

CHALLENGES AND VARIETY OF COMMUNICATIVE SEMIOTICS; NONVERBAL  
COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH KYRGYZ CULTURE

ПРОБЛЕМЫ И РАЗНООБРАЗИЯ КОММУНИКАТИВНОЙ СЕМИОТИКИ;  
НЕВЕРБАЛЬНЫЕ КОММУНИКАЦИИ ЧЕРЕЗ КЫРГЫЗСКУЮ КУЛЬТУРЫ

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**Аннотациясы:** Макалa суйлошуулордун турдуулугун жана алардын кыйынчылыктарын баяндайт. Семиотика илими суйлошуулорду жургузуудо алардын ар турдуу белгилерин тушундуруп максатка эртерээк жетуусуно комоктошот.

**Негизги сөздөр:** Суйлошуу системасы, теориялык илим, кабар, кыйынчылыктар, созсуз суйлошуулор, семиотика, маданият

**Аннотация:** Статья рассматривает разновидности коммуникаций и трудности их осуществления, чтобы достичь всеобщего понимания. Семиотика как отдельная отрасль науки о коммуникации и знаковых системах дает множество возможностей взаимопонимания при межкультурной коммуникации.

**Ключевые слова:** система коммуникации, теория, сообщение, трудность, невербальная коммуникация, семиотика, культура.

**Abstract:** The article deals with the variety of communication system as encoding and decoding of messages. Semiotics is the science of communication and sign systems, in short, of the ways people understand phenomena and organize them mentally, and of the ways in which they devise means for transmitting that understanding and for sharing it with others.

**Keywords:** Communication system, theory, message, challenge, nonverbal communication, semiotics, culture.

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The notion of communication, as well as the discussion of the notion, has been present in the West from pre-Socratic times. Yet it was only in the twentieth century, with the development of a fully-fledged ‘communication theory’, communication was fundamentally conceived in terms of Sender → Message → Receiver

The message provides the basis for this action since it is encoded by the sender and decoded by the receiver. The fact that it requires coding and encoding, of course, indicates that the message is not a perfect, transparent vehicle for ‘meaning’: it *mediates* meaning as a result of being in a channel. The work of researchers in cybernetics in the late 1940s led to an ‘information theoretic’ theory of communication in which ‘meaning’ of communications was deemed irrelevant and the actions of an information source, a message, a transmitter, a signal, a receiver, a message, a destination, “noise” were the crucial factors.

However, communication is also understood outside information theory, particularly in the humanities, as involving the delivery of more or less clear messages between a sender and a receiver. In literary and poetic communication, in contrast to information theory, ‘meaning’ plus the roles of the ‘sender’ and the ‘receiver’ of a message, along with codes, are deemed very important.

A mediating position on between the ‘neutral’ and ‘meaningful’ understanding of communication has been the disciplinary field of semiotics. Originally prominent in dealing with communication involving only human signs in a manner of cultural anthropology, semiotics developed in a fashion which was to re-cast understandings of communication. In particular in the late twentieth century, Thomas A. Sebeok’s increasing attention to non-human communication as he developed ‘zoosemiotics’ marks a period of great advance in the theorising of communication in general. With

the realization that the overwhelming amount of communication in the world is nonverbal, as opposed to a relatively minuscule amount of verbal (human only) communication, Sebeok continually attempted to draw the attention of glossocentric communication theorists to the larger framework in which human verbal communication is embedded. As Sebeok demonstrates, when one starts to conceive of communication in the aggressive expressions of animals or the messages that pass between organisms as lowly as the humble cell, rather than just in, say, messages in films or novels, then the sheer number of transmissions of messages (between components in any animal's body, for example) becomes almost ineffable. This amounts to a major re-orientation for communication. Human affairs are found to represent only a small part of communication in general.

Research into sign systems began with the ancient Greeks, and in the course of Western history many writers and scholars have studied the various processes by means of which signification is produced. In the modern world the major areas which have been the object of semiotic study are literature, environmental and social structures, visual arts, ritual, myth, and gesture. Consequently, semiotics is very much an interdisciplinary science as germane to Anthropology as it is to English, to Philosophy as it is to Art History, to sport as it is to media studies.

The most courses in semiotics are intended to be the core of a program of study that will combine courses of both a theoretical and applied nature. Anthropology, Literary Studies, Philosophy and Psychology relate most obviously to the core courses; the major and minor programs that follow have been drawn up with that fact in mind.

As intuited by de Saussure in the second quote above, this is an important opportunity because it enables one to investigate human language in very general terms, distinguishing its core mechanisms from the idiosyncrasies of any specific communication system. Thus far de Saussure's intuition has had limited recognition and implementation in linguistics. In fact, the core of modern linguistics has been developed under two related assumptions, which we will here refer to collectively as the speech assumptions. The first assumption is that speech has a central place among human communication systems and that studying it can provide us with all we need to understand language. The second assumption is that speech

can be fully understood from within itself, that is, without studying it in a comparative fashion with respect to other human communication systems. The speech assumptions seem rather reasonable. Speech and the many writing systems derived from it are by far the most common communication systems used by humans; other systems are either much less common (e.g., sign language) or much less powerful (e.g., road signs). Perhaps for these reasons, the speech assumptions are so ingrained in modern linguistics that two well-known and insightful linguists, when they attempted to define the essence of human language, included the use of the vocal-auditory channel as a feature (Hockett 1960; Martinet 1984).

An important opportunity to challenge the speech assumptions arose about half a century ago, when researchers began to investigate languages which are not implemented over the vocal-auditory channel, in particular signed languages. However, the opportunity was not readily exploited. In order to persuade the linguistic community that they were indeed studying fully-fledged languages, students of sign language highlighted the similarities between spoken and signed languages rather than the differences. Thus, the study of sign language coexisted for about four decades with the speech assumptions and it was not until very recently that sign language researchers have begun to overtly challenge them. This challenge has direct implications for students of speech and feature of language. As we shall see below provides further support for this hypothesis.

According to Matsumoto and Juang, the nonverbal motions of different people indicate important channels of communication. **Nonverbal actions** should match and harmonize with the message being portrayed, otherwise confusion will occur. For instance, an individual would normally not be seen smiling and gesturing broadly when saying a sad message. The author states that nonverbal communication is very important to be aware of, especially if comparing gestures, gaze, and tone of voice amongst different cultures. As Latin American cultures embrace big speech gestures, Middle Eastern cultures are relatively more modest in public and are not expressive. Within cultures, different rules are made about staring or gazing. Women may especially avoid eye contact with men because it can be taken as a sign of sexual interest. In some cultures, gaze can be seen as a sign of respect.

In Western culture, eye contact is interpreted as attentiveness and honesty. In Hispanic, Asian, Middle Eastern, and Native American cultures, eye contact is thought to be disrespectful or rude, and lack of eye contact does not mean that a person is not paying attention. Voice is a category that changes within cultures. Depending on whether or not the cultures is expressive or non-expressive, many variants of the voice can depict different reactions. The acceptable physical distance is another major difference in the nonverbal communication between cultures. In Latin America and the Middle East the acceptable distance is much shorter than what most Europeans and Americans feel comfortable with. This is why an American or a European might wonder why the other person is invading his or her personal space by standing so close, while the other person might wonder why the American/European is standing so far from him or her.<sup>1</sup> In addition, for Latin Americans, the French, Italians, and Arabs the distance between people is much closer than the distance for Americans; in general for these close distance groups, 1 foot of distance is for lovers, 1.5–4 feet of distance is for family and friends, and 4–12 feet is for strangers.<sup>[45]</sup> In the opposite way, most Native Americans value distance to protect themselves.

***What nonverbal actions are particular to Kyrgyz nation?*** According to the above given examples most of Asian cultures actions generally particular to Kyrgyz nation too, but there are some differences even Kyrgyz is also one of the Muslim countries. The difference is in its upbringing and some customs and traditions of Kyrgyz people. Eye contact in Kyrgyz culture is also thought to be disrespectful or rude, but lack of eye contact means that a person is not paying attention or he/she is not so truthful. Kyrgyz people is one of the independent nation is in Central Asia who is more freedom in his actions and movements without being accused by its society.

***What does Nonverbal communication mean for Kyrgyz people?*** The Kyrgyzs have a variety of ways of greeting one another, and the procedures are followed in an almost ceremonial way. When two men who are friends greet each other, for example, the handshake is not overly vigorous, but it is warm and often quite elegant. Good friends can also shake hands by lightly and gently placing them, with the thumbs up, in between the other's hands. It is not unusual for men to simply touch wrists, especially

when they are working and their hands might be dirty. Women do not usually shake hands. Instead, each touches the other's shoulder, using the right hand. Moreover, as a sign of respect, a younger woman will kiss an older woman on the cheek. The Kyrgyzs are also fond of hugging. Any festive gathering is likely to include many hugs.

***Clothing*** is one of the most common forms of non-verbal communication. The study of clothing and other objects as a means of non-verbal communication is known as artifacts or objects. The types of clothing that an individual wears conveys nonverbal cues about his or her personality, background and financial status, and how others will respond to them. An individual's clothing style can demonstrate their culture, mood, level of confidence, interests, age, authority, and values/beliefs. For instance, Jewish men may wear yamakas to outwardly communicate their religious belief. Similarly, clothing can communicate what nationality a person or group is, for example, in traditional festivities, Scottish men often wear kilts to specify their culture.

Aside from communicating a person's beliefs and nationality, clothing can be used as a nonverbal cue to attract others. Men and women may shower themselves with accessories and high-end fashion in order to attract partners they are interested in. In this case, clothing is used as a form of self-expression in which people can flaunt their power, wealth, sex appeal, or creativity. A study of the clothing worn by women attending discothèques, carried out in Vienna, Austria, showed that in certain groups of women (especially women who were without their partners), motivation for sex and levels of sexual hormones were correlated with aspects of their clothing, especially the amount of skin displayed and the presence of sheer clothing.

While not traditionally thought of as “talk,” nonverbal communication has been found to contain highly precise and symbolic meanings, similar to verbal speech. However, the meanings in nonverbal communication are conveyed through the use of gesture, posture changes, and timing. Nuances across different aspects of nonverbal communication can be found in cultures all around the world. These differences can often lead to miscommunication between people of different cultures, who usually do not mean to offend. Differences can be based in preferences for mode of communication, like the Chinese, who prefer silence

over verbal communication. Differences can even be based on how cultures perceive the passage of time. Chronemics, how people handle time, can be categorized in two ways: polychronic which is when people do many activities at once and is common in Italy and Spain, or monochronic which is when people do one thing at a time which is common in America. Because nonverbal communication can vary across many axes—gestures, gaze, clothing, posture, direction, or even environmental cues like lighting—there is a lot of room for cultural differences.

Kyrgyz wearing of clothes dates back to the immemorial times where every person should wear clothes according to his or her status in the society and ages of a person mean lots in clothing.

In conclusion, we may say that semiotics is the science of communication and sign systems, in short, of the ways people understand phenomena and organize them mentally, and of the ways in which they devise means for transmitting that understanding and for sharing it with others. Although natural and

artificial languages are therefore central to semiotics, its field covers all non-verbal signalling and extends to domains whose communicative dimension is perceived only unconsciously or subliminally. Knowledge, meaning, intention and action are thus fundamental concepts in the semiotic investigation of phenomena.

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