Chapter 3

Semiotic Perspective: Sign, Signifier, Signified

3.1 Introduction

Semiotics, also called semiology, is the study of signs. The word semiotics is derived from the ancient Greek word semeion which means sign. Sign includes:

i. signs in everyday life- road signs, pub signs, star signs;

ii. drawings, paintings and photographs; and

iii. words, sounds, body language, symbols.

The development of Semiotics interlaces through grammar study, philology, comparative philology and linguistics. No doubt, it is an age old practice in medical science. The roots of semiotics lie in linguistics. Semiotics is also considered an autonomous discipline which sets capability of producing hypotheses and affords the possibility of making predictions (Eco, 1976). Ferdinand de Saussure and C. S. Peirce are the founding fathers of semiotics. The Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure regards linguistics as a part of semiotics and takes “a sign as the combination of signifier and signified” (1916:15). There is no natural relationship between the object and the name given to the object. John Locke (1632-1704), the English philosopher has suggested including semiotics in philosophical inquiry. In his Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), Locke defines semiotics as the “doctrine of signs”. Barthes (1967) focuses on denotation and connotation of signs. He says:

Semiology aims to take any system of signs, whatever their substance and limits, images, gestures, musical sounds, objects and the complex association of these, which form the content of ritual, convention or public entertainment: these constitute, if not languages, at least of signification.

(1967:9)
Peirce (1958) points out that “a sign ...is something which stands somebody or something in some respect or capacity ... every thought is a sign” (Eco: 7). He further classifies signs in three categories, viz. iconic, indexical and symbolical. Umberto Eco observes: ‘Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign’ (1976:7). Thus, ‘sign’ is the centre of linguistic study of any text. Semiotics studies, analyses and interprets all kinds of signs, generally. In consumer advertisements, signs are combined or organized in a coherent and cohesive manner to convey a message and create desire among the readers/viewers.

The history of human development and actions is an integral part of semiotics. About 2500 years ago in Greece, Asia Minor and Southern Italy, it was known by the name techne semeiotimke, the ‘semiotic craft’, and the skill to interpret semeia, i.e. ‘signs’. Techne semeiotike means interpretation of signs. (Eugen Baer: 41) The formalization or identification for semiotics as a discipline is established by Saussure, Peirce, Barthes, Morris, Hjlemslev, Freud, Lacan, Jakobson Eco, Lotman, Levi-Strauss, Julia Kristeva, Bakhtin, Derrida and others. Since the primitive age the need of communication through human audible signs, gestures, pictures etc. and later on oral and written language came into existence. According to Saussure, the sound images are translated into a fixed visual image i.e. writing. (1960:15) Oral language took a new form of writing that is the digital form in due course of time. It is the journey of the development of human communication which today is a major field of study, an interdisciplinary approach. It seems that the circle of human communication from oral to oral communication is being completed through the modern means of communication.

The basic or central object of the study of semiotics is ‘sign’. It is like the central notion of ‘atom’ in Physics, ‘cell’ in biology, ‘phoneme’ in phonology,
‘morpheme’ in morphology, ‘mytheme’ in mythology, and ‘language’ in linguistics. These are the fundamental concepts in the respective fields of study. As John Locke calls human brain a blank tablet or tabula rasa in his Understanding of Human Mind (1690) on which the experiences, linguistic or non-linguistic are stored, structured and created later on. Thus, the human mind with the help of signs does think, create and communicate. It perceives the world through the signs. Thus, an individual comes across the world and creates it through signs. The interaction of human society is based on signs and sign systems. The social institutions: religion, mythology, family, education, marriage, law, judiciary and so on are in existence through ‘signs’. In human culture religion, politics, economics, education, language, literature, and art are the integral parts. Behind all these institutional transactions the communicative and value systems are basically ‘sign systems’. The sign systems are followed or observed and sometimes violated, (e.g. literature, advertisements,) if necessary. The social institutions shape and form human culture and cultural tradition. Human culture includes superstitions, beliefs, customs, religion, social and moral values, ethics, art, literature, music, legal system etc which are followed and observed collectively by a speech community or a group of people. Culture is not genetically transmitted but acquired in society through communication. The ‘signs’ used in interaction are very important in this process as they carry and spread cultural values.

The ‘sign’ system is found in human society since the ages. In the primitive culture signs were used for effective communication and are now an integral part of human society. The formal study of ‘signs’ by Saussure, Peirce, Morris, and others has established semiotics as a valuable field of study. Saussure calls ‘semiology’ the whole, while linguistics is the sub-discipline of it. He establishes the inclusive nature of semiotics and relates it to the faculties of study.
3.2 The concept of ‘sign’

The concepts of ‘sign’ are viewed from various perspectives. In linguistics, ‘language’ is the focal point of study. In semiotics, ‘sign’ is the basic and distinctive unit of study. The characteristics and functions associated with language are also applicable to ‘signs’ used in communication. The ‘signs’ are further divided into components. The dyadic and triadic models of ‘sign’ are much popular in semiotics. There are two types of models of ‘signs’ dyadic/bipartite and triadic models.

3.2.1 Dyadic model of ‘sign’

The concept of ‘sign’ is the basic notion of study in semiotics like ‘mytheme’ in mythology, ‘ideogoneme’ in ideology, ‘morpheme’, in morphology, ‘phoneme’ in phonology, and ‘sememe’ in semantics. There are two types of models of ‘signs’: dyadic or bipartite and triadic models. The dyadic model of ‘sign’ has two components, ‘sign vehicle’ and ‘meaning’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>thing</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>sign</th>
<th>(Locke, 1690)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>thing</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>sign</td>
<td>(Locke, 1690)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signifier</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>signified</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>sign</td>
<td>(Saussure, 1916)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>content</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>sign</td>
<td>(Hjlemslev, 1961)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signans</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>signatum</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>Signum</td>
<td>(Jakobson, 1960)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech sound/signal</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>response in hearer</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>Linguistic form</td>
<td>(Bloomfield, 1930)</td>
</tr>
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Thus, these are some of the alternative terms used and they are divided into ‘the sound image’ or ‘sign vehicle’ and ‘meaning’ or ‘content’. The dyadic/bipartite model has been made popular by Saussure and his followers.
3.2.2 Triadic model of ‘sign’

In the triadic model of ‘sign’ the three components are assumed. The triangle given below shows the relationship of the components of a sign: sign vehicle, sense and referent. The sign vehicle is similar to Saussure’s concept of ‘signifier’. The ‘sense’ stands for the mental image of the ‘object’ and the ‘referent’ stands for the ‘object’. Here is the triangle which represents the triadic model of ‘sign’:

![Triadic model of 'sign'](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign vehicle</th>
<th>Sense</th>
<th>Referent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>idea/content</td>
<td>thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>affections</td>
<td>thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td>notion</td>
<td>thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representamen</td>
<td>interpretant</td>
<td>object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>meaning</td>
<td>thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbol</td>
<td>thought/reference</td>
<td>referent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign vehicle</td>
<td>signifiatum</td>
<td>denotatum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The American linguist, C. S. Peirce and his followers adopted the triadic model of ‘sign’ having three components: ‘sign vehicle’, ‘sense’ and ‘meaning’.
3.3 The contributors to the concept of ‘sign’ and ‘Semiotics’

3.3.1 Ferdinand de Saussure’s concept of ‘sign’

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) the Swiss linguist who wrote the treatise on the Proto-Indo-European Vocal System at the age of twenty, taught Sanskrit at Paris for ten years (1881 -1891), served as the Secretary of the Linguistic Society of Paris and taught linguistic courses at the University of Geneva from 1906 to 1911. He brought the revolutionary ideas and practices in the study of language which the inadequacies of the grammatical, philological, and comparative philological approach. His lecture notes were collected and compiled by his students Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Reidlinger, which resulted in the book *Cours de linguistique generale* (1916). The book was translated in English by Wade Baskin in 1960. The ideas, central to his linguistic conception, lead to linguistics considering language as an object of study which needs to be studied in itself. He proposes that language is a system. It is an arbitrary system of signs.

Language is a system of signs that express ideas, and is therefore comparable to a system of writing, the alphabet of deaf-mutes, symbolic rites, polite formulas, military signals, etc. But it is the most important of all these systems. (1960:16)

There is no inherent relationship between the object and the sound image. For instance, there is no inherent relationship between the object ‘dog’ and the word used for it i.e. the sound image ‘dog’ because the sound image does not reflect the doginess of the ‘dog’. He proposed the dyadic model of ‘linguistic sign’ consisting of ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’. He points out the arbitrariness of language in regard to the signifier and the signified.
Saussure introduces the two major concepts – *langue* and *parole*. ‘Langue’ is an underlying system which is common in speech or utterance. He observes:

It is not to be confused with human speech [*langage*], of which it is only a definite part, though certainly an essential one. It is both a social product of the faculty of speech and a collection of necessary conventions that have been adopted by a social body to permit individuals to exercise that faculty. Taken as a whole, speech is many-sided and heterogeneous; straddling several areas simultaneously – physical, physiological, and psychological- it belongs both to the individual and to society; we cannot put it into any category of human facts, for we cannot discover its unity. (1960:9)

Saussure does not neglect the social aspect of ‘signs’ at the same time. He calls language homogeneous and speech heterogeneous. ‘Parole’ is an individual’s speech and has complete or partial social acceptability.

Neither is the psychological part of the circuit wholly responsible: the executive side is missing, for execution is never carried out by the collectivity. Execution is always individual, and the individual is always its master: I shall call the executive side *speaking* [*parole*]. (1960:13)

Saussure argues that ‘signs’ have *syntagmatic* and *paradigmatic* relationship, In other words, the signs are horizontally and vertically bound to one another. His notion of ‘sign’ is the object of study. Any sign, according to Saussure, consists of two components, *signifier* and *signified*. These two components are combined in such a way that they cannot be separated.

\[
\text{Sign} = \text{Signifier} + \text{Signified} \quad \text{or} \\
\text{Sign/word} = \text{sound image} + \text{concept/object/meaning}.
\]
He calls it the union of meanings and sound images.

Language is concrete, no less than speaking; and this is a help in our study of it. Linguistic signs, though basically psychological, are not abstractions. Associations which bear the stamp of collective approval—and which added together constitute language—are realities that have their seat in the brain. (1960:15)

The concept of ‘langue’ and ‘parole’, their paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationship is added by Saussure with the classification of language-study in two sections—\textit{Diachronic} and \textit{Synchronic}. He prefers synchronic study of a language which is the base of semiotics and also of poststructuralist ideas such as Derrida’s concepts of ‘trace’, ‘aporia’, and ‘differrance’ that paved the way for a multiplicity of meanings and thus, ‘signified’ in Saussurean notion becomes ‘sign’ for Roland Barthes and Derrida. The germ of origin of semiotics lies in the work of Saussure. Setting aside linguistics as the complete answer to language study, he asserts that ‘linguistics’ i.e. the objective study of language is a part of ‘semiotics’. Semiotics is the study of signs or it is an objective study of ‘signs’.

The post structural American linguist, Noam Chomsky (b.1928) claims that the human brain is especially constructed to detect and reproduce language. According to Chomsky, children instinctively apply innate grammatical rules to process the verbal input to which they are exposed. He substitutes Saussure’s terms ‘langue’ and ‘parole’, with ‘competence’ and ‘performance’. He incorporates his ideas in his polemic book \textit{Syntactic Structures} (1957). He regards that ‘competence’ is one’s knowledge of the grammar of the language. It is the system internalized by its speakers that enables them to use the language in performance. He calls ‘performance’ the speaker’s externalization of the knowledge in use.
As stated earlier, language is the ‘object’ of study of linguistics but its was rigidity restrained by its arbitrariness, which however was not the case with respect to onomatopoeic words. For instance, the words ‘crack’, ‘clash’, ‘bang’ etc. are not arbitrary. Roland Barthes, the French structuralist and philosopher considers two levels of a sign denoting the first level ‘signifier’ which becomes ‘signified’ at another level. In other words, the first level ‘signified’ i.e. the literal meaning of a ‘sign’ which is generally found in dictionaries, while at another level it yields associative meanings. After all, meanings are generated at the two levels: literal and associative levels which Barthes calls ‘denotative’ and ‘connotative’ meanings. (1967:12)

Barthes in his *Elements of Semiology* (1967) analyses the contribution of Saussure and Hjelmslev and proposes the possibility of semiotic research. He calls Saussure’s division of *langue* and *parole* as *language* and *speech*:

> We shall therefore postulate that there exists a general category language/speech, which embraces all the sign systems of signs; since there are no better ones, we shall keep the terms language and speech, even when they are applied to communication whose substance is not verbal. (1967: 25)

Compared to other views about semiotics, Barthes’s view is more comprehensive and broad. Saussure proposes that a sign is like a coin having both sides united and a sheet of paper having ‘recto’ and ‘verso’ side which cannot be separated. Saussure proposes the concept of linguistic sign while Barthes proposes ‘semiological sign’ because communication does not exist only with linguistic signs but also with non-linguistic signs. In this way, Saussure tries to determine the place of ‘Semiotics’ in relation to
social institutions and faculties of study like psychology. He proposes the bipartite model of ‘sign’ which remains basic to the structural and semiotic analysis.

3.3.2 C.S. Peirce’s concept of ‘sign’

C. S. Peirce (1839-1914), the American logician, linguist, and mathematician has proposed the triadic model of sign. He is known as the founder of semiotics and pragmaticism. His essays appeared in the *Popular Science Monthly* His unpublished writings were later published by Harvard University Press as *Collected Writings* (8 Volumes) between 1931 and 1958. Peirce’s notion of ‘sign’ is found in the second and fourth volume of his Collected Writings (1958). Peirce takes counter view/stance of metaphysics and prefers logic and science for human development. His phenomenological notion distinct from Husserl’s ‘pure phenomenology’ is based on hierarchy of knowledge of ‘firstness’, ‘secondness’, and ‘thirdness’. In this hierarchy, the thirdness is a matter of interpretation, logic and semiotics. He argues that:

> Logic, in its general sense, is, as I believe I have shown only another name for *semiotic*, the quasi-necessary, or formal doctrine of signs. By describing the doctrine as ‘quasi-necessary’, or formal, I mean that we observe the characters of such signs as we know, and from such an observation, by a process which I will not object to naming Abstraction, we are led to statements, eminently fallible, and therefore in one sense by no means necessary, as to what must be the characters of all signs used by a ‘scientific’ intelligence, that is to say by an intelligence capable of learning by experience. (Collected *Papers*, Vol.2, Para 227 Quoted by Hawkes in *Structuralism and Semiotics* p.100)

His notion of ‘sign’ is different from Saussure’s dyadic model. He proposes the triadic model of ‘sign’ which reveals the components of sign as: *representamen, interpretant*
and referent’. The following diagram shows the relationship of the components of a ‘sign’.

![Relationship of Components of a Sign Diagram]

According to Peirce:

i) the sign/’representamen’ is something which stands to somebody or something in a certain respect of capacity

ii) the ‘representamen’ addresses someone and creates in his or her mind an equivalent sign. It is an ‘interpretant’ of the first sign.

iii) the ‘interpretant’ stands for something namely the ‘object’ or ‘idea’ of the first ‘sign’, which is a ‘referent’

In other words, representamen is a perceptible object which functions as a sign which corresponds to Saussure’s term ‘signifier’. A ‘referent’ is an object for which the representamen stands. The image created by the referent in the mind is an interpretant. A representamen is the ‘sign vehicle’, the interpretant is the ‘sense’ and the referent is the ‘object’. He correlates the three components of a sign. This triad in various forms is also used by Plato, Aristotle, Bacon, Husserl and Morris. Peirce classified the signs into ten classes but the most familiar categories are Icon, the index and the symbol.

3.3.2.1 Iconic, indexical and symbolic

Peirce classifies signs in ten major categories and sixty-six sub-categories. His most familiar categorization of sign is that of iconic, indexical and symbolic. The
Greek work *eikon* means ‘likeness’ or ‘image’. According to Peirce, an icon is a type of ‘representamen’ or sign in which the relationship between the ‘signans’ (signifier) and ‘signatum’ (signified) is one of factual similarity. A map, for example, is an icon because it shows the factual similarity. In William Blake’s poem, *The Tyger* (*Songs of Experience*, 1794) the image of tiger is an iconic one which shows the factual likeness between it and the real animal it displays. An index, for Peirce, is a ‘representamen’ which shows the relationship between the ‘signans’ (signified) and ‘signatum’ (signified). The relationship is also factual and existential of the ‘representamen’. Smoke, for example, is an index of fire. A footprint is the indexical sign of the existence of a human being. A symbol is a type of ‘representamen’ which displays the relationship between ‘signans’ (signifier) and ‘signatum’ (signified) which is a shared contiguity between the addresser and the addressee. It requires the addressee or the interpreter of a sign to know and understand the conventional code governing its meanings. Symbols are culture bound and open-ended at the same time. For example, a ‘rose’ is symbolic of ‘peace’ and ‘love’. In a speech and cultural community the symbols are shared. Peirce considers the process of communication to be nothing but the result of the interplay between *representamen, interpretant* and *referent.*

### 3.3.3 Barthes’ contribution to semiotics

The limitation of Saussure’s concept of ‘sign’ was challenged in course of time for the rigidity and constraints of *signifier* and *signified*. The one to one, non-inherent relationship between the ‘signifier’ or ‘sound image’ and ‘concept’ or ‘object’ has been challenged by the structural critic and theorist Roland Barthes, who is also a structuralist but extends his concept of ‘sign’ - ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ in order to emancipate the rigidity between the components of a ‘sign’. He extends the
notion of ‘sign’ and crosses the arbitrariness of language. In the tradition of literary criticism, the New Critics, Cleanth Brooks, and Allen Tate use a similar notion of literal and associative meanings.

3.3.3.1 Barthes’s ‘semiological sign’

The concept ‘semiological sign’ as proposed by Barthes is more inclusive. In linguistic signs, orthographic representation in writing and verbal use of language in speech, are the limitations in communication. They do not include or display paralinguistic and non-linguistic signs such as objects, gesture, pictures, images, colors, fonts, sizes, and facial expressions. Every sign functions in society because society gives life to the signs. At the same time, the correlation between the ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ is restricted to the particular speech community. The semantic and pragmatic functions of signs are inevitable in communication. Barthes calls the signified not ‘a thing’ but ‘a mental representation of the thing’ while signifiers only play the role of mediators. His concept relates to Semiology which includes structural and semantic aspects. Barthes also proposes ‘semiotic metalanguage’ in analyzing the semiotic system, as used in linguistics to speak of semiotic or in other words Semiotics of semiotic. Thus, he calls the inclusion of linguistic and non-linguistic signs a ‘semiological sign’.

3.3.3.2 Denotation and connotation

Barthes proposes the terms ‘denotation’ and ‘connotation’ for ‘literal’ and ‘associative’ meanings. Any sign in society has its denotative or dictionary meaning while the connotative meanings or associative meanings depend on context, situation and relationship. For instance, red color at denotative level is a color distinguished from any other color. It is the binary opposition of the color. But at connotative level or the second level of signification it stands for danger, revolution, blood etc. So the
connotation is not restricted to one meaning but has several factors which determine and interpret a sign. The Expression, Relation and Concept (ERC) stand as a signifier at the connotative level. Barthes’ concept of myth is the second level of signification. Regarding connotation Barthes remarks:

Connotation, being itself a system, comprises signifiers, signifieds, and the process which unites the former to the later (Signification), and it is the inventory of these three elements which one should undertake in the first place for each system (1967:19)

Thus, at the second level the signifiers of connotation function as the ‘connotators’ which are formed of signs, signifier (Sr) and signified (Sd) taken together.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Sd</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sr</td>
<td>Sd</td>
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(1967:19)

This diagrammatic representation of the first and second level of signification stands for denotative and connotative signification. On the second level of signification, he asserts that a sign is needed to be analyzed from ‘ideological, sociological, and cultural’ perspectives.

3.3.3.3 Barthes’ concept of ‘myth’

Barthes in his another relevant book on semiotics, *Mythologies* (1972) gives the diagrammatic expression of ‘myth’ and proposes that a ‘sign’ which is constituted of ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ becomes the ‘signifier’ at the second level. He suggests here the multiplicity of meanings of a sign at connotative level. Language is a system and linguistic signs are constituted of ‘signifiers’ and ‘signifieds’. But at the mythical level it can be understood at various levels.
Barthes interprets ‘myth’ not in the conventional sense. He considers three levels of signification: ‘denotation’, ‘connotation’ and ‘myth’. ‘Myth’ is a combination of the two other stages, ‘denotation’ and ‘connotation’ and the third order of signification is ‘myth’. ‘Myths’ are formed in codes and thus, serve the ideological function of naturalization. For Barthes, ‘myth’ expresses ideology. Hence it is the point that Barthes’s notion of semiology or semiotics is not restricted to only the denotative or literal sense of the signs but connotative and mythical level as well.

### 3.3.3.4 Elements of Semiology

Barthes proposes the structural grouping of the elements of semiology in *Elements of Semiology* (1967),

i) Language and speech

ii) Signified and Signifier

iii) Syntagm and system

iv) Denotation and connotation

(1967:12)

At the denotation level both ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’, become the ‘signifier’ and the possibility of various meanings is conveyed by signs. Here comes the phase of post-structuralism. Barthes has bridged the gap between structuralism and post-structuralism with his concepts in linguistics, literary criticism and semiotics.
It is in relation to the tradition of ‘deconstruction’, especially Derrida and others that every meaning is an interpretation and meaning is not stable at all. Meaning changes according to time and space. The terms ‘differance’, ‘difference’, and ‘trace’, are used by Derrida to point out the instability of meaning in the realms of time and space. Thus, Barthes plays a crucial role in the extension of structuralism through his concepts of ‘sign’, ‘denotation’, ‘connotation’, and ‘mythology’. He even applied his concepts to the field of fashion and advertisements.

3.3.4 Hjelmslev’s concept of ‘connotative semiotics’

The structuralist notions of arbitrariness, the diachronic and the synchronic, binarism, etc. are challenged by the semioticians, thereby contributing to post-structuralism. Hjelmslev (1899-1965), the Danish linguist, considers ‘content’ and ‘expression’ the constituents of ‘sign’. It is similar to Saussure’s concept of ‘sign’ and the constituents ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’. Barthes comments on Hjelmslev’s concept of ERC that:

… any system of signification comprises a plane of expression (E) and a plane of content (C) and that the signification coincides with the relation (R) of the two planes : ERC. (1967:89)

Here at the first level of signification (Barthes calls it a process.) the structural notion of ‘arbitrariness’ is found. But at the second level ERC becomes the ‘signifier’ or the plane of expression of the second level. That is the ‘connotative’ level or ‘associative’ level which Hjelmslev calls ‘connotative semiotics.’

3.3.5 Morris’s concept of ‘sign’

Charles W. Morris (1901-1979) the American semiotician and follower of Peirce, extends his concept of ‘sign’ in his *Foundations of the Theory of Signs* (1938). The ‘sign vehicle’, the ‘designatum’ and the ‘interpretant’ and ‘interpreter’
are the components of a ‘sign’. He calls ‘semiosis’ a process in which something functions as a ‘sign’. He prefers triadic relation of ‘semiosis’ rather than Saussurian dyadic relations of sign. He further comments that there are three dimensions of signs: the semantic, pragmatic and syntactic dimensions. Thus, he prefers the three levels of semiotic analysis of a sign and these are semantics, pragmatics and syntax. Any sign is associated with these three levels in the process of meaning making. He considers semiotics a science.

Semiotic as a science makes use of special signs to state facts about signs, it is a language to talk about signs. Semiotic has the three subordinate branches of syntactic, semantics and pragmatics, dealing respectively, with the syntactical, the semantical and the pragmatic dimensions of semiosis. Each of these subordinate sciences will need its own special terms; as previously used ‘implicates’ is a term of syntactic, ‘designates’ and ‘denotes’ are terms of semantics, and ‘expresses’ is a term of pragmatics. (1938:8)

Morris further regards sign as:

‘Sign’ itself is a strictly semiotic term, not being definable either within syntactic, semantics, or pragmatics alone; only in the wider use of ‘semiotical’ can it be said that all the terms in these disciplines are semiotical terms. (1938:8)

Thus, Morris also like Barthes extends the concept of plurality of signified at the connotative level or the second order level of meaning and the paradigmatic relationship of signs in communication. His concept of ‘descriptive semiotics’ is almost similar to Barthes’s concept of ‘metasemiotics’. Just as linguistics functions as ‘metalanguage’, ‘metasemiotics’ or descriptive semiotics studies semiotics. Morris
regards ‘sign’ from a semiotic perspective in his *Foundations of the Theory of Signs* (1938) that:

A language in the full semiotical sense of the term is any intersubjective set of sign vehicles whose usage is determined by syntactical, semantical, and pragmatical rules. (1938:35)

In this way, Morris relates one *sign* with other *signs* (syntactic), *sings* and their denotative meanings (semantics), signings, and *interpreters* (pragmatics).

### 3.3.6 Eco’s application of semiotics

Umberto Eco (b.1932) the Italian semiotician, who has provided various theoretical and applied frameworks for the study of signs. His theoretical semiotics includes meaning, iconicity, and typology of signs, codes, structure and communication. His applied semiotics includes culture, music and ideology. He proposes ‘text semiotics’. His polemic work *A Theory of Semiotics* (1976) focuses on various approaches to the analysis of texts, visual communication and meaning. For him ‘semiotics is a program and not a theory’. He proposes that ‘culture’ is to be studied from semiotic perspective. He defines semiotics as:

Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign. A sign is everything which can be taken as significantly substituting for something else. This something else does not necessarily have to exist or to actually be somewhere at the moment in which a sign stands in for it.

Thus, *semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie.* (1976:7)

To utter a lie, necessarily involves semantics and structure because without a possible lie truth cannot be established emphatically. His concepts of ‘closed text’ and ‘open text’, similar to Barthes’s concept of ‘readerly’ and ‘writerly’ texts, are valid for
interpretation of a text. His concept of ‘closed text’ is the surface meaning or the firstness of meaning while ‘open text’ is the generation of meanings offered by the text. Thus, Eco denies the structural opposition of ideas and meanings and gives way to the multiplicity of meanings socially and culturally. It is a program, like minimalism, which needs to be applied in practice and not to let it remain only at a theoretical level.

3.3.7 Jakobson’s concept of sign

Jakobson, (1896-1982) a Moscow-born linguist and semiotician carried most of his work in the United States. Among his contributions to semiotics, linguistics, and communication theory, his model of communication is a widely used model that identifies the main functions and components of human communication. Jokobson’s contribution to the field of semiotics is unparalleled. He has contributed to applied semiotics rather than theoretical semiotics. He has proposed the basic issues of semiotics such as the concept of sign, system, code, structure, function, and the renowned model of communication and the history of semiotics. He has also revealed the significance of Peirce’s semiotics in the field of linguistics. His concept of ‘sign’ is dyadic in nature and scope like Saussure. For ‘sign’ he substitutes the term ‘Signum’, for signifier ‘Signans’, and for signified ‘signatum’. ‘Signans’ is a sign vehicle, or signifier and ‘signatum’ is meaning. Like Saussure, he considers ‘signans’ and ‘signatum’ to be the inseparable components of a ‘signum’ or sign. He determines the scope of semiotics relating to linguistics. Winfred Noth quotes Jakobson from Allen and Unwin’s Main Trends in the Science of Language (1973) as follows:

The subject matter of semiotic is the communication of any messages whatever; whereas the field of linguistics is confined to the
communication of verbal messages. Hence, of these two sciences of man, the latter has a narrower scope, yet, on the other hand, any human communication of non-verbal messages presupposes a circuit of verbal messages, without a reverse implication. (1995:75)

Thus, he proposes that communication of messages is the essence of semiotics which consists of verbal and non-verbal signs. He also mentions the wider nature and scope of semiotics rather than of linguistics. His model of communication has six features: addressee, addresser, context, contact, code and message. The model is explored in the context of analyzing the selected data for semiotic analysis. He considers semiotics and linguistics from the communicative perspective and avers that linguistics is concerned with the verbal message while semiotics is concerned with any or all forms of messages including verbal messages. The idea of ‘social communication’ is derived from Levi-Strauss who contemplates three levels of communication: exchange of messages, commodities, and of women. Consumer advertisement is the medium of selling products or commodities in which we find the reflection of the social phenomena.

3.3.8 Levi Strauss’s concept of ‘sign’

Levi-Strauss, a Belgian-born anthropologist based in Paris, sees culture as an external manifestation of the nature of human sign systems. He applies the structural principles to anthropology and establishes an analogous relationship with music, art, myth, rituals, religion and food in different societies. Following Jakobson’s structural linguistics, he analyses ‘kinship’ relations. Like ‘phoneme’ the smallest unit in phonetics, he substitutes ‘mytheme’ in his study of myth. Myths are signs and thus, they contain messages. ‘Mythemes’ have syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations and the ‘text’ is formed of ‘myths’ in a narrative structure of myth. He considers ‘kinship’
as a system of communication. Kinship is a language in which women act as messages exchanged between clans, lineages or families through marital kinships. The relationship is not biologically constructed but it is a cultural symbolism. The kinship pattern is not a system of communication. It goes beyond the binary system of contradiction and arbitrariness of structuralism. He argues in *Structural Anthropology* (1958) as:

What confers upon kinship its socio-cultural character is not what it retains from nature, but, rather the essential way in which it diverges from nature. A kinship system [...] exists only in human consciousness, it is an arbitrary system of representations. (1958:50)

The structure of ‘kinship’ relationship at structural level is limited and it needs to be analysed at social and cultural level. His application of the analytic principles of linguistic structuralism to numerous anthropological phenomena: totemism, rites, customs, marriage rules, and kinship patterns, is valuable in the analysis of the messages. He considers semiotics as a broader term which includes linguistics and anthropology.

3.3.9 **Freud and Lacan’s concept of ‘sign’**

Freud (1856-1939) German psychologist and founder of psychoanalysis suggests that the moral behavioral patterns that have ensured the survival of the human species are built into human genetic structure. He has also formulated the theory of the ‘unconscious” as a region of the mind that stores wishes, memories, fears, feelings, and ideas that are prevented from expression in conscious awareness. These manifest themselves in symbolic and unusual ways, especially in dreams, neurotic syndromes, and artistic texts. Lacan extends the Saussurean concept of ‘sign’ and Freud’s psychoanalysis of the unconscious. The unconscious is produced through language
and governed by the rules of language. He accepts the arbitrary nature of linguistic
sign of Saussure and interrogates the inseparability of the sign and the prioritization of
the signified over the signifier. He formulates the concept of ‘sign’ as:

\[ \text{Signifier} \]
\[ \rightarrow \]
\[ \text{Signified} \]

The capital ‘Signifier’ precedes signified and the line denotes not the inseparability of
the sign but its basic division. The signifier refers to another signifier because there is
a barrier between them. Thus, there is an endless chain of signification. For instance,
if we look for a word in a dictionary, it refers to other words which are signifiers and
given in the dictionary at other places. It shows that it is the chain of signifiers. Sean
a process, as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{Signifier} & \text{Signifier} & \text{Signifier} & \text{Signifier} \\
\rightarrow & \rightarrow & \rightarrow & \\
\text{signified} & \text{signified} & \text{signified} & \text{signified} \\
\end{array}
\]

(2005:40)

In this, each signifier does not consist of meaning but insists on a meaning. Lacan,
here suggests that meaning is not fixed but in the process of signification, the signifier
stops and allows for moments of stable signification. Saussure reveals that there is a
‘structure’ within us that governs what we say. For Lacan, that structure is
unconscious and hence, the conscious is produced through language and governed by
the rules of language. Lacan suggests temporality and multiplicity of meaning.

3.3.10 Julia Kristeva’s ‘semanalysis’

Julia Kristeva, the French feminist, psychoanalyst and semiotician, contributes
to the field of semiotics her concepts of ‘semanalysis’, ‘intertextuality’, ‘phenotext’
and ‘genotext’. The word ‘semanalysis’ is formed of the two words: ‘semiotics’ and ‘psychoanalysis’. In her *Research for Semanalysis* (1969), she relates it to logic, mathematics, linguistics and the theory of ‘polyphonic nature of discourse’ by Mikhail Bakhtin. According to Kristeva, semiotics makes models based on other systems. Semiotics uses linguistic, mathematical and logical models. She regards ‘Semiotics’ as making analogous models based on other systems. Like Barthes’s concept of ‘metasemiotics’, she considers that semiotics only produces models and these models are the objects of study. From the psychoanalytical perspective, she classifies the semiotic and the symbolic nature of signification. The ‘semiotic’ is primary while the symbolic is at the secondary level of analysis. Thus, she considers the nature of signification not as homogeneous but heterogeneous. Her concept of ‘text’ is a generative and productive one which she calls a ‘signifying practice and productivity’. The activity of meaning-making is ‘plurilingual’ and polyphonic in nature. A ‘text’ is a combination of signs having the potential of indeterminacy of meaning. She classifies ‘text’ into two levels of signification: ‘phonotext’ and ‘genotext’ A ‘phonotext’ comes at the primary or surface level showing phonetic, syntactic and semantic relations while ‘genotext’ at the secondary level where the production of signification come into existence. All the texts share certain common properties invariably, which she terms ‘intertextuality’. The term ‘intertextuality’ refers to the various links in form and content which bind a text to other texts. Each text exists in relation to others. A text means more to other texts than to its own maker. The texts provide contexts such as genre with which other texts may be created and interpreted. In the newspaper consumer ads the concept is implied. Following Bakhtin she observes that a text is like a ‘mosaic, absorption and transformation of another texts’. Kristeva’s concept of signification is similar to those
of Barthes, Lacan, and Derrida in the sense that the indeterminacy and plurality of meaning emerge from the text. In the advertising texts, these concepts are valid in the analysis from the denotative and connotative level.

### 3.3.11 Derrida’s concept of ‘sign’

The Deconstructionists, Derrida, Paul de Man, Hillis Miller, Geoffrey Hartman, Harold Bloom and Barbara Johnson have added new dimensions to structuralism and emancipated it from binary opposition, arbitrariness, and posited that meaning is not stable. Meaning is uncertain and temporal. Derrida (1930-2003), the French philosopher, formed a method of analysis, known as deconstruction. It is applied to literature, linguistics, philosophy, law, and architecture, by which texts are seen to be infinitely interpretable. In his famous book *Of Grammatology* (1967) he adopts the notion of ‘logocentricism’. The Greek term ‘logo’ stands for ‘word’. He argues that knowledge is central in ‘logos’ or ‘writing’ while phonocentricism exists at the surface level. In the Saussurean terminology, ‘langue’ pre-exists the ‘parole’. In the analysis, the notion of binary opposition or contradiction is invalid. In literary analysis, the notion of binary opposition or contradiction is invalid because it is hierarchical in nature and marginalizes the other side. For example, nature/ culture, man /woman, the other side is marginalized. Man is dominant and his opposite is woman who is marginalized here. The contradiction may be considered as man/animal and man /boy also. He proposes the instability and indeterminacy of meaning through his terms ‘differance’ and ‘difference’, and ‘trace’. In a text, the multiplicity, instability or temporality of meaning exists. It is like the course of a river whose identity is determinable at different levels. The meaning stands postponed. Thus, the analogous nature of ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ in structuralism is denied. Regarding ‘text’, his famous sentence ‘There is nothing outside the text’, reveals the
nature of interpretation that there is nothing text-free and hence, the ‘text’ is to be studied in context. The contexts are varied and hence, meanings are various depending on the contexts. His stress is on the ‘play’ between the elements of binary opposition. In this way, Derrida and other post-structural critics have extended the notion of structuralism.

3.3.12 Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of ‘sign’

Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975), the Russian philosopher, established intimacy with Pavel N. Medvedev (1891-1938) and Valentin Volosinov (1884-1936), who formed the ‘Bakhtin Circle’, in 1920. He studied sign, utterance, text, discourse, genre, and relations between literary writing and non-verbal expressions in popular culture, as in the signs of Carnival. Bakhtin proposes the term ‘heteroglossia’ which refers to the fact that any society consists of groups of diverse constituents and interests. Their diversity gives rise to difference in languages and language use so that members of any society always speak with many diverse ‘voices’, which are in contestation in any utterance. Bakhtin’s arguments about heteroglossia were demonstrated most spectacularly with reference to the novel as a narrative.

3.3.13 Stuart Hall’s cultural perspective

The New Left Critic, Stuart Hall looks at communication from the Marxist perspective. Marx’s notion of class-struggle, historical materialism and the surplus value are considered valuable in the analysis. The concept of ‘base’ and ‘superstructure’ was modified by the New Left Critics, such as Hall. Antonio Gramsci proposes the concept of ‘hegemony’, while Fredric Jameson considers the era of globalization as ‘the third stage of capitalism’. Hall modifies the traditional model of communication namely the sender, message and receiver. The modification is that the encoder is the producer, the message production and the receiver is the consumer of
the message. The receiver/addressee consume the message because consumption is the active process which leads to production and reproduction. The decoding of the message through ‘signs’; is iconic, indexical and symbolical. Hall stresses the multi-accenctuality of language, whereby the signs are polysemic in nature. The encoding of the message is organized and controlled or sophisticated because the message reflects the dominant cultural order at social, political, cultural and ideological levels. He argues that culture and ideology are not external structures but are imposed on us from one-side and they reflect the constant struggle and negations in a social context. Ideology is communicated and imposed not from top or bottom either. The dominance is found from top to bottom but the bottom has also an ideology but it is not dominant.

3.3.14 Foucault and interpretation of ‘sign’

Michel Foucault, (1926-1984) is the French semiotician and philosopher who attempted to show that the basic ideas that people normally take to be permanent truths about human nature and society are instead no more than the products of a historical process. Derrida, Julia Kristeva and Foucault are the major post structural critics. Foucault is one of the major post-structural critics who had been influenced by Nietzsche and Heidegger. His works are interdisciplinary. His *The Order of Things* (1966) is an exercise in structuralism. He is famous for his proposition of social constructs such as ‘madness’, ‘prison’, ‘sexuality’ and ‘power’. The social constructs that he proposed came into existence through various discourses. He considered that the earlier constructs are not false but ‘coherent systems of concepts which determine the modes of thought in the historical period’. Foucault states that the concept of ‘power’ is not an ‘object’ which can be seized, held or lost, but it is a network of
forces in which power always meets with resistance. ‘Power’ is domination and control, authoritatianism and prescriptivism in language use. He considers that knowledge is always a form of power. The new technologies are symbols of liberation, and development is meant to control on the other hand. The ‘signs’ employed in the advertising texts are not merely for communication but they carry the ‘power’ through the modern means of technology. Foucault imports a new dimension to the interpretation through challenging the traditional notions of interpretations and therefore, like Althusser, and Gramsci, he becomes a contributor to the post-structuralism.

3.3.15 Paul de Man’s concept of ‘multiplicity of meaning’

Paul de Man is one of the critics of Yale School of Deconstruction. His books Allegories of Reading (1979) Blindness and Insight (1983), The Rhetoric of Romanticism (1984) The Resistance of Theory (1988) contribute to the theory of deconstruction. During the 1920s to 1960s, New Criticism was the dominant theoretical practice which posited the sole importance of the text. I A Richards and the New Critics, Allen Tate, Cleanth Brooks, Wimsatt and Beardsley, and others have considered the nature of the text to be ‘autotelic’, ‘organic’, and ‘complete’. New Criticism avoids biographical, historical, and authorial approaches. The New Critics proposed that meaning lies in the text itself through ‘irony’, ‘paradox’, ‘in-tension’ and ‘ex-tension’. If a text is analyzed from the view of the intention of the author and its effect on the readers, it is a fault. These two terms, intentional fallacy and affective fallacy pose a problem in the appreciation of literary artifacts. There is no place for biographical and historical approach in New Criticism. In the 1960s the emergence of post-structuralism changed the scenario of linguistic, literary, and critical approaches. The post-structural view of Barthes, Derrida, de Man, and Hillis Miller, the anti-
colonial view of Fanon, Aime Cesaire, Senghor, the post-colonial utterances of Edward Said, Chinua Achebe, and Thiong’o, the feminism of Helen Cixous, Luce Iregary, Julia Kristeva, and Kate Millet; the Reader Response pronouncements Stanley Fish, Riffaterre; the psychoanalysis of Lacan, Ernest Jones have changed the total scenario of critical analysis. The decade of the 1980s is marked by ‘war theory’. In the reader centre criticism, Riffaterre, the phenomenological critic Stanley Fish, and Paul de Man proposed the reader as the central factor. Paul de Man argued that there is no authoritative centre in a text, no case of fixed meaning, there is no single point more important than any other and there can be no ‘proper’ starting for reading. Readers are not in control of meaning. Man displaces all the traditional categories – author, reader, text, literary language, ordinary speech etc. The reader is a producer of meanings. He stresses the underlying ‘aesthetic ideology’ and avers all that critical readings are misreading.

3.3.16 Judith Williamson’s concept of ‘sign,’

In her book Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising (1995) Williamson extends the concept of sign by comparing ‘form’ and ‘content’ to ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’. She replaces the terms ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ for ‘form and ‘content’. ‘Form’ and ‘content’ are separable but ‘signifier’ and the ‘signified’ are inseparable. They are not separated in ‘time and space’.

Signifiers are things, while form is invisible; signifieds are ideas, while content implies materiality. Furthermore, while form and content are usually seen as separable and their conceptual unity is one of opposition (form vs. content), signifier and signified are materially inseparable, since they are bound together in the sign, which is their totality. (1995:18)
Similar to Saussure’s dyadic model of ‘sign’, she considers that a ‘sign’ consists of ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’. A signifier is ‘the material object’ and the signified is its ‘meaning’. It is stressed in her study that the two components of a ‘sign’: ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ are inseparable. They can be separated only for analytical purposes.

The sign consists of the Signifier, the material object, and the Signified, which is its meaning. These are only divided for analytical purposes: in practice a sign is always thing-plus-meaning. (1995:17)

Thus, she considers that the components of a sign cannot be separated and combined in a ‘sign’. Williamson’s semiotic perspective is useful in analyzing advertisements. Each ‘sign’ ‘weather object, word or picture’ is not separated as ‘form’ and ‘content’ but they exist in unison. Williamson further considers a product as ‘signified’ and ‘signifier’. In the ads, the product is a ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ at various levels.

3.4 In search of meaning

Man is always in search of meaning of the surroundings, happenings, events, utterances, cultural events, and linguistic and non-linguistic signs in order to acquire knowledge and try to use and apply it by finding reasons behind the happenings. An individual is associated with signs. Noam Chomsky focuses on ‘innateness hypothesis’ and argues that a child has an internal or biological capacity to learn a language. A child learns the language (not formally) but through signs, that is the tacit knowledge of the language i.e. ‘competence’. It may be mother’s touch or hunger (crying) which associates the signs with its consciousness. If a schoolboy or a girl is given a ten rupee note, he or she does know the value of the colorful piece of paper. He or she does know that it is not a mere piece of paper but with the exchange of it
one can buy a pencil, paper, or chocolate. The value is determined by the social institution of economics/market.

Human communication is the key notion of studying languages and verbal and non-verbal signs are used for communication. The ability to use language, including kinesis and proxemics or body language and the efforts at meaning making are continuous. Semantics, one of the levels of linguistic and semiotic analysis deals with the aspects of meanings and syntax deals with the vertical and horizontal relationship. The syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationship of the signs form a message. The arbitrariness of ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ seems restricted and display only denotative meaning. The post-structuralists view challenges the notion of restrictedness of meaning with the signifier. Roland Barthes breaks the system of one to one relationship of ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’. He calls it firstness of meaning i.e. ‘denotation’. The signified has associative or connotative meanings which are numberless and dependent on contexts. Any piece of literature, like this the thesis, does not deal with denotative or literal meanings and is not restricted either to the author, or text or reader but depends on the way one looks at the artifact. Meaning is extracted from the text, which is embedded with signs. In this regard Kress and Hodge in Social Semiotics observe:

Meaning is always negotiated in the semiotic process, never simply imposed inexorably from above by an omnipotent author through an absolute code. Traditional semiotics likes to assume that the relevant meanings are frozen and fixed in the text itself, to be extracted and decoded by the analyst by reference to a coding system that is impersonal and neutral, and universal for users of the code. Social semiotics cannot assume that texts produce exactly the meanings and effects that their
authors hope for: it is precisely the struggles and their uncertain outcomes that must be studied at the level of social action, and their effects in the production of meaning. (1988:12)

Thus, meaning is embedded in the text and revealed through the contexts.

### 3.4.1 Semiotics and semantics

The process of meaning making and the role of semiotics depend on the Jakobsonian six factors in communication. Meanings of signs are dependent on the addresser and the addressee. They are active in the meaning making process, bringing with them cultural experience and ideologies for the process making sense. Semiotics is the technique, spontaneous and untutored, self reflexive and critical. John Sturrock argues that semantics focuses on what words mean while semiotics on how they are in sensory form. Saussure calls ‘Semiology – a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life’. Charles Morris defines Semiotics as ‘the science of signs’ and considers semiotics and semantics as integrated. Peirce fuses pragmatics and semiotics. As structural approach, semiotics studies the text. Kristeva classifies the text as ‘genotext’ and ‘phonotext’ while Morris calls it ‘an assemblage of signs, including words, images sounds and gestures, constructed (or interpreted) with reference to the conventions associated with a text type and in a particular medium of communication’. The medium of ‘text’ can be speech and writing; print and broadcasting, specific technical forms within the mass media such as Radio, newspapers, TV, magazines, books, photographs, films, records, letter, telephone, fax, and e-mail.

Saussure argues that sign is made up of signifier and signified. The one to one relationship between the sound image (signifier) and meaning (signified) which is later challenged by Roland Barthes by asserting the plurality of meaning / signified
i.e. along with the literal/dictionary/lexical (denotative) meaning, a sign has connotative or associated meanings. In his polemical essay, *Structure, sign, and play in the discourse of human sciences* (1957) Jacques Derrida marks the possibility of several contextual meanings of the same *sign* in course of time and shatter the concept of ‘centre’. For example, among the media texts, an advertisement is a ‘media text’ which includes several kinds of *signs* - linguistic and non-linguistic, verbal signs, graphic symbols, images, photographs, caricatures, cartoons, sizes of the images, font sizes, extra-graphical signs (emoticons, alphanumerical signs), their colors, foregrounding, defamiliarization, slogans, catchy phrases, jingles and organization of all these in a certain way in order to communicate effectively. Jonathan Bignell comments on visual signs:

> Although language is the most striking form of human sign production, the whole of our social world is pervaded by a message which contains visual as well as linguistic signs, or which are exclusively visual. Gestures, dress codes, traffic signs, advertising images, newspapers, and television programs and so on are all kinds of media which use visual signs.

(Bignell:1997:iv)

Thus, every linguistic and non-linguistic item in an ad is contributory to the message.

Among the linguistic signs, the linguistic deviance at phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic levels, parallelism, repetitions, nonce formation, neologism, tropes and schemes, abbreviations, short forms, initialism, alphabetism, emoticons, figures of speech such as metaphor and metonymy, pun etc are employed to save time, space, and for effective communication. In the non-linguistic signs, images, photographs, colors, logo, etc are intentionally employed to achieve the target or goal in the consumer advertisements. Morris relates semiotics to semantics and
pragmatics which are closely integrated. Lacan’s concept of the ‘chain of signifiers’ gave way to the meanings in context. Barthes gives prominence to ‘connotative’ and ‘mythical’ level of meaning and Hjelmslev proposes ‘Connotative Semiotics’.

Semantics is one of the levels of linguistic analysis which is concerned with meaning. A ‘sign’ gets life when it is given a meaning or meanings. The process of association between a ‘sign’ and its meaning takes place in society and not in isolation. Thus, semiotics and semantics are ‘integral’ and ‘implied’. A single ‘sign’ may have ‘denotative’ and ‘connotative’ meanings. Thus, semiotics and semantics are interdependent.

3.4.2 Semiotics and pragmatics

Semiotics is the study of signs, the doctrine of signs; the signs include all types which stand for something. Pragmatics is the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker/writer and interpreted by a listener/reader. It is the study of utterance meaning; the study of speaker meaning, the study of contextual meaning, and the study of what is communicated rather than what is said. Semantics and pragmatics try to determine meanings. Pragmatics is a part of semantics. In other words, semantics is a broader concept which also includes pragmatics.

Linguistics is the sub discipline of semiotics. Semiotics incorporates linguistics, i.e. the study of linguistic signs or simply language while semiotics studies ‘signs’, linguistic and non-linguistic signs as both of them are complementary in conveying message. Linguistic signs, either verbal or non-verbal, occupy the major part of human communication but still the kinesics or body posture, body language, gestures, facial expressions, eye gaze, dress etc. contribute to the message. Semiotics is not only a textual approach studying signs as an object but also considers their meanings which are determined in society and their contexts in which they are used or
employed. Thus, Semiotics incorporates both the approaches of semantics and pragmatics. Pragmatics is the study of utterances against a background and in context. Therefore, pragmatics is the study of context which determines the meanings. The speech – act theory, locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, cooperative and politeness principles are the major domains of pragmatics rather than the structure of signs. Thus pragmatics is not a structural approach but a functional one. Meaning is not independent of but dependent on context.

3.4.3 Semiotics and literature

Semiotics studies all types of the signs: verbal, non-verbal signs and their organizations in a text. The relationship of the signifiers and the signifieds are studied from communicative point of view. The meanings are studied at denotative and connotative levels. Literature, though in any form either verse, or prose, or drama or fiction the essence of it is language. Any language is formed of the linguistic signs. They are further divided into signifiers and signifieds. They convey messages and entertain, and offer pleasure to the audience or readers. Semiotics studies literature as a sign system objectively. Language is the medium of the literary massage. Semiotics also focuses on the observation and violation of the sign system i.e. linguistic sign system. In poetry, the poetic deviations at various levels are found. Phonological, Syntactic, Semantic, Morphological, dialectical, and parallelism are found and the violation of the linguistic or structural conventions, which Leech calls ‘deviations’. The deviations are intended or intentionally violated for the purpose of effective communication of the literary message. The liberty to ‘deautomatise’ or violate the linguistic norms is called ‘poetic license’. It means that not only the structural arrangement of signs employed in a poem but their violations are accepted because of the intentions. The purpose of ‘foregrounding’ is to highlight the message against the
background. The controversy between linguistic analysis and literary criticism remains invalid here. But both of them go hand in hand to appreciate, analyze and interpret literature. Robert Scholes emphasizes the need of interpretation of literature through semiotic perspectives in his book *Semiotics and Interpretation* (1982).

As the study of codes and media, semiotics must take an interest in ideology, in socioeconomic structures, in psychoanalysis, in poetics, and in the theory of discourse. Historically, its development has been powerfully influenced by French structuralism and poststructuralism: that is, by the structural anthropology of Claude Levi-Strauss, by the neo-Marxism of Louis Althusser, by the “archeology” of Michel Foucault, by the neo-Freudianism of Jacques Lacan, and by the grammatology of Jacques Derrida. (Preface: x-xi)

Thus, literature is needed to be studied in various contexts so that the shades of meanings can be revealed properly.

### 3.4.4 Semiotics and communication

‘Signs’ are the basic notion of human and animal communication. Human communication is mainly determined by verbal or linguistic signs, along with the non-verbal elements such as, gestures, facial expressions, and body movements. Human language is distinct from animal communication because it is distinctive at the levels of –duality of patterning, creativity, interchangeability, cultural transmission, displacement, specialization, arbitrativeness, redundancy, discreteness and reflexiveness (*Introduction to Linguistics* Bl 1 PGCTE, CIEFL, 1995). John Lyon cites the definition of Sapir from his book *Language* (1921):
Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols. (Lyon: 3)

Language is a system or what Saussure calls ’langue’ and its actual use of utterance ‘parole’. Language is a system of ‘signs’ at the level of ‘language’ and their organization in the form of a message is a ‘parole’. In literature, literariness, aesthetic values, themes and setting are carried out in language and thus through ‘signs’ communication takes place. Now, it is conventional to consider drama, poetry, fiction as major forms and short story, songs, folk literature, essay, and one-act play as minor forms. The ‘message’ in literature, may be the smallest one like an ‘epigraph’, ‘epitaph’ or ‘haiku’ as conveyed and communicated to the reader or audience. The ‘message’ conveyed is literal or denotative on one hand but it has ‘associative values’ of meanings in contexts. A literal meaning is not expected here to be conveyed but the connotative meanings. The reader draws meaning out of the text. Barthes argues:

We know now that text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning (the ‘message’ of the Author-god) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. (1977:146)

Therefore, a ‘text’ i.e. literary text, as the New Critics consider it is ‘autotelic’ in nature, and its meaning lies in ‘paradox’, ‘irony’, ‘intension and extension’. I.A. Richards argues that the four types of meanings, sense, feeling, intention and tone are the sources of meaning. In communication, in any form, though it may be literary form, all the six aspects of communication of Jakobson’s model perceive meaning and thus the functions of language or linguistic signs function.
The structuralists consider an artifact/piece of literature as structured and denoting arbitrariness of the ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’. In oral speech, the sound image is ‘signifier’ and the literal meaning is ‘signified’. The strength of any literature/artifact is that it does not convey meaning straightaway but indirect, by through suggestive and associative meaning. Barthes’ ‘denotative’ and ‘connotative meanings’ are relevant here. His firstness of meaning is the ‘arbitrariness’ but at the second and third level, the signified becomes a ‘signifier’ and thus, paves the way for possible meanings. Here Barthes extends the notion of structuralism towards post-structuralism, which breaks the shackles of ‘arbitrariness’ and makes room for uncertainty of meanings.

The deconstructionists, Derrida, Paul de Man, Hillis Miller and others have provided a new way to look at ‘signs’ and their meanings. Barthes in his critical essay, *The Death of the Author* (1968) states the concept of ‘text’ and the role of the reader rather than the author:

…a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination.

(1977:148)

Barthes asserting the value of the reader remarks, “… it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author”. (1977:148) Derrida employs the terms like ‘differance’ and ‘difference’, ‘trace’, and ‘aporia’ and prefers ‘logocentrism’ rather to ‘phonocentrism’. His major argument
is that there is no central and peripheral elements which occupy the centre in course of
time. A meaning is not stable but is being deferred. Thus, he proposes the
postponement of meaning. Only ‘trace’ remains. Like Lacan, he proposes in the same
manner that there is a chain of signifiers and signified but it is not permanent.
Poststructuralist approach deals with the uncertainty or multiplicity of meaning. Thus,
communication is based on the relationship of all the six aspects of communication
and the ‘signs’ employed in the text / message either verbal or non-verbal, and yields
different shades of meanings.

3.4.4.1 ‘Sign’, ‘text’ and ‘context’

An advertisement is a text which is formed of ‘signs’ in a systematic way to
convey a message. The signs may be linguistic, non-linguistic or paralinguistic signs
that are combined in a text. A ‘text’ is a combination of signs and they are read and
perceived in relation to other signs. Jonathan Bignell calls for the signs to be studied
in contexts.

The signs in media texts are read in relation to other signs and other
texts in social contexts. (1997:3)
The message is embedded in the signs. Thus, signs are ingredients of a text. The texts
are classified as ‘genotext’ and ‘phonotext’ by Julia Kristeva, and ‘lisible’ and
‘scriptible’ by Roland Barthes. This classification extends the text to its context. A
text requires to be studied in context. The term ‘context’ refers to “the situation,
background, linguistic and non-linguistic environment in which the text is produced
and perceived. The context may be historical, political, social, critical, and cultural”
(Singh: 46-47). It reveals the semiotic relationship of the addressee and the addressee,
mother tongue, speech community, age, sex, occupation, the venue, purpose, and
time. A text considered linguistically or literarity is made up of signs. Angela
Goddard suggests that the advertisements should be treated as literary texts. She observes:

Advertisements, like literary texts, are not aimed at a single private reader in the way, for example, a personal letter is. On the other hand, they are certainly not completely aimless, without a notion of audience. In the end we need to look at the way the text is constructed in order to gather clues about who is the main address target. (1998:30)

The communication in the newspaper consumer advertisements takes place through the signs embedded in the text. The signs are needed not only at the structural level but also at the contextual level.

3.4.5 Linguistics and Semiotics

Saussure asserted in his book *Course in General Linguistics* (1916) that linguistics is a part of *semiology*. *Semiotics* or *semiology* is the study of signs, scientific or objective study of signs. A sign is anything that makes or conveys meaning(s) or may be natural, artificial or any sign. He also asserts that language is an arbitrary system. There is no one to one or inheritance between the object and the sound image used for it. He argues that language is a sign system. He uses the terms *langue* for language as a system and *parole* for the actual utterance. Further, he also classifies the study of language in to two major categories, the synchronic and the diachronic. The major assertion of Saussure is that linguistics is a part of semiotics. The two major approaches, linguistic and communicative, are integrated in the ELLT class which depends on the need of the students. There are four major critical approaches to literature which can be classified as: author oriented, text oriented, context oriented and reader oriented. It is the linguistic notion that studying literature is nothing but studying language in a special context. Russian formalists showed their
interest in the ‘literariness of language’. Linguistic approach is mainly structural and
descriptive hence *textual*, while in actual society we need to have prescriptive or
communicative approach which needs to consider addressee, addressee, contact, code,
points out the interdependence of language and society. Roland Barthes has modified
the concept of sign at two levels and thus, contributed to the Saussurian concept of
'sign'. The American linguist, C. S. Peirce who is called the father of semiotics,
classified signs into iconic, indexical and symbolic. Hodge and Kress in their book
*Social Semiotics* (1988) claimed that the relationship between the signifier and the
signified is not arbitrary, but motivated. He insists that there is a relationship of
motivation between the world of the sign-user and the signifier. Signs are formed in a
certain social context / conditions/cultural environments. The process of meaning
making is creative and continuous. Thus, the making of signs is not an act of imitation
but of creativity and innovation. In linguistics, language is studied at the
phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic levels while
semiotics encompasses all these levels, paralinguistic, and non-linguistic signs. A
’sign’ conveys meaning(s) and so semiotics is related to semantics.

### 3.4.6 Semiotics: a more comprehensive approach

Semiotics is a more comprehensive approach in studying human
communication, human and artificial languages -computer language, computer
linguistics, animal communication and behavior, medical science, anthropology,
conventional systems of social institutions, human culture and so on and so forth.
Semiotics/Semiology, in relation to linguistics, human communication and culture, is
a more comprehensive approach because as Saussure stated, linguistics is a part of
semiotics and not the other way. In human communication, though verbal language is
dominant verbal/linguistic signs, non-verbal signs- i.e. body language /kinesis and proxemics and the background signs against which communication takes place, also play a vital role. A newspaper reader though he concentrates on a particular news item reads the news, surrounded by other news items.

As the basic object of linguistics is language, one is expected to possess ‘linguistic competence’ as well as ‘communicative competence’. Linguistic competence means the ability to form numberless grammatical sentences which conveying meaning. But as a social behavior, language is used in society and needs to observe social taboos, ethics, rules, religion, social institutional norms etc. in the context, of the relationship between the addressee and addressee. Therefore, it is necessary to have ‘communicative competence’. In society, one needs linguistic as well as communicative approach. Along with ‘communicative, linguistic, and literary competence’ one needs to develop ‘semiotic competence’ too. It is useful in realizing life and linguistic and non-linguistic signs medical signs, social sciences etc. Semiotic approach is needed to be the part of pedagogy.

3.5 Semiotic construct and ideology

The word ‘ideology’ means the ‘science of ideas’. It refers normally to ‘any system of norms, values, beliefs, directing the social and political attitudes and actions of a group, a social class or a society as a whole’ The Marxist notion of ideology is ‘a system of false ideas. It represents the false consciousness of a socio-economic, political dominant class i.e. the ruling class, the bourgeoisie. The false consciousness imposes the false notions of the social, political, economic and culturally dominant class on the whole society. For example, culture creation, the feeling of being rich by using a certain product, to borrow loan but you should possess the product for instance, the SBI Car Loan Facility. It is the false consciousness. It creates the desire
of possessiveness. Ideology is an instrument to deceive. It is sometimes associated with ‘myth’ and opposed to the science of truth. Thus, ideology is a part of the superstructure contrasting the base, i.e. the material basis of a society. Bakhtin defines the term ‘ideology’ as:

Everything ideological […] is a sign; without signs, there is no ideology

[…] The domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs. […]

Whatever is a sign is present, ideology is present, too. Everything ideological possesses semiotic value. (Bakhtin:1930)

Barthes’s analysis of the second level is connotative and thus becomes mythical or ideological at the third level. The ideological notions in the texts are controlled. J. Kristeva, applying the structural notion considers ‘ideologeme’ in ideology as ‘phoneme’ in linguistics. It is the intertextual function which exists in the text.

The naturalization of the dominant ideology is also a controlled or encoded process. Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist uses the term ‘hegemony’ to refer to the notion of implied consent of the dominated class for its own dominance and exploitation. Thus the class distinction exists. Stuart Hall employs the term ‘interpellation’. Thus, semiotics and ideology, culture etc are closely related and interdependent because a ‘sign’ in a text is controlled. In the consumer ads the signs in the advertising texts are controlled, persuasive, and naturalizing or homogenizing the culture through ideological notions of the dominant class. This genre is not free from the economic, cultural, social, political notions which are spread through the ads. The ads of SBI Car Loan, IFB Home Appliance, and Rooh Afza reflect the ideology of gender discrimination on the readers. In regard of ideology Marx proposes:

…The peculiarity of ideology is that it is endowed with a structure and a functioning such as to make it a non-historical reality, i.e. an omni
historical reality in the sense in which that structure and functioning are immutable, present in the same form throughout what we call history, in the sense in which the *Communist Manifesto* defines history as the history of class struggles, i.e. the history of class societies*. (1848:151-152)

Thus, Marx points out the implied nature of ideology in class struggles in the human history.

### 3.6 Andragogical and pedagogical implications of the study/Semiotics in andragogy and pedagogy

Andragogy refers to the science of teaching adults. There is a difference between the adult learner and the younger learners at the level of age, motivation, and cognitive maturity, linguistic, social and cultural consciousness. Knowles calls andragogy the ‘art and science of helping adults learn’. The adults are expected to learn in order to achieve self-development, growth, experiential learning. The term ‘andragogy’ is thought to be opposed to ‘pedagogy’. The term ‘pedagogy’ refers to the formal teaching-learning aspects, methods and approaches, which also include curricular aspects. Semiotics, the broader term which is inclusive of linguistics, is not stable at theoretical level but its application enhances human understanding of communication. It considers language as an object of study and the system of signs, iconic, indexical and symbolic, like any other systems. Semiotics does not only consider the linguistic / verbal signs but also includes the non-linguistic /non-verbal signs. The importance of the non-verbal signs, kinesics and proxemics are also valid in human communication.

Various methods and approaches are applied in language and literature learning-teaching process. The methods and approaches are based on theory. Audio-lingual, grammar-translation method, direct method, etc are the major methods in
language teaching. It is a preplanned procedure of teaching language and literature in classrooms. The various approaches to language teaching like empiristic, behaviouristic, cognitive, are more approved approaches.

The history of language learning-teaching is generally divided into the three phases: traditional, structural and cognitive. The traditional phase encompasses the period from the 5th century to the 19th century and Plato, Aristotle, Patanjali, Katyayana, Dionysius and Quintillian were the major contributors. In this traditional phase, linguistics was considered a sub discipline of logic and philosophy which did not focus on language learning. The structural phase emerged mainly in the early 20th century which considered linguistics to be a separate field or science and adopted a behaviouristic view of language learning. Saussure, Humboldt, Hjelmslev, Boas, Sapir, Bloomfield, Whorf, Harris and Jakobson are the major contributors to the language study in this phase. After 1957, with the publication of Noam Chomsky’s *Syntactic Structures*, a new phase in language learning came into existence. This approach relates language learning to psychology and considers linguistics to be a branch of cognitive psychology. Chomsky proposes that language learning ability is inbuilt in human beings, which is known as ‘innateness hypotheses’.

The traditional approach of language teaching has been replaced by the structural and psychological approaches. In the structural notion, language is a system. Bloch and Trager, in the book entitled *Outline of Linguistic Analysis* (1942) point out that, “A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates”. (1942:5) Language is a system of ‘signs’. The signs are bifurcated as ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’. Therefore, it becomes necessary to study ‘signs’ from which the text is formed and a message is conveyed. The ‘signs’ convey literal and associative meanings through the signs. The traditional and structural
approaches and methods have certain limitations. Semiotic approach overcomes these
limitations and enhances the teaching and learning process of language and literature.
In a language class, the aim is to impart linguistic skills and the learners are expected
to be linguistically competent. In practice, ‘linguistic competence’ is not enough; one
needs ‘communicative competence’. To achieve ‘literary competence’ is the aim of
literature classes. Semiotic approach is more inclusive rather than exclusive. It studies
‘signs’, verbal and non-verbal, human communication, language, literature at/on the
andragogical and pedagogical planes. Therefore, one needs to have ‘semiotic
competence’ so that one can solve the problems and can thus contribute to the
teaching –learning process of language and literature. The new forms of literature,
such as advertisements, reveal certain socio-cultural realities and make people wise
enough to decide for themselves and thus, contribute to a healthy social practice.

In andragogy and pedagogy, the various methods, approaches, materials, and
evaluation are the integral parts. During the process of teaching learning in any
subject, the methods are relative as per the requirements of teaching, effectively.
Traditional, cultural, behavioral and the cognitive approaches are the major
approaches. The direct and indirect method, grammar translation method are generally
applied in the classroom. Semiotics is also a method and approach in the English
language and literature classes. The students are expected to widen their perception
and hence need to acquire ‘semiotic competence’. The application of semiotics is not
restricted only to the ELLT classes but also to other classes to enhance understanding
and broadening the area of scope of understanding.

3.7 Cyber world and newspaper consumer ads

McLuhan, Marshall (1911-1980), the Canadian communication theorist
observes in his book Understanding Media (1964, Rpt. 2009) that media is an
extension of a human being. He argues that electronic technology has transformed the world into a ‘global village’, and that technological innovations are factors in human evolution. The implication of the term ‘global village’ means it metaphorically that the world is united by the modern means of communication through which the changes have taken place. In this era of communication technology, the advertising techniques in print and television advertising are gaining the status of conventional media because the internet has replaced the advertising techniques through banner and pop-up ads on internet. The ads from print media, particularly from newspapers suggest the websites and social networking sites for the access of the product for more details. The Tweeter, Facebook, Google +, Blogs, and YouTube etc. are some of the popular network sites. These social networking sites play a crucial role enabling the audience to post their likes and dislikes and their views. These social networking sites are helpful to communicate and build relationships which are used by those who have access to the internet and thus, consumers have access to the details of product. All these sites advertise and promote a product, an idea which is remarkable for ‘speed’, and ‘time’ reduction. They create a virtual atmosphere since they cross the boundaries of space, place and time. For instance, Tweeter is more individual and links the customer to the product/s on the website. It links the product to the customer in such a way that the customer can interact with the product and can spend some time with the details of the product. Facebook, the more popular or extended than Twitter, provides videos, photos, and longer descriptions of the products online. The video can show the products in detail. It also facilitates the followers to comment on the related product. Google + is an extended form of Twitter and Facebook. It provides search services and allows for targeted advertising methods and navigation services. YouTube is the popular social networking site, targeting the audience precisely. The ‘signs’ used in
the commercials show how the ideas reflect the product, the style and taste of the audience. The success of the media is measured on the basis of TRPs and the National Readers survey. The emphasis of the social networking sites became an inevitable part of the newspaper consumer ads. The ‘logos’ of sites are ‘iconic’ and ‘indexical’ signs and representation of the establishment of the association of the readers. The readers are becoming the users of the internet social sites and they are being persuaded to find out more details.

3.8 Semiotics and advertising

The signs which only give the physical form of representation are called iconic e.g. a map. The indexical signs are those which indicate some other thing such as ‘smoke’ which is an indication of ‘fire’. The symbolic signs are more meaningful and suggestive of more interpretations. Regarding symbolic signs, Leech asserts that:

Most advertising language comes under the broader heading of ‘loaded language’; that is, it aims to change the will, opinions, or attitudes of its audience. Advertising differs from other types of loaded language (such as political journalism and religious oratory) in having a precise material goal. Changing the mental disposition of the audience is only important in so far as it leads to the desired kind of behavior-buying a particular kind of product. And in normal competitive conditions this means buying a particular kind of product. And in normal competitive conditions this means buying brand A rather than equivalent brands B, C, or D. The goal could scarcely be more specific. (1966: 25-26)

The language of commercial print ads printed and published in newspapers is ‘loaded language’ i.e. ‘loaded’ with various linguistic and visual graphic ornaments. It has a purpose and addresses a certain target group such as children, adults, women, family,
and friends. The consumer ads bring out the essence of newspapers through the persuasive nature of advertising which contrasts with the language of news items. Thus, the consumer ads help to reduce the reliability of newspapers.

The goal of semiotics is to study, analyze and interpret the signs from the semiotic perspective. The object of the study of semiotics is ‘sign’. An advertisement text is comprised of signs and the signs have significance in society. Semiotics does not criticize the makers of ads or the signs in the advertising texts but gives objective interpretations of it at surface and underlying levels. In other words, semiotics studies any text at denotative and connotative levels. Structural semiotics is almost an established field of study but connotative semiotics is yet to be recognized as a formal field of study. The reason is the multiple possibilities of meanings and interpretations. Signs may be structural, linguistic, ideological, cultural, psychological, mythological, feminist, and stylistic and so on. Though the ads are controlled texts having signs of logo, slogan, brand name, colors, images, fonts and their sizes, in either printed or digital form, they display a lot of matter. For example, an ad displayed or printed on the Sports page, targets the readers who are young and interested in sports and at the same time belong to the affordable economic class of society while the ads printed on the front page are for the general readers. There are semiotic constructs, just like the social construction of ideas and beliefs in society.

3.8.1 Socio-cultural reflection through signs

The age-old faith in the written and printed matter is being lessened, due to the consumer ads. The masses believe that the written and printed words are truths. For instance, the holy scriptures deal with mythical stories and events which are not rationally true. In the development of the means of communication the role of newspapers is unparalleled. The consumer ads use boasting, and make tall claims
regarding the products advertised. Owing to such advertisements, the reliability is being brought into question. The space reserved for news is occupied by the consumer goods ads. Thus, the basic function of the newspapers is hampered. Instead of educating, informing and entertaining the masses, they are spreading consumerism. Benedict Anderson uses the term ‘imagined political community’ to describe the concept of nation. Regarding consumer advertisements, the users of the same consumer goods are to be termed as ‘consumer community’. It is an affluent class irrespective of national boundaries, associated with the modern means of communication, and shares the common products.

The term ‘reality’, in terms of consumer advertisements, is not one-sided. It is not inclusive in nature but it reflects the ideology of exclusion. The exploitation of women on the basis of ‘gender’ forms a reality of the exploiter from the angle of consumerism while feminists will not treat it as a matter of equality. The reality imposed through the consumer ads is a kind of virtual reality that is dreamy and creates desire among the readers and viewers. It displays the fake reality which is not true in practice and thus, it is a kind of psychological hypnotism. The consumer ads project the reality that consumerism is greater than social and moral values and thus, create ‘others’.

3.9 Conclusion

The history of the development of linguistic, literary and critical approaches resulted in structuralism in the early 20th century. Structuralism has promoted an objective viewpoint in perceiving the various fields of study. In the study of language, the different aspects are focused separately. Thus, structuralism enhances the study of language and literature. Human communication shares verbal and non-verbal language formed of signs. The notion of a text is formed of signs. The concept of
‘sign’ is bifurcated into ‘dyadic’ and ‘triadic’ models. The central notion of semiotics is ‘sign’. The concept of ‘sign’ is elaborated at bipartite and triadic divisions. Semiotics is the study of signs at every level, linguistic/verbal and non-linguistic/non-verbal. The ‘signs’ form a text, the text conveys a message, and thus, communication takes place. The ‘signs’ in a text need to be analyzed from at linguistic, connotative and ideological perspectives. The extension of structuralism is known as post-structuralism which rejects the rigidity of ‘arbitrariness’, ‘philology’, ‘diachronic nature of language’ and ‘binary opposition’ found in language and proposes that ‘signs’ in a text need to be studied not merely for ‘sign’s’ sake.

Language is a social phenomenon, which carries and spreads culture and ideology. Semiotics is the major post-structural approach which relates to the verbal and non-verbal signs in any form of communication. It relates to semantics, pragmatics, anthropology, psychology, culture, and ideology. Semiotics does not exist as a mere approach or theory but it is a program to be applied to the texts and subtexts. Hence, it becomes necessary to acquire / possess ‘semiotic competence’ which includes of ‘linguistic’, ‘literary’, ‘communicative’ and ‘grammatical competences’.