

*Semiotics and
the Philosophy
of Language*

UMBERTO ECO

**INDIANA
University Press**

Bloomington & Indianapolis

CONTENTS

<i>Note</i>	ix
Introduction	1
1. Signs	14
1.1. Crisis of a concept	14
1.2. The signs of an obstinacy	15
1.3. Intension and extension	18
1.4. Elusive solutions	18
1.5. The deconstruction of the linguistic sign	20
1.5.1. <i>Sign vs. figura</i>	20
1.5.2. <i>Signs vs. sentences</i>	21
1.5.3. <i>The sign as difference</i>	23
1.5.4. <i>The predominance of the signifier</i>	24
1.5.5. <i>Sign vs. text</i>	24
1.5.6. <i>The sign as identity</i>	25
1.6. Signs vs. words	26
1.7. The Stoics	29
1.8. Unification of the theories and the predominance of linguistics	33
1.9. The 'instructional' model	34
1.10. Strong codes and weak codes	36
1.11. Abduction and inferential nature of signs	39
1.12. The criterion of interpretability	43
1.13. Sign and subject	45
2. Dictionary vs. Encyclopedia	46
2.1. Porphyry strikes back	46
2.1.1. <i>Is a definition an interpretation?</i>	46
2.1.2. <i>The idea of a dictionary</i>	47
2.1.3. <i>The interpretation of the markers</i>	54

2.2.	Critique of the Porphyrian tree	57
2.2.1.	<i>Aristotle on definition</i>	57
2.2.2.	<i>The Porphyrian tree</i>	58
2.2.3.	<i>A tree which is not a tree</i>	61
2.2.4.	<i>The tree is entirely made up with differentiae</i>	64
2.2.5.	<i>Differentiae as accidents and signs</i>	67
2.3.	Encyclopedias	68
2.3.1.	<i>Some attempts: registering contexts and topics</i>	68
2.3.2.	<i>Some attempts: registering frames and scripts</i>	70
2.3.3.	<i>Some attempts: stereotypes and commonsense knowledge</i>	73
2.3.4.	<i>Clusters</i>	78
2.3.5.	<i>The encyclopedia as labyrinth</i>	80
2.3.6.	<i>The dictionary as a tool</i>	84
3.	Metaphor	87
3.1.	The metaphoric nexus	87
3.2.	Traditional definitions	89
3.3.	Aristotle: synecdoche and Porphyrian tree	91
3.4.	Aristotle: metaphors of three terms	92
3.5.	Aristotle: the proportional scheme	94
3.6.	Proportion and condensation	%
3.7.	Dictionary and encyclopedia	97
3.8.	The cognitive function	99
3.9.	The semiotic background: the system of content	103
3.9.1.	<i>The medieval encyclopedia and analogia entis</i>	103
3.9.2.	<i>Tesauro's categorical index</i>	105
3.9.3.	<i>Vico and the cultural conditions of invention</i>	107
3.10.	The limits of formalization	109
3.11.	Componential representation and the pragmatics of the text	112
3.11.1.	<i>A model by 'cases'</i>	112
3.11.2.	<i>Metonymy</i>	114
3.11.3.	<i>'Topic', 'frames', isotopies</i>	117
3.11.4.	<i>Trivial metaphors and 'open' metaphors</i>	118
3.11.5.	<i>Five rules</i>	123
3.11.6.	<i>From metaphors to symbolic interpretation</i>	124
3.12.	Conclusions	127
4.	Symbol	130
4.1.	Genus and species	134
4.2.	Expressions by <i>ratio facilis</i>	136
4.2.1.	<i>Symbols as conventional expressions</i>	136
4.2.2.	<i>Symbols as expressions conveying an indirect meaning</i>	136
4.3.	Expressions produced by <i>ratio difficilis</i>	137
4.3.1.	<i>Symbols as diagrams</i>	137
4.3.2.	<i>Symbols as tropes</i>	139
4.3.3.	<i>The Romantic symbol as an aesthetic text</i>	141
4.4.	The symbolic mode	143
4.4.1.	<i>The Hegelian symbol</i>	143
4.4.2.	<i>Archetypes and the Sacred</i>	144
4.4.3.	<i>The symbolic interpretation of the Holy Scriptures</i> ¹	147
4.4.4.	<i>The Kabalistic drift</i>	153

4.5.	Semiotics of the symbolic mode	156
4.6.	Conclusions	162
5.	Code	164
5.1.	The rise of a new category	164
5.1.1.	<i>A metaphor?</i>	164
5.1.2.	<i>Dictionaries</i>	165
5.2.	The landslide effect	166
5.3.	Codes and communication	167
5.4.	Codes as s-codes	169
5.4.1.	<i>Codes and information</i>	169
5.4.2.	<i>Phonological code</i>	169
5.4.3.	<i>Semantics-codes</i>	171
5.5.	Cryptography and natural languages	172
5.5.1.	<i>Codes, ciphers, cloaks</i>	172
5.5.2.	<i>From correlation to inference</i>	173
5.5.3.	<i>Codes and grammars</i>	175
5.6.	S-codes and signification	177
5.6.1.	<i>S-codes cannot He</i>	177
5.6.2.	<i>S-codes and institutional codes</i>	179
5.7.	The genetic code	182
5.8.	Toward a provisional conclusion	185
6.	Isotopy	189
6.1.	Discursive isotopies within sentences with paradigmatic disjunction	193
6.2.	Discursive isotopies within sentences with syntagmatic disjunction	194
6.3.	Discursive isotopies between sentences with paradigmatic disjunction	195
6.4.	Discursive isotopies between sentences with syntagmatic disjunction	195
6.5.	Narrative isotopies connected with isotopic discursive disjunctions generating mutually exclusive stories	1%
6.6.	Narrative isotopies connected with isotopic discursive disjunctions that generate complementary stories	198
6.7.	Narrative isotopies connected with discursive isotopic disjunctions that generate complementary stories in each case	199
6.8.	Extensional isotopies	200
6.9.	Provisional conclusions	201
7.	Mirrors	202
7.1.	Is the mirror image a sign?	202
7.2.	The imaginary and the symbolic	203
7.3.	Getting in through the Mirror	204
7.4.	A phenomenology of the mirror: the mirror does not invert	204
7.5.	A pragmatics of the mirror	207
7.6.	The mirror as a prosthesis and a channel	208
7.7.	Absolute icons	210
7.8.	Mirrors as rigid designators	211

7.9. On signs	213
7.10. Why mirrors do not produce signs	216
7.11. Freaks: distorting mirrors	217
7.12. Procatoptric staging	219
7.13. Rainbows and Fata Morganas	221
7.14. Catoptric theaters	221
7.15. Mirrors that 'freeze' images	222
7.16. The <i>experimentum cruets</i>	226
<i>References</i>	227
<i>Index of authors</i>	237
<i>Index of subjects</i>	239