Tippkeskuse metodoloogiline seminar 1: KULTUUR

29.september 2009
integrated science of communication:

„1) Study in communication of verbal messages = linguistics; 2) study in communication of any messages = semiotics (communication of verbal messages implied); 3) study in communication = social anthropology jointly with economics (communication of messages implied)“

(Jakobson 1967:666).
semiotics of culture:

“...the study of the functional correlation of different sign systems. From this point of view particular importance is attached to questions of the hierarchical structure of the languages of culture...” Theses 1973
Cultural semiotics is that subdiscipline of semiotics which has culture as its subject. According to Cassirer, it has two tasks:

a) the study of *sign systems in a culture* (in the sense of Herder or Tylor) with respect to what they contribute to the culture,

b) the study of *cultures as sign systems* with respect to the advantages and disadvantages which an individual experiences in belonging to a specific culture”. (Posner 2005: 308)
“The task of semiotics is to describe the semiosphere without which the noosphere is in-conceivable. Semiotics has to help us in orienting in history. The joint effort of all those who have been active in this science or the whole cycle of sciences must contribute to the ultimate future establishment of semiotics” (Ivanov 1998: 792).
“A further advantage of semiotic anthropology for today’s sociocultural anthropologists is that it supports more flexible and expansive approaches to defining where and how we can do our research” (Merz 2007: 345).
In archaeology semiotics offers “a common language with which we can understand the structure of contrasting interpretative approaches and communicate across these boundaries while at the same time acknowledging the validity of our different theoretical commitments” (Preucel, Bauer 2001: 93).
I have spoken of a shift as we moved to the posthegemonic power regime as hegemony from the symbolic to the real, from semiotics to intensive language, and most of all from epistemology to ontology. Here I have understood the symbolic, semiotics, representation, as basically epistemological and the real, intensive language, and the communication as basically ontological. Epistemology has to do with the understanding of the things we encounter, while ontology and the real have to do with the thing itself that is never encountered. The thing itself, and the real, is never encountered — it is a virtual, a generative force; it is metaphysical rather than physical (p.71).

“In prosaic terms, it would help if anthropological writing were simpler and more direct. Much discourse by anthropologists, especially in books and monographs, is heavy with in-house terminology and overwritten evocations – long on innuendo but short on exposition. Clear and concise statements of purpose, implication, and relevance would create more rather than less space for ethnographic illustration through examples that are creative, carefully chosen, and powerfully rendered. Structural and presentational clarity throws anthropological insights into bolder relief and fosters greater rigor as analysis is organized and orchestrated” (Knauft 2006:423).

“Both humanities and the social sciences, /.../, have been deeply affected by the emergence and diffusion of new ‘master metaphors’, as I have termed it elsewhere, i.e. metaphors not simply used to adorn or enliven sociological writing, but actually playing a central role in the shaping and controlling of sociological theory and research (Silber, 1995). I have in mind, for example, the impact of such potent literary metaphors as ‘culture as text’ and related ideas (i.e. genres, scenarios, narratives), as well as a whole range of economic (e.g. ‘capital’, ‘market’, ‘goods’), spatial (e.g. social ‘space’, ‘fields’), and artistic (e.g. ‘repertoires’) metaphors, combining or competing with older metaphors such as ‘organism’, ‘system’ or ‘code’ (Silber 2007:222).

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

PARTICIPANT-OBSERVATION

1. COMPLETE PARTICIPATION
2. PARTICIPANT AS OBSERVER
3. OBSERVER AS PARTICIPANT
4. COMPLETE OBSERVATION

SEMIOTICS OF CULTURE:
EXPLICITNESS OF RESEARCHER
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1. Participant-Observation
2. Ethnography
3. Photography
4. Ethnomethodology
5. Dramaturgical Interviewing
6. Sociometry
7. Natural Experiment
8. Case Study
9. Unobtrusive Measures
10. Content Analysis
11. Historiography
12. Secondary Analysis of Data
Cultural languages 1:

I. Language as primary modelling system

II. Secondary modelling systems:
   1. language as higher sign system (literature, poetry, scientific etc discourse)
   2. language as metalanguage or part of metalanguage (art, music, dance criticism and history)
   3. language as model (language of film)
Cultural languages 2:

I. Statics:
   1. continual (iconic-spatial) languages
   2. discrete languages

II. Dynamics:
   1. specialisation of cultural languages
   2. integration of cultural languages:
      a) self-descriptions and meta-descriptions
      b) creolisation
TEXT

TEXT AS TEXTUALITY
METACOMMUNICATION
PROTO- AND METATEXTS
COMPLEMENTARITY
MULTIMODAL AND MULTIMEDIAL TEXTS
CREOLE TEXTS

NEW PROTOTEXTS

METACOMMUNICATIVE MEMORY
MEMORY OF TEXT

TEXT AS PROCESSUALITY
INTERCOMMUNICATION
IN- AND INTERTEXTS
MENTALITY
MENTAL TEXTS (TRANSMEDIA TEXTS)
INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE MENTALITY
INTERTEXTUAL, INTERDISCURSIVE, INTERMEDIATIONAL, INTERSEMIOTIC MENTALITY
MENTAL MEMORY
MEMORY OF SIGN SYSTEMS
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“Language is the fundamental but not at all the only system of communication. /…/ When speaking of language as a communicative tool, one must remember that its primary role, interpersonal communication, which bridges space, is supplemented by a no less important function which may be characterized as intrapersonal communication. /…/ While interpersonal communication bridges space, intrapersonal communication proves to be the chief vehicle for bridging time”. R.Jakobson. Communication and society.1973.
1. MNEMONIC OR REFORMATION OF KNOWN (VERBAL TO PICTORIAL ETC)

2. DISCOVERING OR CREATION OF NEW RELATIONS IN MEMORY (ACTIVATING OF MEMORY)
“Self-modelling is a powerful means for the ‘end-regulation’ of a culture, attributing to it a systematic unity and largely defining its quality as a reservoir of information”.

Lotman 1970:420
1) self-modellings of culture that strive toward a maximal approach to real existing culture;

2) self-modellings that are distinct from the practice of culture and are counted toward the changing of that practice;

3) self-modellings that exist as an ideal self-awareness of the culture distinct from the culture as such.

Lotman 1970:420