CONFERENCE REPORTS

FROM SIGN TO TEXT IN LINGUISTICS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS, MAY 20-21, 1985. The Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Be'er Sheva, Israel

On May 20-21, 1985, over forty international scholars from nine different countries, representing various disciplines related to language, linguistics, and literature, convened at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Be'er Sheva, Israel, to discuss the theme: From Sign to Text. All of us, regardless of our specific field of specialization, our country of origin, or our chronological age, shared a basic sign-oriented view of human language. This common denominator allowed us to break the traditional disciplinary barriers reflected in the conventional labels: language, linguistics, literature and literary criticism, as well as the more contemporary "catch-all" categories of pragmatics, language for special purposes, discourse analysis, textlinguistics, etc. Indeed, we found that our shared semiotic view of human communication formed the intellectual basis for a fruitful, creative, and productive interdisciplinary exchange of ideas.

The colloquium was divided into English and French sections within which each sub-section emphasized a different aspect of human communication from the point-of-view of the creation of a textual whole - composed of, but greater than - its individual parts: i.e., the special interrelationship between signs and texts.

The English section consisted of over thirty papers divided into the following four sections:

1. SIGN: CONTEXT: TEXT IN LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS included papers dealing with: sign and text: between and beyond (William Diver); why speech seems ungrammatical (Flora Klein-Andreu); the role of form in going from sign to text and from text to understanding across languages (Elsa Lattey); space, time and point-of-view in the Modern Hebrew verb tense system (Yishai Tobin); verbal aspects and "scripts", autonomy and cognitive interaction of morphological signs (Volkmar Lehmann); Paradigmatic oppositions and syntagmatic relations: tenses and moods in ancient Greek (C.H. van Schooneveld); a study in linguistic sign theory: the suffix -K-A/-KA in modern Russian (Edna Andrews); the challenge of polysemy (Walter Hirtle); signs and their changing textual role in a growing (creole) language (Florimon van Putte); and the crucial theoretical and methodological question of whether sign-oriented linguistic analysis has a future (Robert Kirsner).

2. THE TEXT AS SIGN IN LITERATURE included papers dealing with fictional reference (Lubomir Dolezel); a sign-orien-
3. FROM SIGN TO TEXT IN SPECIFIC TEXT GENRES included analyses of the various roles of different kinds of signs in mathematical discourse (Josh Ard); signs of commitment and involvement in discourse (Tamar Katriel and Marcelo Dascal); the interaction between the sign, its addressee and addressee in legal and liturgical texts (Dennis Kurzon); the text as sign in the genre of Purim Torah (Zelda Kahan-Newman); and from text to sign in translation strategies (Mary Snell-Hornby).

4. SIGNS OF DEVIANCE IN TEXTS included analyses of normal-deviant-disturbed? considerations on a socio-psychological theory of text-planning (Ruth Wodak); on transcribing junkie voices (Charles Kaplan); argument analysis of right-extremist youth (Lona Inowlocki-Kaplan); deviance in the intonation patterns of hearing impaired Hebrew-speaking Israeli children in contrast with their normal hearing peers (Yael Frank); and the significance of ethnographic discrepancies of voice disguise in the Marshfield paper boys' mumming tradition (Simon Lichman).

The smaller French section (DU SIGNE AU TEXTE EN LINGUISTIQUE LITTERATURE ET DANS LES ARTS, consisted of twelve papers divided into two sections:

1. LE SIGNE LINGUISTIQUE included papers on the following themes: le genre des noms de villes comme signe linguistique (Susanne Geigenbaum); le signe idiomatique et la production textuelle (Gertrud Graciano); quand les textes ne font pas signes: quelques problemes du francais d'ile de France (Marie Rose Simoni-Aurembou); methodes et problemes de la lexicologie contrastive appliquee a la traduction (Reiner Arntz); and relativation et conditions d'enonciation: remarques a propos de certaines relatives "marginales" (Michel Pierrard).

2. LE TEXTE COMMUNICATIF included papers on the following themes: entre sens et non-sens dans une perspective textuelle (Enrico Arcaini); le sens propre du figure: questions sur la "texture" linguistique de l'humour (Marlena Braester); a la recherche d'une steganographie dans l'oeuvre romanesque du XVIIe siecle (Ilana Zinguer): l'image proche ou la premiere page enluminée dans les romans medievalx (Martine Dauzier); les marques de l'enonciation dans le vitrail Chartrain (Jean-Paul Dezembe).
Every paper in the colloquium, regardless of its specific theme, possessed a very basic expository line. It first presented a general or specific theoretical and/or methodological sign and text-oriented problem; analyzed the relationship between sign—context and text in human communication in general; and then proceeded to examine a specific, or aspects of a specific, text or text genre to illustrate the interrelationship between the triad of sign-context-text; thus, the considerations applicable to the notion of the text itself as a similar "system of systems" which can be analyzed through the contextual distribution of sign-like elements.

The colloquium was organized by Yishai Tobin of the Department of Foreign Literatures and Linguistics and will be published as part of the Foundations of Semiotics Series of the John Benjamins Publishing Co., Amsterdam.

Report received from

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