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Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Siddhartha Sharma

www.TLHjournal.com

sharmasiddhartha67@gmail.com

**BRICOLGAE IN THE CONTEXT OF ‘STRUCTURE’ AND ‘HUMAN SCIENCES’ IN
DERRIDA’S ESSAY “STRUCTURE, SIGN AND PLAY IN THE HUMAN
SCIENCE”**

Nivedita Lahkar, Ph.D Scholar.

Department of Linguistics.

Assam University, Silchar.

Abstract

At the John Hopkins International Colloquium on “The Language of Criticism and the science of Man” Jacques Derrida first read his paper ‘Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences (1966)’ presented for the first time a post structuralist theoretical Paradigm. The goal of the present paper is to describe the circumstances that laid Derrida to dwell upon bricolgae/bricoleur in the context of ‘Structure’ and ‘Human Sciences’ in his essay “Structure, Sign and Play in the Human Science.

Key words : Structure, Bricolage, Language

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Methodology:

Entire work is base on the secondary source which gave an immense motivation to undertake this work. Most of the secondary data have been collected through library works in the different universities of India, like Assam University, Guwahati University, Tejpur University for details analysis.

Review of Literature

The available literature on this topic are: i) Derrida Jaques. 2005 (rpt) Writing and Difference. trans by Alan Bass. London, Routledge. ii) Derrida (1988) Afterword: Toward An Ethic of Discussion, published in the English translation of Limited Inc. iii) Powell, Jason (2006) Jacques Derrida: A Biography (London and New York: Continuum) However above mentioned works have not clearly emphasis on the proposed topic. Hence the study has proposed to discussed the bricolgae in the context of ‘structure’ and ‘human sciences’ in Derrida’s essay “structure, sign and play in the human science.

Introduction:

“Language is the house of being, and we dwell with in it, not it in us”----Heidegger. For Derrida language, words, and signs are not meaningful because they refer to external objects, the world,

or thoughts and in tensions. They are meaningful through and in tensions. They are meaningful through and intentions. They are meaningful through a network of oppositions that relate signs to each other. Moreover a sign is actually constituted not by reference to some substance like independent thing, nor by identity to some signified. Rather, it is constituted by its difference from other signs. Therefore, Derrida in his essay “Structure, Sign and play in the Discourse of the Human Science” introduces the idea of bricolage or bricoleur.

Derrida’s notion of Structure:

In his essay Derrida at first introduces the idea of an event, which has occurred, to signify some sort of ‘rupture’ or break. Here Derrida insists that all structures have a centre. (Derrida claims, something that makes the structure hold its shape, keep all the parts together) Derrida says that the centre limits the movements of the constituting elements in the structure and Derrida calls this, movement, the ‘play’. According to the centre is the crucial part of any structure, but not a part of it’s, because it is the governing element. Further Derrida cites the example of the puritan belief that God created the world and rules it but is not a part of it. Therefore Derrida puts that the center is the centre but not a part of the ‘Totality’ of the structure. Then referring to the sign Derrida says that all signs have infinite playfulness or infinite ranges of meaning and the only way to talk about the sign is by using the word sign and assuming it has some fixed meaning. For the signification “Sign” has always been comprehended and determined, in its sense, as sign-of, signifier different from its signified. If one erases the radical difference between signifier and signified, it is the word signifier itself, which ought to be abandoning as a metaphysical concept. Citing the example of Levi Strauss’ the Raw and the cooked, Derrida says he has sought to

transcend the opposition between the sensible and the intelligible. The concept of sign is determined by this opposition, through and throughout totality of its history and by its system.

In this context Derrida refers to ethnology. Derrida uses the notion of ethnology as a way to (get back) explain his main topic: Claude Levi Strauss structural view of the binary relation between nature and 'culture' Levi Strauss found out the basic structures of myth as binary oppositions pairs of ideas that gave each other values: height/ Darkness (height is value because it is not darkness, Male/Female, culture / Nature and so on. Pointing at the dichotomy, of nature – culture Strauss defined the 'Natural' as the 'Universe' and 'cultural' as dictated by the norms of a particular Social organization. The basic rule of binaries is that they have to be opposite, so nature/culture, man/ woman/ or universal/ specific all need to be absolutely separate. This leads Derrida to assert that the opposition is a part of system along with the structure. Presence is also that which alludes and escapes significance, and speech acts of significance or lexicalization more generally. The concept of a centred structure, for D, has at its kernel an essential 'thingness', a coherence which escapes capitulation, a total resilience to linguistic certitudes. But most interestingly 'language bears within itself the necessity of its own critique "Which nullifies all rules governing those oppositions. Relating to this Derrida says "The opposition between nature and culture which I have previously insisted on seems today to offer a value which is above all methodological. Therefore Both Derrida and Levi Strauss agree on the notion of the "bricolage" and the "bricoleur" In his "The Savage Mind" Levi Strauss presents the idea of "bricolage".

The Idea of Bricolagae:

Levi Strauss says that the bricoleur is someone who uses “the means at hand”, that is, the instruments he finds at his disposition around him, those which are already there, which had not been especially conceived with an eye to the operation for which an eye to the operation for which they are to be used and to which one tries by trial and error to adapt them, not hesitating to change them whenever it appears necessary, or to try several of them at once, even if their form and their origin are heterogeneous and so forth. Therefore there is a critique of language in the form of bricolage, and it has even been possible to say that bricolage is the critical language itself. Derrida makes a comparison of the ‘bricoleur’ with the engineer. Thus Derrida becomes the person who was himself as the center of his own discourse the origin of his own language itself. Derrida makes a comparison of the ‘bricoleur’ with the engineer. Thus Derrida becomes the person who sees himself as the center of his own discourse the origin of his own language and thus breaking with all forms of bricolage. D (1978: p. 360) writes: “If one calls bricolage the necessity of borrowing one’s concepts from a text of heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined, it must be said that every discourse is bricoleur ... [the engineer appears forced] to construct the totality of his language, syntax, and lexicon. In this sense the engineer is a myth.”

Conclusion:

From the above discussion it can be said that Derrida adopts the idea of bricolage to interpret the structure, sign and play. This discussion can be concluded with one of Derrida’s Statement “I am thinking in particular of the article by G [erard] Genette, “Structuralism et critique littiraire”, published in homepage Levi Strauss in a special issue of L ‘Arc, where it is stated that the

analysis of bricolage could “be applied almost word for word” criticism, and especially to ‘literary criticism’.

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