

Semiotics of play in view of the development of higher mental functions

Rafal Dziurla, M. A.¹

In presented paper there have been indicated the importance of play activity of the child as a semiotic operation indispensable in development of higher mental functions in the example of verbal thinking. The semiotic context, only used as a context helpful in explaining and clarifying psychological concepts, is to be seen as a possible direction of investigation whose result will hopefully lead to a reformulation of some of their premises.

Firstly, according to Vygotsky's proposal, a short analysis of play in the pre - school age were presented stressing a crucial point in the child development which is the ability to create an imaginary world thanks to the operations on meanings. Emphasising the emotional nature of play, he argued that at the root of the "pretend play" situation is the tendency to realise desires that cannot be fulfilled in real activity, thus opening the way to imagination.

Then a short discussion on the sign / meaning concept is introduced in the example of the ideas of de Saussure and Peirce indicating psychological interpretation of the above concepts. The conclusions are then met with the psychological concept of meaning proposed by Vygotsky, that in his contribution to the theory of language (1989) was discovering the fact that meaning (generalisation) develops and at each stage of development it has a different structure, determining the child's functioning in different areas of activity.

In particular, an outline of his conception of meaning / concept development is given and applied in analysis of semiotic phenomena based on play activity of the pre – school child.

In conclusion some remarks are done on the possibility of usefulness of Peirce's semiotics in perspective of Vygotsky's work and perspective of a careful study of a child play concerning the issue of concept development.

¹*Institute of Psychology. Adam Mickiewicz University. Poznan, Poland.*