

## Discourse Analysis and Semiotic Researches: Using Michael Halliday's Sociosemiotic Theory

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**Abstract :** Discourse analysis as an interdisciplinary approach has more than 60-years-history since it was first named by Zellig Harris in 'Discourse Analysis' on Language in 1952. Ferdinand de Saussure differentiated the 'parole' from the 'langue' that established the principle of focusing on language but not speech. So the rising of discourse analysis can be seen as a discursive turn for the entire language research that closely related to the theory of Speech act. Critical discourse analysis becomes the mainstream of contemporary language research through drawing upon M. A. K. Halliday's socio-semiotic theory and Foucault, Barthes, Bourdieu's views on the sign, discourse, and ideology. So in contrast to general semiotics, social semiotics mainly focuses on parole and the application of semiotic theories to some applicable fields. The article attempts to discuss this applicable sociosemiotics and show the features of it that differ from the Saussurian and Peircian semiotics in four aspects: 1) the sign system is about meaning-generation resource in the social context; 2) the sign system conforms to social and cultural changes with the form of metaphor and connotation; 3) sociosemiotics concerns about five applicable principles including the personal authority principle, non-personal authority principle, consistency principle, model demonstration principle, the expertise principle to deepen specific communication; 4) the study of symbolic functions is targeted to the characteristics of ideational, interpersonal and interactional function in social communication process. Then the paper describes six features which characterize this sociosemiotics as applicable semiotics: social, systematic, usable interdisciplinary, dynamic, and multi-modal characteristics. Thirdly, the paper explores the multi-modal choices of sociosemiotics in the respects of genre, discourse, and style. Finally, the paper discusses the relationship between theory and practice in social semiotics and proposes a relatively comprehensive theoretical framework for social semiotics as applicable semiotics.

**Keywords :** discourse analysis, sociosemiotics, pragmatics, ideology

**Conference Title :** ICSSCVC 2018 : International Conference on Semiotics, Social, Cultural and Visual Communication

**Conference Location :** Paris, France

**Conference Dates :** August 27-28, 2018