On the Notion of Dialogue from the Perspective of Peircean Semiotics

By

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Abstract

Taking Peirce's logical semeiotics as the theoretical framework, this paper aims to comb out the notion of Peircean dialogue with a special reference to Peirce's elaborations of signs, sign classification, sign interpretation, semiosis, and semiotic research. To go a step further, this paper explores the notion of dialogue from the perspective of the Theory of Inquiry, which is the core of Peirce's philosophy. It shows that dialogical features are pervasive in Peircean semiotics and logic. Dialogue in semiotics does not solely refer to a communicative way of sign generation and sign interpretation in its narrowest sense, but it can be systematized as the interpretive routes of Peircean interpretation and communication. To put Peircean dialogue in his semiotics, dialogue is justified as the foundation, situation and method for reaching a final interpretant, seeking the truth and fixing a belief.

Keywords: dialogue; Peircean semiotics; sign; interpretant; semiosis; communication; interpretation.

Introduction

Dialogue has its origin as far as the existence of human communication. Dialogue is one of the basic forms of communication. Dialogue research has flourished since the 20th century.

Since the middle and late 20th century, many dialogue scholars and experts have devoted themselves to studying Bakhtin's dialogism theory, and taken Bakhtin's interpretation of the connotation of dialogism as the definition of dialogism: dialogism refers to the existence of two or more interactive voices in discourse (including verbal and non-verbal language). The voices form discourse relations such as consent and refutation, affirmation and negation, reservation and expansion, judgment and supplement, and question and answer. For Bakhtin, dialogism is a pervasive feature of language, thought, and understanding – every sign exists in response to past signs as well as in anticipation of future replies (Laas, 2016).

In this sense, Bakhtin's dialogism is largely concerned with linguistic semiotics, which is quite reasonable as Bakhtin drew on Saussure in his semiotic studies. It's widely known that semiotics has dual origins in Charles S. Peirce's semeiotics, and Ferdinand de Saussure's semiology, with the latter being based on the formal structure of language.

As the founder of modern semiotics, Peirce founded logic semeiotics which involves various forms and types of signs (being different from Saussure's semiology which mainly focuses on the structure of language forms). He established a triadic system of signs composed of three sign categories of Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness. He divided signs into three main types: icon, index and symbol, which includes altogether 55 effective signs. He defines the triadic relationship and interactive progress between sign, object and interpretant as semiosis. Object includes immediate object and dynamic object; interpretant includes immediate interpretant, dynamic interpretant and final interpretant. Interpretant is the focus of Peirce's triadic relationship of signs. It is elsewhere frequently treated in the distinction of emotional interpretant, energetic interpretant and logical interpretant; intentional interpretant, effective interpretant and communicative interpretant as well.

The concept of dialogue in its broadest meaning is repeatedly employed in Peirce's oeuvres. The notion and definition of it in Peircean semiotic perspectives is not well explicated anyway. This topic has only recently been explicitly recognized and studied.

A systematic and wholesome notion of dialogue is standing in need. From the perspective of semiotics, how dialogical features are attributes of Peirce's semiotics can be seen from the importance in his theory of sign, semiosis, and semiotic research. This study will correlate and categorize some entries of meaning of dialogue from the perspective of its importance in sign, sign classification, semiosis, and semiotic research.

If the origin of dialogue is traced in Peirce's philosophy theories, dialogue with its innate nature has accompanied Peirce's inquiry theory from the start. Community dialogue is the inquiry itself. From the perspective of Pierce's category theory, truth belongs to Thirdness and is the final interpretant. Then, if the inquiry oriented dialogue is a dialogue about truth inquiry, the dialogue is also a dialogue about seeking the final interpretant. In this sense, dialogue is interpretation.

Dialogue in Peircean semiotics

Peirce understood the meaning of dialogue through two expressions. For one thing, dialogue could refer to a conventional notion of a back-and-forth exchange of signs between two or more selves, including those exchanges called "thought," or what one "is 'saying to himself,' that is, is saying to that other self that is just coming into life in the flow of time" (EP 2: 338).

For another, dialogue also referred more broadly to our experience with all natural phenomena that is mediated through signs. Peirce believed that "the world of our experience is always already constituted as a realm of signs," meaning that "we are in continuous dialogue with the natural world as well as with other humans" (Colapietro 1989: 21). Merrell (1998) added that "dialogue is not merely between the 'I,' the 'inner' other of the 'I,' and the others of the community, but also between the 'I' and the 'real' physical-world other, which is the most unrelenting opponent imaginable" (Merrell 1998: 64 as cited in Laas, 2016).

The notion of dialogue is central in Charles S. Peirce's semeiotics and logic. In his definition of signs, he has proposed a dialogical definition as:

A sign is an object made by a party we will call the utterer, and determined by his idea, which is the sense or depth of the sign, in order to create in the mind of the interpreter an

interpretant idea of the same object. (MS L 237: 1)

In Peirce's logic, non-content elements (such as quantifiers, connectives and the like) can be counted as parts of a dialogue between two parties – the Utterer and the Interpreter. This is a perfect illustration of how dialogue is pervasive. He even interpretates his theory of existential graphs via a dialogue between two parties as: "The utterer is to determine the meaning of one sign, the interpreter of the other. Whichever of the two has the last choice is supposed to know what the previous determinations were. […]" (MS 9: 2–3).

He insists that "every logical evolution of thought should be dialogic" (CP 4.551). Indeed, Peirce repeatedly affirms that all thought and deliberative reasoning is dialogical (MS. 498). Throughout his oeuvres, Peirce has proposed numerous definitions of signs, sign classifications, and semiosis from the perspective of dialogue. Thus, the notion of Peircean dialogue can be largely expounded with a special reference to Peirce's elaborations of signs, sign classification, sign interpretation, semiosis, and semiotic research.

Dialogical Features of Peircean Semiotics

Peirce starts his semiotic exploration by studying Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. After critically absorbing Aristotle, Kant and Hegel's category thought, he tentatively puts forward his own concept of category (Wang, 2015, p.108). He establishes category on the logic of relation between thinking and judgment, and holds that any judgment involves the combination of object, relation and nature. Therefore, Pierce outlines a new category concept which can be abstractly named as Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness. The three categories construct the universal category as basic categories respectively (Peirce, 1953, p. 8). He extends the universal category to the concept of signs, the compositions of signs and the classifications of signs. Therefore, he establishes his general semiotic theories with triadic relationship as the core.

The dialogical feature of signs

According to Saussure, a sign is composed of sound or image (signifier) and the concept (signified) it represents. Saussure regards the relationship between the signifier and the signified as arbitrary. In other words, the relationship between the sign and the thing it represents is conventional. As he said, "the meaning of a sign is not determined by the relationship between the sign and the external reality, but by the relationship between it and other signs." Therefore, for Saussure, the sign is arbitrary and monologue, which "becomes the spirit of some kind of self-movement" and "An independent entity composed of various internal relations" from the perspective of the generation process of signs, signs should not be monologue, but a process of dialogue (Fiske, 1982, pp. 43-45). As stated above, Peirce classified signs into three "universal categories": Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness. The so-called Firstness refers to the existence of self-reliance; Secondness refers to the individual experience in time and space, which involves the relationship between the subject and the perceived things; Thirdness belongs to the abstract category of intermediary, habit, memory and reproduction, which makes the specific space-time experience, obtain new forms.

Generally speaking, the above three universal categories point out the source of signs and their meanings, as well as the dialogical features contained in the process. First of all, Secondness is the beginning of human cognitive intervention. The individual perceives the objects in a specific time and space, and leaves marks in the consciousness, that is, images. Before the creation of signs, early human beings relied on these images for thinking. With the

formation of the ability of abstract thinking and the need of mutual communication between labor and life, human beings begin to abstract images and use a series of abstract signs to represent them, thus entering the stage of Thirdness. However, the production and application of abstract signs are not simultaneous. The generation of abstract signs is accidental. They are created temporarily by individuals. These signs are invented by individuals based on their memory and representation of the perceptual objects. Therefore, they only reflect the thinking process and results of individuals, but not the thinking orientation of the whole group. We know that in Secondness, each individual's perception of an object in a specific time and space is not the same; there is a subject difference, so their representation of the object of perception is certainly different. Then, how can the signs invented by individuals be accepted and used by groups? Of course, this requires a process, which is the process of dialogue.

When a sign was first put into use, the sign reflecting the user's thought was strange and conflicting to the sign receiver. The tension of this relationship strengthened mutual judgment. And there comes into a dialogue. Of course, dialogue is not just between two individuals, but the participation of groups. In other words, dialogue takes place not only between the sign user and the sign receiver, but also between the sign receiver and the sign receiver himself. In the process of dialogue, the receiver of the sign will call on his own perceptual experience, and combine with the specific situation to negotiate the meaning of the sign, and finally understand the other party's real intention, that is, the meaning of the sign. Then, as a sign user, the sign receiver sends the sign to other sign recipients. If this continues, the sign and its meaning will be gradually recognized and accepted by the whole group, and become the habitual sign. The dialogue in the process of sign generation is as follows:

(sign) user ← dialogue → receiver (user)← dialogue → receiver (user)……sign

Therefore, it is not like what Saussure said that the sign is a whole produced by the arbitrary connection of the signifier and the signified. In fact, there is also a dynamic dialogue process behind it, which involves the subject's cognition of the external world and the cognitive interaction between the subjects. It is also not what Saussure said that the meaning of a sign comes from the relationship between it and other signs in the sign system. The real source of sign meaning is the dialogue between the external world and the thinking subjects.

The dialogical feature of sign interpretation

When signs come into being and become habitual symbols, people will have a strong dependence on them and use them for cognition and communication. As Peirce (CP, 304) said, "we only use signs for thinking", and "all thinking is sign interpretation with speculation" (Peirce, 1991, p. 11). In other words, thinking is sign interpretation. However, the signs used in our thinking are not only verbal signs, but also images, sounds, smells, behaviors and so on. These signs are different from each other, but they serve human thinking together. In addition, "psychological objects can also be used as signs" (Li, 1999, p. 513). The so-called psychological object here does not refer to Saussure's "mental image" or the psychological representation of external object, but refers to pure psychological manifestation, such as thought or emotion itself (Li, 1999, p. 513). Peirce pointed out that "whenever we think, we provide some feelings, images, concepts or other representations for consciousness, which can be used as signs", "thinking not only involves in the semiosis, but also its structure itself is a semiosis, because even thought is a sign" (Innis, 1985, pp: 2-3).

Therefore, the thinking process as the process of sign interpretation is not just the

monologue of verbal signs, but a process of participation of multiple signs. They are synchronous and parallel. Different signs seem to meet in a certain space level and interact with each other to make an equal dialogue. As far as language and visual sign thinking are concerned, Paivio's dual coding theory points out that visual sign information and verbal sign information are encoded and decoded by special sensory and cognitive systems respectively (Xu, 2003). One of them is the vision / picture system, which manipulates different elements in the image at the same time; the other is the verbal and proposition system, which runs in sequence. "The two systems are different in structure and function," explains Miller and Burton (Arnheim & Messaris, 1994, p. 73). However, although the two systems have their own independence, they are interdependent and interactive. Visual concepts can be transformed into verbal markers, and vice versa.

In addition, according to Jerry Fodor, the brain is divided into two different aspects or parts: external input (output) chunks and central cognition. The input block includes special vision, taste, smell, touch and language; the output block includes various systems that control various muscle movements and languages (Carruthers & Boucher, 1998, p. 85). Carruthers points out that almost everyone today believes that the visual system is a unique input block of the human brain, which contains many internal structures (Carruthers & Boucher, 1998, p. 98). Similarly, most cognitive scientists also believe that visual imagination will recall materials in visual chunks for reasoning activities. For example, when visual imagination is carried out, many areas belonging to the same visual cortex will be activated, so that central cognition can call materials in external chunks, activate their representations to serve the central cognitive function of thinking and reasoning. The same is true for language. Language is an internal input and output chunk. When central cognition is employed in some reasoning and problem solving, it can enter this chunk and call materials in the verbal system to generate natural statement representations (in "internal speech"), which can be used in various conceptual reasoning.

Therefore, verbal and visual signs are not independent of central cognition (sign interpretation). On the contrary, they can enter and promote central cognition, and central cognition can also enter and invoke verbal and visual information. They are interlinked and conversational, rather than isolated from each other. Of course, sign interpretation is not limited to the dialogue between verbal signs and visual signs. It should be a dialogic process in which all kinds of signs participate together. It is the voice sung by different tones on the same subject, namely the so-called "polyphony".

The dialogical feature of signification process (semiosis)

As is known, signs are not only used for cognition and thinking, but also for communication. Sign communication also involves a dynamic process of dialogue, that is, the process of meaning negotiation between the sender and the receiver. For Peirce, the essence of sign is a kind of regulatory relationship, which is composed of three parts: representamen, object and interpretant. For these three parts, Peirce explained that:

"Sign, or representmen, represents something to someone in some way. It is particularly for someone. That is to say, it stirs up a corresponding sign, or a more developed sign, in that person's mind. I call the resulting developed sign as interpretant of the first sign. A sign represents something, its object. It represents that object not in all respects, but by referring to a concept." (Ding, 2000, pp. 58-59)

These three parts are not only material but also spiritual. They are both a kind of thought and a kind of behavior. Therefore, Peirce believes that sign is a broad concept, which refers to anything related to another thing, such as a painting, a word, a song, a symptom, etc., which can represent something and can be interpreted at the same time.

J. D. Johansen constantly developed Peirce's triadic sign model and perfected it based on his works. Johanson's model realizes and explains the theme put forward by Peirce in the theory of communicative dialogue, namely semiosis, from which dialogue can be observed from the dialogic semiosis (Xu, 2003, p. 117).

Johanson's new model is mainly based on Pierce's trichotomy, the dynamic view and extended view of angular vertex, as well as Jacobson's view of communication. The sign proposed by him can be expressed as an accidental and concrete "token" dynamically, and can also adopt the characteristics of "type" or rules. Similarly, signs can refer to objects with duality, namely dynamic objects and immediate objects. The dynamic object refers to the real factors or reasons that affect the sign, and the receiver of the sign usually cannot see it directly. However, some ideas about this dynamic object will be regulated in the sign process, which is the direct object. Johanson's view of Peirce's interpretant is also dynamic, so the direct object and the dynamic object have their own corresponding terms, namely the immediate interpretant and the dynamic interpretant. The former is the direct and potential function of the sign, while the latter is the actual function of the sign; the former obviously shows the intention of the addresser / utterer, while the latter is dominated by the intention of the addressee / interpreter. In addition, there is a final interpretant. Theoretically speaking, the final interpretant is the end of interpretation. It contains the core of the process of sign interpretation proposed by Johansen, that is, communicative interpretation or dialogic act. In this process, the sender and the receiver negotiate and reach a consensus. The value of this model is that it can explain and develop Peirce's pragmatism semiotics and his semiosis theory.

The dialogical feature of semiotic research

Semiotic research should also be dialogic. Saussure's insists that semiology is a science that studies sign's activities in society. Semiotics is a branch of sociology of sign life. And "sign life" is not only language, it should include all cultural phenomena in the human world. As the Italian semiotician Umberto Eco said in his semiotics theory, "the process of sign meaning includes the whole cultural life", and "the research scope of semiotics is equal to all cultural phenomena" (Innis, 1985, p. 4iii).

For Saussure, language is the main research object of semiotics. Although other semiotic systems are similar to language systems, they are not representative in system structure, so they are secondary. In this way, semiotics becomes the study of language and a monologue dialogue between human being, the subject sign and the language sign, rather than a polyphonic dialogue.

For semiotics, this monologue dialogue has certain limitations, because it only pays attention to the study of form and structure, but ignores the study of meaning and sign process, so it is difficult to reveal the real law of signs. If we pay a little attention to our daily behavior and the surrounding social environment, we will find that we use several sign systems at the

same time, such as language signs, graphic signs, etiquette signs, and currency signs and so on. These signs have their own characteristics. Through the in-depth analysis of many nonverbal signs, Emile Benveniste summed up more general sign features than the linguistic sign system. He pointed out that the universal characteristics of all semiotic systems and the criteria for bringing them into semiotics are their signifying property or meaning, and their meaning units or signs.

Sign system has four characteristics: (1) mode of operation; (2) domain of validity; (3) nature and number of signs; (4) type of operation (Innis, 1985, p. 234 as cited in Xu, 2003, p. 118). Benny West used these four features to analyze traffic lights as a rudimentary sign system. He pointed out that the operation mode of the signal lamp is visual, usually in the daytime; its effective area is the traffic on the road; its sign is composed of two relative colors of red and green (sometimes there is a short transitional color, yellow); the operation type is an alternating relationship, that is, red means no traffic, green means traffic. This system can be extended or transformed, but only under the condition of relevant field. To sum up, in the above four characteristics, (1) and (2) provide the external experience conditions of the system; (3) and (4) indicate their internal symbolic conditions. Some changes or adjustments are allowed in the first two, but not in the latter two. Benny West's study on the operation law of nonverbal sign system shows that semiotics is not limited to the study of language. It is absolutely necessary and possible for us to explore and summarize the organization principles and operation rules of signs in non-verbal sign systems which are different from those of language (Xu, 2003, p. 118). Therefore, semiotics research, in its broadest sense, should be dialogic.

Besides, dialogic features of signs can be seen from other aspects of semiotic studies. Sign interpretation is in an endless process of Peircean semiosis. This makes the facts which are represented in signs interpreted as discursively constructed reality and the meaning of signs open for dynamic interpretations. To develop a clear picture of such features of signs is the key component of semiotic study which is necessary for both semiosis and sign interpretation.

As for the practical studies, there are also a large amount of studies on the application of Peirce's semiotic theories from the perspective of art, literature, translation, teaching and other fields. The application of Pierce's semiotics to other disciplines or fields can not only contribute to the development of other disciplines or fields, but also promote the new development of Peirce's semiotics. It is a concentrated reflection of interdisciplinary researches which will play a more important role in academic circles.

The systematicity of Peirce's Dialogue

The notion of dialogue is scattered in Peirce's oeuvres. But as a frequently used concept which is closely related with his fundamental theories, dialogue can be systematically studied. The study of the systematicity of Peirce's dialogue should not be limited to dialogue, or even to his semeiotics. Only by putting this concept into Peirce's whole ideological system can we describe it more systematically and completely. This part will trace dialogue from the starting point and development vein of Peirce's philosophical thought, find the coordination and positioning for his so-called dialogue and its purpose, and then return to his semiotic thought and the concept of dialogue from philosophy.

The connection between dialogue theory and Pierce's philosophical thought is evident

in Peirce's Theory of Inquiry, which is the core part of Peirce's whole philosophy system. In this respect, Peirce was mainly influenced by philosophers such as Descartes and Kant, and showed great interest in science, truth and knowledge (Waal, 2000 / 2014, pp. 5-10).

In his view, if we want to get knowledge about the truth, we must explore the essence of inquiry and various methods of inquiry. This can be regarded as the starting point of all Peirce's research. In fact, both Peirce's semiotics and pragmatism revolve around the main idea of scientific inquiry (Zhu,1991, pp. 2-3).

Peirce clearly explained the word "inquiry" in the Fixation of Belief. He believes that inquiry is a process, which is a stable belief achieved from doubt. He pointed out: "the uneasiness caused by doubt leads to efforts to seek a state of certainty of belief. I call such efforts "inquiry" (CP 5.375). He also pointed out that the only and ultimate purpose of the inquiry process is to fix beliefs (CP 5.375). Therefore, Peirce called the final state of this belief establishment truth. From this point of view, how to ensure the acquisition of the truth through scientific inquiry methods has become the core issue of Peirce's inquiry theory.

In this sense , the conceptions of inquiry, truth, belief are all related with dialogue. They are dialogue itself. That is to say, although dialogue is not the core of Peirce's theory, it has been embedded in the core of Peirce's inquiry theory.

Dialogue as an interpretive route of communication
The connection of dialogue with Peirce's above theories is directly related to his line of argument for truth acquisition. Peirce believes that the acquisition of truth is not an individual behavior, but a cooperative process of the community. This kind of community is called "community of inquiry" by Peirce. Peirce pointed out that the inquiry community composed of scientific explorers will eventually come to a final and fixed opinion on any question that can be solved, and this opinion is the truth. Therefore, as long as a research community carries out continuous communication, discussion and consultation in accordance with scientific methods in the long term, it will certainly obtain a consensus opinion, that is, the truth.

Peirce's theory of truth and inquiry has two remarkable characteristics. One is community, that is, the acquisition of truth is a cooperative activity of community. Community provides a platform for communication and dissemination for various human knowledge seeking activities. It encourages rational doubt and promotes the exchange of answers to doubt. It has become the most important proposition to explore how the explorers in the community use signs to communicate and express their views in order to get the truth. This goes back to the nature of dialogue. In essence, the ultimate purpose of dialogue is to explore the most effective ways of communication - whether verbal language, non-verbal language, action or thought - so as to build the integration and consistency of the community, and then the community members can take relatively unified actions. The importance of community experience is an important dimension of dialogue concerns. This is Aristotle's political oratory in its broadest meaning. Cicero emphasized the social function of dialogue, that is, to promote community members to understand common good. Likewise, as Burke said, "the classic principle of persuasion is to make the combination of existence correspond to the nature of signs" (Burke, 1950, p. 22).

Community members need to establish a sense of community identity, for example,

they need to have a common goal, a common belief, or a common standard of judgment; This means that to carry out the sign inquiry activities, we need "sentiments" that can ensure the identity and vitality of the inquiry community, that is, "there is an interest in an infinite community, and we recognize the possibility that this interest will become the supreme interest" (CP 2.655). This supreme interest is the collective interest. In order to recognize this collective interest, Peirce believes that individuals in inquiry groups should not be "selfish" first. In this sense, Peirce's so-called "inquiry community" is actually an ideal communication mode of a community. The members of this community are optimistic, idealistic, confident and can maintain equal communication and dialogue.

The second aspect of the theory of inquiry, that is, the diachronic and evolutionary dimensions of inquiry, determines the continuity of dialogue. Pierce believes that the truth is a future tense and is future oriented, so the so-called inquiry is a continuous and long-term inquiry. It is not only about the present, but also about the continuity and inheritance of community members across generations (Li, 2016, pp. 6-25). Therefore, Peirce's so-called "truth" is actually a critical value that is always close to the ultimate truth, and the present truths can be regarded as relative truths. This idea makes its dialogue gain a historical and evolutionary perspective. This concept can also be embodied in Peirce's concept of sign growth. Any communication method that can promote the acquisition of the truth is his constant pursuit.

Therefore, when we start from Peirce's philosophy of the theory of inquiry and explore the question of dialogue in his semiotics, we may understand the connotation and characteristics of dialogue more clearly.

Generally speaking, Peirce's dialogue takes the scientific exploration of the truth as the overall goal, so it is necessary to study the inquiry method, and this consultation needs to rely on scientific methods, relying on long-term communication and consultation among members of the inquiry community according to scientific methods. Therefore, this path makes its concept of dialogue show significant public and community characteristics. The purpose of sign communication is to express and communicate meaning (Jappy, 2017, pp. 40-45). The exchange and discussion of the meaning of signs obviously belongs to one of the most important tasks of semiotics.

Dialogue as an interpretive route of interpretation

As stated above, the fundamental purpose of all Peirce's theories is to seek the truth of things, and the truth is a fixed belief formed by community members after long-term inquiry. However, the specific implementation of Peirce's theory of inquiry must return to his semiotics, because he believes that any inquiry process is actually a process of semiosis, and even scientific deduction and proposition are a form of representation of meanings of signs.

In this sense, the concept of truth can and must be discussed in the perspective of semiotics. In Peirce's view, the essential purpose of signs is to express the fact, which is also the essential motive force for people to pursue meaning. As to the purpose of signs, Peirce said, "the purpose of signs, that is, the purpose of thinking, is to bring the truth into expression" (CP 2. 44). Peirce subsequently further expressed this view as: "the purpose of a sign is to express facts. It connects itself with other signs and tries its best to make the interpretant close to the complete truth... truth is not abstract but complete in nature. It is the final interpretant of each

sign." (Peirce, 1991 / 2014, p. 60).

Since signs can express the truth, the so-called truth is actually the final interpretant of such signs, and what this interpretation determines is actually the common soul of community members. Therefore, the so-called truth must be the result of the interpreter's interpretation of the meaning of the sign. Therefore, inquiry is essentially a semiosis of the interpretant of signs, that is, the interpretation of the meaning of this kind of signs by inquirers.

In a broad sense, the interpretant can be understood as the meaning of the sign, and the final interpretant of the sign is the truth. Then, the inquiry of the truth of signs is the important issue of how sign users use signs to express and communicate meaning.

In addition, as far as Peirce's so-called "the generation and development of interpretant" is concerned, "generation" refers to the production of sign meaning, that is, how signs are generated in communication, which is the formal condition of communication. And "development" refers to how the generated meaning can be continuously communicated and disseminated. It is obvious that dialogue is indispensable for both its generation and development. In other words, dialogue is the condition for the formation and sustainable development of sign meaning.

Peirce believes that in order to realize any kind of communication, at least the following prerequisites are required. First, there must be an utterer and an interpreter; Second, there must be something communicating between the utterer and the interpreter; Third, something communicated between the utterer and the interpreter must be something that can establish some common interpretant between the utterer and the interpreter (Peirce & Welby, 1977, pp. 196-197). Therefore, Peirce's so-called "communication" is the process of the two sides seeking "common interpretant" in the process of communication, or the gradual expansion of their communicative space. The common interpretant is the product of the mutual dialogue and fusion between the intentional interpretant and the effect interpretant. In other words, in the process of sign communication, both sides of communication have increased their understanding of the meaning of signs and the amount of information (He, 2016, pp. 172-182).

Peirce holds this two-way concept of meaning generation because he believes that both sides of communication regard each other as signs in the process of communication, because people themselves are signs (Peirce, 1991 / 2014, pp: 38-39),   communication can only be carried out through signs. At the same time, the sign itself must be in the triadic relationship composed of the sign itself, the object and the interpretant in order to be regarded as a sign. This means that both sides of the communication of signs will inevitably produce some interpretant in the hearts of each other. In other words, both sides of the communication must have some effect in the hearts of the other side. Therefore, the production of sign meaning is a dynamic interactive negotiation behavior. That is also the dialogue act.

Since the meaning of signs is dynamically generated, it is worth considering how the two sides of communication can gain more consensus in the process of communication, transition from dynamic interpretation to final interpretation, and then spread the meaning of signs more widely. For this reason, Peirce first pointed out that any transmission or communication has "indeterminacy" (CP 5.506), which is the essential characteristic of the sign communication process. Therefore, the purpose of communication is to reduce this uncertainty. Therefore, Peirce believes that the purpose of communication is to reduce the

uncertainty of this sign transmission through the joint efforts of both parties (CP 5.447). To clarify the uncertainty of meaning, we should not only rely on the growth of the sign itself, but also on the specific communication context, the individual experience of the sign user, and the communication rules that both sides abide by. Only in this way can the significance of communication be effectively conveyed (Peirce, 1991 / 2014, p. 253).

Conclusions

The research of dialogue from semiotic perspectives flourished in Bakhtin's dialogism. Dialogue is also central in Peircean semiotics anyway. As the notion of dialogue is scattered in Peirce's oeuvres, few researchers treat it in a wholesome and   systematic way. Taking Peirce's logical semeiotics as the theoretical framework, this study collects Peirce's remarks about dialogue in his semiotics and discusses the dialogical features of sign, sign classifications, sign interpretation, semiosis, and semiotic research. It shows that dialogical features are pervasive in Peircean semiotics and logic. The nature and process of signification, sign interpretation, semiosis and semiotic research themselves are dialogue.

To go a step further, by putting the notion of dialogue into Peirce's whole ideological system, this study investigates it more systematically and completely. The systematicity of Peircean dialogue is tentatively achieved through tracing it from the starting point and development vein of Peirce's philosophical thought, which is largely reflected in his Theory of Inquiry. It shows that the notion of dialogue is closely related with Peirce's core thinking about science, truth, inquiry, knowledge and belief.

The chief way of dialogue being related with the entries of theories in Peircean semiotics can be explored through two aspects, namely, communication and interpretation. This study treats it by means of interpreting dialogue being the interpretive routes of Peircean communication and interpretation. Peirce's so-called "communication" is the process of the utter and the interpreter seeking "common interpretant" in communication, the gradual expansion of their communicative space, and the final agreement of the two sides respective interpretant. The common interpretant, or 'final interpretant' in Peircean semiotic term, is the product of the mutual dialogue and fusion between the intentional interpretant and the effect interpretant.

In this sense, the study concludes that semiotics should not stick to the static and authoritative way of thinking and research methods, because it will lead the research to be deviated from the initiative of the researchers and the external reality. We should enhance the awareness of "dialogue" and emphasize all sorts of signifying activities and specific sign interpretation, and attach importance to the specific and open process of signifying, inquiry of science, truth seeking and belief fixation. Meanwhile, the self-dialogue consciousness of the subject himself and the dialogue consciousness between one subject and other subjects in this process should be cultivated. Only in this way can we get rid of the shackles of structuralism and deeply understand the operation rules of signs.

In practice, the notion of dialogue could be used in a wide range of fields and disciplines as far as Peirce's semiotic theory possibly reaches. Once the concept is categorized and systematized, a lot of academic studies in semiotics and beyond could be more full-fledged and scientific, hence makes the future dialogical study more reliable and more systematical.

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