

DECONSTRUCTION

Introduction

The term deconstruction inaugurated by Jacques Derrida in the late 1960s and became a major influence on literature by 1970s. This theory was first misperceived as the superficial analysis of the world play that destroys our appreciation of literature and our ability to interpret it meaningfully, but deconstruction talks about the ambiguity lies in meaning. It negates absolute truth and considers reading a misreading and interpretation as misinterpretation. A realist person cannot understand deconstruction. It helps us to think critically and to see more readily. Text has inclusion and exclusion. Deconstruction focuses on exclusion.

Beginning and Background

It is said that the idea of deconstruction started by Derrida in the late 1960s by his work "Of Grammatology" and before that book, he declared the same kind of view in post-structuralism. The germs of this theory begin by the idea of Nietzsche "Death of the god". This idea urges religion to read and reread religious books to find the existence of god, in search of centre. This search for centre originates the term logocentrism. Logos is the Latin word for god. In Christianity it was a belief that God's most of the message is in speech form, so they determined the superiority of speech over writing for this Derrida used the term phonocentrism, which was used for spoken word of god. It claimed that speech is something that we can listen and listening gives us feeling so it is superior to writing, but Derrida gives the notion that both writing and speaking are the attributes of author. To strengthen his idea he argued by giving examples that the words "Difference" and "Deference" can be distinguished only

through writing. Derrida says that this hierarchy of speech and writing is “violent hierarchy”. **Francis Bacon** support the argument of Derrida that one of the main obstacle to scientific advances was the love of eloquence. He says that this hierarchy can be undone and reversed. So it can be said that speech is a specie of writing. This the first stage of Derridean deconstruction. **Rousseau** goes against both of them and said that writing is nearly a supplement of speech. In France supplier also means to substitute. Derrida shows that writing is not only a supplement but also takes the place of speech.

Characteristics of Writing by Derrida

- Writing can be repeated.
- Sign can break its real context regardless of what its writer intended.
- Sign can be grafted into a discourse in another context.
- Written sign is subject to spacing in to ways.
 - ✓ It is separated from other signs.
 - ✓ It is separated from present reference.

Deconstruction language by Derrida

Language is non referential because it refers neither to thing to the world nor to over concepts of things but only to play of significance of which language itself consists.

J.A Austins Theory of Speech Acts

- It supersede the old logical positivist view of language, which can assumed that the only meaningful statements are those which describe a state of affairs in the world.

- Austin requires that speech acts must have context. An oath can be occur only in a court within the Judicial framework.

Paul de Man

- He found romantic poetry and open invitation to deconstruction, because romantics actually deconstruct their own writing by showing that the presence they desire is always absent, always in the past and future.
- Blindness and Insight (1917): it gives the idea of Paradox that critics only achieve insight through a certain blindness. This insight blindness is facilitated by an unconscious slide.
- Allegories of Reading (1979): This becomes the criticism of ambiguity by this ambiguous poetic language. In Allegories of Reading de Man develop rhetoric type of deconstruction always begin in blindness and sight.
- He is concerned with the theory of tropes which accompanied rhetorical treatises.
- Unity is not in the text, but interpretation.
- De Man follows Nietzsche in believing that language is essential figurative and referential or expressive; there is no original unrhetorical language.

Barbara Johnson's (The Critical Difference, 1980)

- Her idea contains subtle and Lucid deconstructive reading of literature and criticism.
- She shows that both literary and critical texts setup a network of differences into which the reader is lured with a promise of comprehension.
- Deconstruction is not a hedonistic abandon of all restraint, but a disciplined identification of the sources of textual power.

Michel Foucault

- All knowledge is an expression of the “will to power”.
- We cannot speak any absolute truth about objective knowledge.
- Discourse as a central human activity, not as a universal general truth.
- World is more than the Galaxy of texts.
- Man finds in things nothing, but what he himself has imported into them.
- Discourse is always a violence that we do to things.

Julia Kristeva

French philosopher Julia Kristeva and Derrida gives the concept of intertextuality.

- Intertextuality contends that texts lack fixed authorship and meanings.
- The concept of intertextuality carries radical democratic idea that all social and public texts in society are bound in a dynamic relationship to ongoing social and political transformation.
- The intertextual strategy calls for constant interrogation of the normative status quo, deconstructing stable and fixed meaning of good.

Application of the theory

Derrida gives the frame work of the deconstructive analysis:-

- **Verbal**. It includes:
 - ✓ Close reading
 - ✓ Binary opposition
 - ✓ Paradoxes and Contradictions
- **Textual**. It includes:

- ✓ Textual reading beyond shifts and breaks which lies into continuity of the text.
- **Linguistic**
 - ✓ In which language itself as a medium of communication.
 - ✓ Implicit and explicit references.
 - ✓ Unreliability and untrustworthiness of language
 - ✓ Literary devices specially metaphor

Theory and Literature

Application of the theory includes certain characteristic of language:

- Language is ambiguous, dynamic and unstable having disseminating and possible meanings.
- Existence has no centre, no stable meaning and no fixed ground.
- Human beings are fragmented.
- Meaning is created by the readers in the act of reading.
- Meaning that is created is not a stable element, capable of producing closure; that is, no interpretation has the final word.
- Literacy consisting of multiplicity of overlapping and conflicting meanings in dynamic and fluid relation to one another and to us.

Purpose

- To reveal the text's undecideability
- To reveal the complex operations of the ideologies of which text is constructed.
- To show that text has no meaning in the traditional sense of world at all.
- To see what the text can show us about the ideologies of which it is constructed.

Method

- Note all the possible interpretation
- Show the ways in which these interpretations conflict with one another
- How these conflicts produced still more interpretations which produced more inflicts which produce more interpretations.