

SPECIFICITY OF STRUCTURALIST METHODOLOGY IN THE SYSTEM OF HUMANITARIAN DISCOURSE

Shermukhamedova, Nigina Arslanovna & Tyukmaeva, Aida Maratovna

Abstract

The article examines the relevance and significance of the structuralist approach in the humanities, especially in the context of modern socio-cultural changes. The author explores the principles and basic ideas of structurism, emphasizing its role in the formation of the theoretical foundations for the analysis of texts and culture. The ideas of such thinkers as Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault, who made significant contributions to the development of structuralist theory, are analyzed. Specific methods of analysis characteristic of the structuralist approach are considered, such as decoding texts, identifying structural patterns and relationships between elements within discourse. Discusses how the use of these methods reveals the underlying meaning structures and cultural codes that shape human perception and interpretation of reality. Particular attention is paid to the criticism of structuralism and its transformations in poststructuralism. The article highlights the dialogue between structuralist and poststructuralist approaches, as well as their influence on contemporary humanities thought. The authors argue that despite criticism of structuralism, its methodology remains viable and useful for the analysis of complex social and cultural phenomena, arguing the importance of structuralist methodology for understanding humanitarian discourse, emphasizing the need to integrate different approaches for a deeper understanding of the dynamics of cultural processes.

Keywords: Structuralism, Humanitarian Discourse, Cultural Codes, Philosophy of Language, Social Sciences, Communication.

Fundamental to structuralist methodology in all its variations is the concept of invariant structural codes that influence the understanding, communication and behavior of individuals, groups and societies on a subconscious level. The main attention is paid to language, speech and linguistic communication, the study of which is based on the ideas of structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure. Ferdinand de Saussure identified two aspects of the sign. First, the denotative aspect represents the literal, universal meaning of a sign, which, according to Ferdinand de Saussure, is relatively constant and understandable to all participants in communication, regardless of their cultural characteristics.¹ The second aspect of a sign - connotative - is associated with the cultural associations that it evokes in a particular individual, depending on his sociocultural context. This aspect provides a wider range of understanding of the sign compared to the denotative aspect, since it includes various sociocultural factors and individual characteristics.

The issues that Ferdinand de Saussure discusses in his work "Course of General Linguistics" cover such issues as the relationship between language and speech, the structure of language, its sign nature, as well as aspects of synchrony and diachrony, internal and external linguistics. It should be noted that many of these questions had already been raised by his predecessors and contemporaries, such as Wilhelm von Humboldt, Baudouin de Courtenay, Nikolay Krushevsky, William

¹ Ferdinand de Saussure, F. de., *Course of general linguistics*/ Moscow: F. de. Ferdinand de Saussure, 1967: 64.

Dwight Whitney and other researchers. However, Ferdinand de Saussure's important contribution was the unification of these problems within a unified theory of language, although it contains some contradictions and does not offer definitive solutions. As the main method for developing his linguistic theory, Ferdinand de Saussure used the method of antinomies, which was actively used by such linguists of the 19th century as Wilhelm von Humboldt.² An example is the work of the French linguist William Henry "Linguistic Antinomies", published in 1896.

One of the key antinomies in Ferdinand de Saussure's theory is the difference between language and speech. The question of their relationship was first raised by Wilhelm von Humboldt, and then it was studied by Alexander Afanasyevich Potebnya and Baudouin de Courtenay. Ferdinand de Saussure, considering this issue, relies on a broader concept of speech activity, which includes both language and speech. This activity is multifaceted, covering both individual and social aspects, and intersects with such sciences as physics, physiology, and psychology. It has both external (sound) and internal (psychic) components.³ Speech activity is characteristic only of humans. Language and speech act only as components of a more general phenomenon - speech activity. They are inextricably linked and depend on each other: language is needed so that speech is understandable and fulfills its function; at the same time, speech itself is important for the formation of language, since it historically precedes linguistic structures. At the same time, language and speech have a number of differences.

The first difference between language and speech is that language is a social phenomenon, while speech is individual. Language is a social aspect of speech activity that exists outside the individual, and a person is not able to create or change it. As a social product, language is acquired by the individual in an already formed form. Ferdinand de Saussure, while emphasizing the social nature of language, also focuses on its psychological aspects: language is a set of associations located in the brain and united by collective agreement. Unlike language, speech is always individual - it is "a personal act of will and understanding." Speech does not contain collective elements; its manifestations are unique and fleeting. In addition, language is the basis for the realization of speech. It potentially exists in the brain as a grammatical system and lexicon, and the realization of these capabilities occurs through speech. In contrast to the instability and singularity of speech, language is characterized by stability and durability. Thus, Ferdinand de Saussure emphasizes the need for a separate analysis of each of these aspects, distinguishing between the linguistics of language and the linguistics of speech, which is secondary.

Ferdinand de Saussure figuratively refers to the difference between language and speech as the first crossroads that a linguist encounters. The second crossroads is the antinomy of synchrony and diachrony. Synchrony characterizes a language in its current state, representing its static aspect, while diachrony covers the development of a language, the sequence of linguistic events over time and its historical, dynamic aspect. Ferdinand de Saussure argues that "everything related to the static aspect is synchronic," while "everything related to development is diachronic." This leads to the need to distinguish two independent directions - synchronic and diachronic

² Kosikov Georgy Konstantinovich, "Structure" and/or "text" (*strategies of modern semiotics*) Moscow: French semiotics: From structuralism to poststructuralism, 2000: 43.

³ Martynov Vladimir Anatolyevich, *The case of structuralism*: [Art. first]. Moscow: Vestn. Ohm. un-ta. 2020: 36.

linguistics. The first of them should explore the logical and psychological relationships between the elements of language, which constitute a single system and are perceived by the collective consciousness. While diachronic linguistics will study the relationships between elements of language in a time sequence that do not form a system. It is important to note that the idea of synchrony and diachrony was also discussed by Baudouin de Courtenay as the statics and dynamics of language.

Another important aspect contrasted with Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic theory is the antinomy between external and internal linguistics. Issues concerning these two aspects of language and the influence of external factors on its evolution were discussed by scientists such as W. von Wilhelm von Humboldt and Baudouin de Courtenay. However, Ferdinand de Saussure's contribution is that he clearly distinguished between internal and external influences on language. He emphasizes that the language system itself develops under the influence of internal factors, while external conditions determine the functioning and development of language. Ferdinand de Saussure points out that the connection of language with the history of society, nation and civilization is also an important external factor. The history of language and society are interconnected: cultural traditions are reflected in language, and language contributes to the formation of the identity of the people. External conditions such as conquest and migration influence the spread of a language and its dialects. At the same time, extralinguistic aspects do not change the internal structure of the language. Language, as a system, is subject to its own rules, which makes it the object of internal linguistics, while its relationship with society is the basis for further study of sociology and structuralism.

One of F. de Ferdinand de Saussure's key contributions to linguistics is his substantiation of the systemic nature of language. Earlier, Baudouin de Courtenay, whom Ferdinand de Saussure highly regarded, proposed the concept of language as a system where its elements are interconnected by various relationships. For Ferdinand de Saussure, the main aspect of the language system is the contrast between its components. He studied language by viewing it as a mathematical system and used the term "member" to designate its components, believing that all linguistic relations could be represented in mathematical formulations.⁴ Language as a system has two key characteristics: all its elements are in a state of equilibrium, and the system itself is closed. The formation of a language system occurs through the determination of identity and difference between its elements. Ferdinand de Saussure focuses on staticity as the main property of the linguistic structure, but does not believe that it is in a state of absolute rest.

Within the framework of a language system, two types of relationships between its components are key: syntagmatic and associative. Syntagmatic connections are formed between two or more elements present in the actual sequence and are subject to the principle of linearity. This principle implies that linguistic units are arranged in a row, where each of them interacts with its neighbors. Such combinations are called syntagms, according to Ferdinand de Saussure's terminology.

Associative relations, in turn, connect elements in the area of the virtual mnemonic series. Ferdinand de Saussure places both morphological and semantic connections between words in this category. He argues that the totality of syntagmatic and associative

⁴ Pyatigorsky Alexander Moiseevich, *Notes from the 90s on semiotics of the 60s*. Moscow: Lotman Yu.M. and the Tartu-Moscow semiotic school, 1994: 54.

relations constitutes a language and determines its functioning. Thus, language is a complex of interconnected elements, where each unit of the system is connected with others both in a spatial context (syntagmatic connections) and in a cognitive context (associative connections).

Ferdinand de Saussure and language as a system of signs: deeper than it seems Ferdinand de Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, revolutionized our understanding of language. He put forward the concept of language as a system of signs, emphasizing that it was this system, and not individual words, that was the key object of study. According to Ferdinand de Saussure, language is not just a set of sounds, but a complex structure where each element is connected with the other, forming a single whole. The most important concept in Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic concept is "sign". He is a two-way psychic entity: "meaning" (acoustic image, for example, the sound of a word "house") And "signified" (the concept that this word evokes in our minds, that is, the image of a house). Ferdinand de Saussure emphasizes that "the sign exists only in our consciousness." It is not a material object, but represents a mental connection between the signifier and the signified. "Word" is the central sign in the language system.⁵ It is with the help of words that we express our thoughts and feelings and interact with the world around us. "Semiology" - the science of signs in general, the concept of which was also proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure. Linguistics, according to the scientist, is part of semiology, its most important section, since language is "the most complex and most widespread semiological system".

Ferdinand de Saussure identifies a number of key "signs" of a linguistic sign: "Arbitrariness of the sign": the connection between the signifier and the signified is conditional and arbitrary. For example, there is no "natural" connection between the word "home" and the house itself. This connection is established in society and is passed on from generation to generation. "Social conditioning of the sign": language is not an individual, but a collective system that functions thanks to the agreement of the members of the linguistic community. We speak and understand each other because we use the same signs and follow the same rules for their use. "Motivation of the sign": Although the connection between signifier and signified is arbitrary, it is not always completely unmotivated. Many words in the language have "etymological motivation", that is, their meaning is related to their origin. For example, the word "lock" originally meant "fortress", and then moved on to designate the device that locks the door. "Antinomy of variability - immutability of a sign": language is constantly developing and changing, new words appear, old words change their meaning. But at the same time, language is stable and unchanging: we use words as established by tradition. "Why is Ferdinand de Saussure's concept so important?" It allowed us to see language in a new light - not just as a set of words, but as a complex system of signs that is created and maintained by society. Understanding language as a system of signs, rather than simply as a tool of communication, allows us to delve deeper into its study, to understand how language functions, how it develops, and how it influences our thinking. "A few important points": "Systems approach": Ferdinand de Saussure emphasized the relationship between the various elements of language. He believed that language is not a set of independent words, but a single system where each element depends on the others. «Dichotomy of language and speech»: Ferdinand de Saussure divided language into two aspects: «language» (langue) - a system of signs that exists in society, and

⁵ Avtonomova Natalia Sergeevna, *Open structure: Jakobson - Bakhtin - Lotman - Gasparov*. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2009: 51.

«speech»(parole) - a specific act of realizing language in speech. «Synchronic approach»: Ferdinand de Saussure focused on the study of language at a specific point in time, rather than on its historical development. "Learning a language is not only about mastering grammatical rules and vocabulary, it is also about immersing yourself in the world of signs and understanding how they shape our thinking and interaction with the world around us."⁶ Ferdinand de Saussure's concept is not just a theoretical construct, it has practical implications for the study of language, literature, culture and much more.

Ferdinand de Saussure and the evolution of the sign: from sound to meaning Ferdinand de Saussure, the founder of modern linguistics, in his work «General linguistics course» put forward a revolutionary concept of the sign, which laid the foundation for understanding language as a complex system, and not just a collection of words. Ferdinand de Saussure emphasized that the relationship between the signifier (the sound image of the word) and the signified (conceptual meaning) in a sign is not static, but changes dynamically in the process of the historical development of language. The key point in Ferdinand de Saussure's theory is the principle «continuity of language development».⁷ Language, like a living organism, is constantly evolving, which leads to changes in both the sound form of words (signifier) and their meaning (signified). For example, the word «be able» in Old Russian it sounded like «urine», A «cold»- How «cool». These changes reflect the natural process of transformation of the language system, determined by social, cultural and historical factors. Another important point in Ferdinand de Saussure's theory is the emphasis on «importance of differences in sign». According to Ferdinand de Saussure, language is not just a set of words, but a system of interconnected units that receive meaning only in the context of their differences from each other. It is these differences, and not the material characteristics of the word, that become decisive for its understanding. Ferdinand de Saussure gives the example «sound differences». Sound by itself does not have meaning, but the differences in sound that distinguish one word from another are key to creating meaning. A phoneme is not just a sound, but is a set of distinctive features that allow words to be distinguished. This concept of the phoneme was then developed by the Prague Linguistic Circle, and became key to understanding the sound structure of language.⁸ Ferdinand de Saussure's theory, despite its innovative nature, is not without contradictions and allows for ambiguous interpretations. According to some researchers, its main provisions can be divided into three main areas:

1. Geneva School: Charles Bally, Albert Seche, Sergei Osipovich Kartsevsky, who remained faithful students of Ferdinand de Saussure, developed his ideas about the structural organization of language and the role of differences in sign.
2. Sociological approach: Antoine Meillet, Georges Vandries, Emile Benveniste, Astrid Sommerfelt and other linguists applied Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas about language as a social system, integrating them with the principles of comparative historical linguistics. This approach has made it possible to identify the relationships between linguistic evolution and social change.
3. Structuralism: Numerous linguists, using Ferdinand de Saussure's structural principles, have developed different branches of structural linguistics. Within the

⁶ Martynov Vladimir Anatolyevich, *Casus of structuralism. Article two* // Moscow: Vestn. Ohm. un-ta, 2020: 82-93.

⁷ Lyons John, *Linguistic semantics. Introduction*. Moscow: Languages of Slavic culture, 2003: 71.

⁸ Ferdinand de Saussure F. de., *Notes on general linguistics*. Moscow: Progress, 2001: 142.

framework of this approach, various levels of the language system were analyzed - phonetics, morphology, syntax, semantics, which made it possible to study in detail the interaction of elements in the language. The importance of Ferdinand de Saussure's theory lies in its influence on the development of linguistics as a science. His concept of the sign as a systemic unit gave impetus to the development of new methods of language analysis, and the principle of continuity of language development made it possible to better understand the history of language and its dynamics. Despite debates about the precise interpretation of some of Ferdinand de Saussure's points, his theory remains fundamental to modern understanding of language and is the starting point for many new studies.

Ferdinand de Saussure's concept of the sign: from abstract structure to social process The concept of the sign, developed by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Ferdinand de Saussure, became fundamental to structural linguistics. Ferdinand de Saussure, analyzing linguistic phenomena, identified the sign system as an objectively existing entity, separate from individual subjective perceptions. Structural linguistics, based on this concept, studies precisely this abstract structure, abstracting from specific sociocultural contexts. However, Ferdinand de Saussure himself distinguished between language and speech, two key elements of sign communication. Language is a fixed, invariant structure that objectively exists independently of individual users. Speech, on the contrary, is a process of operating with these structures of language, a process that, in essence, «loosens» their invariance, making it not completely self-identical. In this difference lie the seeds of contradiction «structure-process». The abstract level of analysis of the structure of language inevitably faces the problem of studying the act of communication, which, by its nature, is procedural and social. It was this contradiction that aroused interest in the sociological component of the structuralist concept of language, as noted by the French philosopher and literary critic Roland Barthes.

Indeed, the genesis of structuralism is closely connected with the sociology of Emile Durkheim. Barthes pointed to the direct influence of the famous debate between Durkheim and Gabriel Tarde on the formation of Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas. Durkheim, exploring society, focused on collective consciousness, which does not depend on individual manifestations.⁹ This concept is reflected in Ferdinand de Saussure's understanding of language as an objectively existing structure that does not depend on individual use. It is noteworthy that Durkheim, considering language «collective representation», saw in it the most important tool for social integration and the transmission of cultural values. In his works, for example, «On the division of social labor» And «About social facts» the connection between language and society is clearly visible. According to Durkheim, language is not just a means of communication, but rather «collective instrument» for the formation of social life, for «creation of the world». Ferdinand de Saussure, in turn, also saw language as a tool that allows a person not only to express his thoughts, but also to think. He talked about «language ability» How «inner strength», which «generates» language system. In this «strength» Ferdinand de Saussure saw not just a tool, but a kind of "organism", which self-develops and self-regulates. Thus, Ferdinand de Saussure's work shows a clear influence of Durkheim's ideas. This influence is especially noticeable in the concept of language as an objectively existing structure that shapes social consciousness and determines ways of thinking.

⁹ Barth Rolan, *Introduction to the structural analysis of narrative texts*. Moscow: Foreign aesthetics and theory of literature of the 19th-20th centuries: treatises, articles, essays, 1987: 123.

However, Ferdinand de Saussure did not limit his concept to strict structural boundaries. He saw in speech not only the process of operating with linguistic structures, but also the process of creating new meanings, the process «rethinking» already existing structures.¹⁰

This highlights the importance of studying the act of communication, which cannot be separated from social and cultural contexts. It is in this connection that the full richness of Ferdinand de Saussure's concept of the sign is revealed, which not only reflects the structure of language, but also allows one to penetrate into the complex space between language and speech, between structure and process. Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas open the way to a deep analysis of language as an instrument of social life, an instrument that shapes social consciousness and determines ways of thinking.

Bibliography

- Sergeevna Avtonomova Natalia, *Open structure: Jacobson - Bakhtin - Lotman - Gasparov*. Moscow: Rosspen, 2009.
- Rolan Barth, *Introduction to the structural analysis of narrative texts*. Moscow: Foreign aesthetics and theory of literature of the 19th-20th centuries: treatises, articles, essays. 1987.
- F. de. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Notes on general linguistics*. Moscow: Progress, 2001.
- F. de. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course of general linguistics/* Moscow: F. de. Ferdinand de Saussure, 1967.
- Konstantinovich Kosikov Georgy, *“Structure” and/or “text” (strategies of modern semiotics)* Moscow: French semiotics: From structuralism to poststructuralism, 2000.
- John Lyons, *Linguistic semantics. Introduction*. Moscow: Languages of Slavic culture, 2003.
- Anatolyevich Martynov Vladimir, *Casus of structuralism. Article two* // Moscow: Vestn. Ohm. un-ta. 2020.
- Anatolyevich Martynov Vladimir, *The case of structuralism: [Art. first]*. Moscow: Vestn. Ohm. un-ta. 2020.
- Moiseevich Pyatigorsky Alexander, *Notes from the 90s on semiotics of the 60s*. Moscow: Lotman Yu.M. and the Tartu-Moscow semiotic school, 1994.

¹⁰ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Notes on general linguistics*, 112.