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The Development of Pragmatics in Morris's Behavioral Semiotics: Semiotic Perspective

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Abstract

Many pragmaticists claimed that pragmatics developed mainly from 1970s and 1980s, taking the emergence of its series of pragmatic theories (e.g., Cooperative Principle, Conversation Implicature, Relevance Theory, etc.), methodology, and the official issue of *Journal of Pragmatics* (1977) in Amsterdam as its marks. However, few scholars reinstate the historical truth of the real development of pragmatics by comparing and reviewing the semiotic thoughts between Peirce and Morris so as to discover the development and prosperity of pragmatics in Morris's times (around 1930s). As one of the founders of modern semiotics, Morris's major contribution derives from his proposal of trichotomy theory of semiosis, that is, syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics, grounded on which Morris intends to establish an all-inclusive general theory of signs. Substantially, Morris's semiotic theory involves rich pragmatic thought which is inherited and developed from Peirce theory of signs that has logic and pragmatism as its foundations. This paper aims to reveal the formation and development of pragmatics in Morris's behavioral semiotics by means of comparing the semiotic thoughts between Peirce and Morris from the perspective of dynamic history. Specifically, this paper involves the analysis of the philosophical foundations of pragmatics, disciplinary classification, the establishment of pragmatics, theory of sign inquiry, the relevant specific semiotic views, and three semiotic dimensions of Morris's pragmatics, which are conducive to explore the pragmatic origin and development from the perspective of Morris's semiotic thoughts. As such, Pragmatics in Morris's behavioral semiotics is established and developed in a systematic and formal way.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Pragmatism, Semiotics, Peirce, Morris

1. Morris and his major semiotic thoughts

Charles William Morris (1901-1979) is a classic writer of semiotics. He had a decisive influence on the development of Semiotics in the 1930s and 1940s. His semiotic thoughts are the integration of Peirce's Semiotics, George Mead's social behaviorism and symbolic interaction theory, and American pragmatism, empiricism and logical positivism. Morris discusses the general theory of Semiotics in order to establish a unified science. His definition of general semiotics and the theory of three branches of semiosis is still one of the basic theories of contemporary semiotics. In applied semiotics, his semiotic thought has great influence on semiotic aesthetics and

similitude theory. What the great contribution he made is his classification of discourse pragmatics, which is the specific application of his theory of pragmatics from the perspective of semiotics. His most important semiotic work is *Writings on the General Theory of Signs*, in which the essay “Foundations of Theory of Signs” (1938) is his classic and famous paper on Semiotics. His famous trichotomy of semiotic respectively refers to syntactics, semantics and pragmatics. Morris promotes the development of the theory of pragmatics. The proposal of pragmatics as one of the branches of semiotics is the kernel of his pragmatic thought and the classifications of discourse types are the specific application of his pragmatic thought. Morris divides the common language into 16 types of discourse by virtue of connecting the two dimensions of the signifying modes of signs and the usage of signs. Grounded on the theory of behavioral semiotic, his distinctions of semiosis not only take into account the relationships between signs and objects, signs themselves, but also pay key attention to the relationship between signs and sign users, which is the specific application of his pragmatic thought.

“Semiotic, or sign theory, has come to serve for many as an all-inclusive term, subsuming such diverse enterprises as semiology, cybernetics, hermeneutics, and so forth; yet the contemporary use of the term “semiotic” derives from the highly influential theory articulated by Charles Morris, who in turn acquired it from C. S. Peirce, the founder of modern semiotic. The term semiotic was first used in modern times by John Locke, who mentioned it near the end of his masterwork, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). Locke only suggested a division of science in which semiotic would form the third of three sections, and would be identified with logic. It was first used as a term denoting a specific and detailed theory by Peirce, who spent the greater portion of his life working out his semiotic, which for him was a normative theory of logic” (Rochberg-Halton & McMurtrey 1983, pp.129-130). This theory is at the heart of Peirce’s philosophy, and he considered pragmatism, which he founded, to form one area within its domain.

Morris adopts from Peirce the name semiosis for the general theory of signs. Being influenced by Charles Sanders Peirce, he first used the term ‘pragmatics’ as a branch of semiotics in 1930s (Morris, 1938). Later this term was taken in linguistics for granted as a name of one of its core branches dealing with usage of language. Morris, in fact, isolates semiotics into three different branches— syntactics, semantics and pragmatics. According to his interpretation, syntactics deals with ‘the formal relation of signs to one another’, semantics denotes the study of ‘the relations of signs to the object to which signs are applicable’ and, finally, pragmatics incorporates the study of ‘the relation of signs to interpreters’ (Morris 1938, p.6; Levinson, 1983). Later Carnap (1942) (cf. Recanati, 2004) makes an order of the degree of abstraction of these three branches. More elaborately, according to Carnap, syntactics is the most abstract and pragmatics is the least abstract, whereas semantics belongs to these two in expressing the degree of abstraction. Morris’s semiotics has three dimensions of semiosis, and the pragmatic dimension is only one of them (cf. Arif 2013, pp.30-31).

2. The disciplinary classification of Morris’s pragmatics

The three components of Morris’s philosophy generate the emergence of three branches of his semiotics. As a kind of formalism, positivism studies the formal structure of scientific language, empiricism researches on the object and its relation to scientific language, pragmatism focuses on the methods and steps of clarifying ideas and communicating with each other among scientists. Grounded on the three schools of philosophy, Morris proposed three branches of semiotics, i.e., syntactics, semantics and pragmatics. By virtue of positivist research methods and achievements, Syntactics is “the study of the syntactical relations of signs to one another in abstraction from the relations of signs to objects or to interpreters,” and “is the best developed of all the branches of semiotic” (1938, p.13). “Semantics deals with the relation of signs to their designate and so to the objects which they may or do denote” by means of empirical method (1938, p.21). In reference to the term “pragmatism” first used by C. S. Peirce, Morris coined the term “pragmatics” to refer to “the science of the relation of signs to their interpreters” by means of pragmatism (1938, p.30). Morris’s three dimensions of semiotics, which are based on three philosophical thoughts, cannot be separated from the influence of Peirce’s trichotomy of signs. Peirce’s trichotomic sign is grounded on his Trinity definition of signs and the trivium taught in medieval universities. A sign, or representamen, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its object (CP

2.228). “Representamen is a subject of a triadic relation to a second, called its object, for a third, called its Interpretant, this triadic relation being such that the Representamen determines its interpretant to stand in the same triadic relation to the same object for some interpretant” (CP 1.541). The medieval trivium refers to grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric. Peirce reformed the trivium into three branches of semiotics: the first branch is speculative Grammar (also known as pure grammar), which studies the form, function and classification of all symbols; the second branch is the critical logic, which studies the relationship between signs and their objects and the validity and conditions of objects being conformity to signs; The third branch is pure rhetoric, which studies the conditions for signs producing interpretants and the methods to obtain truth. This method is mainly called pragmatic maxim, i.e., the meaning of signs can be interpreted as the interpreter’s response---interpretant according to the actual effects. In words, the three branches of Morris’s Semiotics basically correspond to Peirce’s trichotomy of signs. Morris’s trichotomy is indeed related to Peirce’s, who distinguished between speculative grammar, critical logic (previously dialectic) and methodeutic (previously rhetoric) (cf. CP 1.191ff and CP 2.93). Syntactics and pure grammar focus on the syntactical dimension of semiosis, semantics and critical logic focus on the semantical dimension of semiosis, pragmatics and pure rhetoric focus on the pragmatism dimension of semiosis. In this sense, semiotics consists of three subdisciplines: ‘speculative grammar’, which gives us a physiognomy of forms, a classification of the function and form of all signs; ‘critic’, the study of the classification and validity of arguments (divided into three parts: the logic of abduction, induction and deduction); and ‘methodeutic’, the study of methods for attaining truth (Petrilli 2004, p.297). Pragmatism, which is based on the thesis that the meaning of a sign can be explicated by considering its practical consequences as the response of an interpretant, is a methodeutic theory in Peirce’s sense (cf. Petrilli 2004, p.297; Helmut Pape, Art.100, ‘Peirce and his followers’, in *S/S*, 2: 2020).

3. Morris’s inheritance and development of Peirce’s pragmatic theory: a semiotic perspective

Peirce’s obvious and direct influence on Morris is embodied in pragmatics. In terms of terminology, “Pragmatics” is made by Morris with the reference to the word “pragmatism” coined by Peirce, of which relationships shows that Peirce’s pragmatism plays a special role in the foundation of Morris’s pragmatics. The importance of pragmatism in Peirce’s pure rhetoric lies in that it attaches more importance to the relationship between signs and their users than ever before, and pays more attention to the relevance of this relationship in understanding intellectual activities. Morris believes that Peirce’s works have made no less contribution to semiotics, specifically to pragmatics, and his pragmatic theory paves the way for the development of modern pragmatics. According to Peirce, the interpretant of a sign must lie in a habit, not only in the direct psychological reaction or the image or emotion accompanying the psychological reaction caused by the sign. Interpretant is the influence of signs on the interpreter. Habit is the tendency to act in a similar way under similar circumstances in the future. It is the tendency to respond to a given stimulus in a specific way. Habit will affect the actual action. Morris extracted some properties from pragmatism and integrated them into his pragmatics: The interpreter of a sign is an organism; the interpretant is the habit of the organism to respond, because of the sign vehicle, to absent objects which are relevant to a present problematic situation as if they were present (Morris 1971, p.45). Therefore, Morris defines pragmatics as the science of the relationship between the sign and the interpreter. Peirce has ever expounded on the relationship between men and signs, interpreters and interpretants in the article “Some Consequences of Four Incapacities” (1868). Peirce explicates that in man’s consciousness, every element has its counterpart in words. “It is that the word or sign which man uses is the man himself. For, as the fact that every thought is a sign, taken in conjunction with the fact that life is a train of thought, proves that man is a sign, [...] thus my language is the sum total of myself; for the man is the thought” (CP 5.314). From Peirce’s point of view, there is no substantial distinction between a man and a word. Both men and words are signs. Our concept of a symbol cannot surpass the effect of signs on us. Every effect on the interpreter, i.e., the interpretant is a sign. The interpreter is a sign, and the interpretant is a sign as well, so men are in the open chain of signs. Therefore, Peirce’s semiosis becomes the pivot of Morris’s pragmatics. In Peirce’s view, interpretant is the influence of sign on interpreter. In order to understand the meaning of a sign, we have to discern the behavior habits caused by signs. Peirce’s emphasis on behavior is highly praised by Morris, who believes that only human behavior can provide a clear empirical criterion for defining signs (Morris 1971, p.339).

Morris explores pragmatic rules from the perspective of behavioral habits, i.e., the expected habits of the interpreter while employing signs under certain circumstances. Pragmatic rules include formative rules and transformative

rules, which corresponds to the actual combination and transformation of signs employed by the interpreter or the regulations made by the interpreter for the application of signs. These rules are the same as other behavior rules that the interpreters attempt to consciously control. From the perspective of pragmatics, language structure is a set of behavioristic systems (Morris 1971, p.45). Pragmatic rules indicate the conditions under which the interpreter interprets a sign vehicle as a sign. Any rule in practical application works as a type of behavior. In other words, pragmatic factors are existed in both syntactic and semantic rules. Even if it is impossible to express it in terms of syntactical rules or semantical planning, we can also find a standpoint of pragmatic rules, such as the employ of interjections and some rhetorical devices. Morris proposes the term “pragmatic rule” to further expound the signs, sign vehicles, interpreters from the perspective of pragmatics, defining “pragmatical rules as the statement of the conditions in the interpreters under which the sign vehicle is a sign. Any rule when actually in use operates as a type of behavior, and in this sense, there is a pragmatical component in all rules” (Morris 1971, p.48). In Morris’s view, behavior affects the interpreter’s habit of using the sign vehicle in specific context. Conversely, when the interpreter uses signs, it also produces the expectations in the pragmatic dimension. Morris explores pragmatic rules from behavioral habits, i.e., the expected habits of the interpreter while employing signs under certain context. In terms of pragmatics, a linguistic sign is used in combination with other signs by the members of a social group; a language is a social system of signs mediating the responses of members of a community to one another and to their environment (Morris 1971, p.48). Thereby, a linguistic structure is a behavioral system. In the process of sign combination, designative signs direct the interpreter’s attention to some parts of the environment, while descriptive signs limit the expected response. When both designative and descriptive functions are performed, the interpreter needs to make judgment, but the sign combination itself is a kind of judgment as well, which is equivalent to sentences in syntax and propositions in semantics. Actually, “to understand a language is to employ only those sign combinations and transformations not prohibited by the usages of the social group in question, to denote objects and situations as do the members of this group, to have the expectations which the others have when certain sign vehicles are employed, and to express one’s own states as others do - in short, to understand a language or to use it correctly is to follow the rules of usage (syntactical, semantical, and pragmatical) current in the given social community” (Morris 1971, p. 48). To a certain extent, when the interpreter’s expectation is consistent with the reality, the sign is confirmed, but only part of the sign can be confirmed generally. From the behavioral point of view, when the sign correctly reflects the expected reaction of the sign user, the sign is “genuine”. Morris’s Semiotics, especially pragmatics, mainly originates from Peirce’s pragmatism. Grounded on Peirce’s sign theory, Morris inherits and develops Peirce’s Semiotics.

4. Morris’s development of Inquiry in Pragmatics

Pragmatic thought in Peirce’s pragmatism is represented in his trichotomy sign theory grounded on pragmatism, but this pragmatic thought has not been formed in a systematic way, is presented in fragments. It turns out to be the initial proposal of the term “Pragmatics” in Morris’s groundbreaking essay “Foundations of Signs of Theory” that stands for the establishment and formation of Pragmatics. With the further various specific explication of the meanings and functions of signs in Morris’s behavioral semiotics, pragmatics, as one of the three dimensions in semiosis, has been developed, so as to lay the foundations of the modern pragmatics developed in the post-semiotic period.

As one of the important theories in Morris’s semiotics, inquiry theory is closely related to the development of Pragmatics in the semiotic dimension. Pragmatics determines the relationship between the interpreter and the sign, and focuses on the employment of the sign. So how is the meaning of the symbol determined and transmitted among the members of the community to reach consensus? Morris answers this question according to Peirce’s Inquiry theory. Inquiry is interpreted by Morris as a process of reflection involving signs and problem solving oriented (Morris 1964, p.26). Peirce described the task of pure rhetoric as a process of inquiry, i.e., [...] “the study of those general conditions under which a problem presents itself for solution and those under which one question leads to another” (CP 3.430). In other words, inquiry is a psychological activity or struggle to determine the meaning of a sign or proposition so as to make people enter a state of belief. Peirce holds that if a group of inquirers has enough time to inquire something, their opinions will eventually be converged and fixed in a common stable belief which is the “true conclusion” of an issue or a sign. In Peirce’s view, inquiry is directional from individual to community, which is a public process. The limitations of individual inquirers in environment, power, preference,

etc. are the sources of mistakes, which are filtered out in the process of public inquiry. People will arrive at the final opinion agreed by all inquirers to overcoming their one-sidedness and establishing the common knowledge. In principle, the meaning of all things could be available to people. In regarding to the proposition that the truth is given to birth from people's final agreement, the meaning of a sign is determined depending on the consensus among subjects from the perspective of inquiry theory, i.e., the habitat of knowledge is not individuals, but communities.

Morris inherits Peirce's inquiry method in his semiotic theory, and distinguishes problem from non- problem in his inquiry theory as well. Every problem to be analyzed appears in a context, such characteristics of this context as object, meaning and belief, are non-problems as such, which are taken for granted as the starting point or preconditions to solve the problem. However, Morris holds a dynamic and dialectical view on the relationship between the problematic and the unproblematic, i.e., What is problematic in one context may become unproblematic in another context and vice versa. The object or sign being the problematic is the object of inquiry or research, while the object or sign being the unproblematic becomes the instrument of inquiry. The theory of inquiry is specifically applied to the analysis of scientific terms (including Semiotic nomenclatures) by Morris. He believes that the inquiry of signs is completed by signs that are not necessarily analyzed in this process of inquiry. Corresponding to the problematic and the unproblematic, Morris divides the sign into an inquiry into two classes: the analyzed sign and the unanalyzed sign. The unanalyzed signs of a given inquiry may be those of an established science or they may be terms of the everyday language in which the inquiry is being carried on (Morris 1971, p.435). The question of the adequacy of the unanalyzed terms depends on the purpose for which they are used. In science, for example, the fixation of unanalyzed terms should be widely recognized by partners, while the analyzed terms should be either completely or partially analyzed according to the necessary conditions of their application (Morris 1971, pp. 435-436). In reality, inquiry in science is only one kind of inquiry. Morris divides inquiry into three types according to the three dimensions of semiosis. Inquiry about what has happened, is happening or will happen and the result of the designative statement are called designative inquiry; the inquiry about what should be done ends with prescriptive discourse, which could be called prescriptive inquiry; the inquiry about what to prefer ends with appraisive discourse, which could be called appraisive inquiry. Peirce mainly discussed the first kind of inquiry, focusing on the field of natural science, while the latter two kinds of inquiries are common in the field of Humanities and social sciences. In the process of inquiry, the inquiry of the problematic always depends on the unproblematic which become the premise or standard of inquiry. When the result of an inquiry is acknowledged by the community, it is transformed into a non-problem.

5. Morris's behavioral pragmatics as the development of Peirce's pragmatist semiotics

It may be drawn a conclusion from the above that, in terms of the basic framework and principles of semiotics, Morris inherits and develops Peirce's Semiotics. From some specific points of view, the former is a loyal follower of the latter. Morris claims that his book *Signs, Language, and Behavior* (1946) is "an attempt to carry out resolutely the insight of Charles Peirce that a sign gives rise to an interpretant and that an interpretant is in the last analysis 'a modification of a person's tendencies toward action'" (Morris 1971, p.444). Peirce's exemplary role for Morris could be explored in the respect of borrowing the semiotic academic terminologies, such as "semiotics", "semiosis", "sign", "interpretant", "interpreter", "representamen", etc., The employment of these semiotic academic terminologies without the inquiry shows that Morris regards these terms as the unanalyzed ones, i.e., the non-questions in semiotic research, which is the axiom for the further semiotic research. In other words, in the field of semiotics represented by these terms, Morris directly inherits Peirce's viewpoints. In terms of semiotic methodology, both Morris and Peirce are good at creating semiotic academic terms, such as Peirce's "representamen", "interpretant", etc., and Morris's "significatum", "discriminatum", "locatum", "valuatum", and "obligatum", etc. These neologisms respectively show their innovative ideas in the field of semiotics. From the perspective of semiotics ontology, Morris, like Peirce, attempts to establish an all-inclusive and comprehensive semiotics. Peirce points that the sign is full of the whole universe, such as a book, a building, a man, etc. Even the whole universe is in signs, which is the sign of a creator. Thought, as a medium to connect the sign vehicle and its object in the semiosis, is expressed as interpretant in the sign process. Thought is not necessarily connected with a brain. It appears in the work of bees, of crystals, and throughout the purely physical world (CP 4.551). Hereby, Peirce's semiosis is not confined to human beings. He does not make a strict distinction of sign processes between

humans and non-human animals. Peirce's practice lay the foundations for Morris to bring animal sign process into the category of Semiotics in the future. In book of *Sign, Language and Behavior*, Morris often employs two typical examples to interpret sign behavior: one is that the sound of the buzzer is a sign designating food for dogs; the other one is the words of the informant to driver are signs designating the conditions of road ahead. Morris applies the word "organism" to summarize animal interpreter and human. Morris tries to establish an all-round semiotics based on human beings. He studies not only rational behavior signs, but also irrational and even anti-rational behavior signs. He studies both Western Christian culture and pagan culture, as well as Eastern Buddhist culture, and put all kinds of signs into the scope of semiotics, such as mystical semiotics, pathological semiotics, semiotics of social alienation, semiotics of mental illness, etc. In the article "Man-Cosmos Symbols", Morris draws a conclusion that organic process and non-organic process, science and art, man and the world are completely interlinked and integrated, i.e., Man is once more in the world and the world is in man. Similar processes and similar structures are within and without (Morris 1971, p.464). Although Morris was in accord with Peirce's description of semiosis as the 'action of a sign' (CP 5.473), he limited his concept of action to behavior directed toward a goal. This approach implies the presence of a subject, an organism, its goal-oriented behavior and a goal-object, that is, a 'final object' outside semiosis.

In the aspect of the expression of sign modes, Morris thinks that he is basically faithful to that of Peirce, but has made some minor and subtle improvements. Peirce's trichotomic signs include "representamen, or sign", "object", and "interpretant". In the book of *Signs, Language, and Behavior* and the essay "Foundations of Theory of Signs", Morris points out "the three components in semiosis, which may be called, respectively, the sign vehicle, the designatum, or significatum, and the interpretant; the interpreter may be included as a fourth factor" (Morris 1938, p.3). Again, in the book of *Signification and Significance*, Morris adds the fifth factor, context, but not discuss in detail. Although Peirce's semiotic model does not include the interpreter and context both of which are regarded as the premises of the unanalyzed term in the process of interpreting signs, Peirce comments that "A sign, or representamen, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its object" (CP 2.228). With the reference to Peirce's definition of signs here, "somebody" is equivalent to the interpreter, while "some respect" is related to context. Therefore, there is no substantial difference of sign models between Morris and Peirce. However, the terms of the two semioticians are not completely corresponding, but exists subtle differences with the example that Peirce's interpretant sometimes corresponds to Morris's interpretant, or significatum in other time. For Morris, the interpretant refers to the interpreter's responsive tendency to a sign, while the significatum refers to the interpreter's response to the relevant conditions of the sign, both of which express the effects of the sign on the interpreter. Therefore, it is natural for Morris to introduce the "interpreter" into the sign models. In fact, Peirce has also addressed inquiries to the effect of signs on interpreters, i.e., the nature of interpretant. He assumes that the effects of signs on the interpreter are the change of habits, the change of a man's behavior tendency, while habit is defined by Peirce as the interpreter's tendency to respond to a given stimulus in a specific way (CP 5.484-5.487). From the perspective of their sign models, specifically the relationship between the interpretant and the interpreter, both talk of effects of signs on interpreters, both describe interpretants in terms of such effects, both regard the interpretant as an effect on an interpreter such that the interpreter tends to act in a certain way under given circumstances when actuated by a given need (Morris 1971, p. 446). In Peirce and Morris's view, the nature of interpretant is, in a sense, the effects of signs (MS 318:14-5,1907).

In addition, Peirce's view that the semiosis is a mediating process also influences Morris. Peirce interprets the mediating process of signs by virtue of the three categories of phenomenology. In phenomenology, there are three modes of being. Firstness is the mode of being of that which is such as it is, positively and without reference to anything else. Secondness is the mode of being of that which is such as it is, with respect to a second but regardless of any third. Thirdness is the mode of being of that which is such as it is, in bringing a second and third into relation to each other (CP 8.328). Peirce believes that in the triadic relationships of signs, the relationship between representamen and the objects is the first and the second, and the connection between them is inseparable from interpretants being as the third which plays a role of mediator between the representamen and the objects. Peirce connects the signing process with the mediating process involved the being as the third, while the interpretant for

Peirce is the process of mental effect, thereby, Peirce basically equates the sign process with the mental process, which Peirce himself attempts to avoid psychology as well in his semiotics after 1898.

Morris doesn't fully agree with Peirce's viewpoints of mediating process in semiotics. He advises "to delimit in some way sign-processes within the general class of processes involving mediation", as "there seem to be many processes involving mediation other than conditioning which would not ordinarily be regarded as signs; the eye, for example, in seeing is a genuine mediating element in the relation of certain responses to certain objects, and yet the eye (or even the retinal image) would hardly be called a sign in such cases" (Morris 1971, p.338).

In terms of the meaning of signs, Morris also inherits and develops Peirce's viewpoints of signs. Peirce proposes that every sign has two objects: immediate object and dynamic object. The former is the object represented by the sign, for example, the direct object of the rainbow is the seven-color ribbon available to people, while the latter is the object that really functions but does not appear directly, i.e., the dynamic object of the rainbow is the refraction of sunlight through water drops after rain. Correspondingly, each sign has an immediate interpretant, i.e., its meaning, represented or signified in the sign, and a dynamic interpretant, i.e., the actual effect of the sign in the mind of the interpreter. In addition, a sign will get an acknowledged final interpretant after the full inquiry. Peirce seldom employs the word "meaning", Morris also uses the word "meaning" cautiously, which expresses the complexity and diversity of meaning. For Morris, meaning includes the following contents: (1) denotatum, what signs represent (Morris 1971, p.361); (2) designatum, the properties of the object or context that a sign refers to (Morris 1971, p.361); (3) interpretant, the behavioral responsive tendency or mental effects of signs on the interpreter (Morris 1971, p.363); (4) significatum, the conditions of being the object of a specific sign, according to the means of signifying, it can be subdivided into five subclasses: discriminatum, locatum, valuatum, obligatum, formatum (Morris 1971, p.366).

Peirce's influence on Morris's semiotics is shown in many aspects, but it cannot cover up Morris's expansion and revision of the semiotic viewpoints of Peirce. For example, Peirce's definition of interpretant is limited in a cognition of a mind to some extent, which Morris thinks it difficult in defining a sign in terms of mind or thought. Without the ground of behavior situations in attempting to define "sign", Morris argues that Peirce's definition of signs from the perspective of psychology cannot furnish an empirical criterion for determining whether a certain thing is or is not a sign until a satisfactory criterion for the occurrence of mind or thought could be available (Morris 1971, p.339). Therefore, Morris would rather choose Peirce's emphasis on behavior and behavior habits as the starting point of semiotics research. In addition, Peirce always defines 'signs' in such a way that the interpretant of a sign is itself a sign, and so ad infinitum (Morris 1971, p.339). With the regard to Peirce theory of unlimited semiosis ("semiosis ad infinitum"), Morris agrees that signs are usually grown into new signs and produce a series of sign processes, i.e., a sign is just a link in the endless chain of signs, but he opposes to bring this fact of unlimited semiosis into the scientific definition of signs, which may trigger the suspicion of circular argument in defining a sign. In conclusion, Peirce's pragmatic semiotics is an important source of Maurice's behavioral semiotics. The former has a great influence on the latter, in which the revision of Peirce's view cannot erase Peirce's influence on him. Conversely, Morris's semiotic theory is a development of Peirce's sign theory, specifically, as one of the branches of Morris's semiotic, pragmatics is not only formed with its ontology and methodology, it is also developed grounded on Peirce's pragmatism or pragmaticism. Pragmatics is actually a discipline pertaining the effects of sign on interpreter, which is closely related to Peirce's pragmaticism, and formed and developed in Morris's behavioral semiotics.

6. The three semiotic dimensions of Morris's developed pragmatics

This paper argues that Morris's proposal of pragmatics as the development of pragmatic thought of Peirce has at least three distinctive properties of semiotic.

(1) Pragmatics as science and scientific tool. Morris (1938, p.2) pointed out that "Semiotics has a double relation to the sciences: it is both a science among the sciences and an instrument of the sciences. The significance of semiotic as a science lies in the fact it is a step in the unification of science, since it supplies the foundations for any special science of signs". Every science must use signs and the means of signs to express its research results. Therefore, semiotics must provide relevant signs and principles needed for research. Semiotics must use meta-

signs of indices. He regards all the terms in generalized semiotics as “Semiotics”, including “pragmatism” (Morris 1938, p.8), and such terms as ‘interpreter’ ‘interpretant’ ‘convention’ (when applied to signs), ‘taking-account-of’ (when a function of signs), ‘verification’, and ‘understands’ are terms of pragmatics, while many semiotic terms such as ‘sign’ ‘language’ ‘truth’ and ‘knowledge’ have important pragmatical components (Morris 1938, p.33). In Pragmatic terminology, many are new words or new meanings of old words, such as speech act, performative, perlocutionary action, conversational implicature, cooperative principle, etc. Pragmatics itself is also a pragmatic term, which cannot be defined separately without semantics and syntax. Morris distinguished pure semiotics from descriptive Semiotics (Morris 1938, p.9), which is also the distinction between metasemiotics and semiotics.

(2) Pragmatics as meta-semiotics and meta-linguistics. Morris also pointed out that the science which takes semiotics as an instrument to study science is meta science; Metapragmatics, which was proposed by Silverstein (1976) in the field of linguistic anthropology, is a discipline that describes the pragmatic structure of language, which is similar to the principle of meta semantics in describing semantic and grammatical structure. Mey (2001) discusses metapragmatics based on the research of metapragmatics of Caffi (1994). He doesn’t recognize Morris’s contribution to pragmatics, so he doesn’t notice the inspiration of Morris’s metasemiotics to metapragmatics. However, he proposed the importance of “metapragmatic thinking” (Mey 2001, p.178) on pragmatics itself and its research objectives and methods, revealing an important semiotic dimension of pragmatics. Morris pointed out that the language used to discuss scientific language is metalanguage (Morris 1938, p.9, p.22). He later emphasized that semiotics could “provide meta language for Linguistics”, which could generate a science of linguistics grounded on the Theory of Semiotics (Morris 1946, p.221). The fact that modern Logic and Linguistics distinguish object language and metalanguage (Tarski 1936/2002) divides linguistics into linguistics and metalinguistics. What’s more, the application of “metalanguage” can be divided into metalingual and metalinguistic levels (Feng, 2005). Leech (1983) put forward “meta implicature” “metaproposition” and “meta maxim” on the basis of pragmatic terms such as “meaning” “proposition” and “maxim”, which includes the quality of “metagrammar” in the process of description, the problem of “metalanguage” of politeness, and the “metalinguistic strategy” used by the speaker, all of which are applied in the exploration of meta theory. The theory of metalanguage and metatheory is another semiotic dimension of contemporary pragmatics.

(3) Pragmatics as social semiotics. Social semiotics is an important branch of contemporary semiotics, which is developed from Saussure’s Semiotics Theory. It studies the social dimension of human beings in the process of designing and interpreting the meaning of signs. Social Pragmatics proposed by Leech (1983) is actually the definition of another semiotic dimension of pragmatics under the influence of Halliday (1978)’s “language is social sign”. Halliday has a further analysis of the “situational context” of language communication, and has noticed the direct “pragmatic relationship” between discourse and environment. It is believed that pragmatic language is language representing action, which has the social functions (Halliday 1978, pp.29-32). Wierzbicka (1991) challenged the classical pragmatic theory and called his pragmatic study “interpersonal interaction semantics”. Semantics from the perspective of social semiotics, especially discourse and discourse semantics, is an important part of contemporary pragmatics. Therefore, social semiotics is also an important semiotic dimension of contemporary pragmatics.

Pragmatics is closely related to the qualities of Semiotics in many aspects. Eco defines that “Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign” (Eco 1976, p.9) and Semiotics also focuses on anything meaningful in the fields of Linguistics and Science of Language. Morris’s semiotics is a summary of three philosophical schools: pragmatism, empiricism and logical positivism. In 1934, he put forward three kinds of relations of signs (with people, with objects, with other signs). It was only in 1938 that pragmatics, semantics and syntax were put forward in the framework of sign theory. Saussure’s semiotics is the direct theoretical basis of modern linguistics, but it did not have a wide influence in the English world until 1959. Although Saussure did not put forward pragmatics, his semiotics has the nature of pragmatic semiotics, which is a method of discourse research that has been developed traditionally by Barthes’ semiotics since the late 1960s (Sturrock 2003, p.41). The pragmatic scope of classical pragmatics is much narrower than that of Morris Semiotics (Levinson 1983, p.2). Therefore, Pragmatics is developed and prosperous in the connection with Semiotics, as one of the fastest growing fields in “contemporary linguistics and philosophy of language” (Huang 2007, p.1), Pragmatics has become one of the most

vigorous one in “contemporary linguistics and philosophy of language”, of which kernel of the fastest development lies in its nature of semiotic dimension.

7. Conclusion

Morris was influenced by pragmatism such as Pierce and Mead in his early years, and then influenced by logical positivism such as Carnap. In all his life, he tried to build a bridge between pragmatism and logical positivism and advocated to combine the both to establish a kind of “scientific empiricism” which consists of semiotics and axiology, whose thoughts have played an important role in the development and integration of English American pragmatics and Continental pragmatics. Morris directly inherited and applied the early American pragmatism, especially the behaviorism caused by pragmatism and Peirce’s Semiotics, according to which Morris founded the behaviorist pragmatics theory. Morris first put forward three dimensions of semiotics, namely syntactics, semantics and pragmatics which is generally accepted by semioticians and linguists. Later, Morris redefined Pragmatics: pragmatics is a part of semiotics, which studies the origin, application of signs and the *effects* of signs in action. Morris clearly expounds that “pragmatics” is coined from the word “pragmatism”, which emphasizes the relationship between signs and the interpreters of signs, and solves the biological aspects of semiotics, i.e., dealing with psychological, biological and social phenomena existing in the effects of signs; From the perspective of pragmatics, language structure is a kind of behavioral system. What Morris proposed is actually a kind of behaviorist pragmatics, which not only lays great influence on philosophy of language, but also gives birth to pragmatics. His behaviorist pragmatics summarizes the pragmatic thinking since the beginning of pragmatism, which makes the pragmatic thoughts in American philosophy widely spread. It is in this context that pragmatics, as a new discipline, has been established and developed prosperously.

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