

matter. And - not autonomously, but spontaneously - it operates back on the material plane, by way of its own material-energetic basis : the brain, the organ it originated from. Emerging from neuronal interaction, it is continuously creating itself anew. Mind - or somewhat less meta-physical : personal consciousness - and the brain as well as the body containing it and the senses that are part of it are an organic unity. But mind transcends the inner world. Through the physical senses and initially stimulated by them, the mind creates its models of the outside world on the basis of sensual data. It transforms the presentation of objects into their representation, and perception through experience into knowledge. In semiotic loops of intuition, observation and understanding, and retrosemiotic confirmation, our consciousness expanding - but will never retrace its origins, and neither will it be able to fathom its phenomenal self. We are able to show neuro-functional correlations of sensory and cognitive processes, it is true, but we will not gain any insights into consciousness with this method. We are able to understand how optical and acoustic signals are turned into visual and auditive sensual data. But we do not know how the brain, in immeasurable electro-chemical interaction processes of roughly one hundred billion neurons that are connected through trillions of synapses, arrives at meaning. There is no doubt that the genesis of semiosis occurs subliminally. I will pursue some questions within this context.

THE "ZERO LEVEL" OF LANGUAGE

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In order to explain how language - and any other system of signs - works, we need a precise systematic analysis of all its levels. However, I argue for the opposite idea, based on the results of a similar semantic analysis : namely, to present a model of the most elementary possible "language" which is used as a means for basic communication. In this regard, we need to answer a few basic questions directly related to the most elementary understanding of language or "communication system of signs". I begin by clarifying the main question : what is it that any language whatsoever cannot do without?

1. Language cannot do without participants in an act of communication : the speaking I (and possibly) hearer (YOU), as well as conditions for any communication: unity of time (NOW), place (HERE) and action (DOING). These are the necessary and sufficient conditions without which we cannot talk about sign-representation in any communication expressed in the so-called deixises or shifters I, HERE and NOW, i.e. the units on the level of discourse which supply the speaker's spatio-temporal coordination in a typical given situation ("scene") in any act of utterance.
2. Language cannot do without conditions for speaking (via narration) of any mode of being : real (AM, IS), possible (CAN, WISH) and necessary (MUST). These are the necessary and sufficient conditions for any utterance-result about the existence of objects (things) in sign-representation.

They are expressed by so-called modal verbs (AM, CAN and MUST - units on the level of narration (utterance-result) which supply orientation in any possible world (or modes of being).

3. Language cannot do without conditions for saying something about something (predication) through the verbs (verba dicendi) SPEAK and SAY, cognitive verb THINK and KNOW and perceptual verbs PERCEIVE and FEEL. These are the implicit conditions (and presuppositions) for any referring sentence and subject-object predication.

4. These are three conditions containing the three I's - of the speaker, the narrator and saying something about something, which are usually not distinguished. Nor do we normally distinguish between the AM's - of the speaking and communicating I, the existence of what is narrated (direct mode) and the AM (or HAVE or zero marker) of the copula.

Thus, before talking about lexico-grammatical categories, we should distinguish lexico-grammatical levels : SHIFTERS, MODI and EPISTEMES, from all remaining lexico-semantic units. All nouns, reduced to approximately 350, can be grouped and presented in 17 thematic domains. All concrete verbs (except for the modal verbs discussed above), are semantically reducible to the verb DO. All adjunctives (adjectives and adverbs) are reducible to the archetypes GOOD and BAD. The remaining lexico-grammatical categories are closed classes of signs and are easily reducible to shifters or adjunctives.

There remains only a small group of units obtained as a result of a compression of the figurative use of sign-words such as HERO, ENEMY, ASSISTANT, TOOL and GOAL which are functionally comprised by the unit SCENE. These are the general conditions for the functional (re)presentation of the human world by means of a "PICTURE of the WORLD".