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HOW TO DO THINGS WITH INTERTEXTUAL PATTERNS: ON UMBERTO ECO'S *THE NAME OF THE ROSE*

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It has long been debated how much of the meaning of a text is in the text itself, and how much is in the mind of the reader. An empirical approach to this question is to study the relation between an individual text and its intertext.

I will discuss the concept of intertextuality by using examples from Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* (henceforth *NR*, Eco 1983). The novel contains very many intertextual references, and also much literary, linguistic, philosophical and religious content. It was explicitly designed in this way (Eco 1984), and therefore lends itself to discussing whether narrative fiction can express ideas which are difficult or even impossible to express in conventional academic prose. That is, can fiction contribute to theory?

The article has two specific connections to the overall theme of the book in which the article appears. In terms of the content of *NR*, throughout the whole novel the characters constantly debate about pattern, design and order, including a false pattern which leads to the truth. In terms of general theory, intertextuality involves the repetition of a semantic pattern across two or more texts, with the proviso that the reader recognizes the repetition and its purpose. This type of pattern recognition is much discussed by literary theorists, but largely neglected by linguists.

I begin by discussing my data and some essential concepts. I then discuss whether the concept of intertextuality meets standard empirical criteria of objectivity and falsifiability.

Eco, U. 1983. *The Name of the Rose*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
[Translated from the Italian by William Weaver.]

Eco, U. 1984. *Postscript to The Name of the Rose*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. [Translated from the Italian by William Weaver.]
