

An Inquiry in the Dialectical Approach to Reading

Mahdi Shaghaghi

PhD student of LIS, University of Theran

m.shaghaghi@ut.ac.ir

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Abstract

Purpose: This article tries to explain that reading is a dialectical action. For this purpose, it refers to the concept of dialectics in ancient times and, with a glance at the concepts of man, world, science, language and knowledge, it tries to discuss the dialectical status of reading.

Method: In the present article, a conceptual analysis approach has been used. This approach that is used in analytical and theoretical writings serves to analyze and study opinions about a particular subject, chooses a particular thought as the point of departure and, thus, attempts to discuss that subject. To explain the dialectical concept of reading, the paper refers to Heidegger's phenomenology and Gadamer's dialectical hermeneutics as the point of departure.

Findings: By comparing the reading in pre-modern and modern world, one can come up with the idea that nowadays reading is a monolog by binary (based upon subject/object contrast) and visual token. However, the writings of the ancient and the medieval periods do not have such a stance and are more as an absent author's speech. In this case, to understand the text in the absence of the author, one has to dialogue with his/her speech. Monologue approach to a text, which is the new world souvenir, prevents any appropriate understanding of or communication with the text. Knowledge, as a prerequisite of reading, is something out of one's methodical control. Reading is an old concept that is rooted in tradition and comes into existence by interaction between the text and the reader.

Originality/Value: The novelty of the present article lies in its expanding the concept of reading in situations where psychological paradigms rule the reading environment and the reading act. Nowadays here and there, we observe many writings entitled 'reading techniques', 'reading methods', 'reading and learning procedure', and so on that interpret the book as an object under the human mind subjugation and control. They also presuppose the control of a reading act with the help of a method which assumes knowledge is achievable. This article argues that understanding is basically achieved by open-mindedness, interlocution and interaction with the text not by methodical superiority upon it.

Keywords: Dialectic, Reading, Study, Dialectical hermeneutics, Gadamer, Dialogue