Text semiotics:
Textology as survival-machine

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Abstract. Signifying practices by which living creatures communicate, are, according to Sebeok, the survival-machines. Accordingly, as represented by the semiotic text analysis or Bakhtin's textology, one can speak about a human survival-machine. This has been studied by different semiotic schools (including the Moscow–Tartu school) referring to language, culture, genre and, importantly, text ideology. In this article, the aspects of textology in Peirce's generalized theory of signs become analysed. After a discussion of the concept of text in Peirce's (published and unpublished) writings, its relationship with semiosis and other Peircean categories is shown. The project of elaborating Peirce-based text-semiotics expects that it must be dramatically different from other sign-theoretical text-theories. This may be a path towards more inter-subjective and creative textology.

Textology

The application of a semiotic paradigm to text analysis, which characterizes the analysis of written verbal utterances, also called text semiotics, is finally what distinguishes the formalized approach of text grammar from a more comprehensive point of view, that of communication in the broad sense of the term. Indeed, texts are objects or artifacts containing and conveying information; messages encoded, sent, transmitted, received, decoded, and given some interpretation[1].

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[1] For text and textuality, see further Gorlée 1997a and 1998.

Semiotics in the broad sense is precisely concerned with the study of all signifying practices (verbal, non-verbal, or a combination of both) by which living creatures, human and non-human, communicate. How vital this pursuit is, has been repeatedly emphasized by Sebeok, who refers to it as life's, and thus also man's, "survival-machine" (Sebeok 1986: 5). In order to study the many different ways in which signs can function, semiotics has developed a fullfledged repertoire of concepts. Semiotics is therefore in the unique position to describe, explain, as well as to predict human thought as operative in the sign process. Moreover, a semiotic analysis does not peculiarly involve a value judgment, neither a priori nor a posteriori; because as the radically general theory of signs it is, at least in its purest form, incompatible with ideological discoloration of the facts it pretends to study.

Textual production and textual interpretation are, among innumerable other human practices, forms of communication through signs. The text-phenomenon can therefore be studied from the perspective of a theory of signs. Obvious as this may perhaps seem, a "semiotic textology" (Petöfi 1986b)[2] is nevertheless a relatively recent emprise within semiotics, and remains in many ways a little-explored field of applied semiotic investigation. One important reason for this is that text semiotics as it has so far been practices has often concentrated rather one-sidedly on what is called linguistic semiotics, or descriptive sign theory in the Saussurean tradition. Examples abound[3]. Whereas, on the other hand, the semiotic project of a textology from the point of view of Peirce's semiotics has as yet received scant attention (Gorlée 1992).

Without going into the details of the sectarian "warfare" between followers of the two sign-theoretical traditions, the discussion here will concentrate instead on their respective relevance to the textological case in point. On the other hand, the insights as developed in the former Soviet Union, the Moscow–Tartu school, will also, whenever relevant, be drawn upon. Bachtin's novel textological propositions, from the Leningrad school of semiotics, has been mentioned in the previous paragraph, who rejected the Saussurean dichotomy of syn-

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2   The term "textology" was originally an invention of Bachtin's from the Leningrad school of semiotics. See his 1959–1961 article "Das Problem des Textes" (Bachtin 1990: 437–438, note 2 [composed by the translators]).

3   See *Linguistique et discours littéraire. Theorie et pratique des textes* by Adam, published in 1976, still in use. Jointly with Saussurean terms the following (always literary) texts are analyzed, for instance, Colette's *La maison de Claudine*, Chrétien de Troyes's *Perceval ou le Conte du Graal*, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, André Breton's *Poisson soluble*, Zola's *Germinal*, Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, and so forth.

chrony and diachrony and statics versus dynamics, as against the re-
vival of post-Saussurian descriptive tradition in France (see Lévi-
Strauss) and parts of North America. No attempts will therefore be
made here to resolve semiotic disputes. It will instead be argued that
Peirce's theory of signs has been unduly neglected in text theory, and
that its potential for text-theoretical study fully deserves further explo-
ration. To explore this well-nigh pristine ground will be the primary
aim, and indeed the privilege, of this study.

Text semiotics

Different semiotic theories have defined the text by establishing a
relation between the concept of text and that of sign. This does, how-
ever, not mean that there is agreement among semioticians about what
precisely is a text. Indeed, what is meant by it varies according to the
different definitions, explications, or descriptions given, explicitly or
implicitly, to the concept of the (linguistic) sign.

In what has been denominated "linguistic semiotics", the written
verbal sign is regarded as a graphic utterance-sign occurring as a se-
quence of word-signs, that is, as an "entity endowed with meaning ... ,
prior to any linguistic or logical analysis" (Greimas and Courtés 1982:
362). It is not until the object in question is analyzed (or described)
that it becomes a signifying whole, or text. It is thus only as a result of
the descriptive process of what is called "signification" that articulated
meaning comes into existence and is made visible to the reader. This
means that a text is "made up only of those semiotic elements fitting
the theoretical goal of the description" (Greimas and Courtés 1982:
340). Different types of analysis will perceive different pertinent traits,
will choose, retain, and process different signifying features, and will
consequently produce different non-equivalent texts.

This sign-theoretical approach studies how the utterer (who in this
predominantly literary-oriented tradition is often referred to as "narra-
tor") addresses himself to the reader. As it concentrates on retracing
the process in which meaning is encoded and textualized, linguistic
semiotics is primarily concerned with text production, and hence with
sign production. This agrees with Barthes's concept of the text (or
Text, as he often called it), which hinges on the sign *qua* signifier;
while its counterpart, the signified, can be endlessly explored (this is
Barthes's "semiological adventure"), yet its true scope must remain

elusive. After making a round through textuality in his structuralist colleagues (Propp, Kristeva, Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, *Tel Quel*) as Barthes formulated his textness (originally in 1974):

> And what is the Text? I shall not answer by a definition, which would be to fall back into the signified.
> The Text, in the modern, current sense which we are
> trying to give this word, is fundamentally to be distinguished from the literary work:
> it is not an esthetic product, it is a signifying practice;
> it is not a structure, it is a structuration;
> it is not an object, it is a work and a game;
> it is not a group of closed signs, endowed with a meaning to be rediscovered, it is a volume of traces in displacement;
> the instance of the Text is not signification but the Signifier, in the semiotic and psychoanalytic acceptation of that term;
> the Text exceeds the old literary work; there is, for example, a Text of Life ... (Barthes 1988: 7)

In so far as the often cryptic nature of Barthes's idea-world and the daunting nature of his parlance do permit a transparent and unambiguous interpretation, a structuralist concept of text seems to de-emphasize what is central to other semiotic theories, namely that a text serves first and foremost a communicative target. Yet to conceive of a text as a self-contained entity with its own internal structure, independent (at least in principle) of whatever interpretations it may at any time be able to receive, is to ignore the almost obvious, namely that this structure or form is as it is precisely to efficiently organize and convey a particular message. Before anything else, a written text must therefore be considered as a communicative event, a writer's device for telling something to somebody, his particular reader(ship).

In non-structuralist semiotic theories, and in semiotic theories which, while bearing the stamp of Saussure, are not as directly Saussurean as structuralism is, communication does take central stage. In the former Soviet Union, this was clearly prefigured in the text-theoretical work by Jakobson and Bachtin, which focuses upon the (preferably artistic) verbal text *qua* individual utterance (written as well as spoken), and which is conceived as a polemical dialogue between Saussurean linguistics and "metalinguistics", the latter a Bachtinian concept (*not* coextensive with Jakobson's 1960 notion of meta-language) emphasizing the diachronical and cumulative aspects of literary hermeneutics instead of the static nature of Saussure's model[4].

model[4]. This marks the transition, in so-called Soviet semiotics, from a cybernetic and scientistic approach to a cultural approach.

In the sense of the Moscow–Tartu school of semiotics, originally headed by Lotman, communication is approached as a fact of culture, and its manifestations, both linguistic and non-linguistic, are called, in consequence, "texts of the culture." In his article "Problems in the typology of texts", Lotman gives the following, deliberately broad characterization of the (linguistic) text:

> A text is a separate message that is clearly perceived as being distinct from a "nontext" or "other text" ... The distinctive character of a text is not randomly distributed among semiotic levels. For a linguist, a sequence of sentences may be perceived as distinct from what precedes and follows in a linguistic relation, syntactically for instance, and thus as forming a text; and yet it may not possess such a delimitation according to certain legal standards. For a lawyer, a sequence of sentences is part of a text if it belongs to a broader unity, and is a nontext if it does not belong to such a unity. From this follows: ... A text has a beginning, end, and definite internal organization. An internal structure is inherent by definition in every text. An amorphous accumulation of signs is not a text. (Lotman [1977] 1988: 119)

Considered as a semiotic sign, the text is for Lotman a delimited whole. First, the text must have clear external boundaries, which set it apart from other texts in the same linguistic code. Second, and in addition to its outward demarcations, the text often has an inner distinctiveness, insofar as it consists of parts (strophes, chapters, paragraphs, etc.). The text is hierarchically organized in a variety of subsigns corresponding to levels of structural-semantic organization, or subtexts[5]. In order to be understandable as a coherent unity, both in terms of form and in terms of meaning, texts must for Lotman be viewed as rooted in a given culture in its plurality of codes. As Shukman points out, the concept of "code," "in Lotman's usage, may refer to semantic level, literary convention, level of consciousness or ideology. Used in this way, it is a heuristic device not strictly or ideologically defined" (Shukman 1986: 1088). What is important here is not so much how texts are interpreted (because widely divergent interpretations are often possible, all integral), but the fact that they make sense in a com-

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[4] See, e.g., Bachtin 1990, an essay composed in 1959–1961, mentioned in note 2.

[5] In addition to its hierarchism, the concept of text is defined by Lotman in terms of (1) expression, (2) demarcation, and (3) structure. In my survey, these features do not appear seriatim, but are blended into the discussion.

munity or culture and can be efficiently interpreted by its members. Herein lies perhaps the difference between Lotman's and Barthes's ideas of text. While both scholars consider the text as an autonomous object, Barthes's analyses disregard all extratextual properties and ideological relations, whereas these play a decisive role in Lotman's textual approach.

As argued in Lotman and Pjatigorskij ([1977] 1988)[6], culture consists in a collection of rules which functions as a system of signs. The (written) text is a cultural product and may be regarded as a "'semiotic space' in which the various codes combine in a unique manner" (Shukman 1986: 1088). In order to become texts, verbal messages must function semiotically, that is, they must possess a special cultural significance. This means that they must have a meaningful relation not only with other texts, but they must also function meaningfully within the relevant system of social and cultural codes governing religion, law, medicine, politics, art, etc. All texts are embedded in and, to a certain degree, conditioned by certain sociocultural rules. This relation can be simple and straightforward, or it can be polemic and ambiguous; but a verbal message lacking a cultural impact cannot be endowed with a textual status.

This means that the everyday utterance, or linguistic communication without a particular cultural meaning beyond the purely utilitarian, does for this reason not qualify as a semiotic sign, or text. It is called a "nontext". That the division between a text and a nontext is neatly defined only in theory, may be exemplified by the New York stock-index, a sports report, a shopping list, or the weather report; mundane texts, true, but not devoid of cultural relevance. It must be underscored that in the text-semiotic perspective as developed in the former Soviet Union, strictly linguistic well-formedness à la Chomsky is not as such decisive in verbal utterances, because what would at first blush seem like a random sequence of words (for instance, a magic formula, children's nonsense rhymes, a Dada poem) can nevertheless make perfect sense to specific interpreters and/or in specific sociocultural contexts. Of the three semiotic dimensions (Morris's syntactic, semantic, pragmatic factors) which may be distinguished in the text, the first two are thus integrated in, and overshadowed by, the third: "Eeny Meeny Mo" does function as what Lotman conceives as a "real text" ([1977] 1988: 124).

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[6]   On Lotman's ideas, see also Segre 1984, for example.

In spite of the wide range of their interests, Lotman and his associates (such as Ivanov, Uspenskij, Toporov, and many others) gravitate towards a concept of text which is particularly applicable to dividing texts into "artistic" and "non-artistic" texts (see Shukman 1986). This is hardly surprising, because they are especially interested in how culturally-functioning signs (Lotman's "real texts") not only reflect a certain encoded meaning, but also how they enable interpreters to generate new and unexpected meanings of them, for example by placing them within the novel context of a different cultural (sub)code than the original or "natural" one:

> In the course of the cultural functioning of the text, its original meaning is subjected to complex re-makings and transformations, which result in an *increase of meaning*. This may therefore be called the *creative* function of the text. In contrast to its communicative function, where the slightest change represents an error and a distortion of meaning, a text in its creative function tends to produce new meanings (cf. E. T. A. Hoffmann's words in the preface to his *Lebensansichten des Katers* where errors, slips of *Murr* about the creative role of misprints, and also the numerous incidents mentioned by Tolstoy, Akhamatova, and others, the pen, etc., have played a part in the creative process). If in the former function noise swallows up the information, it may creatively transform it in the latter. (Lotman 1987: 161)

By concluding that "the text in its modern semiotic definition, is no longer a passive carrier of meaning, but appears as a dynamic, intrinsically contradictory phenomenon, as one of the fundamentals of modern semiotics" (Lotman 1987: 163), Lotman transforms the text-sign from a mere vessel of meaning into an active meaning-generating agency, hereby moving textuality away from the statics of the post-Saussurian tradition and towards new horizons.

Text ideology

In the final analysis, this dynamic conception of the text as semiotic sign would seem more germane to "semiosis" in Peirce's sense of triadic sign-action, than to Saussure's dyadic sign-relation, between a signifier in opposition to a signified. It is true that the semiotic tradition in the former Soviet Union is conceptually closer to Saussure and, to some degree, to Hjelmslev, than to Peirce. One example of this is the notion of culture, which echoes *langue*, and the vision of the text

as *parole*; another, that Lotman operates with binary oppositions (such as systemic/non-systemic, univocal/ambivalent, center/periphery). Moreover, Lotman's focus (in tandem with Saussure's) is on man-made signs interpreted by human interpreters; while Peirce conceived of the sign, in a much broader way, to include all signs, man-made and/or natural. Yet it can perhaps be suggested that in Lotman's perspective, as in Peirce's, the text's meaning is not reducible to the system in which it is inscribed; it is an ongoing process whereby new relations with the world are being established and revived, and hence new meanings are being forged. Lotman's conception of the "real" sign as determined by culture can be regarded as akin to Peirce's "genuine" sign (at least in one of the senses in which Peirce uses this term): this is, in addition to being an entity in itself, a two-faced agency mediating meaningfully (that is, both functionally and creatively) between "reality" as represented in the sign and "reality" as interpreted by an interpreting mind; whereas Saussure's sign consists of, and is therefore reducible to, the sign-internal interaction and mutual dependence between its material side (signifier) and the "content" (signified) with which it is descriptively connected. This is textual ideology in structuralism, that is "in the restricted, semiotic, meaning of this word" (Greimas and Courtés 1982: 149).

Next, let us consider Eco's concept of the written text, which is radically eclectic as it seeks to harmonize and integrate many different semiotic traditions, particularly East Europan semiotics, "French" semiology, and "American" semiotics. In tandem with semiology (more commonly called structuralism), Eco concentrates, in his classic *A Theory of Semiotics* and later work, on modes of text production, while borrowing his textual concepts and terminology mainly from the communication model deviced by information theoreticians. At the same time, however, Eco began to develop a text theory emphasizing textual interpretation. In consequence, his exploration of the "role of the reader" in interpreting texts has been guided expressly by Peircean concepts (Eco's *The Role of the Reader* [1979] 1984).

In *A Theory of Semiotics*, Eco notes that "usually a single sign-vehicle conveys many intertwined contents and therefore what is commonly called a 'message' is in fact a *text* whose content is a multi-levelled *discourse*" (1979: 57; Eco's emphasis)[7]. If a text can express

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[7]   Eco inverts the use of "text" and "discourse" as found in, for example, the work of van Dijk, for whom "text" is "the abstract notion … , underlying what is intuitively known as 'connected discourse'" (van Dijk 1972: 1).

several coexisting messages, Eco argues, it is because the codes according to which it is encoded, are ideally shared by the utterer and the interpreter of the text. Except in the rare case of the absolutely simple and rudimentary sign, every sign constitutes for Eco a text; and a complex sign such as a painting is thus, for Eco, "not a sign but a text" (1979: 20, 250).

Eco realizes, of course, that while every sign is a vehicle of meaning, in order to do so it does not necessarily have to be produced by a human individual. Many signs, such as the so-called "natural" signs (signs of the weather, medical symptoms, etc.) have no utterer. But a sign does not function as a sign until it be recognized and understood as such, and interpreted by some (real or potential) interpreter. What is, however, crucial in making the sign (whether verbal or non-verbal) a text, is for Eco solely its multiple meaning-potential; as opposed, it must be reminded, to Lotman's above-discussed, more diversified requirements. A sign must be susceptible of receiving more than one meaning, including non-intended and even fanciful ones. In the interpretive act or acts new meanings can emerge as a result of the application by the interpreter of non-intended (by the sign producer) codes. In Eco's favored expression, the sign must be capable of lying.

Eco's identification of sign with text holds also true for the inverse operation, the written text as a semiotic sign — intentionally produced and conventionally interpreted. When Eco considered the sign as a text, he really used "text" in an extended, even metaphorical sense; while in his consideration of the verbal text as a sign Eco uses the term "text" also, and primarily, in reference to the particular written object, thereby using "text", somewhat confusingly, in two senses, literal and figurative, concrete and abstract. As it happens, Eco's argument concentrates upon the latter (the concept of text) while assuming a general acquaintance with the former (the object called text). Poorly defined, if defined at all, this object can only be known through the (fragments of) verbal texts which Eco uses as examples illustrative of his text theory. These include, in Eco ([1979]1984), texts as heterogeneous as a short story (*Un drame bien parisien*, by Alphonse Allais), an excerpt from a poem (*Toto-Vaca*, by Tristan Tzara), a paragraph from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, and Peirce's definition of the words "hard" and "lithium"). With such a wide topical selection of texts (from literary, philosophical and chemical genres), Eco shows a universal, Peircean spirit and departs from other semiotic traditions which either limit textual study to the study of lit-

erary texts, or define what constitutes a text in terms of culture, high and/or popular. Following Peirce's line of reasoning, the crucial distinction is not, as usually, between the artistic and the non-artistic, the verbal and the non-verbal, the cultural and the natural, but (as shall be shown in more detail in the next section) between the genuine, or triadic sign and signs which do not function triadically. In short, Peirce opposes semiosis to non-semiosic forms of textual sign-action.

In *The Role of the Reader* Eco states that the literary, philosophical, etc. text as "what one calls 'message' is usually a text, that is, a network of different messages depending on different codes and working at different levels of signification" ([1979] 1984: 5). At the same time he points out that "every text is a syntactic-semantico-pragmatic device whose foreseen interpretation is part of its generative process (Eco [1979] 1984: 3, 11). This last definition of the text as concept not only accomodates all three semiotic dimensions of the text; it also emphasizes the crucial role which text interpretation crucially has to play, in tandem with the earlier text production; and the use of the designation "device", rather than "sign", underscores that the text is however a complex human construction, something contrived by human design; and at the same time a means for bringing about a result, a kind of tool requiring, from both its maker and its user, a combination of workmanship and creativity, skill and imagination.

In "Peirce and the semiotic foundations of openness: Signs as texts and texts as signs" (Chapter 7 of Eco [1979] 1984), written in 1976, Eco deploys his ideas on a Peircean text theory by developing some of Peirce's concepts in a suitable textual direction. These concepts are not so much Peirce's well-known triad, icon-index-symbol, as his theory of the "interpretant". In other words, of the three relations which the sign has (with itself, with its referent, and with the meaning it is given), Eco goes beyond what the sign stands for and also concentrates on the dynamic process by which the sign (text) arouses an interpreting sign (meaning) in some interpreting mind (reader). Such a pragmatic approach includes and presupposes an approach from both semantics and syntactics, in the same way as Peirce's Thirdness includes and presupposes Secondness and Firstness. In fact, it is one of the many concrete manifestations of Peirce's three modes of being. Rather than giving here a detailed account of Eco's reading, interpretation, and application of Peirce's ideas, let us in what follows take a closer look at how Peirce himself equated, or otherwise connected, text (as defined for the purpose here) with the adventure of the sign.

Peirce, text, and sign

Peirce did occasionally use "text" in a modern sense of the term[8]. Nevertheless, in Peirce's days "text" was commonly used in classical philology, religious studies, and related disciplines, to refer to the words of Greek and Latin authors, and other, preferably "ancient" (*N*1:158,1892), pieces of writing, or manuscripts, invested with special authority, the Bible, especially[9], and referring to Aristotle's writing, his "Greek text, the context of the book calls more emphatically for a chapter of very different meaning from that which we read in the present text" and "the meaning that can be attached to the existing text", written by Aristotle (*MS* 756: 10–11, c. 1906). This is how the term is commonly used by Peirce, and this is likewise how Peirce's contemporary, Saussure, spoke of "written texts" (Saussure [1916] 1959: 1, 7), namely, as objects of comment and exegesis.

In respect to the modern meaning of "text" as constituting the object of research in these pages, Peirce, as a sign-theoretician, used

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[8]   See, particularly, Peirce's review-articles for *The Nation*, where he referred, for example, to "the illustrations, which are wood-cuts in the text" (*N* 2: 62, 1894); "there was a date, 10 Nov. 1619, in the text, and 11 Nov. 1620, in the margin" (*N* 2: 93, 1889); "its pages were filled with solid text" (*N* 2: 197, 1899); "The text occupies less than six hundred pages" (*N* 2: 265, 1900); "a text of half a million words" (*N* 3: 34, 1901); "the Appendix to the book … fills more than half again as many pages as the body of the text" (*N* 3: 62,1890); "Heiberg prints for the first time the Greek text of Anatolius on the first ten numbers" (*N* 3: 87, 1902). From Peirce's other works, see the following examples: "End of footnote" is immediately followed by "Text resumed" (*MS* 646: 8, 1910); and apropos of the opera Peirce remarked: "The business of the composer was to invent 'beautiful melodies'. The text that was written below it was a secondary affair. Music and words were yuxtaposed, as it were" (*MS* 1517: 31, 1896). The latter quote is from Peirce's translation of William Hirsch's *Genius und Degeneration* (1998), and Peirce's use of "text" here is evidently a transposition of the original German *Text* (as an addendum, see publications on this theme, Gorlée 1996, 1997). See also the following passage: "I hold that it is necessary to make an emendation to the text of the 25th chapter of the *Second Prior Analytics* ..." (*MS* 318: 187, 1907), where Peirce also used "text" in the sense of "words". In this connection it is interesting to note the following quote: "... if we take a piece of blank paper, and form the resolve to write upon it some part of what we think *about some real or imaginary condition of things*, then, that resolve being made and the whole sheet (called the [)] having been devoted to that purpose exclusively,..." (*MS* 678: 42, 1910; underlining in the handwritten original). Here, the word which Peirce was apparently looking for to fill the blank space, could perhaps have been "text", or an equivalent.

[9]   See further Segre 1988.

terms such as "symbol", "discourse", "proposition", and "argument", thereby addressing himself to logical properties of the text, which will be elaborated later in greater detail. Here it must suffice to characterize the several concepts through which Peirce approached the phenomenon of text, briefly and seriatim, as follows: A symbol is a sign requiring intelligent or skilful interpretation to become meaningful. It is the vehicle of thought, and "all thinking is conducted in signs that are mainly of the same structure as words ..., or *symbols*" (*CP* 6.338, c. 1909). Reasoning, that is interpretation of signs by signs, whether spoken, written, or otherwise (such as pictorial), takes always a discursive form. Peirce wrote that

> Reasoning by our older authors Shakespeare, Milton, etc. is called "discourse of reasoning", or "discourse" simply. The expression is not yet obsolete in the dialect of philosophers. But "discourse" also means talk, especially talk monopolized. That these two things, reasoning and talk, should have come to be called by one name, in English, French, and Spanish, a name that in classical Latin means simply, running about, is one of the curious growths of speech. (*MS* 597: 2, c.1902)

However, Peirce hastened to add to this that discourse, or reasoning, is "communication", and hence not "a sort of talk with oneself ... addressed to oneself" (*MS* 597: 3, c.1902). Accordingly, a "proposition" is, for Peirce, "any product of language, which has the form that adapts it to instilling belief into the mind of the person addressed, supposing him to have confidence in its utterer" (*MS* 664: 8, 1910); and in what Peirce called "argument", "[c]ertain facts are stated in such a way as to convince a person of the reality of a certain truth, that is, the argumentation is designed to determine in his mind a representation of that truth" (*MS* 599: 43, c.1902). Applied to written texts, these concepts (symbol, discourse, proposition, argument, *inter alia*) enable us to deal logically (that is, semiotically) with the text as a device for verbal definition, suggestion, persuasion, instruction, and other forms of communication through words.

First, it is necessary to consider the text as a material object. Construed in Peircean terms, it is a sign and, more specifically, a verbal sign. As a sign it must be seen on a par with all other objects which in Peirce's logic are susceptible of signhood. In a Peircean semiotics, anything (any object, event, phenomenon, concept, etc.) can, in certain circumstances, be a sign. Fisch underscores that "Peirce's general theory of signs is so general as to entail that, whatever else anything may be, it is also a sign" (1983: 56). According to Peirce, signs in general

are "a class which includes pictures, symptoms, words, sentences, books, libraries, signals, orders of command, microscopes, legislative representatives, musical concertos, performances of these ... (*MS* 634: 18, 1909). In short, "[a] sign is any sort of thing" (*MS* 800: 2, [1903?], provided it is a "representation" and thus "stands for something to the idea which it produces, or modifies; or it is a vehicle conveying into the mind something from without" (*NEM* 4: 309, 1895)[10].

It has been frequently noted, and commented upon, by Peircean scholars that Peirce's concept of the sign is very broad; much broader, at any rate, than all other semioticians's conception of signhood, which it encompasses. According to Greenlee, it is "deliberately broad" (1973: 24); but note Peirce's own affirmation that it "is a very broad conception, but the whole breath of it is pertinent to logic" (*NEM* 3: 3: 233, 1909). Indeed, despite Peirce's numerous definitions and redefinitions of the sign throughout his intellectual career[11], he never abandoned the broadness of its scope; nor did he change the essence of the logical properties of the sign as "something, A, which denotes some fact or object, B, to some interpretant thought, C" (*CP*: 1.346, 1903).

There is substantial evidence from Peirce's work that he had a keen interest in language and linguistics, in addition to many other fields of research, theoretical and applied. Peirce's numerous linguistically-oriented essays (the first of which is his 1865 Harvard Lecture I (*W* 1: 162ff., 1865)) are manifestations of a deeply-felt concern with language as a logical (i.e., for Peirce, as a semiotic) sign system. This interest manifests itself most peculiarly in Peirce's later period (from 1902), when the idea of a phenomenology governed by the three modes of being (Firstness, Secondness, Thirdness) had crystallized in the philosopher's mind[12]. Unlike phenomenology in the more customary sense, Peirce's idea of phenomenology is the science studying "the collective total of all that is in any way present to the mind, quite regardless of

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[10] Pharies notes that "Peirce's definition of the term as anything capable of standing for something else is so broad that it includes many things that would not normally qualify for the term in everyday English (tokens, marks, badges, signals, ciphers, symbols; objects, animals, persons; propositions, arguments, sentences, paragraphs, books; mountains, seas, planets, stars, galaxies, universes), although it would be possible to say, for example, that a robin on the lawn is a sign of approaching spring, that a book is a sign of the author's labors, or that a galaxy is a sign that the laws of physics continue to operate" (1985: 14).

[11] For bibliographical key references, see Parmentier 1985: 45, n. 2.

[12] For a further discussion of Peirce's categories Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness, see Gorlée 1994: 40–42.

whether it corresponds to any real thing or not" (*CP*: 1.284, 1905). Object of study can thus be, in a Peircean phenomenology, all that can possibly be perceived or thought. Thus we find linguistic phenomena rubbing shoulders with the myriad phenomena of a non-linguistic nature which call our attention. Peirce's doctrine of the three categories provides a means of dealing with all such phenomena indiscriminately, though not equally. To place Peirce's thought under the banner of philosophy of language is, nevertheless, a serious misconstrual of the facts, because it would fail to do justice to the universal scope of Peirce's logic. This is brought out beautifully by Jakobson, thus:

> Peirce's semiotic edifice encloses the whole multiplicity of significative phenomena, whether a knock at the door, a footprint, a spontaneous cry, a painting or a musical score, a conversation, a silent meditation, a piece of writing, a syllogism, an algebraic equation, a geometric diagram, a weather vane, or a simple bookmark. The comparative study of several sign systems carried out by the researcher revealed the fundamental convergences and divergences which had as yet remained unnoticed. Peirce's works demonstrate a particular perspicacity when he deals with the categoric nature of language in the phonic, grammatical and lexical aspects of words as well as in their arrangement within clauses, and in the implementation of the clauses with respect to the utterances. At the same time, the author realizes that his research "must extend over the whole of general Semeiotic," and warns his epistolary interlocutor, Lady Welby: "Perhaps you are in danger of falling into some error in consequence of limiting your studies so much to Language." (1987: 442)

By categorizing signs not by their material aspects but by the different ways in which they may be meaningful, Peirce conceived of many human languages (speech, gestures, music, and others), in which experience may be differently communicated. Verbal language (that is, language consisting of verbal signs) is, of course, pivotal among these languages. Peirce said that "[b]y a 'verbal sign' I mean a word, sentence, book, library, literature, language, or anything else composed of words" (*MS* 318: 239, 1907)[13]. This list, from Peirce's later period, is nearly echoic of earlier enumerations, such as "words and phrases, and speeches, and books, and libraries" (*MS* 404: 5, 1893). As Fisch interprets Peirce,

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[13]   In his monograph on *Charles S. Peirce and the Linguistic Sign*, Pharies takes the linguistic sign only in the narrowest sense: "Peirce would use it to refer to any linguistic representation, including words, sentences, conversations, even whole books. I am employing it in the sense that has become traditional in linguistic literature, namely, that is 'word'" (Pharies 1985: 9, n. 7). This limits the value of this book.

> It goes without saying that words are signs; and it goes almost without saying that phrases, clauses, sentences, speeches, and extended conversations are signs. So are poems, essays, short stories, novels, orations, plays, operas, journal articles, scientific reports, and mathematical demonstrations. So a sign may be a constituent part of a more complex sign, and all the constituent parts of a complex sign are signs. (1983: 56–57)

Scattered throughout Peirce's works there are numerous references to, and discussions of, written signs of all kinds and genres, from isolated simple word-signs to complex verbal structures. For instance, the words "witch" (*MS* 634: 7, 1909), "Hi!" (*MS* 1135: 10, [1895] 1896), "runs" (*MS* 318: 72, 1907), and "whatever" (*CP*: 8.350, 1908) are for Peirce signs; so is "the word 'man' [which] as printed, has three letters; these letters have certain shapes, and are black" (*W* 3: 62, 1873; cf. *MS* 9: 2, 1904). Peirce considered as a sign "[a]ny ordinary word, as 'give', 'bird', 'marriage'" (*CP*: 2.298, 1893)[14] and combinations of words, such as "all but one", "twothirds of", "on the right (or left) of" (*CP*: 2.289–2.290, c.1893).

In his writings, Peirce further presented and analyzed many sentence-signs (grammatically complete or elliptic), such as "Napoleon was a liar" (*MS* 229C: 505, 1905), "King Edward is ill" (*MS* 800: 5, [1903?]), "Fine day!" (*MS* 318: 69, 1907), "Let Kax denote a gas furnace" (*CP*: 7.50, 1867), "Burnt child shuns fire" (*MS* 318: 154–155, 1907), and "Any man will die" (*MS* 318: 74, 1907). By the same token, Peirce wrote that "if -- then --", "— causes --", "-- would be --", and "-- is relative to -- for --" are "among linguistic signs" (*CP*: 8.350, 1908). Peirce's favorite examples of sentence-signs were perhaps,

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[14]   In July of 1905, Peirce wrote to Lady Welby, in a draft of a letter which was never sent to his correspondent: "The dictionary is rich in words waiting to receive technical definitions as varieties of signs" (*PW*: 194, 1905). His long list includes many instances of verbal communication, spoken and/or written: "Then we have *mark, note, trait, manifestation, ostent, show, species, appearance, vision, shade, spectre, phase*. Then, *copy, portraiture, figure, diagram, icon, picture, mimicry, echo*. Then, *gnomon, clue, trail, vestige, indice, evidence, symptom, trace*. Then, *muniment, monument, keepsake, memento, souvenir, cue*. Then, *symbol, term, category, stile, character, emblem, badge*. Then, *record, datum, voucher, warrant, diagnostic*. Then, *key, hint, omen, oracle, prognostic*. Then, *decree, command, order, law*. Then, *oath, vow, promise, contract, deed*. Then, *theme, thesis, proposition, premiss, postulate, prophecy*. Then, *prayer, bidding, collect, homily, litany, sermon*. Then, *revelation, disclosure, narration, relation*. Then, *testimony, witnessing, attestation, avouching, martyrdom*. Then, *talk, palaver, jargon, chat, parley, colloquy, tittle-tattle*, etc." (*PW*: 194, 1905). Regrettably, the rest of this text — possibly containing Peirce's comments on the catalogue — did not survive.

chronologically, "This stove is black" (e.g., *CP*: 1.551, 1867), the military command "Ground arms!" (e.g., *CP*: 5.473, 1907 and *MS* 318: 37, 175, 214, and 244, 1907), and "Cain killed Abel" (e.g., *NEM* 3: 839, 1909 and *CP*: 2.230, 1910), all of these repeatedly used by Peirce as illustrative examples.

Pieces of writing (that is, texts) are signs. Though a sentence may sometimes be a text in itself, texts are more commonly combinations of sentences, complex signs consisting in their turn of signs, which again consist of signs. This may be exemplified by the syllogism: a compound sign built up, logically as well as linguistically, of three subsigns, which are again divisible, and so on: "All conquerors are Butchers / Napoleon is a conqueror / ∴ Napoleon is a butcher" (*W* 1: 164, 1865). The theater directory and the weather forecast published in the newspaper are, for Peirce, predictive signs (*MS* 634: 23, 1909); so are "the books of a bank" (*MS* 318: 58, 1907) and "an old MS. letter ... which gives some details about ... the great fire of London" (*MS* 318: 65, 1907). As a further example of a verbal text-sign mentioned by Peirce we might finally mention "Goethe's book on the Theory of Colors … made up of letters, words, sentences, paragraphs, etc." (*MS*7: 18, 1904).

Text and semiosis

All linguistic signs, regardless of size or complexity, are first and foremost signs of Thirdness: Peirce's symbolic signs (see *CP*: 5.73, 1903). "All words, sentences, books and other conventional signs are Symbols" (*CP*: 2.292, c.1902): they stand for the object not because they have a (qualitative or structural) similarity to it (which would make them iconic signs); nor are they (physically or causally) connected with their object (as is the case of indexical signs). A symbolic sign is a sign "simply because it will be understood to be a sign" (*MS* 307: 15, 1903) and it "is applicable to whatever may be found to realize the idea connected [with it]" (*CP*: 2.298, 1893).

As Thirds, symbolic signs only function fully in a triadic sign relation including the sign itself, the object it stands for, and the sign in which the "first" sign is interpreted, its interpretant-sign. Every interpretant is a sign, every sign is not an interpretant:

> If this triple relation is not of a degenerate species, the sign is related to its object only in consequence of a mental association, and depends upon

habit. Such signs are always abstract and general, because habits are general rules to which the organism has become subjected. They are, for the most part, conventional or arbitrary. They include all general words, the main body of speech, and any mode of conveying a judgment. (*CP*: 3.13, 1867)[15]

"Habit" must here be understood in the Peircean sense: not as an etiquette fixed once and for all, but, on the contrary, as a rule of procedure adopted for the practical purpose of successfully interpreting a sign. Phenomenologically, a phenomenon is considered a First when looked at "in itself"; it is considered a Second when compared with either internal or external characters or with its own context; and it is considered Third when regarded as a totality of influences within a postulated unity predicting the future. All signs dealing not with feeling (Firstness) nor with action (Secondness) but with thought (Thirdness), that is Peirce's "intellectual concepts" (*CP*:5.467, 1907), are in this sense habit-bound or habitual. The understanding and interpretation of a linguistic signs is an intellectual (or better, expert or proficient) activity, and therefore a habitual, rule-governed activity.

However, the rule must always be conceived as being ultimately based upon some deliberate resolution adopted by the language users to give certain linguistic signs certain meanings. The implication of this is again that language users as a group may also at any point decide to change the rules, while the "new" rules may be overruled in their turn by any following decision. Change and development are, as repeatedly argued by Sebeok, essential to language, or better all human languages. Though the concept of the linguistic sign as an ad hoc rule of procedure would make linguistic change into an arbitrary entity, one which, paradoxically, would be unfit for efficient communication, yet the fact that the linguistic sign is habit-bound means, at the same time, that it is also conventional inasmuch as a word, sentence, or text can only function as a means of communication if the rule or habit is, to some extent, somehow agreed upon by a consensus in the community of language users.

In order to communicate its message the text-sign must function in a tripartite (sign-object-interpretant) relation called "semiosis". Semiosis as Peirce conceived it, seems to be both the action of the sign itself and the process of its interpretation. These are in fact two aspects of the same activity, because a sign is only capable of produc-

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[15]   The first sentence of this quote speaks on the concept of degenerate signs as opposed to genuine or regenerate signs, see the discussion in Gorlée 1990.

ing an interpretant in a thinking mind if it is an element of a triadic relation. Only the latter constitutes a real thought-sign, as opposed to the "quasi-sign" which is governed by "automatic regulation" (*CP*: 5.473, 1907) between sign and object.

In a dyadic sign relation, such as bounds linguistic semiotics or structuralism, the sign is "physically connected with its object; they make an organic pair, but the interpreting mind has nothing to do with this connection, except remarking it, after it is established" (*CP*: 2.299, c.1902). In order to be meaningful and genuine a non-triadic sign does not require intelligent interpretation (that is, an interpretation which is at the same time habitual and habit-changing, conventional and creative), either because the sign immediately exhibits its meaning or because it directly points toward it. That there is no real action in the interpretation of a one-place, iconic sign, a First, should be clear; but the two-place, indexical sign, a Second, equally disqualifies itself from semiosis, because it signifies its object either by law or by "brute force with no element of inherent reasonableness" (*CP*: 6.329, c. 1909). It needs Thirds in their combination.

Peirce emphasized explicitly that by semiosis he meant "an action, or influence, which is, or involves, a cooperation of three *subjects*, such as a sign, its object, and its interpretant, this tri-relative influence not being in any way resolvable between pairs" (*CP*: 5.484, 1907). Text semiosis means that it is essential for the text-sign to embody predictive ideas, thoughts, a message, because they are what the text is about, its object. However, it is not sufficient for a text-sign to have or possess a meaning-content in itself; its persona must be recognized, identified, and interpreted as such in order to operate as a full-fledged symbolic sign. It may on occasion even be misunderstood or manipulated (see Eco's lying), because from a strictly Peircean perspective the nature of the interpretation produced is, in the final analysis, as irrelevant as is the person of the individual interpreter. The text-sign itself is endowed with a power which, coming from the object and ultimately referring back to it, must in order to realize its full semiotic effect, appeal forward through it (the sign) to what is potentially an endless series of interpretant signs, each one interpreting the one preceding it. Textual semiosis teaches ultimately that the "real" meaning of the text-sign is not necessarily identical with the prima facie object which the text refers to, but rather with the rule or habit (its interpretant) by which one would, under certain conditions, read, understand, and interpret it.

This can be illustrated by Peirce's account from the "life" of one text-sign, thus:

> Take, for example, that sentence of Patrick Henry which, at the time of our Revolution, was repeated by every man to his neighbor: "Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of Liberty, and in such a country as we possess, are invincible against any force that the ennemy can bring against us." Those words represent this character of the general law of nature. They might have produced effects indefinitely transcending any that circumstances allowed them to produce. It might, for example, have happened that some American schoolboy, sailing as a passenger in the Pacific Ocean, should have idly written down those words on a slip of paper. The paper might have been tossed overboard and might have been picked up by some Jagala on a beach of the island of Luzon; and if he had them translated to him, they might easily have passed from mouth to mouth there as they did in this country, and with similar effect. (*CP*: 5.105, 1902)

The history of Henry's pronunciamento is, at least potentially, the life history of all text-signs. Texts need to receive a (real or potential) interpretation in order to be able to operate as signs in different spatial and/or temporal settings, that is, they must be meaningful in shifting time/place semiosic relations. If a combination of verbal signs does not draw the attention toward itself as a sign and does not manifest itself as mediating between what it can mean and what it is interpreted to mean, it remains a non-text (see Lotman's concept of non-text). A text which, when transplanted in time and/or place, loses its power to appeal to an interpreting mind, becomes thereby a non-semiosic (that is, a dead) entity. From the perspective of a Peircean semiotics, the text-sign is characterized by unlimited semiosis, by the ongoing process of growth through interpretation. What keeps the text-sign alive is precisely that it elicits an interpretant again and again, and that these interpretants (and the interpretants of the interpretants) are not only rule-governed entities but also (whether virtually or really) rule-changing and rule-creating activities. This is vital for semiosis.

It is apparent that for Peirce, a written text was a complex verbal sign partaking of the basic properties common to semiotic signhood. Unfortunately, Peirce himself did not develop an explicit text-semiotics, he was no textologist in the modern sense, so that the significance of his theory for the purpose of a text-semiotics will require some interpretive extrapolation. The project of elaborating a Peirce-based text-semiotics expects that it has at this point been sufficiently argued that it must be dramatically different from other sign-

theoretical text-theories, particularly from Saussure-based text-theories. As opposed to French semiology with its emphasis on text production, pragmatic semiotics (that is, semiotics in the Peircean tradition) proceeds to the contrary and manifests itself first and foremost as a theory of sign interpretation. The sign as Peirce conceived it is, in contradistinction to its semiological counterpart, not defined in terms of an utterer and/or interpreter but in terms of its dynamic relations, with itself, with its object, with its interpretant. Through semiosis, the sign deploys its meaning; its full meaning is thus ideally knowable, if only in some hypothetical future. Sign-action and sign-interpretation are not necessarily determined by a human utterer nor interpreter. Peirce's semiosis is self-generating triadic action. As all semiotic signs, the text-sign is a living agency actively seeking to realize itself through some interpreting mind rather than passively waiting to be realized by it, as is the case in linguistic semiotics.

One reason why a Peircean concept of text, and hence a Peircean text-semiotics, may at first seem fanciful is that it diminishes the significance of the reader/interpreter. In a semiological (structuralist) text-theory, the reader/interpreter is customarily looked upon as the sole discourse-producing subject, as the one agency giving the text-sign its meaning by matching signifier with signified. By moving instead to a pragmatic, Peircean paradigm, the presence of an interpreter is somehow subsumed but at the same time deemphasized. Apparently, Peirce did not have in mind one single person or not even one specific mind, but in an abstract way any receptive organism capable of generating textual interpretants. Peirce called this an intelligent "quasi-mind". As Peirce wrote, semiosis "not only happens in the cortex of the human brain, but must plainly happen in every Quasi-mind in which Signs of all kinds have a vitality of their own" (*NEM* 4: 318, c.1906); and a "quasi-interpreter" is one example of such a "quasi-mind" (*CP*: 4.51, 1906).

Peirce did therefore not include the interpreter as a fourth component of semiosis, in addition to the interpretant. This is not to say that Peirce did not recognize the existence of the interpreter, because he did in fact refer to an interpreter occasionally, e.g., in his often-cited definition of a sign as

> … 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. (*CP*: 2.228, c.1897)

On the whole, however, Peirce seems to indicate that the meaning of the text-sign must be logically conceived as relatively independent from the reader/interpreter and transpires wholly in what is an endless series of individual semiosic events. This proposition argued and documented in this essay, provides a new and fruitful perspective on the phenomenon of text, one which undercuts subjective signification and elevates semiotics to the plane of intersubjective and objective inquiry, thereby enhancing, not restraining, its creative and innovative component of textology[16].

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Семиотика текста:
текстология как машина выживания

Сигнификативные практики, с помощью которых живые существа общаются, являются, по Себеоку, машинами выживания. Соответственно, в применении к семиотическому анализу текста или текстологии Бахтина мы можем говорить о человеческой машине выживания. Она изучалась разными семиотическими школами (включая Московско–Тартускую школу), с обращением к языку, культуре, жанру и, что важно, к идеологии текста. В данной статье аспекты текстологии изучаются в свете пирсовской общей теории знаков. Обсуждается понятие текста в опубликованных и неопубликованных сочинениях Пирса и демонстрируется его соотношение с семиозисом и другими категориями Пирса. Наш проект разработки пирсовской текстовой семиотики основывается на презумпции ее существенного отличия от других знаковых текстовых теорий и указывает нам путь к более интерсубъективной и креативной текстологии.

Teksti semiootika:
tekstoloogia kui ellujäämismasin

Signifikatiivseid praktikaid, millede abil elusolendid suhtlevad, nimetab Sebeok ellujäämismasinateks. Vastavalt võiks teksti semiootilise analüüsi või Bahtini tekstoloogia puhul rääkida inimese ellujäämismasinatest. Seda on uuritud erinevate semiootikakoolkondade poolt (ka nõukogude semiootikas) pöördumistega keele, kultuuri, žanri ja, mis on oluline, ideoloogiliste käsitluste poole. Antud artiklis pööratakse tekstoloogiale tähelepanu Peirce'i üldise märgiteooria valguses. Teksti mõiste üle arutlemine Peirce'i avaldatud ja avaldamata kirjutiste põhjal seostatakse semioosise ja teiste Peirce'i kategooriatega. Peirce'i põhise tekstisemiootika väljatöötamise projekt toetub tema eripärale teiste märgiliste tekstiteooriate suhtes ja näitab meile teed intersubjektiivsema ja kreatiivsema tekstoloogia juurde.