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Modeling Meaning Dyadically

Meaning through relations

Something can mean something else. In order to derive further meaning about something, we need to relate it to what it means. The potential arbitrariness of these relations infers that anything can mean something else if it is related to mean so. To interpret something toward an alternative meaning would be to interpret it as a sign. Different interpretations of the same information can conceive different signs; different meanings. This interpretation process is known as signification. If signification is paramount to meaning-making, we will begin our pursuit by formally modeling the sign.

Dyadic foundations

Early conceptions of signs consisted of two parts: A sign-vehicle and its meaning. Philosophers have not always been clear about the ontology of these two relata. The potential physical and psychological instantiations of each need re-evaluated. We also desire reassurance that meaning can be reinterpreted again as a sign-vehicle of another sign; continuing the process of signification. If this is indeed the case, then any two relata can take either form depending on their relation within a sign. Our initial modeling begets further questions. How are relations formed to make signs? How are signs related to form further signification? Through signification, what does immediate self-referential meaning imply? Through signification, what does non-immediate cyclic meaning imply? When does signification terminate?

Saussure's Model

Ferdinand de Saussure's model of a sign is a stronger foundational starting point for meaning-making. The original conception of Saussure can be imagined as

an evenly split circle. Each slice is labeled signifier and signified. They are said to be inseparable relata that together form a sign. From Saussure's perspective, both the signifier and the signified were purely psychological.

Extension of Realms

Interpretation Results