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1. Studying language using a semiotic approach

The study of language using the semiotic approach involves the process of seeking to understand the signs that accompany the spoken word. It also involves the symbolic behavior applied in systems of communication. The semiotic approach is more concerned with the 'visual signs' but it is more encompassing as it includes interpretation of pictures, drawings etc. While still including words, body language and sounds (Hall 1997). The use of semiotic approach in the study of language has anthropological dimensions as each culture interpreted a certain sign in a unique way that differs from other cultures. The sign systems are therefore the focus of the semiotic theories; this is more concerned with the social science as some branches of this theory go beyond the usual human communication to how animals learn as their use of signals and their interpretation.

2. Use of the semiotic approach to analyze clothing

One of the elements of semiotic approach is the interpretation of signs, the dresses worn by the daughter of Ben's neighbor symbolizes the economic standings of her family. The simple attires interpret the lack of enough money in her family (Hall 1997). The long sleeved dressed mean that the girl is conservative as well as restricted, this may be the family perception. There is lack of freedom as the dressing is just modest lacking the ability to show off the shapely figure of a high school girl. The girl has a restrained personality; she brings out the picture of someone who is in a shell.

The clothing's worn by this girl interpret an external expression of the inner emotions of this girl. Therefore, the girl appears to be modest and shy, as she does not want to attract attention. On the

other hand, the neighbor with the son who wears a leather jacket to school every day may symbolize the higher economic status of the family. He enjoys a lot of freedom and severity of the male gender. He possesses enormous presence with the jacket as well as masculine strength. He comes from a liberated family, which is outgoing and proud.

3. Meaning of discursive approach

The discursive approach in language entails the process of representing knowledge of a specific statement or topic (Hall 1997). The discourse is responsible for coming up with the topic meaning of a particular statement or group of statements. Discursive approaches seek to define and come up with the objects of the knowledge that we seek. This approach also influence the way we use ideas in regulating other people's conduct as well as the way those ideas are applied. Therefore, we can say that we can construct meaning in language only in discourse, as there is no meaning without discourse. In a specific situation, we can understand the meaning of a certain behavior using the discursive approach. This approach has four insights namely; appreciation of context nature of the discourse, accepting that the realities of society are constructed in a discursive manner, understanding that it is through interaction that meanings are negotiated as opposed to the idea that meaning is always present in our talk. Finally, is the fact that discourse is a social act (Hall 1997).

4. The difference between a semiotic approach and a discursive approach to the study of language

Although the semiotic approach and the discursive approach share some elements, these two approaches are distinct. The semiotic approach deals with understanding the signs, symbols as well as the spoken word. On the other hand, the discursive approach entails the process of

producing and understanding the meanings in certain people. We interpret a certain sign or action using the discursive approach while the same action, or sign/symbol is understood using the semiotic approach. The discursive approach is more concerned with the action as opposed to mere representation. What is accomplished during the discourse is of more importance as it becomes the object to be studied as one seeks to find out how to apply the phenomena. The human interactions are usually interpreted through the discursive approach (Hall 1997).

Use of discursive approach to analyze clothing

The dresses worn by the daughter living next to Ben's home can be interpreted as a communication to the public that she does not want to change, as she is okay the way she is. The long sleeved dull dress is interpreted as a way of saying that the girl is aware of other fashions but they are not important as she has her priorities-education. The other meaning derived from the clothing worn by the girl is that she does not want to be recognized but she prefers to be ignored. On the other side the son of the other neighbor may be seen as a way of telling people of how civilized he is as to wear fashionable clothing's. Other people may interpret his clothing's as a show of prioritizing fashion over education. The dresses may also be interpreted to mean that the daughter is an innocent person who is yet to be corrupted with worldly pleasures as others may interpret the dresses as a lack of civilization (Hall 1997).

References

Hall, S., Jhally, S., & Media Education Foundation.(1997). *Representation & the media*.Northampton, MA: Media Education Foundation.