

A Peircean Approach to Dialogue

Interpretation, Translation
and Communication

First Edition, 2026

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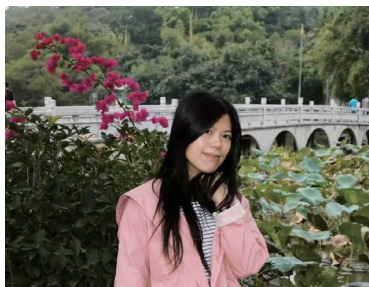
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Author Introduction

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Abstract

Recently, in the process of absorbing Peirce's semeiotic theory from various branches of semiotics, the theory of "dialogic semiotics" has gradually attracted the attention of Peircean semiotics scholars. Dialogue is not a new subject term; Peirce's concept of dialogue has repeatedly appeared in his research on logical semeiotics. However, Peirce's dialogue has not been presented a systematic feature, nor used as a research method in the relevant research inside and outside of semiotics.

In view of this, based on Peirce's logical semeiotics, this study attempts to conduct a qualitative study on the notion of Peirce's dialogue from the perspectives of interpretation, translation and communication by means of literature synthesis, qualitative research, and academic history research. It aims to answer two research questions: first, what is Peirce's notion of dialogue as being extracted and categorized from his semeiotic cosmology? Second, how is Peirce's dialogue systematized from the perspectives of interpretation, translation, and communication?

For the first research question, this study mainly studies the notion of Peirce's dialogue from the properties and attributes of dialogue. firstly, literature review and academic history method is employed in tracing the origin of Peircean dialogue. Following the origin of Peirce's dialogue, this study uses the method of qualitative research to elucidate the properties and attributes of Peircean dialogue. As to the second research question, in order to systematize Peircean dialogue and put it into a theory, this study employs systematic research methods to put Peirce's concept of

dialogue under the three frameworks of his logical semeiotics, namely, interpretation, translation and communication. With a correlational analysis, the study examines the interwoven relationships between dialogue and the three main aspects of Peircean semeiotics.

Based on the above two research modules, the following conclusions are drawn from this study: as to the notion of Peircean dialogue, its properties and attributes are extracted from Peirce's definition of signs, Peircean sign category, and Peirce's semiosis conception. The dialogue constituents, dialogic logic, participants and prerequisites of opening a dialogue are demonstrated. As to the systematicity of Peircean dialogue, this study proposes that Peircean concept of interpretation is the interpretive route of Peircean dialogue, translation is the interpretive paradigm of Peircean dialogue, and communication is the interpretive goal of Peircean dialogue.

The significance of this study is reflected from two aspects: 1) theoretically speaking, the study of the notion of dialogue in Peirce is an indispensable part both in dialogue research and in Peircean research. It does not only enrich the study of the dialogue theory but also make Peircean study full-fledged and thus strengthen his semiotic theoretical framework as a whole. 2) practically speaking, this study can provide a new interpretive route for social issues (anti-anthropocentrism and anti-hegemony as cases) related to dialogue. Dialogue is pervasive not solely in human beings. The key enlightenment of Peirce's dialogue study lies in that it provides a dialectical and comprehensive perspective to see the world.

To sum up, this study discusses the notion and systematicity of dialogue from the perspective of Peirce's semiotics. Similar

to the interpretation of dialogue by other dialogists, Peirce's dialogue also believes that the study of semiotics should not stick to a static, monologic way of thinking and research methods. Because static and anti-dialogue way of research will mislead the research away from the initiative of the cognitive subject and the meaningful entity of external reality, resulting in the crisis of semiotics. It is necessary to strengthen the consciousness of "dialogue", attach importance to the specific and open semiosis, as well as the self-dialogue cognition of the subject and the dialogue cognition between the subjects in this process. Only in this way can the shackles of structuralism be removed, and the operation rules of signs perceived in-depth. It's also vital to take all forms of sign activities as research objects and restore the connection and dialogue between disciplines, theories and the living world, thus make semiotics become what Morris called 'an interdisciplinary enterprise' authentically.

Keywords: Dialogue; Peirce's semeiotics; Category; Semiosis; Interpretation; Translation; Communication

Contents

Title	Pages
Author Introduction	I
Abstract	II
Contents	V
List of Tables	VIII
List of Figures	IX
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	X
 Chapter 1 Introduction	 1
1.1 Background of the Study	3
1.2 Statement of the Problems	11
1.3 Objectives of the Study	12
1.4 Research Questions	12
1.5 Research Objects	13
1.6 Theoretical Framework	13
1.7 Scope of the Study	16
1.8 Significance of the Study	17
1.9 Research Methodology	19
1.10 Definition of Terms	32

1.11	Organization of the Chapters	35
1.12	Summary of the Chapter	37
Chapter 2	Literature Review	39
2.1	Studies about Peirce's Semeiotic Theory	39
2.2	Studies about Dialogue	56
2.3	Summary of the Chapter	93
Chapter 3	Properties of Peirce's Dialogue	94
3.1	Peirce's Notion of Dialogue from the Definition of Signs	94
3.2	Peirce's Dialogue from the Sign Categories	96
3.3	Dialogical Logic of Peirce's Dialogue	102
3.4	Participants in Peirce's Dialogue	107
3.5	Prerequisites of Opening a Dialogue	116
3.6	The Dialogical Features of Peircean Semeiotics	118
3.7	Summary of the Chapter	127
Chapter 4	The Systematicity of Peircean Dialogue	130
4.1	The Interpretive Route of Peircean Dialogue: Interpretation	131
4.2	The Interpretive Paradigm of Peircean Dialogue: Translation	140

4.3	The Interpretive Goal of Peircean Dialogue: Communication	153
4.4	Summary of the Chapter	175
Chapter 5	Conclusions	178
5.1	Findings and discussion	178
5.2	Implications	183
5.3	Limitations	192
5.4	Future recommendations	197
5.5	Summary of the Chapter	201
	Reference	202

List of Tables

Title		Pages
Table 1.1	Database of the Research	22
Table 2.1	Peirce’s ten classes of signs	42
Table 2.2	Peirce’s definition of dialogism in contrast with syllogism	83
Table 3.1	Relations among the components of the sign	96
Table 3.2	Peirce’s sign categories	97
Table 3.3	The properties of Peircean dialogue and their connectedness with I, T, and C	129

List of Figures

Title	Pages
Figure 1.1 The triadic relationship of sign-interpretant-object	14
Figure 1.2 The sign model of Peircean semiotics	15
Figure 2.1 The Process of Information Transmission Ideally (Lotman, 1990, p.14)	73
Figure 2.2 The Function of Creation of a Text (Lotman, 1990, p.15)	75
Figure 2.3 Jakobson's Communication Model (Holenstein, 1974, p. 154)	76
Figure 2.4 Communication in the Semiosphere (Zou, 2015, p. 31).	78
Figure 3.1 The components of signs and their interrelation. (cf. Liszka, 1996, p 32.)	95
Figure 3.2 The sign model of Saussurean semiology	119
Figure 4.1 The communicative feature of Peirce's dialogue in its relation with interpretation, translation and communication.	158
Figure 4.2 The systematicity of Peircean dialogue in its relation with interpretation, translation and communication	177

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

- C Communication
- CP Peirce, Charles Sanders (1980). *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*. 8 vols. (Vols.1-6, C. Hartshorne; P. Weiss, (ed.), 1931–1935; vols. 7–8, A. Burks, (ed.), 1958) Cambridge: Harvard University Press. [In-text references are to CP, followed by volume and paragraph numbers.]
- EP Peirce, Charles Sanders (1992–1998). *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*. Vol. 2. (N. Houser; C. J. W. Kloesel, (ed.), 1992; *The Peirce Edition Project*, (ed.), 1998.) Bloomington: Indiana University Press. [In-text references are to EP followed by volume and page numbers.]
- I Interpretation
- MS Peirce, Charles Sanders (1967). *Unpublished manuscripts*. Copies from Peirce Edition Project of Indiana University – Purdue University, Indianapolis. [In-text references are to MS, followed by manuscript number and page numbers.]
- LW Letters with Welby
- T Translation
- W Peirce, Charles Sanders (1980-1993). *Writings of Charles Sanders Peirce: A Chronological Edition*. 5 Vols. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. [In-text references

CHAPTER - 1

Introduction

“Every utterance, covertly or overtly, is an act of indirect discourse” (Emerson, 1986, p. 24) and constitutes the primary building block of communication within the dialogic framework. Once in the dialogic sphere, the word becomes real and material.

Dialogue is employed by Plato (427--347 B.C.) to represent the philosophical activities of Socrates (469--399 B.C.) (Robinson, 1953). The art of reasoning in dialogue was called ‘dialectic’ by the Greek philosophers. Plato and Aristotle, in particular, saw dialectic as the method of philosophy. Aristotle also saw dialectic as fundamental to another closely related field - rhetoric. Dialectic was very important to the Greek philosophers, and Aristotle even made a classification of different kinds of dialogue used in dialectical argumentation.

Philosophers often use the form of Question and Answer to unfold their philosophical discourse. Philosophy originally started from dialogue and Question and Answer, as did Confucius (551-479 B.C.), Mencius (372-289 B.C.) in China and Plato in the West.

The theory of “dialogue” in the perspective of philosophical hermeneutics provides us with a new dimension of thinking. Dialogue is a kind of life relationship between people, which is an open structure. The purport of dialogue is to dispel the dualistic opposition between subject and object, and establish a “marginal

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- 感染性皮膚病學 Infectious dermatology
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