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**SEMIOTIC ELEMENTS IN TEXT ANALYSIS:
ACTION RESEARCH IN ELT**

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ABSTRACT

Considering contextual features and cultural aspects of signs, this study aims at discussing the insights of semiotics (through the emphasis on educational semiotics) by combining both foreign language teaching and text analysis. Moreover, by creating awareness about signs within a context, it is aimed to observe whether semiotic analysis helps the enhancement of learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels when learners try to learn foreign language at learning process.

The following research questions were proposed as the basis of the study;

1. Do analyzing semiotic texts have a positive effect on the students' performance levels while comprehending and constructing meaning during foreign language learning process?
2. Is there a significant development in the language skills of the learners who were treated by using semiotic issues?

In order to find answers to the questions, with classroom practices, different kinds of texts are analyzed on the base of semiotic analysis. Therefore, learners are thought to be able to decode texts both in surface and deep structures. This may help them understand and construct meaning during language learning process. Moreover, learners are expected to be competent enough to distinguish semiotic elements by studying on cultural forms and gaining practice in intercultural communication.

The participants of this research are twenty-four fourth year students attending the ELT department at the Faculty of Education, Trakya University.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in the study. Therefore, the data gathered from pretest and posttest results and mid-term and final exams were statistically analyzed. Additionally, classroom observations and the students' reports collected in the research process were used to compare the findings of the research.

The findings of the study reveal that students, who were treated by using semiotic issues, have become more professional and more interested in analyzing contextual elements. That's to say there is a development in the students' performance levels while analyzing the texts by using semiotic elements for comprehending and constructing meaning and in their language skills.

Key Words: Semiotics, English Language Teaching, Linguistics, Culture

Başlık: Metin Çözümlemesinde Göstergebilim: Yabancı Dil Öğretiminde Eylem Odaklı bir Araştırma

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ÖZET

Bu çalışma, göstergelerin bağlamsal özellikleri ve kültürel boyutları göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, yabancı dil öğretimi ve metin çözümlemesini birleştirme yoluyla (eğitimsel dilbilime de değinerek) göstergebilimin dil öğretimindeki önemini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Buna ek olarak, bağlamsal göstergelerin farkındalığını yaratarak, öğrencilerin yabancı dili öğrenme aşamasında göstergebilim çözümlemesinin, bilişsel ve biliş ötesi düzeylerde öğrenmenin pekişmesine yardımcı olup olmadığını gözlemlemek çalışmanın bir diğer amacıdır.

Aşağıda belirtilen sorular çalışmanın temelini oluşturmaktadır:

1- Dili öğrenme sürecinde metinler anlamı kavramak ve yeni anlamlar oluşturmak için göstergesel öğelere göre çözümlendiğinde, gösterge çözümlemesi öğrenenlerin performans seviyelerini olumlu yönde etkiler mi?

2- Göstergesel öğelerle öğrenim gören öğrenenlerin dil becerilerinde anlamlı bir gelişme var mıdır?

Yukarıda belirtilen sorulara cevap bulabilmek için, farklı metin türleri, sınıf için uygulamalarda, göstergebilim çözümlemeleri ile ele alınacak ve betimlemeler yapılacaktır. Uygulama neticesinde, metinlerin yüzey ve derin yapılarında var olan metinlerin düğümünü çözebilecek okurların oluşturulması düşünülmektedir. Metnin düğümünün çözülmesi dili öğrenme aşamasında öğrenenlerin anlamı kavraması ve yeniden yapılandırmasına yardımcı olabilir. Ayrıca, böyle bir yaklaşımın, öğrenenleri

kültürel kodları anlamaya ve kültürler arası iletişimi kurmaya yönlendirmesi beklenmektedir.

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Bu çalışmada hem nicel hem de nitel araştırma metotları kullanılmıştır. Bu sebeple, elde edilen ön test, son test ve vize ve final sınavları istatistiksel olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Ayrıca, sınıf içi gözlemler ve araştırma süresince toplanan öğrenci raporları da araştırma bulgularını karşılaştırmak için kullanılmıştır.

Çalışmanın bulguları göstergesel öğelerle öğrenim gören öğrenenlerin bağlamsal öğeleri çözümlene aşamasında daha profesyonel ve daha ilgili olduklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Yani, metinlerin anlamı kavramak ve yeni anlamlar oluşturmak için göstergesel öğelere göre çözümlenmesi, öğrenenlerin performans seviyelerinde ve dil becerilerinde gelişme yaratmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Göstergibilim, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi, Dilbilim, Kültür

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CHAPTER I

THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Semiotics, the study of signs, is a type of scientific inquiry that examines virtually everything to represent the world around us and to make messages about it. Semiotics is considered as a subject, a movement, a philosophy, or science. Every item- verbal or nonverbal- is the focus of semiotics. For example, the color (and the word) red is a sign in semiotics. The semiotician refers to the meaningful location of any specific light-frequency property as context, to its meaning in specific contexts as signification, to the ways in which it generates meaning as a code-based, and to the ways in which a message is understood as interpretation (Danesi, 1994).

Semiotics is significant in language studies. Ferdinand de Saussure (1983:15) states that “a language . . . is a social institution which is in various respects, distinct from political, judicial and other institutions and emerges in different order of facts. A language is a system of signs expressing ideas, and hence comparable to writing, the deaf-and-dumb alphabet, symbolic rites, forms and politeness, military signals, and so on. It is simply the most important of such systems. . . It is therefore possible to conceive of a science which studies the role of signs as a part of social life. It would form part of a social psychology, and hence of general psychology.

Semiotic studies are widely used in cultural studies. Culture is a significant part of language learning environments. In that sense, semiotics is a significant field to be studied in language education. Since culture is constructed with the social signs

and social codes (which are included into the field of semiotics), educational settings are shaped by these cultural elements. In order to take the attention of language learner to these social codes and signs, they need to be integrated into learning environment. While instructors are teaching foreign language, they need to teach foreign culture at the same time because foreign language is realized in parallel to foreign culture. Therefore, in the learning process, both instructors and learners need to be aware of the target culture, different social codes and social signs. This idea is consistent with Eco's statement about language (cited in Piper, 1992) "language cannot be understood independently from its interplay with other cultural codes, including those which carry social understanding". As mentioned in James Mangan's (1981) doctoral thesis, which provides interesting examples to illustrate both cultural and cognitive limitations to the ability to understand pictures, cultural differences in perception is more subtle and numerous than most educators suspect.

Driscoll (cited in Sert, 2006) states that constraints would be caused by mismatches in the signs understood and used by the learner and those that exist in the learning environment, learning task, and social context for learning, or those used by the teacher. The mismatching of the signs may result in misunderstanding in learning. At that point the teacher has a vital role in order to minimize the misunderstandings. They need to have a pre-performed contrastive analysis, including comparative cultural analysis. Considering foreign language teaching departments, these problems are mostly seen and may result with constant mistakes of the learners.

Hence, in order to overcome this problem, instructors need to take their students' attention to the semiotic signs and codes of the target culture. The point is clarified by Tseng (2002:11) as "competence in language use is determined not only by the ability to use language with grammatical accuracy, but also use language appropriate to particular contexts. Thus, successful language learning requires language users to know the culture that underlies language".

In consequence, it can be said that semiotics and educational linguistics have started to attract attention of many English Language Teaching (ELT) instructors and teachers all over the world. As Spolsky (2008 :1) says “with the growing significance of language education as a result of globalization, more and more educational systems are appreciating the need to train teachers and administrators in those aspects of linguistics that are relevant to education and in the various subfields that have grown up within educational linguistics itself”. Therefore, in this study it is aimed to discuss the insights of semiotics (through the emphasis on educational semiotics) by combining both foreign language teaching and text analysis.

1.1 Problem

Signs are culture oriented. Since a culture cannot be separated from its language, the consideration of cultural signs is an important phenomenon in ELT. In ELT classes, the teachers use of the cultural signs of the foreign language which help students bridge the gap between their native culture and the target culture; hence between the native language and foreign language. When these are combined with the presented content and the target language skill to be improved, this will obviously accelerate the foreign language awareness of the student both at conscious and sub-conscious levels.

The problem of this thesis study is focused on the ambiguity of cultural and contextual signs in the texts. Signs are the arbitrary items which create ambiguity for readers while comprehending texts. The ambiguity of signs may depend on many factors such as cultural and contextual differences. Hence, signs create hindrances in the deep structure of the texts and learners cannot easily receive the message coded through the signs during foreign language learning process.

1.2. Aim

Considering contextual features and cultural aspects of signs, this study aims at discussing the insights of semiotics (through the emphasis on educational semiotics) by combining both foreign language teaching and text analysis. Moreover, by creating awareness about signs within a context, it is aimed to observe whether semiotic analysis helps the enhancement of learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels when learners try to learn foreign language.

The following research questions were proposed as the basis of the study;

- 1- Do analyzing semiotic texts have a positive effect on the students' performance levels while comprehending and constructing meaning during foreign language learning process?
- 2- Is there a significant development in language skills of the learners who were treated by using semiotic issues?

1.3. Importance

Since, culture is a compound of social signs and social codes; language teaching is directly affected from these cultural elements. When the awareness of these social codes and signs are heightened in the learning process, it would have promising results. The case is more important in second language teaching due to the fact that a foreign language is the product of a foreign culture and accordingly subject to different social codes and social signs, which the students and teachers should be aware of.

Thus, in teaching-learning processes, semiotics may enable teachers and learners of English to understand the relations among cultures, language, society and

ethnic groups, which avoids any breakdown in communication in the target language. Also, teachers can help students see cultural differences by using semiotic-type materials such as visuals showing the properties of other culture, or real-like dialogues taken from the real lives of native speakers (Şenel, 2007:120).

It can be said that, the most important role of teaching a language is to provide communication with others. While communicating, learners and instructors make use of a number of semiotic signs. Most of these signs are used unconsciously. Therefore, in this study, it is assumed that practicing semiotic analysis may provide significant contributions for students and instructors during learning/teaching processes. Further it may provide instructors different models of teaching and assist them to gain insights for analyzing contextual elements.

In the study, with classroom practices, different kinds of texts are analyzed on the base of semiotic analysis. Therefore, learners are thought to be able to decode texts both at surface and deep structure levels. This may help them understand and construct meaning during the language learning process. Moreover, learners are expected to be competent enough to distinguish semiotic elements by studying on cultural forms and gaining practice in intercultural communication.

1.4. Assumptions

In the study it is assumed that;

1. Subjects will reflect their own knowledge while responding to the tests
2. Semiotic analysis may help learners to enhance foreign language learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels

1.5. Restrictions

The research in this study is restricted to the twenty-four fourth year students attending the ELT department at the Faculty of Education, Trakya University, in the 2009-2010 academic year.

1.6. Concepts

Linguistics: Linguistics studies language. It is the scientific study of human languages, which seeks answers to the questions of “what is language?” and “how is it represented in human mind?” “The main purpose of linguistics is to reveal the universal qualities of language” (Tercanlioğlu, 2000: 51).

Semiotics: “The field, which studies the sign systems in a given society, is named as semiology by Saussure” (Başkan, 2003: 79). In semiotics, a sign may be a word, an image, a sound, mimic or a substance. Thus, semiotics adds everything that can be considered as a sign into its research field.

Educational Linguistics: Educational Linguistics is an area of study that integrates the research tools of linguistics and other related disciplines of the social sciences in order to investigate holistically the broad range of issues related to language and education (Hornberger, 2001; Spolsky, 1978:1).

English Language Teaching: It refers to teaching English as a foreign language and training teachers who are going to teach English language.

Culture: Culture is the way of life, esp. general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people at a particular time (Cambridge, 1995).

1.7. Abbreviations

ELT: English Language Teaching

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Language

Language is too complicated and mysterious to be sufficiently explained by a brief definition. For many years, it has been studied to explain its use and purpose, analyzed how it is produced and perceived from different perspectives. Brown's following definition of language, drawn from the previous studies and analyses, is beyond new perspective. Approaching the language from different perspective, this quotation and following examples of interrelated areas of language may serve as points of departure for an exploration of mysteries and the limitations of language.

According to Brown (2007: 18); "language is a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction, is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic, is qualitatively the same in every individual, and is distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently..." It can be said that all learning is highly individual and there is a natural tendency for the learner to take control over his or her own learning. In a general sense, individual learner differences and language teaching and learning may be actualized within the framework of some interrelated areas.

As Brown (2007:18) said following possible areas are some of the examples:

1. Explicit and formal accounts of the system of language on several possible level (e.g., phonological, syntactic, lexical, and semantic analysis)
2. The symbolic nature of language; the relationship between language and reality; the philosophy of language; the history of language.
3. Phonetics; phonology; writing systems; the role of gesture, distance, eye contact, and other ‘paralinguistic’ features of language.
4. Semantics; language and cognition; psycholinguistics.
5. Communication systems; speaker-hearer interaction; sentence interaction; sentence processing
6. Dialectology; sociolinguistics; language and culture; pragmatics; bilingualism and second language acquisition.
7. Human language and nonhuman communication; neurolinguistics; innate factors; genetic transmission; nature vs. nurture.
8. Language universals; first language acquisition.

2.1.1. Language Studies

Language can be analyzed in the form of individual competence as a formal system of signs and in discourse among groups of individuals as a cultural system. As a formal system and, under the influence of Noam Chomsky, general linguistics focused on language to interpret it in terms of individual competence. The language was seen as a beginning in the individual, in the physical development of the brain and in its ability to process language. However, as it is known, communicating is a created system by the individuals who interact with each other. Communication provides individuals to express their own personality. Besides, social context is the main part of this created system. Because, with the help of the cultural elements in the social context, that means signs system that individuals create and use

unconsciously, codes are designed to present individuals' personality to perceive and react to environmental cues in their actual use of language (Tonkin, 2003:1).

In addition to this, as Matilal (1990) says (cited in Fischer, 1999:172); language not only signals where people come from, what they adopt and to whom they belong; as a communication system language also defines their individual, gender or ethnic franchise; to authorize their way through societies' orders; and to signal to others what they want and how they intend to achieve it.

Language has such a long history that all known living languages combine with signs. Signs have always been part of human communication. Humans have always transmitted messages over distances using some form of sign language: with smoke, drums, conch shells, arrows, trumpets, bugles and a vast array of other means. For example; Ancient Greeks could signal to offshore ships by reflecting the sun on polished bronze shields. Romans used trumpets and standards to signal in battle. Chinese employed colour-coded rockets and fired powders. North Americans often sent one another special signals over wide valleys by use of series of smoke puffs, like a primitive Morse code. Flag codes have been used by merchantmen and navies for millennia. With the advent of railways in the nineteenth century, a system of general lantern signals meant 'release brakes', 'stop', 'back' and so on. In addition, telegraphy came to elaborate language codes that could also be used for various means of physical signaling, too: the Morse Code, for example, has been used with hand flags, sun flashes, or by night with torches, lanterns or other lights; if close at hand, Morse can also be transmitted by means of a whistle, bugle, drum and other things. Spoken language is also transmitted by prearranged gestures (Fischer, 1999). Language system and codes/signs within this complicated system has been the core of linguistics studies as a scientific approach to languages.

2.2. Linguistics

The function of linguistics and linguists is to introduce the common features of the humans' mind who belong to a language community. When it is examined closely, it is seen that these features are very complicated (Kiran, 2002:39).

Considering the historical process, it was seen that first of all practical worries came to the fore. The language studies which are known as the earliest ones go to the Ancient India and Ancient Greek. Language had two important roles according to the subject and the tendency to the study of itself. The first one was religion. It can be said that, taking care of the words of blessing and the texts related to the religion stimulated the language studies. As it is known, misreading of words of blessing and misevaluation of them couldn't be approved. In order to inherit the scriptures and religion related texts correctly from generation to the generation, it had been started to endeavor. Besides, establishing the regulations of some spelling rules and grammar concepts had been aroused and they needed to be emphasized (Aksan, 1995:16).

As Doğan Aksan (1995) states; the context of religious facts, tradition of basic grammar rules was settled in Ancient Indian language. From the 6th century B.C., the subjects in the frame of grammar, linguistics and contemporary language philosophy were brought up by the philosophers. Identifying the grammar concepts, setting up the rules were mostly performed in Aristotelian period. By then, it was studied on "languages". Port-Royal Grammar (1660) which was prepared for the students of Port-Royal School in the 17th century contributed new dimensions to the language phenomenon discussing language-logic relationship. Bacon, Leibniz, Herder, Humboldt are such philosophers that are the close ones who tend to the different perspectives of language phenomenon. Language that was analysed with more diachronic view point until the 20th century, at the beginning of the 20th century it was seen and described as "structure" by F. de Saussure. The thoughts that are the pioneered by Saussure, take the diachronic view as in a secondary position, analyse

the structure of the language in a specific time and describe the gathered findings were the fundamentals of linguistics.

It can be mentioned that, every research field performed as a resource for the following field. The interest, the analysis and the description area of linguistics was broadened in linguistics, as every scientific field. In the same period but in a different context or in different countries, same or different studies were performed. Thus, while progressing, linguistics benefitted from the results of previous contexts (Kıran, Korkut and Ağildere, 2003:12).

2.2.1. Contemporary Linguistic Studies

Linguistics has been subject to many categories. Due to the fact that, language perspective varied, naturally different methods are used to form linguistics fields. Nowadays, rhetoric, pragmatics and text linguistics are also added to the traditional categories such as phonetics, phonology, stylistics, syntax and semantics. In the frame of interaction among categories, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, scientific linguistics and applied linguistics can be mentioned (Kıran, Korkut and Ağildere, 2003:12). Besides, it should be mentioned that linguistic theory enables to describe effectively how a language works (Halliday, 2007:136). While describing the language and in its applications, different categories are included to the linguistic fields. Some of the fields were explained below in the frame of interaction among them and the language as a subject.

Considering the linguistics historically, it was seen that in the 19th century any change was needed and this change was in the way of studies. In the 19th century, linguistic studies were not on the general characteristics of the language as they focused on the language phenomenon one by one. Thus, linguistics studies were blocked. In reaction to this, the 20th century modern linguistics tried to focus on

general problems of language. Until the 20th century, the concept language was just referring to the words. However, within the 20th century many words weren't analyzed one by one, they were accepted as a mechanism, which means a specific system, a specific order with words again (Başkan, 2003:75). Structuralism is the name of an approach that can be seen in many applied fields such as, linguistics, culture research, folk stories and literary texts shortly all narratives and that generally originated from constitutive feature of 'structure' trying to explain the philosophical and social problems with this concept of constitutive structure even different meanings were attributed to (Cevizci,1999). Structuralism, which showed huge extend to the various human sciences mostly between 1950-1960 years, in addition to Saussure, Jacobs and Trubetskoy's studies particularly at anthropology, C. Levi-Straus who also benefitted from mathematics and logic fields reached to the most advance methodological level. Structuralism also impacted semiotics and constituted a starting point for many studies which were developed within different perspectives (Vardar, 2002).

The need of change in structuralism caused a paradigm shift and such fields as structural syntax and structural semantics came up. Semantics discuss the content or signified part of the sign, the relationship between signifier and signified changes in and move of the signified and varied phenomenon that language structures assert in semantically (Giraud, 1984). Meaning is not only an element that is relevant with sentences; but also it is also important for various language units and every communication circumstances with different perspectives. If the word "görüşürüz" in Turkish is tried to be analysed by its own, it is seen that it cannot be possible. Because, there are three possibilities to refer a meaning at this example: 1- this word can be said in order to threat or intimidate any person, 2- it can offer for betting or a reply for this offer, 3-it can signify such a routine word that expresses worry for politeness while leaving that it can be thought as an interpretation from English words; "see you again" (Aksan, 1994, 119). As semantics is the study of meaning, it can be said that it is a wide subject within the general study of language. An understanding of semantics is essential to the study of foreign language teaching

(how language users acquire a sense of meaning, as speakers and writers, listeners and readers) and of language change (how meanings alter over time). It is important for understanding language in social contexts, as these are likely to affect meaning, and for understanding varieties of English and effects of style. It is thus one of the most fundamental concepts in linguistics and foreign language teaching.

In second language teaching, it is important to teach speaking skill besides other skills (grammar, reading, listening, and writing.). However, it is hard to be successful at all skills. Speaking skill is more complicated and develops more problematically, because, this skill is the product of living and socialization process of target language both in society and culture together. Via the data analysis of pragmatics, new perspectives are contributed to language teaching (Demirezen, 1991). As Crystal (1997:301) defined “Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication”. In the application of pragmatics in foreign language teaching it is aimed to develop speaking skill. The most convenient way for this aim is to integrate daily speeches to the course books. Authentic materials consisting of target language culture should be placed in course books. Thus, obtaining the difference between the target language native speakers and non-native speakers, the teacher can help students (Boran, 2003:153).

Linguistic studies deal with language issues in different ways. If the core of linguistic studies is language items, the sign system, verbal or nonverbal, is studied in the field of semiotics as an independent approach. Semiotics is the system consisting of natural languages (Turkish, English, French etc.), various gestures (hand, arm, head movements), sign language, traffic signs, flags special to some job families, advertisements, fashion, architectural designs, literature, arts, music which humans create in order to communicate with in a society. These systems that are used by different reasons (sound, writing, image, move etc.) are meaningful entire structures. The units of this structure are generally called as signs. For instance; both

an element of a colour or a figure in a painting can be called as a sign and, the aim or behavior of a hero in literary text or a t-shirt, a skirt, a sweater etc. can be signs which are connected to the other units around them (Rifat:2009:12).

It is impossible to understand semiotics without learning about the sign which is the subject of semiotics. Semiotics is all sorts of objects, entity or phenomenon which refers to anything except for itself because; semiotics is such as to stand for other things (Vardar:1988). For instance, the sound image of the word “HOME” signifies to the concept of home in minds, it is not a real home. There is no place for the object in this relationship. The word “home” consists of “h”, “o”, “m”, “e” letters which don’t imply any meaning by their own. These letters have no concern with the real object home because in every language, the same object is expressed differently. (Ev, Haus, demeure, casa etc.) By creating awareness about signs within a context, semiotic analysis may help the enhancement of learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels when learners try to learn foreign language.

2.3. Historical Background of Semiotics

Historically, perhaps the first recorded use of the notion of sign is the medical use of *symptom* by the Greek physician Hippocrates, as some noticeable condition that stands for a medical problem or illness. Aristotle laid the foundation for semiotics by defining the sign as the actual *physical sign* itself, the thing or state of affairs it refers to (the *referent*), the *meaning* it evokes. Throughout history, this western notion of sign has been further elaborated upon by philosophers from St. Augustine to John Locke (who proposed the formal study of signs and named it *semiotics*). From these beginnings the ideas were picked up around the turn of the 20th century by Saussure and Peirce, independently from one another. Around that same time other thinkers such as Bakhtin and Vygotsky were elaborating theories of language and thought that have since become influential in modern (or postmodern) conceptions of semiotics (Lier, 2004:58).

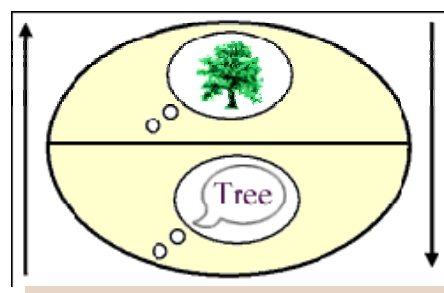
The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) and the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) are the two divergent traditions in semiotics. While for the linguist Saussure, 'semiology' was 'a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life', for the philosopher Charles Peirce 'semiotic' was the 'formal doctrine of signs' which was closely related to logic. Pierce and Saussure are widely regarded as the co-founders of what is now more generally known as semiotics. They established two major theoretical traditions (Chandler, 2004:6).

As the previous definitions indicate, “the sign” is the basic unit in semiotics. With major theoretical traditions it has been studied many years in order to find what the sign is indeed. Saussure offered a 'dyadic' or two-part model of the sign. According to him; A sign is composed of; a 'signifier' (*signifiant*) - the *form* which the sign takes; and the 'signified' (*signifié*) - the *concept* it represents. The relationship between the signifier and the signified is referred to as 'signification'. The relationship between the signifier and the signified is mutual and reciprocal which means that one cannot speak of a sign freed from its signifier or signified. They interact with each other and directly affect one another.

Figure 1: The relationship between signifier and the signified (Chandler, 2004:18)



Figure 2: The object and the concept (Chandler, 2004:19)

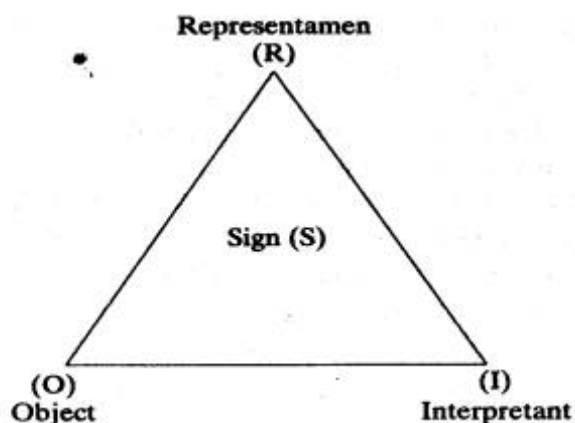


According to Saussure (1966:66), “a sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern”. So, when you think of a “tree”, the tree as an object is the signified and the sound pattern (or in written form) is the signifier which represents the tree as coded culturally to people’s minds (Figure 2). It is the case that the relationship between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary (except for onomatopoeic words) and highly culture dependent.

As Chandler (2004:36) clarifies, in contrast to Saussure's model of the sign in the form of a 'self-contained dyad', Peirce offered a triadic model:

- The **Representamen**: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material);
- An **Interpretant**: *not* an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign;
- An **Object**: to which the sign refers.

Figure 3 Peirce’s model of sign (Nadin, 1993)



Peirce's model of the sign includes an *object* or referent - which does not, of course, feature directly in Saussure's model. The *representamen* is similar in meaning to Saussure's *signifier* while the *interpretant* is similar in meaning to the *signified*.

Peirce picks up Aristotelian notion of the three part sign and turns into an elaborate theory of signs, a fully fledged semiotics. He bases his semiotics on three universal categories: *Firstness*, *Secondness*, and *Thirdness* (cited in Lier, 2004:61). Firstness is just what is, in itself, with no reference to anything else. This is often called Quality and is related to feeling, or possibility; Secondness is reaction, relation, change, experience; Thirdness is mediation, habit, interpretation, representation, communication, symbolism.

The triadic Peircean sign is fundamentally different from the Saussurian dyadic sign. While the latter is static, and gains value only in relation to other signs in the system of langue, Peirce's triadic sign is open and dynamic, always changing, and always developing into other signs, in a never ending process of *semiosis* or meaning making. It is triadic because it consists of the dynamic interaction between the *Representamen* (sign or sign vehicle; signifier in Saussure, 1983), the *Referent* or object, that which it stands for, and the *Interpretant*, the meaning or outcome of the sign (which is already another sign). Each of these three correlates can be characterized in terms of Firstness, Secondness or Thirdness, and thus the total number of possible signs according to this schema is huge, in a mathematical sense (Lier, 2004:61).

2.3.1. Contemporary Semiotics

After Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure, the work of Louis Hjelmslev (1899-1966) can be seen as following in the 'semiological' tradition of Saussure. Hjelmslev, who established the 'Copenhagen School', was in turn a major influence on the structuralism of Algirdas Greimas (1917-92), Roland Barthes (1915-80) and Christian Metz (1931-93). Greimas himself established 'the Paris school' of semiotics. As for the Peircean 'semiotic' tradition, this is represented in the writings of Charles William Morris (1891-1957) and Thomas Sebeok (1920-2001). Semiotics

began to become a major approach to cultural studies in the late 1960s, partly as a result of the work of Roland Barthes. The translation into English of his popular essays in a collection entitled *Mythologies* (cited in Chandler, 2004:6) followed in the 1970s and 1980s by many of his other writings, greatly increased scholarly awareness of this approach. Writing in 1964, Barthes declared that 'semiology aims to take in any system of signs, whatever their substance and limits; images, gestures, musical sounds, objects, and the complex associations of all of these, which form the content of ritual, convention or public entertainment: these constitute, if not *languages*, at least systems of signification'.

The Peircean and structuralist traditions are bridged by both the Russian linguist Roman Jakobson (1896-1982) and celebrated Italian writer Umberto Eco (b. 1932). Jakobson was involved in the establishment of both 'the Moscow school' (in 1915) and 'the Prague school' (in 1926) and he was also associated with 'the Copenhagen school' from 1939 – 49. He was much influenced by Peirce and in turn influenced the structuralism of the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss (1908-1990) and the psychoanalytical theorist Jacques Lacan (1901-81). Like Hjelmslev, Jakobson was thus influential in his own right within the structuralist tradition (Chandler, 2004). According to Roman Jakobson (1896-1982) (cited in Sebeok, 1985: 1) the role of semiotics in linguistics is to provide "the communication of any messages whatever" or "the exchange of any messages whatever and the system of signs which underlie them.". On the other side, in agreement with Eco (1979:7), semiotics is "the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie." He argued that if something cannot be used to lie, then it cannot be used to tell the truth; and therefore it cannot be used "to tell" at all.

Acting as another bridge between traditions, Umberto Eco in his *Theory of Semiotics* (1976) sought 'to combine the structuralist perspective of Hjelmslev with the cognitive-interpretative semiotics of Peirce' (cited in Chandler, 2004:7). Meanwhile, evolving from the structuralist tradition in the late 1960s, post-structuralism problematized many of its assumptions. Poststructuralist theorists

include the later Barthes and Lacan together with the literary Michel Foucault (1926-84) and the feminist theorist Julia Kristeva (b. 1941).

Semiotics became a major approach to cultural studies in the second half of the 20th century rather than an academic discipline. Semiotics, in a broader sense, is a science that studies signs and sign systems. However, this description changes according to the subject which semiotics deals with. Semiotics can be defined according to the method it uses. Thus, semiotics is a science which tries to apply linguistic methods to the objects, describe everything (games, jests, mimics, religious rites, literary arts, and music) with a language and explain all non-linguistics phenomenon by transferring them into language metaphor (Guiraud, 1994:17).

In the early years of the twenty-first century questions of power, identity and language have assumed to have an unprecedented importance in human life. However, it seems that struggle is about to be superseded. John Deely (cited in Cobley, 2005:13) writes that the current, 'postmodern', period coincides with a breakdown of the modern national linguistic compartmentalization, as a new global perspective begins to emerge beyond national differences of language. This emerging perspective is based not on a unity of natural language, as in the previous three epochs, but on the achievement of an epistemological paradigm capable of taking into account the very mechanisms of linguistic difference and change as part of the framework of philosophy itself. This movement, the postmodern development, seems to have been based especially on the work of the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce, with its leading premises that 'the highest grade of reality is only reached by signs'.

As Cobley (2005:78) states all human semiotic systems change, though not at a rate usually noticed by those who are constantly engaged in their 'use'. If the metaphor of 'sign-making' has any plausibility, and if the metaphors/signs constantly newly made do express the assessment of the social situation in which sign-makers find themselves, as well as their own social and cultural histories, and their affective

states in the moment of representation, then both of change (signs are constantly newly made, the resources of representation are constantly remade) and of the directions of change, at least broadly (the sign always embodies the state of the social and the cultural as assessed by the sign maker) have been accounted. And as the theory says that it is the individual, engaged in representation and communication who is the agent of that change.

Why Study Semiotics?

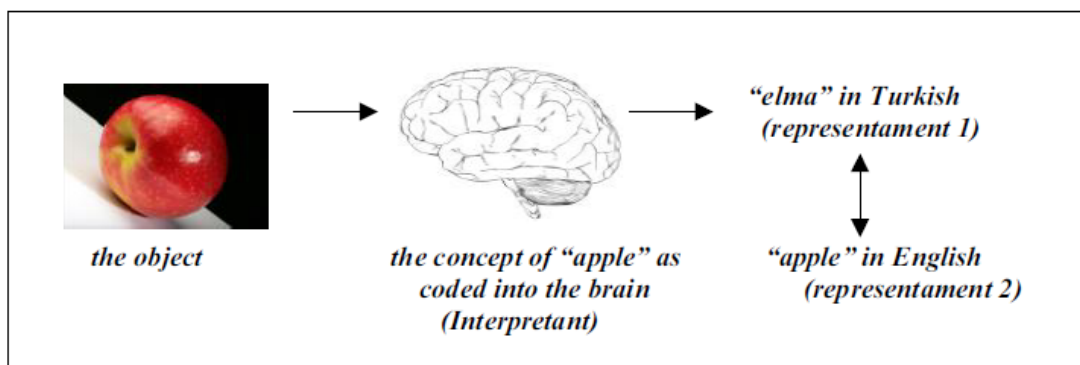
Studying semiotics can assist people to become more aware of the mediating role of signs and of the roles played by ourselves and others in constructing social realities. It can help people to realize that information or meaning is not 'contained' in the world or in books, computers or audio-visual media. Meaning is not 'transmitted' – it is actively created according to a complex interplay of codes or conventions of which people are normally unaware. Becoming aware of such codes is both inherently fascinating and intellectually empowering. It is learned from semiotics that people live in a world of signs and people have no way of understanding anything except through signs and the codes into which they are organized (Chandler, 2004:14).

Through the study of semiotics people become aware that these signs and codes are normally transparent and disguise their task in 'reading' them. Living in a world of increasingly visual signs, it is needed to learn that even the most 'realistic' signs are not what they appear to be. By making more explicit the codes by which signs are interpreted people may perform the valuable semiotic function of 'denaturalizing' signs. In defining realities signs serve ideological functions. Deconstructing and contesting the realities of signs can reveal *whose* realities are privileged and whose are suppressed (Chandler, 2004:15).

2.4. Semiotics and Language Education

Signs are culture oriented. Since a culture cannot be separated from its language, the consideration of cultural signs is an important phenomenon in ELT. The signs and codes of the native culture is the source of mother tongue interference in learning second language. While learning the first language, the signs of the native culture are coded into a person's brain with the signifiers which belong to the native culture. In the same way, while learning second language, the equivalences of these signifiers are loaded to the brain which leads to a neurological confusion. When you are thinking, speaking or writing in the second language, the production process lasts longer as you should go through the object, the interpretant, the representant and the equivalence of that representant in the target language.

Figure 4: The processing of target language item with a semiotic perspective Peirce's model of sign (Sert, 2006:108)



Sign and code systems of a specific culture are made up of the interaction between signs, structures and experiences constructed via these signs. As each culture has its own systematic signs and codes, learning the language of the target culture requires the exact coding of the sign systems of the target culture. In this sense, educational semiotics tries to find ways to improve and accelerate the process of learning a foreign language (Sert, 2006:108).

Using semiotics in education is related to the culture's role in learning. Since, culture is a compound of social signs and social codes; language teaching is directly affected from these cultural elements. When the awareness of these social codes and signs are heightened in the learning process, it would have promising results. The case is more important in second language teaching due to the fact that a foreign language is the product of a foreign culture and accordingly subject to different social codes and social signs, which the students and teachers should be aware of. As Eco said (as cited in Piper, 1992) in claiming that language cannot be understood independently from its interplay with other cultural codes, including those which carry social understanding.

2.4.1. Semiotics and Language

While semiology might have seemed to be, in some limited twentieth-century intellectual circles, the final word on the sign and, especially, the human phenomenon of language, work from two other perspectives thrived. First, linguistics in the latter part of the century was thoroughly re-invigorated by the project of Noam Chomsky and his co-workers. His positing of an innate human propensity for language – more accurately, a Universal Grammar – profoundly re-orientated linguistic study. Second, three key figures – Charles Morris, Roman Jakobson and Thomas A. Sebeok – two of whom were schooled in and contributed to modern linguistics, worked tirelessly to broaden the remit of sign study beyond the merely vocal. For all three, the sign theory of Peirce, itself a re-formulation of the ancient doctrine of semiotics, was pivotal in their attempts to investigate the breadth of communication and signification (Cobley, 2005:5).

Peirce set himself the task of constructing a method by which the life of science might enter into a true representation of all reality. From the outset, he envisaged a sign theory that would be comprehensive rather than localized. As he wrote to Lady Welby (cited in Cobley, 2005:8):

Know that from the day when at the age of twelve or thirteen I took up, in my elder brother's room a copy of Whateley's Logic, and asked him what Logic was, and getting some simple answer, flung myself on the floor and buried myself in it, it has never been in my power to study anything – mathematics, ethics, metaphysics, gravitation, thermodynamics, optics, chemistry, comparative anatomy, astronomy, psychology, phonetics, economics, the history of science, whist, men and women, wine, metrology, except as a study of semeiotic.

Semiotics, so conceived, embraces animate nature and human culture; it incorporates scientific analysis with cultural analysis; and it surveys the continuity of semioses within language as well as those outside (Cobley, 2005:9).

Thus, in teaching-learning process, semiotics enables teachers and learners of English to understand the relations among cultures, language, society and ethnic groups, which avoids any breakdown in communication in the target language. Also, teachers can help students see cultural differences by using semiotic-type materials such as visuals showing the properties of other culture, or real-like dialogues taken from the real lives of native speakers. In order to examine the Semiotic, some principles should be taken into consideration (Şenel, 2007:120):

1-Signs and languages are interrelated with each other. Signs and language are the means of communication. The best way of communication is no doubt language. Not only the language but also signs and symbols are the means of communication.

2-Language learning is sign learning in all aspects. Language is the signs, symbols, gestures, etc used for indicating ideas or feelings.

3-Language learning is a concentrated way of sign learning, signs are the building blocks of conveying messages. All signs are integrated into larger systems; they are parts of a chain.

4-Language learning is reinforced by iconic signs and signs. Letters are written or printed sign representing a sound used in speech and they are icons in arbitrary relationships.

5-In every culture, a sign represents a code of its own. Culture is composed of symbols and other signs; these provide a structure for social actors, and these symbols and signs are the tools people use to convey meaning.

6-Signs represent something meaningful. There are several kinds of signs. Icons are symbols that involve resemblance to the referent. For example, most of the traffic signs are iconic.

7-Culture is a sign system and communicates itself through signs. Signs are social actors such as kinship systems, culinary systems or food styles, literature, clothing styles. These systems are the signs of a specific culture. To put it in other words, these systems signal to culture and culture demonstrates itself through these systems. Hence, culture is communicated by means of these sign systems like language, clothing style, and food style.

2.4.2. Contributions of Semiotics to Language Teaching & Learning

Semiotics, emphasizing the importance of the sign system in language teaching includes important contributions to language teaching and learning. Semiotics deals with the communication with regard to the meaning in the context observe verbal, non-verbal and visual communication in language teaching and learning.

For language educators, it is important to keep focused on the sign-making processes in learning contexts. A learning context is constituted of physical, social and symbolic opportunities for meaning making, and the central notion that drives this meaning is *activity* instead of instructional material (facts, skills, behaviors) that is inculcated through process of presentation, practice, and production, an ecological-semiotic approach envisages an active learner who is guided and simulated to higher, more complex levels of activity. The directions in which the processes are taken by learners working together or alone cannot and should not be exactly predicted or controlled a notion that must horrify many educational-semiotic approaches, and is also evident in the experiential approach of John Dewey. Stenhouse (cited in Lier, 2004:62) puts this same idea as follows: “Education as induction into knowledge is successful to the extent that it makes the behavioral outcomes of the students unpredictable.”

Signs are not objects, but relationships of relevance between the person and the world, physical, social and symbolic. Signs are mediated affordances, thus they start out as dialogical relationships between the person and ‘something out there’ (Lier, 2004:63). The sign language, which is also a part of verbal communication, provides the teachers of English language with the effective teaching ways by using hands and arms just like in the gestural language while communicating. They can use dialogues, role-plays in their classroom activities.

Semiotics has important applications to culture, vocabulary, grammar teaching. Moreover, it enables students to develop listening, speaking, reading, writing skills, and provides teachers of English with effective classroom management in ELT. Besides, it helps learners of English store what they have learnt into their long-term memories with verbal, nonverbal and visual communication. Visual communication includes visual images, paintings, drawings, photography, comics, filmstrips, films, videos, objects, and the authentic materials which provide a successful teaching / learning process. Teachers can make good use of pictures to teach vocabulary items. Listening activities can also be employed by using drawings,

pictures, real objects, symbols, etc. Video, however, is the ideal tool for the Semiotic teaching of listening because all the visual signals are present to aid understanding.

2.4.3. Contributions of Semiotics to Culture Teaching & Learning

2.4.3.1. Culture and Language

The term culture refers to all the ideas and assumptions about the nature of things and people that they learn when they become members of social groups. It can be defined as “socially acquired knowledge”. This is the kind of knowledge that, like native language, is initially acquired without conscious awareness. The knowledge of awareness and hence culture is developed only after having developed language. The particular language that is learned through the process of cultural transmission provides, at least initially, with a ready-made system of categorizing the world and experience of it (Yule, 2006:216).

It is commonly accepted that language is a part of culture, and that it plays a very important role in it. Some social scientists consider that without language, culture would not be possible. Language simultaneously reflects culture, and is influenced and shaped by it. In the broadest sense, it is also the symbolic representation of people, since it comprises their historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as their approach to life and their ways of living and thinking. Brown (1994:165) describes the two as follows: 'A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.' In a word, culture and language are inseparable.

Traditions of secondary education have usually taken for granted that language and culture teaching must be clearly linked. A frequent metaphor of

language as the 'key' to a culture embodies this link and at the same time reveals an implicit separation. The language shall 'unlock the door' to the culture (Buttjes, Byram, 1991:17).

The people's utterances refer to common experience. They expect facts, ideas or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share. Words also reflect their authors' attitudes and beliefs, their point of view and also of others. In both cases, language expresses cultural reality. But members of a community or social group do not only express experience; they also create experience through language. They give meaning to it through the medium they choose to communicate with one another, for example, by speaking on the telephone or face to face, writing a letter or sending an e-mail message, reading the newspaper or interpreting a graph or a chart. The way in which people use the spoken, written, or visual medium itself creates meanings that are understandable to the group they belong to, for example, through a speaker's tone of voice, accent conversational style, gestures and facial expressions. Through all its verbal and non-verbal aspects, language embodies cultural reality (Kramsch, 2009:65).

Moreover, language is not simply a reflector of an objective cultural reality. It is an integral part of that reality through which other parts are shaped and interpreted. It is both a symbol of the whole and a part of the whole which shapes and is in turn shaped by sociocultural actions, beliefs and values. In engaging in language, speakers are enacting sociocultural phenomena; in acquiring language, children acquire culture (Buttjes, Byram, 1991:18).

As it is stated before, language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value. Speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language; they view their language as a symbol of their social identity. The prohibition of its use is often perceived by its speakers as a rejection of their social

group and their culture. Thus it can be said that language symbolizes cultural reality (Kramsch, 2009:3).

2.4.3.2. Teaching Language Awareness and Cultural Awareness

Donmall (1985) and Hawkins (1987) (cited in Buttjes, Byram, 1991:22) have stressed both the need to educate children in one of the fundamental characteristics of being human and, secondly, the benefits in language learning of having a general understanding of the nature of language and positive realistic attitudes towards language learning. Culture teaching provides arousing curiosity in students' linguistic environment, being aware of their own linguistic competence.

For example, in language learning pupils acquire the skills and some linguistic formulae to greet and take leave. These may be practiced in role-play, and be acquired through experiential learning. The language awareness component would draw conscious attention to the similarities with and differences from the learners' first language perhaps focusing on different degrees of formality and the appropriate linguistic formulae (Buttjes, Byram, 1991:22).

Cultural awareness teaching thus shares with language awareness a dual purpose of supporting language learning and extending general of the nature of culture. Both are concerned with specific and general learning. Both are concerned with the relationship between language and culture. The cultural awareness component is also concerned with non-linguistic dimensions of culture and more focused on the question of change from monocultural to intercultural competence (Buttjes, Byram, 1991:23).

Cultural awareness develops and parallel with awareness of the sociolinguistic dimension of language study by comparative analysis of, for instance, the semantic fields of the two languages, and their relationship to cultural meanings. Cultural awareness is also mutually supportive with the direct experience in the

foreign language of selected cultural phenomena by allowing for L1 medium analysis of that experience and of the relationship between language and cultural meanings of the experience. Language Awareness may also have beneficial effects on the acquisition of linguistic skills by allowing learners to reflect on their learning, but in turn will be supported by the experience of learning if the language learned is made the focus of comparative analysis. Finally the relationship between Language Learning and Cultural Experience is mutually supportive in that Language Learning may well be largely rehearsal oriented, with some communicative teaching techniques shifting the learner towards performance, for example by information gap exercises. This shift can be made more realistic by using the language as a medium and for experiencing and talking about cultural phenomena presented from the viewpoint of native speaker peers and adults (Buttjes, Byram, 1991:20).

Teaching language awareness and culture awareness have a humanizing and a motivating effect on the language learner and the learning process. They help learners observe similarities and differences among various cultural groups. Today, most of L2 students around the world live in a monolingual and monocultural environment. Consequently, they become culture-bound individuals who tend to make premature and inappropriate value judgments about their as well as others' cultural characteristics. This can lead them to consider others whose language they may be trying to learn as very peculiar and even ill-mannered, which, in turn, plays a demotivating role in their language learning process.

The use of the learners' mother tongue for comparative analysis of own and foreign cultural meanings can be combined with the teaching of the foreign language both as a subject as the medium of experience of foreign cultural phenomena. This would involve, first, language learning in the current sense of skill-acquisition, enriched by the study of the nature of language as a social and cultural phenomenon (Language Awareness). Second, the study of language would in turn be combined with a study of culture, both of these carried out with comparative techniques using the learners' mother tongue (Cultural Awareness). Thirdly, the direct experience of

selected aspects of the foreign culture from the viewpoint and within the ethnic identity of the foreign peer group would be in the foreign language, and this would in turn contribute to the language learning process (Buttjes, Byram, 1991:19).

2.4.3.3. Why culture teaching should be involved in language teaching?

According to Bada (2000: 101), “the need for cultural literacy in ELT arises mainly from the fact that most language learners, not exposed to cultural elements of the society in question, seem to encounter significant hardship in communicating meaning to native speakers.” In addition, nowadays L2 culture is presented as an interdisciplinary core in many L2 curricula designs and textbooks (Sysoyev & Donelson, 2002). Bearing all these in mind, culture has gained a crucial role in language teaching so far; that is scholars and teachers have started to discuss the importance and the affectivity of incorporating cultural information into their teaching.

According to Stainer (1971) studying culture gives learners a reason to study the target language as well as rendering the study of L2 meaningful. Since, learners like to learn about target culture in order to make sense of target language. As Chastain (1971) stated from the perspective of learners, one of the major problems in language teaching is to conceive of the native speakers of target language as real person. Although grammar books gives so called genuine examples from real life, without background knowledge those real situations may be considered fictive by the learners. In addition providing access into cultural aspect of language, learning culture would help learners relate the abstract sounds and forms of a language to real people and places.

The affect of motivation in the study of L2 has been proved by experts like Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1965, and 1972). In achieving high motivation, culture

classes does have a great role because learners like culturally based activities such as singing, dancing, role playing, doing research on countries and peoples, etc. The study of culture increases learners' not only curiosity about and interest in target countries but also their motivation (Gardner and Lambert 1959, 1965 and 1972).

2.4.4. The Key Concepts and Terms of Semiotics

Terminology is going to be given in five main parts; the level of signifier, the level of signified, signification process, types of signs and semiotics codes:

At The Level of Signifier

At the level of signifier; the distinction between literal and figurative language and the roles of rhetorical tropes are important. As Terence Hawkes tells us (cited in Chandler, 2004:124) that '*figurative language* is language which doesn't mean what it says' - in contrast to *literal language* which is at least intended to be, or taken as, purely denotative. Rhetorical tropes are useful to improve the effectiveness, clarity, and enjoyment of writing. Tropes can be seen as offering us a variety of ways of saying '*this* is (or is *like*) *that*'. Tropes may be essential to understanding if people interpret this as a process of rendering the unfamiliar more familiar.

a) Metaphor

According to Richards said (cited in Chandler, 2004); in semiotic terms, a metaphor involves one signified acting as a signifier referring to a different signified. In literary terms, a metaphor consists of a 'literal' primary subject (or 'tenor') expressed in terms of a 'figurative' secondary subject (or 'vehicle').

For instance: '*Experience* is a good *school*, but the fees are high' (Heinrich Heine). In this case, the primary subject of *experience* is expressed in terms of the secondary subject of *school* (Chandler, 2004:127).

b) Metonymy

Metonymy is a function which involves using one signified to stand for another signified which is *directly related* to it or *closely associated* with it in some way. Metonyms are based on various *indexical* relationships between signifieds, notably the substitution of *effect* for *cause* (Chandler, 2004:130).

As Lakoff & Johnson said (cited in Chandler,2004:131) ; When people think of a *Picasso*, people are not just thinking of a work of art alone, in and of itself. People think of it in terms of its relation to the artist, this is, his conception of art, his technique, his role in art history, etc. People act with reverence towards a *Picasso*, even a sketch he made as a teenager, because of its relation to the artist.....

c) Synecdoche

The rhetorician Richard Lanham (cited in Chandler, 2004:132) describes synecdoche as 'the substitution of part for whole, genus for species or vice versa'. Thus one term is more comprehensive than the other. Here are some examples:

- *part for whole* ('I'm off to the smoke [London]'; 'people need to hire some more hands [workers]'; 'two heads are better than one'; 'I've got a new set of wheels', the American expression 'get your butt over here!');
- *whole for part* (e.g. 'I was stopped by the law' - where the law stands for a police officer, 'Wales' for 'the Welsh national rugby team' or 'the market' for customers);

- *species* for *genus* (*hypernymy*) - the use of a *member of a class* (*hyponym*) for the *class* (*superordinate*) which includes it (e.g. *a mother* for *motherhood*, 'bread' for 'food', 'Hoover' for 'vacuum-cleaner');
- *genus* for *species* (*hyponymy*) - the use of a *superordinate* for a *hyponym* (e.g. 'vehicle' for 'car', or 'machine' for 'computer').

d) Irony

Irony is the most radical of the four main tropes. As with metaphor, the signifier of the ironic sign seems to signify one thing but people know from another signifier that it actually signifies something very different. Where it means the *opposite* of what it says (as it usually does) it is based on binary opposition. Irony may thus reflect the opposite of the thoughts or feelings of the speaker or writer (as when you say 'I love it' when you hate it) or the opposite of the truth about external reality (as in 'There's a crowd here' when it's deserted) (Chandler, 2004:134).

At The Level of Signified

Denotation and connotation operates at the level of signified. In semiotics, denotation and connotation are terms describing the relationship between the signifier and it's signified, and an analytic distinction is made between two types of signifieds: a *denotative* signified and a *connotative* signified. Meaning includes both denotation and connotation (Chandler, 2004:140).

a) Denotation and Connotation

'**Denotation**' tends to be described as the definitional, 'literal', 'obvious' or 'commonsense' meaning of a sign. The term '**connotation**' is used to refer to the socio-cultural and 'personal' associations (ideological, emotional etc.) of the sign. These are typically related to the interpreter's class, age, gender, and ethnicity and so on. Signs are more 'polysemic' - more open to interpretation - in their connotations than their denotations (Chandler, 2004:140).

Connotation and denotation are often described in terms of *levels of representation* or *levels of meaning*. Roland Barthes adopted from Louis Hjelmslev the notion that there are different *orders of signification*. The *first order of signification* is that of denotation: at this level there is a sign consisting of a signifier and a signified. Connotation is a *second-order of signification* which uses the denotative sign (signifier and signified) as its signifier and attaches to it an additional signified. In this framework connotation is a sign which derives from the signifier of a denotative sign (so denotation leads to a chain of connotations). This tends to suggest that denotation is an underlying and primary meaning - a notion which many other commentators have challenged (Chandler, 2004:142).

b) Myth

Myths can be seen as extended metaphors. As Lakoff and Johnson said (cited in Chandler, 2002:144); like metaphors, myths help to make sense of experiences within a culture. They express and serve to organize shared ways of conceptualizing something within a culture.

For Barthes, myths serve the ideological function of *naturalization* (cited in Chandler, 2002:144). Their function is to naturalize the cultural and historical values,

attitudes and beliefs seem entirely 'natural', 'normal', self-evident, timeless, obvious 'common-sense' - and thus objective and 'true' reflections of 'the way things are'.

Signification Process

a) **The first (denotative) order (or level) of signification** is seen as primarily representational and relatively self-contained.

b) **The second (connotative) order of signification** reflects 'expressive' values which are attached to a sign.

c) **In the third (mythological or ideological) order of signification** the sign reflects major culturally-variable concepts underpinning a particular worldview - such as masculinity, femininity, freedom, individualism, objectivism, Englishness and so on. (Chandler, 2004:145)

Types of signs

There are three types of signs: symbol, icon and index.

a) **A symbol** is a mode in which the signifier does not resemble the signified but which is fundamentally arbitrary or purely conventional-so that the relationship must be learned (numbers, national flags, particular languages, Morse code etc.).

b) **Icon** is a mode in which the signifier is perceived as resembling or imitating the signified (cartoon, portrait, imitative gestures, etc.).

c) As Chandler (2004:41) argues, *index* is a mode in which the signifier is not arbitrarily, but directly connected to the signified (as in the relation between fire and smoke).

One basic principle of educational semiotics is that the teacher should have a heightened awareness of these signs and develop materials and strategies for the teaching environment. When the learning materials are visualized with respect to the relations among signs, the results may become more promising in that more senses are activated in the learning process and learning also emerges at sub-conscious level. Particular attention should be given to iconicity when learning is considered. Considering an icon, the close relation between the signifier and signified helps students understand the content better. According to Danesi (as cited in Ponzio, 2002: 301) “all types of learning in human development, as results in childhood, are a modeling process which may be described as a flow from iconicity to cultural symbolism”. There seems to be no reason to neglect this natural learning flow when people consider the fact that in all types of learning (also in native language acquisition), icons play a vital role which may be a positive contribution if foreign language learning is considered (Sert, 2006:110).

In ELT classes, the teacher’s use of imitative gestures or pictures in relation to target culture would obviously help students bridge the gap between their native culture and the target culture; therefore between the native language and foreign language. When these icons (the cultural signs of the foreign language) are combined with the presented content and the target language skill to be improved, this will obviously accelerate the foreign language awareness of the student both at conscious and sub-conscious levels. To illustrate, if the foreign language teacher uses an imitative gesture of a famous American figure or if he/she uses a symbolic picture of the target society while teaching a particular point, the students’ attention on the foreign language content and its culture will be heightened. (Sert, 2006:110)

Semiotic Codes

The concept of the 'code' is fundamental in semiotics. While Saussure dealt only with the overall code of language, he did of course stress that signs are not meaningful in isolation, but only when they are interpreted in relation to each other. Since the meaning of a sign depends on the code within which it is situated, codes provide a framework within which signs make sense. Codes organize signs into meaningful systems which correlate signifiers and signifieds. Society itself depends on the existence of such signifying systems. When studying cultural practices, semioticians treat as signs any objects or actions which have meaning to members of the cultural group, seeking to identify the rules or conventions of the codes which underlie the production of meanings within that culture. Understanding such codes, their relationships and the contexts in which they are appropriate is part of what it means to be a member of a particular culture (Chandler, 2004:148).

Particular attention to signs of the society is not solely adequate in educational semiotics, since comprehension of a sign is dependent upon the context of a particular code. Cunningham (2005, cited in Sert 2006:144) asserts that teachers should construct materials which will heighten their students' awareness of the cultural context and the cultural codes of the society. These semiotic codes are namely;

- A- *Social codes* are verbal language, behavioral codes etc.
- B- *Textual codes* are scientific codes, mass-media codes etc.
- C- *Interpretative codes* are perceptual codes and ideological codes etc.

Each sign is meaningful in a particular code or sub-code. Educational semiotics is in great extent interested in the way how different semiotic codes are reflected in cultures and the ways in teaching these or using them in presenting a content. Accordingly, consideration of non-linguistic messages in teaching English is obviously a beneficial trend, which is also stressed by Curry (cited in Sert, 2006:114) as “although the focus of English language instruction generally points learners to language and less to images and sounds..., it is important to consider how non-linguistic messages produce cultural meanings”.

2.4.5. How to Organize Language Education

Considering the history of language teaching it can be mentioned that the study of classical Latin and an analysis of its grammar and rhetoric was the model for foreign language study from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. As “modern” languages began to enter the curriculum of European schools in the eighteenth century, learners were taught using the same basic procedures that were used for teaching Latin. Textbooks consisted of statements of abstract grammar rules, lists of vocabulary, and sentences for translation. Speaking the foreign language was not the goal, and oral practice was limited to students reading aloud the sentences they had translated. This approach to foreign language teaching became known as the Grammar-Translation Method. Toward the mid-nineteenth century several factors contributed to a questioning and rejection of the Grammar-Translation Method. Increased opportunities for communication among European created a demand for oral proficiency in foreign languages. From the 1880s, however, linguists emphasized that speech, rather than the written word, was the primary form of language. The most active period in the history of approaches and methods was from the 1950s to 1980s. The 1950s and 1960s saw the emergence of the Audiolingual Method and the Situational Method, which were both superseded by the Communicative Approach. During the same period, other methods attracted smaller but equally enthusiastic followers, including the Silent Way, the Natural Approach, and Total Physical Response. In the 1990s, Content-Based Instruction and Task-

Based Language Teaching emerged as new approaches to language teaching as did movements such as Competency-Based Instruction that focus on the outcomes of learning rather than methods of teaching. Other approaches, such as Cooperative Learning, Whole Language Approach, and Multiple Intelligences, originally developed in general education, have been extended to second language settings. By the 1990s, however, many applied linguists and language teachers moved away from a belief that newer and better approaches and methods are the solution to problems in language teaching. Alternative ways of understanding the nature of language teaching have emerged that are sometimes viewed as characterizing the “post-methods era” (Richards and Rodgers 2002: 3, 4, 5, 6). As it can be inferred with the increasing social integration of multicultures, English undoubtedly keeps its dominance as an international language in communication. As Bamgbose (2001: 357) observed, English is recognized as the dominating language in the world as globalization comes to be universally accepted in political and academic discourse.

In the case of foreign language learner, curricula tend to be very linguistic and formal, so that there is almost no opportunity to develop Firstness, a relation of emotional mutuality with the language. The deep emotional connectedness that people feel when they use our mother tongue may remain elusive, since they are denied opportunities to engage in joint project-based (triadic) work that would allow for the development of indicational skills as a way into more predicational ways of using the new language. It can be seen, therefore, that a triadic semiotic view such as the one developed by Peirce (cited in Lier, 2004:72) more than a hundred years ago, can give important insights about how to organize language education. In summary, the main insights are as follows:

- Language and the physical, social and symbolic world are interconnected in a myriad of ways, and this should be reflected in curricula, materials and classroom practices. That is, language learning should be richly contextualized.

- Language is not just brain-resident or located in an abstract mental realm; it is intimately connected with the body (it is embodied) and with gestures, expressions, interpersonal resonance, and so on. These are not just added-on frills of language, but that are *constitutive* of language and *instrumental* in learning.
- Healthy and robust language use combines Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness (or iconic, indexical and symbolic elements) in equal degrees. Learning contexts must therefore ensure the availability of rich semiotic resources in all three areas. Learners are people with something to say, and with meaningful goals in life, not just statistics that add to test averages.
- Communicative methodologies may have overstated the notion of face-to-face communication as an interactional model. As Wells (Cited in Lier, 2004) said Perhaps more important is a side-by-side model that employs joint attention to a common focus, as *improvable object* as a basic design feature.
- As Deci and Flaste (cited in Lier, 2004) said; seeing language from a semiotic perspective and learning from an ecological perspective can thus contribute to a learning environment that is pedagogically rich and stimulating, learner and learning-centered, non-controlling and autonomy-supporting, and truly thought- and language-provoking for all learners.

2.4.6. Language Education and Teacher Training

Over the years, language teachers have drawn on many disciplines in formulating their views of what students need. Linguistics, psychology, and education have been the most influential source disciplines (Brown, 1995:5). Language teachers need to know more about the language in order to teach language effectively. Language teachers need to know even in general, something about the relationship between language and cognition, writing systems, nonverbal

communication, sociolinguistics, and first language acquisition. Besides, language teachers should be aware of what are the components of language. Understanding of the components of language determines to a large extent how to teach a language. If, for example, you believe that nonverbal communication is a key to successful second language learning, you will devote some attention in your curriculum to nonverbal systems and cues. If you perceive language as a phenomenon that can be dismantled into thousands of discrete pieces and those pieces programmatically one by one, you will attend carefully to an understanding of the discrete forms of language. If you think language is essentially cultural and interactive, your classroom methodology will be with sociolinguistic strategies and communicative tasks (Brown, 2007:7).

A combination of shifting epistemological perspectives on human learning and the accumulation of almost three decades of research on how teachers learn to teach and how they carry out their work in classrooms highlights the fundamentally social nature of teacher learning and the activities of teaching. Learning to teach, from a sociocultural perspective, is based on the assumption that knowing, thinking, and understanding come from participating in the social practices of learning and teaching in specific classroom and school situations. Teacher learning and the activities of teaching are understood as growing out of participation in the social practices in classrooms; and what teachers know and how they use that knowledge in classrooms is highly interpretative and contingent on knowledge of self, setting, students, curriculum, and community (Johnson, 2009:13).

From a sociocultural perspective, the professional development of L2 teachers becomes a process of building on teachers' everyday concepts about language, language learning, and language teaching to enable them to understand the scientific concepts about language, SLA, learning, and L2 teaching that are produced, accepted, and adapted in the profession. Of course, these scientific concepts shift as teacher's profession's understandings of language, SLA, and L2 teaching shift (Johnson, 2009:14).

Just as the dominant conceptualization of language has shifted from structural to functional and the dominant view of SLA from mentalistic to socially situated, so too have the goals, content, and activities of L2 pedagogies. It is not surprising that L2 teachers experience tension as they engage in a process of being simultaneously enculturated into ways of being an L2 teacher and at the same time expected (and in some cases mandated) to reconceptualize and reconstruct those ways of being as they confront new challenges (Johnson, 2009:14).

A major challenge for L2 teacher education is the recognition that the professional development of L2 teachers takes place in ever changing sociopolitical and socioeconomic contexts around the world. Thus, the assumption that there can or should be uniformity in what L2 teachers should know and be able to do is called into question. Both the content and activities of L2 teacher education must take into account the social, political, economic, and cultural histories that are “located” in the contexts where L2 teachers learn and teach. Context is not necessarily limited to specific geopolitical boundaries: sociopolitical, sociohistorical, and socioeconomic contexts may shape and be shaped by local and global events, for example, As Canagarajah (2005) (cited in Johnson) said the globalization of English or the as Matsuda (2003) and Jenkins (2006) (cited in Johnson, 2009:113) recognition of World Englishes.

“Located” L2 teacher education begins by recognizing why L2 teachers do what they do in the social, historical, and cultural contexts in which they work. It continues to co-construct with L2 teachers locally appropriate responses to their professional development needs. Of course, this will be both a macro and a micro enterprise since it requires both attention to the social and ideological structures that shape and are shaped by the contexts in which L2 teachers live and work and also recognition of the complexities of classroom life and the relative autonomy that can exist there (Johnson, 2009:115).

A sociocultural perspective on human learning challenges the way L2 teacher education has traditionally thought about how teachers learn to teach, how they think about and teach language, the broader social, cultural, and historical macro-structures that are ever present and ever changing in the L2 teaching profession, and what constitutes L2 teacher professional development. A sociocultural perspective on human learning reorients how the field of L2 teacher education understands and supports the professional development of L2 teachers (Johnson, 2009:123).

As Marscholleck (2003), Schrier (1994), Jarvis and Bernhardt (1987) stated that foreign language proficiency, the quality of the language teacher depends on professional knowledge in linguistics, literary studies, psychology, pedagogy, sociology, philosophy, and the interpersonal relationships (cited in Eret and Ok, 2008). That's to say in order to reach standards in teacher education, it is required to have qualified and competent language teachers. To provide these qualifications and competencies, there is a need for evaluation of the quality of the teacher education institutions so that the student satisfaction can be increased, problems can be minimized and better learning environment can be provided (Eret and Ok, 2008). Thus, curriculum is another important aspect of foreign language teacher education.

2.4.7. Curriculum, Course, Syllabus and Approaches to Course Design

- **Curriculum**

The definition of curriculum is complex because there are many definitions. Curriculum can be defined, as an educational program which states:

- a) "The educational purpose of the program (the ends)

- b) The content teaching procedures and learning experience which will be necessary to achieve this purpose (the means)
- c) Some means for assessing whether or not the educational ends have been achieved.”

(Richards, Platt and Platt 1993: 94)

- **Course**

Hutchinson and Waters (1996, cited in Nunez 2007: 275) describe the course as “an integrated series of teaching-learning experiences, whose ultimate aim is to lead the learners to a particular state of knowledge”.

- **Syllabuses**

According to Lee (1980, cited in Nunez 2007: 277) “Syllabus is essentially a statement of what should be taught, year by year – through language – syllabuses often also contain points about the method of teaching and the time to be taken”.

- **Approaches to the course design**

It can be said that the field of education has undergone profound changes during the last 30 to 40 years and it is suggested that successful language programs depend upon the use of approaches. The following table shows what the different approaches are, and the different ways of defining what the students need to learn: (adapted from Brown, 1995:5)

Table 1: Approaches

APPROACHES	WAYS OF DEFINING WHAT THE STUDENTS NEED TO LEARN
Classical approach	Humanism: students need to read the classics
Grammar-translation approach	Students need to learn with economy of time and effort
Direct approach	Students need to learn communication so they should use only second language in class
Audiolingual approach	Students need operant conditioning and behavioral modification to learn language
Communicative approach	Students must be able to express their intentions, that is, they must learn the meanings that are important to them

2.4.8. A Comprehensive View of Curriculum in Semiotics

A comprehensive view of curriculum is implicit in semiotics all existing school subjects--and even subjects not yet formulated--are by their nature ways of organizing signs. If learners are thought as individuals with the potential for understanding and communicating through a variety of signs (such as linguistic, gestural, pictorial, musical, and mathematical signs) and sign systems, fresh perspective can be gained both on human potential and on the organization of school subjects (<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9219/english.htm>).

The role of language in the curriculum, moreover, takes on new power in the semiotic perspective. Language is the main arbiter as students learn to use and understand all of the other symbol systems. Language is used by musicians and visual artists in articulating their intentions and describing their techniques. Analysis of the syntax of any nonlinguistic object, from an equation to a piece of sculpture, involves language. So does description of the ideas or emotional responses that the object evokes in.

The richness of skills required in a semiotics-based curriculum is evident. Salomon (1970) points to the broad range of mental skills required in multimedia reception and production. Dickson (1985) sees in new technologies an immense potential for "juxtaposing symbol systems" in ways that "contribute to the development of metacognitive awareness and higher-order problem-solving skills". Semiotics and its potential for organizing thinking about curriculum in new ways can add structure and substance to arguments for the things that teachers value: oral language, the written word, the arts, interdisciplinary study, and the articulate exchange of ideas and feelings among students (<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9219/english.htm>).

Due to the mentioned requirements and shifts in teacher training, new perspectives, training courses are needed to add into the curricula of all the ELT departments of the Educational Faculties in Turkey. Yet, it is viewed essential to put forward what should be given place in those courses' contents regarding their possible contributions to teacher trainees when they start their professional practice.

2.4.9. Organizing Syllabus

In Wilkins' (1981:83) words, syllabuses are "specifications of the content of language teaching which have been submitted to some degree of structuring or ordering with the aim of making teaching and learning a more effective process." It should be mentioned that a language teaching syllabus involves the integration of subject matter (what to talk about) and linguistic matter (how to talk about it); that is, the actual matter that makes up teaching.

There are many types of syllabuses. Brown (adapted from 1995:7), in his book, describes 6 types of syllabuses in the following table:

Table 2: Syllabuses

SYLLABUSES	WAYS OF ORGANIZING COURSES AND MATERIALS
Structural	Grammatical and phonological structures are the organizing principles- sequenced from easy to difficult or frequent
Situational	Situations (such as at the bank, at the supermarket, at a restaurant, and so forth) from the organizing principle-sequenced by the likelihood students will encounter them (structural sequence may be in background)
Topical	Topics or themes (such as health, food, clothing, and so forth)form the organizing principle-sequenced by the likelihood that students will encounter them (structural sequence may be in background)
Functional	Functions (such as identifying, reporting, correcting, describing, and so forth) are the organizing principle-sequenced by some sense of

	chronology or usefulness of each function (structural and situational sequence may be in background)
Notional	Conceptual categories called notions (such as duration, quantity, location, and so forth) are the basis of organization- sequenced by some sense of schronology or usefulness of each Notion (structural and situational sequence may be in background)
Skills	Skills (such as listening for gist, listening for main ideas, listening for inferences, scanning a reading passage for specific information, and so forth) serve as the basis for organization- sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness for each skill (structural and situational sequence may be in background)
Task	Task or activity-based categories (such as drawing maps, following directions, following instructions, and so forth) serve as the basis for organization- sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of notions (structural and situational sequence may be in background)

As Brown (1995:17) mentioned approaches, syllabuses, techniques, and exercises are all happening simultaneously in any given language program and that such activities all interact with each other and affect one another. It is required to be flexible and leave options open. This kind of informed picking and choosing from among the options available to the teacher has sometimes been labeled *eclecticism*, which will be fairly narrowly defined here as the practice of (or belief in) making informed choices among the available approaches, syllabuses, techniques, and exercises in order to adapt to a particular group of students in a particular situation for the purposes of most effectively and efficiently helping them to learn language. Eclecticism involves informed and rational choices based on knowledge and

experience. Putting all of the individual choices of approach, syllabus, techniques, and exercises together at a given time almost inevitably makes the teacher eclectic.

It should be considered that all the possible factors that might affect the teach ability of a particular syllabus. By tailoring the choice and integration of the different types according to the needs, the syllabus design may become more appropriate and effective.

Ögeyik (2009:2) says that in Turkey, the Council of Higher Education has begun to re-structure the faculties of education since 1998. The first effort in 1998, a reform of the World Bank and the Council of Higher Education was implemented in all faculties of education in Turkey. The recent curriculum, which has been employed since 2006-2007 academic year, offers new courses in addition to the previous ones. The overall aim is to define learning outcomes expected from teachers of different fields as well as English. The aims include the issues such as determining, assessing and evaluating the processes of teaching proficiency. Therefore, the faculties of education are anticipated to have common standards as the requirement of the process and the courses have been adjusted to these purposes.

Ergenekon (2006:14) stated in her study that The Higher Education Council has suggested some linguistic courses for the curriculum of the ELT departments of the Faculties of Education in Turkey. However, there seems to be some deficiencies in and a certain degree of overlap between the existing syllabus contents of those linguistic courses for the inadequate course descriptions. This could be regarded as waste of time and energy. In addition, the sequence in which these courses are offered over the semesters is not logical and does not serve the purpose. So according to their contents, the linguistic courses in the existing curriculum should be reordered.

Linguistic courses are crucial in the sense that they lead the learners of second language to involve in recognizing how a language systematically operates. Therefore, the linguistic component as well as language awareness activities may be useful for language development when they aim to develop the ability to use the language in real communications, that is, to develop an understanding of how language works, so that these activities contribute directly to the trainees' proficiency in using the language itself (Wright & Bolitho 1993).

As Cunningham (2005, cited in Sert, 2006:110) asserts that teachers should construct materials which will heighten their students' awareness of the cultural context, the cultural codes of the society. Since, non linguistic parts of the language are also important. ELT practitioners may adopt the semiotic codes of the target culture combined with semiotic signs in their syllabuses. Curry (1999, cited in Sert, 2006) stresses that "although the focus of English language instruction generally points learners to language and less to images and sounds..., it is important to consider how non-linguistic messages produce cultural meanings".

2.5. Relevant Research

There are some research in semiotics and ELT. This research can be seen as examples in relation to this study.

Hişmanoğlu (2005:1) conducts a study titled "*Semiotic Elements and Difficulties in Teaching Vocabulary Items*" with the aim at emphasizing the importance of semiotic elements and difficulties in teaching vocabulary items. It summarizes the background of vocabulary teaching, lists vocabulary teaching techniques proposed by various researchers and expounds semiotic elements and difficulties in teaching color names, idioms, onomatopoeic words and compound words. Moreover, semiotics as one of the most effective ways of teaching culture, the

role of semiotic elements in vocabulary learning and teaching, problems caused by being unfamiliar with the cultural semiotics of the target language, the use of semiotic elements in literature and the role of the language teacher in a vocabulary lesson are taken into account.

In her master thesis study, Ergenekon (2006:1) studies “*A Suggested Course Description and a Content List for the Course “Introduction to Linguistics I” In the Curriculum of the Elt Departments in Turkish Universities*”. This study aims to suggest a new course description and a content list for the course “Introduction to Linguistic I” in the curricula of the ELT departments of the educational faculties.

In the master thesis of Akalın (1995:1) with the title “*The Contributions of Linguistics to language Teaching*” aims to evaluate what linguistics and linguistic-related disciplines have contributed that is of value in language teaching. These disciplines are divided into two as Micro – Linguistics. Within Micro – linguistics, people have dealt with phonology, Morphology and Syntax. Macro- Linguistics included the analysis on Semantics, Discourse Pragmatics, Psycho – Linguistics, Socio – Linguistics, Interpreting, Language Teaching methods, Child Language Acquisition Dialects and so on.

The other relevant study is Whitson’s (2007:1) study with the title of “*The need for semiotically – informed curriculum consciousness*”. In his study he focuses on education and semiotic understanding. He says that language and other resources that could be used as signs mediating access to the world for learning and participation become, instead, flat and opaque substitutes for knowledge, and occlusive obstacles to learning and understanding. Propositional and procedural ‘knowledge’ are presented and learned (whether by memorization, or by active construction) with the idea that such propositions and procedures are, in themselves, bits of positive knowledge, rather than being used as sign-elements for cognitive participation in the world through meditative semiosis. The fundamental difference

between positive and semiotically meditative conceptions of meaning implicates profound consequences for education practice and policy.

Erton (2006:1) conducts a study with the title “*Semiotic Nature of Language Teaching Methods in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching*”. In his paper it is aimed to cover the semiotic nature of language teaching methods, and their sample applications in the language classroom. The verbal and the non-verbal aspects of language teaching should not be kept separate since they are closely interrelated and interdependent. The use of signs, symbols and visual aids by the teachers help the enhancement of the learning capacity of the language learner both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels as they listen and try to learn a foreign language component in the classroom.

Sert (2006:1) studies “*Semiotic Approach and Its Contributions to English Language Learning and Teaching*”. He says that semiotics is a progressing and promising discipline with its applications in many fields of study. As a bridge between semiotics and foreign language teaching (FLT), educational semiotics has started to attract attention of many scholars, English Language Teaching (ELT) instructors and teachers all over the world. It is obvious that the consideration of semiotic approach in FLT has promising results and may lead to long-term success in learning a foreign language with its applicable and pertinent techniques that are learner-centered. In this article, basic terminology of semiotics and its possible applications to foreign language learning settings are introduced in order to help teachers of English to have a heightened awareness of the semiotic approach. Throughout the paper, it is claimed that the consideration of the semiotic signs of the target culture in teaching a foreign language is vital, since a language cannot be separated from its culture.

Considering the relevant studies above, it can be said that they generally focused on the semiotics as a field required integrating into the curriculum of foreign language teaching. Even if semiotics and foreign language teaching have been seen

in different fields. As Ögeyik (2003:2) says “when the expansion of the fields integrated into the curriculum of foreign language teaching is examined, it is seen that all those fields have similar paradigms and paradigm shifts in order to meet the need of their receivers. The chronological paradigms of the fields in contemporary sense are all interwoven and being affected by one another. The overall picture of all these paradigm shifts confirms the simultaneous affinities of the mentioned fields”.

In consequence, semiotics and educational linguistics have started to attract attention of many English Language Teaching (ELT) instructors and teachers all over the world. As Spolsky (2008 :1) says with the growing significance of language education as a result of globalization, more and more educational systems are appreciating the need to train teachers and administrators in those aspects of linguistics that are relevant to education and in the various subfields that have grown up within educational linguistics itself. Therefore, in this study it is aimed to discuss the insights of semiotics (through the emphasis on educational semiotics) by combining both foreign language teaching and text analysis.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Method

In this study, action research was designed. Carr and Kemmis (1986) described action research as the improvement of practice; the improvement of the understanding of practice; the improvement of the situation in which the practice takes place. Therefore, the benefits of action research, while practicing semiotic analysis are thought to be useful yielding for promising results in ELT departments. Since, through systematic controlled action research, students can become more professional, more interested in analyzing contextual elements.

Action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully. It is based on the following assumptions:

- Teachers and principals work best on problems they have identified for themselves
- Teachers and principals become more effective when encouraged to examine and assess their own work and then consider ways of working differently
- Teachers and principals help each other by working collaboratively
- Working with colleagues helps teachers and principals in their professional development

(Watts, 1985, p. 118)

3.2. Participants

The participants of this research are fourth year twenty-four students attending the ELT department at the Faculty of Education, Trakya University. Students' age, gender, social and educational backgrounds were not taken into consideration while evaluating research findings.

Since the participants are the students in the ELT department for four years and, according to CEF Language Comparison, they are assumed to be an C1 Advanced Level which means to be able to understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning, express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions, use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes and produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices (http://www.world-english.org/cef_language.htm)

3.3. Data Collection

Considering contextual features and cultural aspects of signs, this study aimed at discussing the insights of semiotics (through the emphasis on educational semiotics) by combining both foreign language teaching and text analysis. Moreover, by creating awareness about signs within a context, it was aimed to observe whether semiotic analysis helps the enhancement of learning process both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels when learners are learning foreign language.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in the study. Therefore, the data gathered from pretest and posttest results and mid-term and final exams were statistically analyzed. Additionally, classroom observations and the

students' reports collected in the research process were used to compare the findings of the research.

The students were given a pre-test with two main parts; reading assessment part and picture analysis part. Then, the students were given the same test as a post-test in order to answer the following research questions:

- 1- Do analyzing semiotic texts have a positive effect on the students' performance levels while comprehending and constructing meaning during foreign language learning process?
- 2- Is there a significant development in language skills of the learners who were treated by using semiotic issues?

In order to provide answers to the research questions above, firstly a pre-test was administrated to the students at the beginning of the course sessions before the treatment. The sessions which include classroom practices and different kinds of texts analysis on the base of semiotic analysis were designed according to the objectives and aims of the research questions for the participants. Then, the sessions were applied for 8 weeks. Finally, at the end of the application of the sessions, the students were given the pre test as the post-test in order to determine the difference between the pre-test and post-test results. In addition to these, classroom observations and the students' reports which reflect their ideas on semiotic analysis were gathered throughout the session process. Besides, the students were asked to prepare homework for the each session which was announced at the beginning of the session process and written in the dossier which was prepared by the researcher for the specific purposes of the course sessions.

In this study, the independent variable was the course session. Dependent variable was the performance achievement of the students. During the research, the Pretest was used for measuring the degree of the dependent variable before the

treatment, and at the end of the treatment students were given the post-test. Then, the results were gathered and compared. In this way, the results of the pretest- and the posttest were used together to decide at how efficient the treatment was.

During the research process different types of authentic texts were included into the course syllabus. In the selection of the texts and in the implementation of semiotic analysis during the course session, the linguistic level of the learners and their developmental stage characteristics were taken into consideration: and thus, the courses were designed in these perspectives by keeping their needs and interests in mind.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

In this study, pre and post – treatment tests and mid-term final exams which were designed by the researcher were used in order to assess the students' performance levels after the treatment.

- **Pre-test Post-test**

The pretest-posttests were designed by selecting limited response tasks. In limited response tasks, the range of responses available to the students is not fixed by the researcher as it is in the case of closed-ended tasks. At the same time, the range of possible responses is limited. Elicitation task is a kind of limited response tasks. In elicitation tasks; carefully selected stimulus or prompt is used to elicit specific responses from the student, but no response alternatives are actually given. Thus, the student must provide the response. (Genese, Upshur 1996, p.170) In this study, Limited response elicitation tasks were designed in order to reach very rich samples of language due to the fact that all the students are on advanced level.

The test consisted of mainly two parts; reading assessment part and picture analysis part. The total score of the test was 100 points. (See appendix 1). However; the fourth question which was designed just for evaluating the attitude of the students wasn't graded in the whole scores of the test.

Part I consisted of two passages (*Part I A* and *Part I B*) and two questions for each:

Part I A 1 and 2 consisted of comprehension questions based on the description of the symbol. The questions aimed to assess the students' comprehension level in understanding a passage through semiotic analysis. This part covered two questions and each question was evaluated out of 10 points.

Part I B 3 consisted of comprehension question. The question aimed to assess the students' ability in finding the type of the text by giving information about it. The question was evaluated out of 10 points.

Part I B 4 consisted of multiple choice question based on difficulty rate of the passage. The question aimed to assess the students' perception of difficulty in understanding a short story with semiotic items. This question was not evaluated in the whole of the test even if it was analyzed separately in SPSS program.

Part I B 5 consisted of elicitation questions based on the specific symbols in the passage. The questions aimed to assess students' ability to describe the symbols and their roles in the short story. This part covered six questions and each question was evaluated out of five points.

Part II consisted of elicitation question based on a Picture analyze part. The question aimed to assess students' ability to comment on the Picture considering the semiotic issues. This part was evaluated out of forty points.

- **Mid-term exam**

Mid-term exam was constructed via selecting closed ended tasks and limited response tasks. Closed ended test tasks call for the most limited and most predictable responses, and open-ended tasks call for the least limited and least predictable responses; limited response tasks fall in between these two. Closed ended tasks include a prompt, stem, or elicitation followed by alternative responses or answers. Students select their answers from the alternative that are given. These are what commonly known as multiple choice questions. (Genese, Upshur 1996:168) As closed ended multiple choice test tasks, limited response elicitation, completion, discussion and explanation tasks are suitable for assessing comprehension skills and used control students' specific responses for gathering what was intended by the researcher; they were used for designing mid-term exams.

Mid-term exam consisted of mainly six parts; multiple choice test part, completion part, discussion part, explanation part, two photo elicitation parts. The exam was 100 points in total (see appendix 2).

Part I consisted of multiple choice questions based on semiotic theory and issues, including rhetorical tropes, descriptions of some important semiotic elements. The questions aimed to assess students' comprehension levels in choosing the right alternative by using basic theoretical background knowledge of semiotics. This part covered eight questions and each question was evaluated out of four points.

Part II Part consisted of completion questions based on the names of the relevant semioticians. The questions aimed to assess the students' ability in completing the sentence with the right item referring to the basic theoretical background of semiotics. This part covered four questions and each question was evaluated out of two points.

Part III consisted of discussion question based on the forms of the signs. The question aimed to assess the students' ability in stating their expressions about signs. This part covered one question and was evaluated out of twenty points.

Part IV consisted of explanation question based on the semiotic analysis. The question aimed to assess the students' comprehension levels of texts and their ability in explaining items by giving right examples. This part covered one question and was evaluated out of ten points.

Part V consisted of elicitation question based on the levels of signified; denotative level, a connotative level and a mythic level. The question aimed to assess the students' comprehension abilities in describing the photos. This part covered three questions and each question was evaluated out of five points.

Part VI consisted of elicitation questions based on semiotic elements; signifier, signified and coded message. The question aimed to assess the students' comprehension in identifying the semiotic issues on the photos. This part covered three questions and each question was evaluated out of five points.

- **Final exam**

The questions in the final exam were selected considering the activities during teaching/learning process, the students' reports, their homework and the objectives of the course syllabus. It was anticipated that the students could achieve the comprehension level in analyzing the texts and understanding the hindered codes. As Genese and Upshur (1996:168) said that the most important factor to consider when choosing which type of test task to use is your objectives. If different task types are used in a single test, it is generally desirable to start off with closed-ended tasks in order to put students at ease and to include limited-or-open-ended response items later once the students have warmed up (Genese, Upshur 1996). *Final exam* was constructed by selecting limited response tasks and open ended tasks. In open

ended tasks, the response alternatives were not limited by the researcher or test item, and students were free to give a wide variety of possible responses.

The *final exam* in this study consisted of five questions; two questions were for reading a narrative assessment part, two questions were comprehension questions and the last one was writing a paragraph question. The exam was 100 points in total (see appendix 3).

Question 1 was a comprehension question based on the narrative. The question aimed to assess the students' comprehension levels in order to find out how they detect signs and decode them. The question was evaluated out of 10 points.

Question 2 was a comprehension question based on the narrative. The question aimed to assess the students' comprehension levels while describing binary oppositions in the narrative. The question was evaluated out of 5 points.

Question 3 was a comprehension question based on the proverbs. The question aimed to assess the students' comprehension levels to the proverbs in order to find out how they explain them considering the semiotic signs. The question was evaluated out of 10 points.

Question 4 was a comprehension question based on the proverbs. The question aimed to assess the students' comprehension levels while dealing with the cultural codes hindered in these proverbs and explain them considering the semiotic signs. The question was evaluated out of 10 points.

Question 5 was writing a composition question. The question aimed to assess the students' cognition about the advantages of semiotics. The question was evaluated out of 15 points.

The pre-test was also used as the post-test at the end of the course to collect data. The scores obtained from the pretest - posttest and mid-term - final exams were

analyzed in SPSS program to find out whether or not the integration of semiotics course has a positive effect on the improvement of students' decoding the texts both in surface and deep structures and their ability to understand - construct meaning during language learning process.

Besides, the other data collection instrument in the research was the students' reports which were gathered in the mid-term exam and the final exam.

3.5. Research Procedure

This study was carried for 8 weeks in the first semester of 2009-2010 Academic year and the course design, presented below, was implemented in elective courses. Moreover, the syllabus design is mainly based on different types of texts to implement semiotic analysis. The previous studies on the semiotics and educational linguistics were used as a frame work for planning the sessions and syllabus for the course.

Table 3: The Implementation Procedure

Week	Time-table	Content
1st week	09.10.2009	<i>Pre-Test</i> Theoretical Course Instruction
2nd week	16.10.2009	Theoretical Course Instruction
3rd week	23.10.2009	Emblems and Logos
4th week	30.10.2009	Semiotics Analysis of Pictures and Advertisements
5th week	20.11.2009	Semiotic Elements in Vocabulary Items: Proverbs and Idioms
6th week	11.12.2009	Applied Semiotic Operations "The Name of the Rose" by Umberto ECO
7th week	18.12.2009	Descriptive semiotics: Caricatures and characterization

8th week	08.01.2010	Semiotics of Narrative “Red Riding Hood” <i>Post-Test</i>
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Table 3 displays the research procedure of the study.

3.5.1. Syllabus Design

The course syllabus design is displayed weekly in detail in Table 2 below.

Table 4: The course syllabus

COURSE NAME & DATES	PURPOSE	COURSE DESCRIPTION
COURSE I: Introduction to Semiotics (Theoretical Course Instruction) 09.10.2009	To provide a basic introduction to Semiotics and information on the complexity of novice teachers’ learning and use of knowledge of semiotics.	Theories of semiotics and semiotics were introduced to students by tracing its development from Saussurian linguistics and examining various theories of such semioticians as Roland Barthes, C.S. Peirce, and Umberto Eco. Besides, systems of verbal and non-verbal communication in areas such as advertising, cinema, gesture, language, art, literature and the media were discussed.
COURSE II: Theories of the Sign, Types of signs,	To deal with the major theories of semiotics, representation, and interpretation	Definition of the sign from the ancient world up to and including the 20th Century, the ways in which semioticians have problematized two key distinctions: that at the level of the

semiotics codes (Theoretical Course Instruction) 16.10.2009	in a critical- historical way and focus especially on the ideas of Saussure and Peirce.	signifier between the literal and the figurative and that at the level of the signified between denotation and connotation, types of signs and semiotics codes were studied.
COURSE III: Semiotics analysis of Emblems and Logos 23.10.2009	To teach how to encode and decode the contexts in which logos and emblems are referred.	Emblems and logos which symbolize a feeling and a belief, a movement or an idea were presented to students and asked them to encode and decode emblems and logos by using sign theories. Students were required to bring some logo and emblem samples before coming to the class. At the end of the course, the students analysed the emblems and logos semiotically and examined the signification process
COURSE IV: Semiotics analysis of pictures 30.10.2009	To make aware of the different social codes and signs on the paintings by making semiotic analyses.	Paintings of leading painters (Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali) were introduced; background information about them and their arts were given to students. Samples of semiotic analyses of paintings (Akerson, 2005) were presented to students and taught how to analyse pictures semiotically without criticizing the painting and painters.
COURSE IV: Semiotic Elements in Advertisements 30.10.2009	To provide a structure of analyzing the way that sign systems operate	Students were presented some advertisements and their texts. Considering Roland Barthes Theory of Narrative in Media, (cited in Akerson, 2005) advertisement samples were

	to create meaning in the context of advertisements and to introduce the idea of a <i>metastructure</i>	explained by identifying the signifier, the signified and coded message of them. Besides, the idea of metastructure, in which meaning is not just decoded with one structure, but transferred to create another new meaning, was introduced to students to decode signs.
COURSE V: Semiotic Elements in Vocabulary Items: Proverbs and Idioms 20.11.2009	To provide sufficient input to understand the meaning of proverbs and idioms by using the semiotic elements and relating the proverbs to similar concepts in their own languages.	<i>Proverbs</i> and <i>idioms</i> which possess semiotic elements were studied by visualizing the meanings of them within students' minds and students were taught how to accelerate the learning process in the long term memory of them. Additionally, proverbs from different cultures and some basic idioms were given to the students to analyze by using semiotic issues and compare with proverbs in their native language.
COURSE VI: Applied Semiotic Operations: Narrative Analysis 11.12.2009	To teach how to encode codes to understand the narratives better.	Parts from the novel "The Name of The Rose" was analyzed through the template of semiotic analysis and cultural elements. Before reading a part from the novel, background information about the author "Umberto ECO", who is one of the major semioticians, was introduced to the students by eliciting the students' prior knowledge of the novel and the

		author. At the end of the course students were asked comprehension questions which require the answers with codes from the novel.
COURSE VII: Descriptive semiotics: Analysis of caricatures 18.12.2009	To teach semiotics as a method of reading cartoons.	The analyses of Caricature; Ramiz: Tombul Teyze (Akerson, 2005) was introduced to the students. The focus was on types of codes. Caricatures which students had brought to the classroom and Turhan SELÇUK's caricatures (Selçuk, 1995) with the thematic of Human Rights were analyzed by using semiotics issues.
COURSE VIII: Semiotics of Narrative; Narrative Analyze 08.01.2010	To provide an introduction to the approaches that semiotics has developed toward the problems of textual interpretation and to teach how to make a structural analysis in the narrative.	<p>How to assign meanings to the textual world was studied by focusing on the principle of the interpreter's centrality in the process of meaning construction.</p> <p>Narrative analysis of Red Riding Hood, through signification theory of Greimas (Rifat, 2009) was studied. The Semiotic Square, which was developed by Algirdas J. Greimas, a Lithuanian linguist and semiotician was introduced to students in order to use it in the structural analysis of the relationships between semiotic signs in the narrative.</p>

All the activities and the course session implemented were designed by the researcher, and they were assumed to be appropriate to the students' age, linguistic level and interests. In order to create awareness of the students about the needs of decoding and encoding texts for understanding meanings of signs/words, each session including semiotic analysis and implementations were carefully selected from the previous studies on semiotics.

3.6. Data Analysis

For the statistical analysis of the data gathered from the pretest and posttest, SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 16.0 for Windows was used.

In relation to the research questions, pretest - posttest and mid-term final exams results were analyzed statistically by using *paired sample t-test*.

Paired sample t-test was used

- to assess the success and determine the significance between pretest - posttest and mid-term - final exams and

- in order to determine whether semiotic analyses would be supportive for learners during foreign language learning process both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels.

Data analyses were carried with the help of an expert on statistics.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter includes the statistical analysis of the research results and the discussion. Additionally, to support the data gathered from the statistical analysis, these findings are discussed by referring to the research questions and the previous research carried out in this field.

4.1. Results

The results of the study are presented mainly in two parts; the statistical analyses results and the students' reports results.

4.1.1. Statistical Analyses Results

In this study, in order to assess the success and determine the significance between pretest – posttest and mid-term and final exams *Repeated Measures Design of Paired Sample t-test* was applied. As Heiman said t-test is used for the paired (related) samples when two compared means are related to two sets of scores which are correlated. In short, paired sample t-test is a parametric technique which is used to examine the significance of the difference between two means of two samples. Paired samples are used in two different research designs. (cited in Büyüköztürk, Bökeroğlu and Köklü, 2008, 165) These are: Paired Samples Design and Repeated Measures Design.

By using Repeated Measures Design of Paired Sample t-test, the statistical analyses which questions whether or not the course improved the students' success in analyzing the texts before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the implementation procedure in order to examine the impact of the course which aimed to develop students' insights of educational semiotics. Besides, the results of the mid-term exam, which was applied during the implementation process, and the final exam, which was applied after the implementation process, have shown additional data that supports pre-test and post-test results.

4.1.1.1. Results of the Pretest – Posttest

Data gathered from pretest and posttest results provided an output in order to figure out whether or not the course increased the students' success in analyzing the texts.

The pre-test and post-test results are displayed in table 5.

Table 5: T-test results for pretest and posttest

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	pretest	33,4286	21	12,29866	2,68379
	posttest	81,0952	21	12,42137	2,71057

Paired Samples Test							
Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	pretest - posttest	-47,66667	11,28421	2,46242	-19,358	20	,000

Table 5-A and table 5-B shows the results of the scores for pre-test and post-test.

Table 5-A: Mean Values and Deviation Score of Pre-test and Post-test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	21	33.4286	12.2
Posttest	21	81.0952	12.4

Table 5-B: The Difference between Pre-test and Post-test

Pre-test,	Sd	Df	p
post-test	20	-19.3	,000

In table 5, table 5-A and table 5-B of the paired sample t-test, it is seen that paired sample mean score of post-test ($\bar{x} = 81.09$) to be higher than that of pre-test ($\bar{x} = 33.42$). The t-test results show that the difference between pre and post-test scores is significant [$t(20) = -19.3, p < .05$]. It can be said that; there is a significance difference between pre-test and post-test. Students were more successful in post-test ($\bar{x} = 81.09$) than in pre-test ($\bar{x} = 33.42$).

4.1.1.2. Results of the Attitude Question In Pretest – Posttest

In order to assess the success and determine the significance between pretest attitude question– posttest attitude question, *paired sample t-test* was applied. The results for them are shown in table 6.

Table 6: T-test results for attitude questions of pretest and posttest**T-Test**

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	pretestattitude	4,4762	21	1,12335	,24513
	posttestattitude	4,5238	21	1,12335	,24513

Paired Samples Test							
Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	pretestattitude - posttestattitude	-,04762	1,02353	,22335	-,213	20	,833

Table 6-A and table 6-B shows the results of the scores for pre-test attitude question and post-test attitude question

Table 6-A : Mean Values and Deviation Score of Pre-test and Post-test attitude question

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretestattitude	21	4.47	1.12
Posttestattitude	21	4.52	1.12

Table 6-B: The Difference between Pre-test and Post-test attitude question

Pretestattitude,	Sd	t	p
Posttestattitude	20	-213	,833

Tables 6, 6-A, 6-B show the p value for the pair pretest attitude question and posttest attitude question — and their probability value is .833, which is greater than the significance level at .05 [$t(20) = -213$, $p > .05$]. In this table of the paired sample t-test, paired sample means, ($\bar{x} = 4.47$) and ($\bar{x} = 4.52$) are insignificant. It can be said that, there is no significant difference between pretest attitude question and posttest attitude question; that's to say, there is no difference between the perceptions of the students before the session and after the session.

4.1.1.3. Results of the Midterm – Final Exams

In order to assess the success and determine the significance between midterm exam and final exam, *paired sample t-test* was applied. The results for them are shown in table 7.

Table 7: T-test results for midterm and final exams

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	midterm	72,9167	24	9,90352	2,02155
	final	84,5833	24	9,73526	1,98720

Paired Samples Test							
Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	midterm - final	-11,66667	8,57026	1,74940	-6,669	23	,000

Table 7-A and table 7-B shows the results of the scores for mid-term and final exams

Table 7-A: Mean Values and Deviation Score of Mid-term and Final Exams

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mid-term	24	72.9	9.50
Final	24	84.5	9.73

Table 7-B: The Difference between Mid-term and Final Exams

Mid-term,	Sd	t	p
final	20	-6.66	,000

Tables 7, 7-A and 7-B show the p value for the pair midterm and final—and their probability value is .000, which is smaller than the significance level at .05 [$t(20) = -6.66, p < .05$]. In this table of the paired sample t-test, paired sample means ($\bar{x} = 72.9$) and ($\bar{x} = 84.5$) are significant. It can be said that there is a significant difference between midterm and final in favor of final. Students were more successful in the final exam ($\bar{x} = 84.5$) than in mid-term exam ($\bar{x} = 72.9$).

4.1.2. Students' Reports Results

Throughout the application of the session, students' reports were gathered: after the mid-term exam and after the final exam in order to capture their reflections to the material in the sessions and reactions to the course.

4.1.2.1 Students' Reports after the Mid-Term Exam

The students' reports which were gathered after the mid-term and the final exam were other enlightening data for the research that provide information to examine students' improvement.

In the reports gathered after the mid-term exam, students generally focused on their own individual performance and development. They indicated that this course provided them awareness and ability of interpretation of signs, which they learn unconsciously around them; and they also stated that the course improved their creativity. Some samples of the students' statements are given below.

“With this lesson, we learned to interpret the things that we observe like colours, pictures, symbols differently. We learned to use our creativity and search the meanings of the objects and we learned to look at the things from other sides and with this lesson, now we can notice details that we can't notice before. Our creativity improved.”

“My semiotics knowledge will support my ability of transferring the discourse meaning of language structures in my future teaching career. Not only I will give them surface meaning but also deep meanings underlying them especially in reading classes which generally includes short stories and literary. I will focus on

what people intend to say rather than what they say. I can express my thoughts better now. So it contributed to my communicative skills which I will need while dealing with my students and their families.”

“Being interested in semiotics helps us to empower intellectually. So we become more creative and we assist to our own students about critical thinking. Thought richness appears on some subjects by the help of this thinking.”

The other important issue considered in the reports is the students view about culture and semiotic relations. The students stated that semiotics is directly related to the culture and they need to teach culture while teaching target language, English. The views of the teacher candidates on this issue are given below:

“While teaching a language, we can use these semiotics signs of the culture to make meaning clear and to make line between language and its culture. By doing so, learning will be more meaningful.”

“Especially in ELT departments, it should be studied since it is related with the culture of the target language, English; it provides the ELT students awareness and lastly it makes the teachers of English use it effectively during their courses.”

“In ELT; teaching target language culture is also very important. Culture plays a vital role in learning. Since a particular culture is interwoven with the social signs and social codes, educational settings are inevitably shaped by these cultural elements. A foreign language is the product of a foreign culture so it is formed by different social codes and social signs which the students and teachers should be aware of.

It can be said that, throughout the course, the students figured out that this course can be easily integrated to ELT and they need semiotic as an ability to become more successful at their teaching proficiency while teaching different skills. Some of the views of the students are given below:

“That is to say, taking a semiotics course is a must in ELT classes to become aware of the meaning beyond the words. By examining around us and making the students become aware some of the signs around them, we can easily implement semiotics in our classes.”

“Semiotics should be studied in ELT is the fact that it aims to provide the ELT students with literary competence and make each of them a meaning maker”

“Semiotics is useful for understanding our environment for that reason we can use semiotics in our jobs as an English teacher. We make our students understand things around them exactly and find English learning cheerful and easy.”

4.1.2.2. Students’ Reports after the Final Exam

In the reports gathered after the final exam, the students pointed out the importance of semiotics for ELT and teaching proficiency. The reports showed that the students perceived semiotics as a must to be learn at teacher training process. Some sample statements of the students on this issue are presented below:

“Semiotics helps us to gain awareness about the signs around us. ELT teacher can exploit this awareness in teaching activities including proverbs, idioms, literature. Teaching about cultural signs in text may help students to understand the text, proverbs, and idioms. Hence students develop positive attitude towards English and its culture. Some similarities between English culture and students’ own culture may also help students to comprehend the lesson. In order that a teacher can

arrange the lesson considering these issues, he should have knowledge about semiotics. This ability will also help teachers in having good communication with his students, because making meaning and understanding people and everything around us will be easier. Thanks to teacher, students also become meaning makers.

“In ELT, we can teach abstract objects with the semiotics to make them more clear for the students. Many idioms or proverbs can be taught with semiotics. This provides students enjoyable time and clear and permanent knowledge about this subject.”

“To teach our students signs, semiotics is an important issue. Reading of signs gives us to empower over the people. In ELT giving the students an ability of reading signs means to give them the power.”

“It is useful to make the meaning more concrete and meaningful. It is useful for especially young learners who are unaware of the abstract units. It is an advantage of being aware of the signs and symbols around us. We can be meaning-makers by means of using semiotics in ELT.”

“.... I strongly believe that this awareness affects our creativity and this makes us a successful teacher. Because, creativity is one of the most important factors of being a teacher to make our lessons more enjoyable for the student.”

Additionally, the students focused on how semiotics can be affective on learners they will teach when they become teachers. They made internalized the learning process of semiotics. Thus, as they are both the students and the teacher candidates, they easily made a deduction for teaching more effectively in future. The following statements are the students' views towards the learners of English:

“Students can improve their analytical thinking by the help of the semiotics. They can think deeply. This leads to their self-confidence. While they are in communication, they can be more self-confident.”

“By the help of the semiotics the students will be able to understand the texts better. They will be able to see the hindered meanings in the texts. Also, we can teach the culture of the target language better with the help of the semiotics as the language cannot be separated from its culture.”

“It helps students to become aware of the roles played by themselves and others in social areas.”

On one hand, it can be easily seen that in the reports gathered after the midterm exam, students mostly focused on their own development and the need of semiotics in teaching/learning process. Throughout the course, due to their worries about teaching English, Semiotic analysis provided an insight for students. On the other hand, in the reports gathered after the final exam, it was seen that students completed the internalization process for the inquiry *“Why learning semiotics”*. They mainly pointed out that learning and teaching semiotic can be must for ELT departments. They thought that if they learn semiotics, they can be more affective teachers.

4.2. Discussion

In this study, considering contextual features and cultural aspects of signs, it was aimed to discuss the insights of semiotics (through the emphasis on educational semiotics) by combining both foreign language teaching and text analysis. Moreover, by creating awareness about signs within a context, it was aimed to observe whether semiotic analysis helps the enhancement of learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels when learners try to learn foreign language. In order to see whether or not the course has improved the students' success in analyzing the texts before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the implementation procedure and examine the impact of the course which aimed to develop students' insights of educational semiotics. The results of the scores of pre-test and post- test and also the results of the scores of the

mid-term exam, which was applied during the implementation process, and the final exam, which was applied after the implementation process were compared. The students' reports which were gathered in the mid-term and the final exam were analyzed in order to examine students' improvement. In the light of the statistical analysis results and the reports results the research questions are discussed in this part.

The findings of the study reveal that students, who were treated by using semiotic issues, have become more professional more interested in analyzing contextual elements. That's to say there is a development in the students' performance levels while analyzing the texts by using semiotic elements for comprehending and constructing meaning and in their language skills.

There was a statistically significant difference between pre-test ($\bar{x} = 33.42$) and post-test ($\bar{x} = 81.09$). The findings were shown in the table 5, 5-A and 5-B. This shows that students were more successful in the post-test than in the pre-test. Besides, the fourth question (attitude question) in the pre-test and the post-test was analyzed separately. It was observed that there is no significance difference between pretest attitude question ($\bar{x} = 4.47$) and posttest attitude question ($\bar{x} = 4.52$) that's to say there is no difference between the perceptions of the students before the session and after the session. This may be resulting from the shortage of implementation procedure which is also specified in the restrictions part (1.5). As students haven't attended to semiotics course before, they learned how to make semiotic analysis, internalized the process and made practices in four-month period.

Later, the final exams, which were applied after the implementation procedure, were analyzed in order to compare the results scores of mid-term and final exams and see whether there is an improvement in students' success. It was seen that there was a statistically significant difference between the mid-term exam ($\bar{x} = 72.9$) and the final exam ($\bar{x} = 84.5$). The findings were shown in the table 7, 7-

A and 7-B. This means that students were more successful in the final exam than in the mid-term exam.

Lastly, the students' reports collected in the research process were used to compare the findings of the research. Whereas students mostly focused on their own development and the need of semiotics in teaching/learning process in the reports gathered after the midterm exam, it was seen that students mainly pointed out that learning and teaching semiotic can be must for ELT departments in the reports gathered after the final exam. The reason for this difference is that; at the beginning of the course sessions, the students weren't sure why they need to learn semiotics. Throughout the course they become aware of the semiotic system and need for signs in order to understand and analyze texts. Firstly, they gave importance to the course just for their own improvement. Then, as they internalized the learning process, they figured out that it is important for their teaching proficiency and semiotic course should be a must for ELT departments.

On the other side, throughout the implementation process the researcher observed the students in order to find out their reflection to the semiotic analysis in the course. Most of the time, the students eagerly participated the course. Using previously presented authentic materials (common advertisement texts, texts with the signs include well known characteristics of cultures etc.) activated students' memory before they participated to the course. Then, they discussed on the semiotic issues while doing text analysis and other semiotic analysis (like picture and advertisement analysis). Considering semiotic issues, they liked to talk and write about cultural codes and specific signs in the target culture and their native culture by comparing them. As a result, it can be said that, in class discussions and writing activities had a positive effect on their speaking and writing skills. Moreover, the students were successful in analyzing the texts by using signs and they liked to do it. They wanted to learn more about sign systems of different cultures. Doing analysis in the texts contributed to their reading skills. While analyzing different cultural signs, they learned new vocabulary items. Since, new words are reinforced with relevant signs, the result was assumed to be the long term coding of signs. Thus, they also learn how

to encode new vocabulary items in order to accelerate the learning and teaching process. Since, signs not only refer to the specific vocabulary items, but also the grammar in used with contextual clues, this also helped with the long term coding of certain grammar structures to the memory. The meaningful contextualization contributed positively to learning process of vocabulary and grammar.

In conclusion, it can be said that presenting of the signs of the target culture plays an important role in understanding and reconstructing the texts. If students learn how to decode signs, which are hindered in the text, they can easily understand the target culture, code new signs, compose meanings and be included to the production process. With the results of the statistical scores, the results of the reports and observation process it can be said that assumptions of the research that semiotic analysis may help learners to enhance foreign language learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels have become fact. Through systematic controlled research, students have become more professional, more interested in analyzing contextual elements. The successful implementation procedure, course instruction and new syllabus design which include classroom practices and different kinds of texts analysis on the base of semiotic analysis and were designed according to the objectives and aims of the research questions for the participants have a positive effect on the results, which were assumed and became fact.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusion

In this study, action research was designed in order to see whether students can become more professional, more interested in analyzing contextual elements, while practicing semiotic analysis through systematic controlled action research. In this chapter, to provide an overall view to the study, conclusion and suggestions for further studies and limitations will be presented.

In Chapter 1, the problem, aim, importance, restrictions, the main concepts of the study and the abbreviations were revealed. The problem of this thesis study is focused on the ambiguity of the signs in the texts. Signs are the arbitrary items which create ambiguity for readers while comprehending texts. Considering contextual features and cultural aspects of signs, this study aimed at discussing the insights of semiotics (through the emphasis on educational semiotics) by combining both foreign language teaching and text analysis. Moreover, by creating awareness about signs within a context, it was aimed to observe whether semiotic analysis helps the enhancement of learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels when learners try to learn foreign language at learning process. In order to perform the study, the research was restricted to twenty-four fourth year students attending the ELT department at the Faculty of Education, Trakya University.

In Chapter 2, firstly the language was described with some interrelated areas within which language teaching and learning may be actualized. Language studies were mentioned historically regarding signs in terms of being part of a

communication and some examples from ancient times were given as supported ideas. After giving information about language and language studies, function of linguistics and linguists were discussed. As Aksan said (1995) considering the historical process, it was seen that first of all practical worries came to the fore, which leded linguistics studies. Then the historical development of linguistics studies was described in a holistic view in order to see the changing status of linguistics as a subject to many categories. Linguistics has been subject to many categories. Due to the fact that, language perspective varied, naturally different methods are used to form linguistics fields. Nowadays, rhetoric, pragmatics and text linguistics are also added to the traditional categories such as phonetics, phonology, stylistics, syntax and semantics. In the frame of interaction among categories, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, scientific linguistics and applied linguistics can be mentioned (Kıran, A. E., Korkut, E., Ağildere, S., 2003). Later, main focus was on semiotics and language education. Historical background of semiotics regarding theories of semioticians and semiotics by tracing its development from linguistics Saussurian and semiotician Peirce, the notion of sign, key concepts and terms of semiotics were introduced. Contemporary semiotics was discussed considering major semioticians; Barthes and Eco. After literature of language, linguistics and semiotic were revised with their own characteristics, the use of semiotics as a means in language education was examined. Contributions of semiotics to language teaching & learning and culture teaching & learning were reexamined regarding the role of semiotics, culture and their value from several aspects. Moreover in this chapter, language education and teacher training and syllabus design were mentioned in a detailed way.

In Chapter 3, the research method, participants, data collection, data collection instruments and research procedure, syllabus design and data analysis were presented. In order to see the difference between the students' performance levels while analyzing the texts by using semiotic elements for comprehending and constructing meaning and to examine whether there is a significant development in language skills of the learners who were treated by using semiotic issues, action

research was applied. The participants of this research were fourth year twenty-four students attending in the ELT department at the Faculty of Education, Trakya University. In order to provide answers to the research questions; “Does analyzing semiotic texts has a positive effect on the students’ performance levels while comprehending and constructing meaning during foreign language learning process?” and “Is there a significant development in language skills of the learners who were treated by using semiotic issues?”, firstly pre-test was administrated to the students at the beginning of the course sessions before the treatment. The sessions which include classroom practices and different kinds of texts analysis on the base of semiotic analysis were designed according to the objectives and aims of the research questions for the participants. Then, the sessions were applied for 8 weeks. Finally, at the end of the implementation sessions, the students were given the same test (the pre test) as a post-test in order to determine the difference between the pre-test and post-test results; thus, decoding texts both in surface and deep structures during language learning process was assessed. In addition to these, classroom observations and the students’ reports which reflect their ideas on semiotic analysis were gathered throughout the session process. The syllabus design is mainly based on different types of texts to implement semiotic analysis. The previous studies on the semiotics and educational linguistics were used as a frame work for planning the sessions and syllabus for the course. In relation to the research questions, pretest - posttest and mid-term final exams results were analyzed statistically by using *paired sample t-test* to assess the success and determine the significance between pretest - posttest and mid-term - final exams and in order to determine whether semiotic analyses help learners to enhance foreign language learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels.

In Chapter 4, findings of the research were given in details statistically. In order to answer the questions of the study, the pre-test, post-test scores and mid-term, final exams scores were compared and *Repeated Measures Design of Paired Sample t-test* was applied. It was seen that there was a statistically significant difference between pre-test ($\bar{x} = 33.42$) and post-test ($\bar{x} = 81.09$) in favor of post-test and mid-term exam ($\bar{x} = 72.9$) and the final exam ($\bar{x} = 84.5$) in favor of final exams. This

shows that students were more successful in the post-test than in the pre-test and in the final exam than in the mid-term exam. Lastly, the students' reports collected in the research process were used to compare the findings of the research. Whereas students mostly focused on their own development and the need of semiotics in teaching/learning process in the reports gathered after the midterm exam, it was seen that students mainly pointed out that learning and teaching semiotic can be must for ELT departments in the reports gathered after the final exam.

In conclusion, with the results of the statistical scores and the results of the reports it can be said that the assumption of the research that semiotic analysis may help learners to enhance foreign language learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels have been realized. Through systematic controlled research, students have become more professional, more interested in analyzing contextual elements.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Studies

With respect to the findings of the study mentioned so far, following suggestions can be offered to the academicians, researchers, program designers and teachers dealing with teaching foreign language.

In the study, the findings proved the positive contributions of the implementation of semiotics to the enhancement of foreign language learning both at cognitive and meta-cognitive levels. But, generalizing these findings requires more studies with further points of views.

To conduct repeated studies with different groups may be required as this study contains only 21 participants from the same group.

In this study the action research which was applied for 8 weeks can be repeated. In this sense, further studies may reveal whether there will exist differences between the students' performance levels while analyzing the texts by using semiotic elements for comprehending and constructing meaning.

The pre-test and the post-test were applied to only one group. Since, there is one group who attended the sessions. It would be better to implement the procedure and apply the pre-test and the post-test to two groups: experimental and control groups.

Program designers may include semiotic issues in their ELT materials in order to raise the students' performance levels while analyzing the texts by using semiotic elements for comprehending and constructing meaning. Further it may provide instructors different models of teaching and assist them to gain insights for analyzing contextual elements.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

The number of the participants of the study was limited with 21 students. Conducting the study with a larger sample size would permit a greater certainty about the findings.

Students' age, gender, social and educational backgrounds were not taken into consideration. Considering more characteristics of students' would give more rich data which develop different point of views for the study.

The implementation of the present study lasted only 8 weeks. The period should be longer in order to see the longlasting effects.

In this study only one group of ELT students participated. This study can be enhanced by including control group of students.

The course was carried out in an elective course. Such kind of research should be implemented as a compulsory subject for the students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

SEMIOTICS PRE-TEST & POST-TEST

Name: _____

Date: _____

PART I: READING ASSESMENT

A- The following is a passage of a reading from semiotics. **Answer the questions considering the following passage.**

“Symbols are not proxy for their objects but are *vehicles for the conception of objects*... In talking *about* things we have conceptions of them, not the things themselves; and *it is the conceptions, not the things, that symbols directly mean*. Behaviour towards conceptions is what words normally evoke; this is the typical process of thinking” (Langer 1951, 61).

Considering our society's use of symbols like those commonly found in advertising, think about an advertising symbol.

1- Describe a symbol and tell the company that uses it:

2- Explain the meaning of the symbol:

B- The following passage is **Alice Walker’s** modern classic “*Everyday Use*”. It tells the story of a mother and her two daughters’ conflicting ideas about their identities and ancestry. The mother narrates the story of the day one daughter, Dee, visits from college and clashes with the other daughter, Maggie, over the possession of some heirloom quilts. **Answer the questions considering the following passage.**

.....

"Oh, Mama!" she cried. Then turned to Hakim-a-barber. "I never knew how lovely these benches are. You can feel the rump prints," she said, running her hands underneath her and along the bench. Then she gave a sigh and her hand closed over Grandma Dee's butter dish. "That's it!" she said. "I knew there was something I wanted to ask you if I could have." She jumped up from the table and went over in the corner where the churn stood, the milk in it crabber by now. She looked at the *churn* and looked at it.

"This churn top is what I need," she said. "Didn't Uncle Buddy whittle it out of a tree you all used to have?"

"Yes," I said.

"Un huh," she said happily. "And I want the dasher, too."

"Uncle Buddy whittle that, too?" asked the barber.

Dee (Wangero) looked up at me.

"Aunt Dee's first husband whittled the dash," said Maggie so low you almost couldn't hear her. "His name was Henry, but they called him Stash."

"Maggie's brain is like an elephant's," Wangero said, laughing. "I can use the chute top as a centerpiece for the alcove table," she said, sliding a plate over the chute, "and I'll think of something artistic to do with the dasher."

When she finished wrapping the dasher the handle stuck out. I took it for a moment in my hands. You didn't even have to look close to see where hands pushing the dasher up and down to make butter had left a kind of sink in the wood. In fact, there were a lot of small sinks; you could see where thumbs and fingers had sunk into the wood. It was beautiful light yellow wood, from a tree that grew in the yard where Big Dee and Stash had lived.

After dinner Dee (Wangero) went to the trunk at the foot of my bed and started rifling through it. Maggie hung back in the kitchen over the dishpan. Out came Wangero with two *quilts*. They had been pieced by Grandma Dee and then Big Dee and me had hung them on the quilt frames on the front porch and quilted them. One was in the Lone Star pattern. The other was Walk Around the Mountain. In both of them were scraps of dresses Grandma Dee had won fifty and more years ago. Bits and pieces of Grandpa Jattell's Paisley shirts. And one teeny faded blue piece, about

the size of a penny matchbox, that was from Great Grandpa Ezra's uniform that he wore in the Civil War.

"Mama," Wanegro said sweet as a bird. "Can I have these old quilts?"

I heard something fall in the kitchen, and a minute later the kitchen door slammed.

"Why don't you take one or two of the others?" I asked. "These old things was just done by me and Big Dee from some tops your grandma pieced before she died."

"No," said Wangero. "I don't want those. They are stitched around the borders by machine."

"That'll make them last better," I said.

"That's not the point," said Wangero. "These are all pieces of dresses Grandma used to wear. She did all this stitching by hand. Imag' ine!" She held the quilts securely in her arms, stroking them.

"Some of the pieces, like those lavender ones, come from old clothes her mother handed down to her," I said, moving up to touch the quilts. Dee (Wangero) moved back just enough so that I couldn't reach the quilts. They already belonged to her.

"Imagine!" she breathed again, clutching them closely to her bosom.

"The truth is," I said, "I promised to give them quilts to Maggie, for when she marries John Thomas."

She gasped like a bee had stung her.

"Maggie can't appreciate these quilts!" she said. "She'd probably be backward enough to put them to everyday use."

"I reckon she would," I said. "God knows I been saving 'em for long enough with nobody using 'em. I hope she will!" I didn't want to bring up how I had offered Dee (Wangero) a quilt when she went away to college. Then she had told they were old-fashioned, out of style.

"But they're priceless!" she was saying now, furiously; for she has a temper. "Maggie would put them on the bed and in five years they'd be in rags. Less than that!"

"She can always make some more," I said. "Maggie knows how to quilt."

Dee (Wangero) looked at me with hatred. "You just will not understand. The point is these quilts, these quilts!"

"Well," I said, stumped. "What would you do with them?"

"Hang them," she said. As if that was the only thing you could do with quilts.

Maggie by now was standing in the door. I could almost hear the sound her feet made as they scraped over each other.

"She can have them, Mama," she said, like somebody used to never winning anything, or having anything reserved for her. "I can 'member Grandma Dee without the quilts."

I looked at her hard. She had filled her bottom lip with checkerberry snuff and gave her face a kind of dopey, hangdog look. It was Grandma Dee and Big Dee who taught her how to quilt herself. She stood there with her scarred hands hidden in the folds of her skirt. She looked at her sister with something like fear but she wasn't mad at her. This was Maggie's portion. This was the way she knew God to work.

When I looked at her like that something hit me in the top of my head and ran down to the soles of my feet. Just like when I'm in church and the spirit of God touches me and I get happy and shout. I did something I never done before: hugged Maggie to me, then dragged her on into the room, snatched the quilts out of Miss Wangero's hands and dumped them into Maggie's lap. Maggie just sat there on my bed with her mouth open.

"Take one or two of the others," I said to Dee.

But she turned without a word and went out to Hakim~a~barber.

"You just don't understand," she said, as Maggie and I came out to the car.

"What don't I understand?" I wanted to know.

"Your heritage," she said, and then she turned to Maggie, kissed her, and said, "You ought to try to make something of yourself, too, Maggie. It's really a new day for us. But from the way you and Mama still live you'd never know it."

She put on some sunglasses that hid everything above the tip of her nose and chin.

Maggie smiled; maybe at the sunglasses. But a real smile, not scared. After we watched the car dust settle I asked Maggie to bring me a dip of snuff. And then the two of us sat there just enjoying, until it was time to go in the house and go to bed

3- What kind of a passage is it?

4- How would you rate the difficulty of the passage?

- a- Very easy
- b- Somewhat easy
- c- Easy
- d- Somewhat difficult
- e- Difficult
- f- Very difficult

5- What roles do the following objects and characters play as symbols in “Everyday Use”?

- a- Quilts: _____
- b- Butter churn: _____
- c- Maggie: _____
- d- Dee: _____
- e- Mama: _____
- f- The title “Everyday Use”: _____

PART II Picture Analyze

1 - Comment on the following picture considering the semiotic issues.



Appendix 2

MID-TERM EXAM

Name-Surname:

Date:

Number-Class:

Duration: 50'

A- CHOOSE THE CORRECT ALTERNATIVE (4 x 8 = 32P)

1- Which of the following is true?

- a- The sign and the signifier make up the signified.
- b- Denotations are the smallest unit of meaning.
- c- The signifier and the signified make up the sign.
- d- Connotations are the smallest unit of meaning.

2- Which of the following best describes the difference between denotation and connotation?

- a- Denotation is the thing signified, whereas connotation is the signifier of the thing.
- b- Connotation is the thing signified, whereas denotation is the signifier of the thing.
- c- Connotation is the simplest, most basic relation between a signifier and signified, whereas denotation builds secondary associations by turning a sign into the signifier of another sign.
- d- Denotation is the simplest, most basic relation between a signifier and signified, whereas connotation builds secondary associations by turning a sign into the signifier of another sign.

3- Which of the following is the best example of a connotation?

- a- A picture of a man in an airport suggests a man in an airport.
- b- The word "dog" suggests the animal that goes "bow wow."
- c- A black suit suggests death and mourning.
- d- A cartoon image of "Dilbert" suggests the fictional character Dilbert.

4- Which of the following is an example of metonymy?

- a- A rose stands for passion.
- b- A picture of a man in a sweater suggests "sitcom Dad."
- c- An advertising picture of an elegant hand stands for a beautiful woman.

d- A model posed smiling with her finger in her mouth suggests a calculated childishness.

5- Which of the following is an example of metaphor?

- a- 'A slip of the foot you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over.'
- b- 'A diplomat must always think twice before he says nothing'
- c- 'It is not enough to aim; you must hit'
- d- 'The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science.'

6- Which of the following is an example of synecdoche?

- a- She owns a Picasso.
- b- Two heads are better than one.
- c- Nixon bombed Hanoi.
- d- The ham sandwich wants his check.

7- Which of the following is an example of irony?

- a- I'm one of the suits. You can ask me.
- b- Life is like a box of chocolates for me.
- c- Teachers open the door. You enter by yourself.
- d- 'There's a crowd here' I can't see anybody at the office.

8- A myth is:

- a- A fantastic story people tell each other when they don't know the real explanations for events.
- b- The simplest, most basic form of sign system, out of which all other sign systems are constructed.
- c- A popular but largely untrue story about life shared by many people in society.
- d- A complex cluster of connotations frequently associated with an oft-repeated story.

B- Find the names of the relevant semioticians (2 x 4 = 8P)

a- His theory is one of the divergent traditions in semiotics. According to the linguist (1857-1913); *semiology* was 'a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life': _____

- b- His theory is one of the divergent traditions in semiotics. For the philosopher (1839-1914) *semiotic* was the 'formal doctrine of signs' which was closely related to Logic. _____
- c- He was involved in the establishment of both '*the Moscow school*' and '*the Prague school*' and he was also associated with '*the Copenhagen school*' from 1939 – 49. He was much influenced by Pierce. _____
- d- Semiotics began to become a major approach to cultural studies in the late 1960s, partly as a result of the work of him. His popular essays in a collection entitled *Mythologies*, followed in the 1970s and 1980s by many of his other writings, greatly increased scholarly awareness of this approach. _____

C- One of the broadest definitions is that of Umberto Eco, who states that 'semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign'. Semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stands for' something else. In a semiotic sense, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects. Discuss. (20P) (State your expressions briefly and clearly!)

D- Semiotics is not widely institutionalized as an academic discipline. It is a field of study involving many different theoretical stances and methodological tools. In which fields can we see the semiotics implementations? Considering the semiotics implementations, give two examples for two fields and explain them. (5 x 2 = 10 P)

E- Considering the three orders of signification in relation to a photograph of Michael Jackson explain the photograph at a denotative level, a connotative level and a mythic level. (5 x 3 = 15 P)



At the denotative level

At the connotative level

At the mythic level

F- Considering Roland **Barthes Theory** of Narrative in Media, explain the following ad by identifying the signifier, the signified and coded message of it. (5 x 3 = 15 P)



The signifier:

The signified:

Coded message:

GOOD LUCK!

Appendix 3

FINAL EXAM

Name-Surname:

Date:

Number-Class:

Duration: 50'

Answer the questions 1 and 2 according to the following narrative “Little Red Riding – hood by Charles Perrault”.

PART I

Once upon a time there lived in a certain village a little country girl, the prettiest creature ever seen. Her mother was very fond of her, and her grandmother doted on her still more. This good woman had made for her a little red riding-hood, which became the girl so well that everybody called her Little Red Riding-Hood.

One day her mother, having made some custards, said to her:

"Go, my dear, and see how your grandmamma does, for I hear she has been very ill; carry her custard and this little pot of butter."

PART II

Little Red Riding-Hood set out immediately to go to her grandmother, who lived in another village.

As she was going through the wood she met with Gaffer Wolf, who had a very great mind to eat her up, but he durst not, because of some fagot makers hard by in the forest. He asked her where she was going. The poor child, who did not know that it was dangerous to stop and listen to a wolf, said to him:

"I am going to see my grandmamma and carry her a custard and a little pot of butter from my mamma."

"Does she live far off?" said the Wolf.

"Oh! yes," answered Little Red Riding-Hood; "it is beyond that mill you see there, at the first house in the village."

"Well," said the Wolf, "I'll go and see her, too. I'll go this way and you go that, and we shall see who will be there soonest."

The Wolf began to run as fast as he could, taking the nearest way, and the little girl went by the longest, diverting herself in gathering nuts, running after butterflies, and making nosegays of such little flowers as she met with. The Wolf was not long before he got to the old woman's house.

PART III He knocked at the door-tap, tap.

"Who's there?"

"Your grandchild, Little Red Riding-Hood," replied the Wolf, imitating her voice; "who has brought you a custard and a little pot of butter sent you by mamma."

The good grandmother, who was in bed, because she was ill, cried out:

"Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up."

The Wolf pulled the bobbin, and the door opened, and he fell upon the good woman and ate her up in a moment, for it was above three days that he had not touched a bit.

PART IV

He then shut the door and went into the grandmother's bed, expecting Little Red Riding-Hood, who came some time afterward and knocked at the door-tap, tap.

"Who's there?"

Little Red Riding-Hood, hearing the big voice of the Wolf, was at first afraid; but believing her grandmother had got a cold and was hoarse, answered:

"This is your grandchild, Little Red Riding-Hood, who has brought you a custard and a little pot of butter mamma sends you."

The Wolf cried out to her, softening his voice as much as he could:

"Pull the bobbin and the latch will go up."

Little Red Riding-Hood pulled the bobbin and the door opened.

The wolf, seeing her come in, said to her, hiding himself under the bedclothes:

"Put the custard and the little pot of butter upon the stool, and come and lie down with me."

Little Red Riding-Hood undressed herself and went into bed, where, being greatly amazed to see how her grandmother looked in her night clothes, she said to her:

"Grandmamma, what great arms you've got!"

"That is the better to hug you, my dear."

"Grandmamma, what great legs you've got!"

"The better to run, my child."

"Grandmamma, what great ears you've got!"

"The better to hear, my child!"

"Grandmamma, what great eyes you've got!"

"The better to see, my child."

"Grandmamma, what great teeth you've got!"

"To eat you up!"

And saying these words, the wicked Wolf fell upon Little Red Riding- Hood and ate her all up.

Answer the questions 3 and 4 according to the following proverbs:

(A) "A child's life is like a piece of paper on which every person leaves mark." *Chinese Proverb*

(B) "If you scatter thorns, don't go barefoot." *Italian Proverb*

(C) "A kind word never broke anyone's." *Irish Proverb*

(D) "He who doesn't look ahead remains behind." *Mexican Proverb*

- 1- Find 5 signs in the narrative and explain what they symbolize. (10p.)
- 2- Describe the binary oppositions and explain it briefly. (5p.)
- 3- Explain the proverbs considering semiotic signs. (10p.)
- 4- What are the cultural codes hindered in these proverbs? Describe one of them. (10p.)
- 5- Write the advantages of semiotics in ELT. (15p.)

GOOD LUCK!

Appendix 4

Figures

Figure 1: The relationship between the signifier signified



Figure 2: The object and the concept

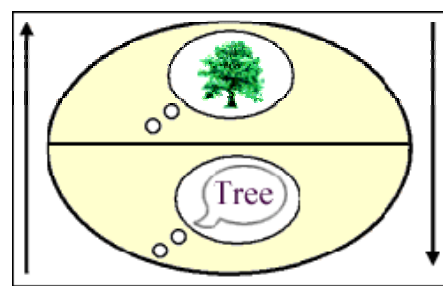


Figure 3: Peirce's model of sign

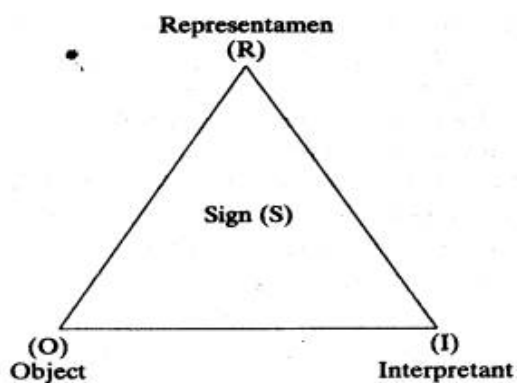
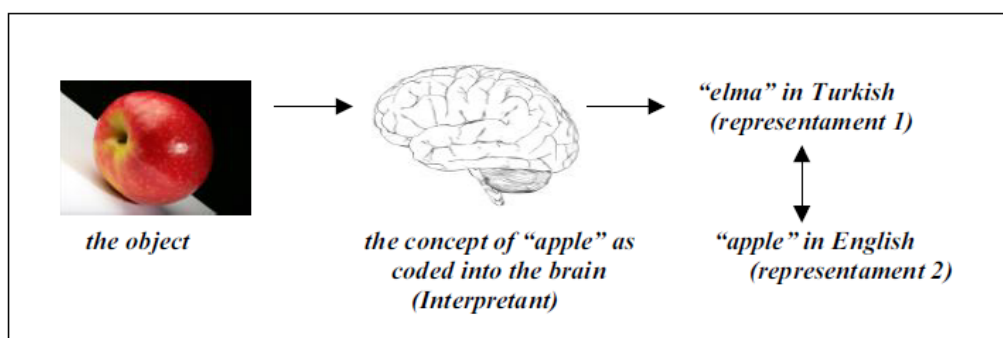


Figure 4: The processing of target language item with a semiotic perspective Peirce's model of sign



Appendix 4

Tables

Table 1: Approaches (Brown, 1995)

APPROACHES	WAYS OF DEFINING WHAT THE STUDENTS NEED TO LEARN
Classical approach	Humanism: students need to read the classics
Grammar-translation approach	Students need to learn with economy of time and effort
Direct approach	Students need to learn communication so they should use only second language in class
Audiolingual approach	Students need operant conditioning and behavioral modification to learn language
Communicative approach	Students must be able to express their intentions, that is, they must learn the meanings that are important to them

Table 2: Syllabuses (Brown, 1995)

SYLLABUSES	WAYS OF ORGANIZING COURSES AND MATERIALS
Structural	Grammatical and phonological structures are the organizing principles- sequenced from easy to difficult or frequent

Situational	Situations (such as at the bank, at the supermarket, at a restaurant, and so forth) from the organizing principle-sequenced by the likelihood students will encounter them (structural sequence may be in background)
Topical	Topics or themes (such as health, food, clothing, and so forth)form the organizing principle-sequenced by the likelihood that students will encounter them (structural sequence may be in background)
Functional	Functions (such as identifying, reporting, correcting, describing, and so forth) are the organizing principle-sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of each function (structural and situational sequence may be in background)
Notional	Conceptual categories called notions (such as duration, quantity, location, and so forth) are the basis of organization- sequenced by some sense of schronology or usefulness of each Notion (structural and situational sequence may be in background)
Skills	Skills (such as listening for gist, listening for main ideas, listening for inferences, scanning a reading passage for specific information, and so forth) serve as the basis for organization- sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness for each skill (structural and situational sequence may be in background)
Task	Task or activity-based categories (such as drawing maps, following directions, following instructions, and so forth) serve as the basis for organization- sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of notions (structural and situational sequence may be in background)

Table 3: The Implementation Procedure

Week	Time-table	Content
1st week	09.10.2009	<i>Pre-Test</i> Theoretical Course Instruction
2nd week	16.10.2009	Theoretical Course Instruction
3rd week	23.10.2009	Emblems and Logos
4th week	30.10.2009	Semiotics Analysis of Pictures and Advertisements
5th week	20.11.2009	Semiotic Elements in Vocabulary Items: Proverbs and Idioms
6th week	11.12.2009	Applied Semiotic Operations “The Name of the Rose” by Umberto ECO
7th week	18.12.2009	Descriptive semiotics: Caricatures and characterization
8th week	08.01.2010	Semiotics of Narrative “Red Riding Hood” <i>Post-Test</i>

Table 4: The course syllabus

COURSE NAME & DATES	PURPOSE	COURSE DESCRIPTION
COURSE I: Introduction to Semiotics (Theoretical Course Instruction) 09.10.2009	To provide a basic introduction to Semiotics and information on the complexity of novice teachers’ learning and use of knowledge of	Theories of semiotics and semiotics were introduced to students by tracing its development from Saussurian linguistics and examining various theories of such semioticians as Roland Barthes, C.S. Peirce, and Umberto Eco. Besides, systems of verbal and non-verbal communication in areas such as

	semiotics.	advertising, cinema, gesture, language, art, literature and the media were discussed.
COURSE II: Theories of the Sign, Types of signs, semiotics codes (Theoretical Course Instruction) 16.10.2009	To deal with the major theories of semiotics, representation, and interpretation in a critical-historical way and focus especially on the ideas of Saussure and Peirce.	Definition of the sign from the ancient world up to and including the 20th Century, the ways in which semioticians have problematized two key distinctions: that at the level of the signifier between the literal and the figurative and that at the level of the signified between denotation and connotation, types of signs and semiotics codes were studied.
COURSE III: Semiotics analysis of Emblems and Logos 23.10.2009	To teach how to encode and decode the contexts in which logos and emblems are referred.	Emblems and logos which symbolize a feeling and a belief, a movement or an idea were presented to students and asked them to encode and decode emblems and logos by using sign theories. Students were required to bring some logo and emblem samples before coming to the class. At the end of the course, the students analysed the emblems and logos semiotically and examined the signification process
COURSE IV: Semiotics analysis of pictures 30.10.2009	To make aware of the different social codes and signs on the paintings by making semiotic analyses.	Paintings of leading painters (Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali) were introduced; background information about them and their arts were given to students. Samples of semiotic analyses of paintings (Akerson, 2005) were presented to students and taught how to analyse

		pictures semiotically without criticizing the painting and painters.
COURSE IV: Semiotic Elements in Advertisements 30.10.2009	To provide a structure of analyzing the way that sign systems operate to create meaning in the context of advertisements and to introduce the idea of a <i>metastructure</i>	Students were presented some advertisements and their texts. Considering Roland <i>Barthes Theory</i> of Narrative in Media, (cited in Akerson, 2005) advertisement samples were explained by identifying the signifier, the signified and coded message of them. Besides, the idea of metastructure, in which meaning is not just decoded with one structure, but transferred to create another new meaning, was introduced to students to decode signs.
COURSE V: Semiotic Elements in Vocabulary Items: Proverbs and Idioms 20.11.2009	To provide sufficient input to understand the meaning of proverbs and idioms by using the semiotic elements and relating the proverbs to similar concepts in their own languages.	<i>Proverbs</i> and <i>idioms</i> which possess semiotic elements were studied by visualizing the meanings of them within students' minds and students were taught how to accelerate the learning process in the long term memory of them. Additionally, proverbs from different cultures and some basic idioms were given to the students to analyze by using semiotic issues and compare with proverbs in their native language.
COURSE VI: Applied Semiotic Operations: Narrative Analysis 11.12.2009	To teach how to encode codes to understand the narratives better.	Parts from the novel "The Name of The Rose" was analyzed through the template of semiotic analysis and cultural elements. Before reading a part from the novel, background information about the author "Umberto ECO", who is one of

		the major semioticians, was introduced to the students by eliciting the students' prior knowledge of the novel and the author. At the end of the course students were asked comprehension questions which require the answers with codes from the novel.
COURSE VII: Descriptive semiotics: Analysis of caricatures 18.12.2009	To teach semiotics as a method of reading cartoons.	The analyses of Caricature; Ramiz: Tombul Teyze (Akerson, 2005) was introduced to the students. The focus was on types of codes. Caricatures which students had brought to the classroom and Turhan SELÇUK's caricatures (Selçuk, 1995) with the thematic of Human Rights were analyzed by using semiotics issues.
COURSE VIII: Semiotics of Narrative; Narrative Analyze 08.01.2010	To provide an introduction to the approaches that semiotics has developed toward the problems of textual interpretation and to teach how to make a structural analysis in the narrative.	How to assign meanings to the textual world was studied by focusing on the principle of the interpreter's centrality in the process of meaning construction. Narrative analysis of Red Riding Hood, through signification theory of Greimas (Rıfat, 2009) was studied. The Semiotic Square, which was developed by <u>Algirdas J. Greimas</u> , a <u>Lithuanian linguist</u> and semiotician was introduced to students in order to use it in the structural analysis of the relationships between <u>semiotic signs</u> in the narrative.

Table 5: T-test results for pretest and posttest**T-Test**

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	pretest	33,4286	21	12,29866	2,68379
	posttest	81,0952	21	12,42137	2,71057

Paired Samples Test							
Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	pretest - posttest	-47,66667	11,28421	2,46242	-19,358	20	,000

Table 5-A: Mean Values and Deviation Score of Pre-test and Post-test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	21	33.4286	12.2
Posttest	21	81.0952	12.4

Table 5-B: The Difference between Pre-test and Post-test

Pre-test,	Sd	Df	p
post-test	20	-19.3	,000

Table 6: T-test results for attitude questions of pretest and posttest**T-Test****Paired Samples Statistics**

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 pretestattitude	4,4762	21	1,12335	,24513
posttestattitude	4,5238	21	1,12335	,24513

Paired Samples Test

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	pretestattitude - posttestattitude	-,04762	1,02353	,22335	-,213	20	,833

Table 6-A : Mean Values and Deviation Score of Pre-test and Post-test attitude question

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretestattitude	21	4.47	1.12
Posttestattitude	21	4.52	1.12

Table 6-B: The Difference between Pre-test and Post-test attitude question

Pretestattitude,	Sd	t	p
Posttestattitude	20	-213	,833

Table 7: T-test results for midterm and final exams**T-Test**

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	midterm	72,9167	24	9,90352	2,02155
	final	84,5833	24	9,73526	1,98720

Paired Samples Test							
Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	midterm - final	-11,66667	8,57026	1,74940	-6,669	23	,000

Table 7-A: Mean Values and Deviation Score of Mid-term and Final Exams

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mid-term	24	72.9	9.50
Final	24	84.5	9.73

Table 7-B: The Difference between Mid-term and Final Exams

Mid-term, final	Sd	T	p
	20	-6.66	,000