

Semiotic Applied in Websites

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1 Context

The tsunami of online information is a current subject in the research of data visualization, organization of information architecture (IA), usability (ease of use), and accessibility of websites. The Internet is increasingly revolutionizing the forms of communication and access to information. However, why this phenomenon? For the potential of being able to reach an increasing number of people, regardless of geographical location and socio-cultural context (EMAG, 2016)

In this scenario the user's way to realize the navigation interface is where the semiotic is apply, since the information architecture (IA) of the website depends on the understanding the reading each of the links and graphics as paths to guide to find the desired information.

We believe the lack of approach to semiotic in websites is one of the causes of the miss understanding of the navigation process for the user. It is important for the relationship of Human Computer Interface (IHC) to have semiotics during the analysis of interaction for efficiency in websites to avoid difficulties and to find what you are looking for. If there is something wrong, then correct it to know why the error happened.

The combination of semiotics and IHC can help as the interpretation and understanding of user behavior when dealing with the interface information. If the interface is seeing as a communication system, it shall have physical, perceptual and conceptual dimensions (Moran, 1981) and effecting actions according to the given tasks.

We implemented the theory of Peirce (1977) and the analysis of semiotic dimensions of Niemeyer (2009) for the evaluate of the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC SP) website before and after the changes in the layout design as an example of application of semiotic sites specifically oriented interfaces and interaction.

2 Method

The methodology consisted of two stages. The first was to analyze the interfaces of the website of PUCSP, the old and the new version, using the semiotic dimensions, the second was based on data obtained in the first step, conduct a comparative study of design improvements.

The analysis of the semiotic dimensions (syntactic, semantic and pragmatic) gave an idea of organization of the website in terms of structure, IA, color of links, hierarchy information of the menus, quality of graphic design, efficiency, usability and accessibility. To know what could improve for the website and for the user experience.

3 Results

The results shows that the website of PUCSP evolves in the question of the organization of information and navigation context. The layout of the new version was better simple and direct. While browsing, there is a failure to update the system automatically, after a certain time while the user is reading the menu of courses, the website returns to a previous session, and this makes necessary to return to the steps until the user get back to the session of the disciplines.

The writing in general of the website is good, but for the student to understand the disciplines text is confused by the use of many technical terms. We recommend writing a simple text the goes straight to the point and after the details.

4 Conclusions

The conclusions for this evaluation of the website of PUCSP brings the importance to have a study about the user experience to attend the recommendations of usability and accessibility. The layout project of the new version of PUCSP website is simple to understand and we saw that the navigation context have familiarity. The user have total autonomy to deal with the pages with no visual pollution or over too much information going on.

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