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- Author:** Paolucci, Claudio
- Title:** From Logic of Relatives to Cognitive Semiotics: On some unsuspected correspondences between Peirce and Structuralism
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- Abstract:** This paper investigates the actuality of structuralism in its relationship with cognitive semantics. It does so through a trajectory that begins with Peirce's Logic of Relatives, then Tesnière's and Greimas' actantial syntax are considered with respect to dynamic semiotics and Frege's chemistry of concepts, ending in cognitive semiotics. The article argues for the complete compatibility of Peirce's semiotics with a structuralist epistemology, of which the Logic of Relatives anticipates some fundamental traits. A Peirce-inspired interpretative semiotics has often been opposed to structural and generative semiotics. This is not necessarily the case. Through passages from Peirce, Tesnière, Greimas and dynamic semiotics works, unsuspected echoes and correspondences are unveiled, but a crucial divergence also comes to light. The different authors share a conception of the sentence as grounded on purely relational positions, called relatives or correlates (Peirce), actants (Tesnière) and proto-actants (Greimas). Peirce considers the primitive relatives as triads (the model of "A gives B to C") from which dyads can be generated. Contrarily, the Greimasian development of structuralism decomposes actantial structures into primitive dyads ("A renounces to B" and "C receives B"), thus breaking the structural balance that constitutes the topological and relational Gestalten on which the Logic of Relatives and actantial syntax are grounded. Indeed, those Gestalten are not reducible to conjunctions and disjunctions of algebraic inspiration, or to a conceptual chemistry inspired by logic (as in Frege): this is the reason why Peirce's and Tesnière's structural theories have prompted a great interest in dynamic semiotics. Moreover, through their semio-linguistic specificity, these models still allow us to investigate the heritage of structuralism, and situate it within a cognitive semiotic perspective.

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