further understood as a human being, that is, a historical-social being.

All is but natural that this is where language comes into play (and speech, verbal language, is only one of its many expressions). Language implies that the human being is not only a semiotic being like all living beings insofar as they communicate, but is also a semiotic animal, that is, capable of semiotics, in other words, of meta-semiosis, reflection and consciousness. As linguists state unequivocally, language is the characteristic prerogative of hominids and as such has determined our evolutionary development, the evolution of the semiotic animal — not just biological evolution, but also historical-social evolution.

Thus, communication-production is communication of the world as it is today. It is global communication not only in the sense that it has expanded over the whole planet, but also in the sense that it accepts the world as it is, relates to it positively, accommodates the world. To put it differently, global communication is communication of this world as it is. We may also say that communication and reality, communication and being coincide. Realistic politics (but if it is not realistic, it is not politics) is politics appropriate to global communication, to the being of communication-production. The relationship between politics and ontology (politics proper which as such is pre-disposed for war, the crudest and most brutally realistic face of being) is nowadays specified as the relation with the ontology of being communication, which is world communication, communication-production.

The category of "identity" and the related category of "subject", whether the identity of the individual subject or of the collective subject (the "Western world", the European Community, the nation, the ethnic group, the social class, etc.), carry out a decisive role in world-wide and global communication.

One conclusion that can be reached is that the concept of individual identity must be reconsidered from a semiotic point of view similarly to the relation between identity and community, where the latter too is understood in terms of identity.

To sum up we should stipulate the fact that globalisation of communication-production has already proceeded to high degrees of homologation in modelling the social forms of production is an advantage for telosemiotics. The entire planet is dominated by a single market, a single form of production and consumption leading to homologation not only in behaviours, habits, fashions (also in the sense of dress fashions), but also in the life of the imaginary.

To put it in a tragic nutshell(!) we could also claim that in today's dominant production system difference understood in terms of otherness is being replaced ever more by difference understood in terms of alternatives.

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