

LITERARY THEORIES AND THE COMMON GROUNDS OF PHENOMENOLOGY: A CRITIQUE WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON MARXISM

Mumtaz Hussain*

PhD Scholar English Literature, University of Sindh / Lecturer in English Government College Sama
Satta Bahawalpur
mumtazdepal@gmail.com

Marina Khan

Lecturer, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan

Muhammad Faisal Rehman

Assistant Professor, The Department of Architecture, University of Engineering and Technology
Peshawar Abbottabad Campus.

ABSTRACT

The ground aspects of phenomenological perspective provide a wide range of the literary study in collaboration with literary theories with the single exception of Marxism that cannot be studied better in the phenomenological perspectives; rather, in critical ones. The relationship of Marxism and literary theories with phenomenological common grounds is highlighted in the current study through descriptive method of research. The study illustrates this relationship of Marxism and literary theories in phenomenological perspectives considering the previous studies for which Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice is taken as a sample.

Keywords: Literary Theories; Marxism; Phenomenology

INTRODUCTION

Critical Theory in literature is a specific approach in which power is studied in social sciences and literature with respect to politics, economy, dominance, exploitation, and ideology. It is based on the judgment that dominates the problem faced by a dominated in society. The question raised is that how does it affect the opinion and practices in the society in political communication? The modern political issues can be manipulated by literary theory. Marxian tradition helps to understand the categorical needs of society that it helps to understand through the critical question of power, dominance, exploitation, and struggle of demand. Marxists employ the term 'critical' to describe that all sciences are not only critical but has administrative character that take power structure for granted; but, does not help to understand the meaning of legitimization.

Phenomenology is an approach developed by Edmund Husserl which is based on the human experience and the way things are perceived and appear to the human sciences. It has become the new critical approach for evaluating the literature and literary aspects in context to ground realities. Qutoshi (2018) says that phenomenology has become a new phenomenon and theoretical guideline for the researchers which helps to understand the phenomenon at the subject level of reality. Creswell (2017) says that phenomenology is descriptive in its nature which provides the wider meaning of living experiences to study the things under consciousness. Fotchman (2008) illustrates that the roots of phenomenology are found in the writings of Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle as the philosophy of human beings.

Marxism was developed to describe a new economic and political system of the world in which the power manipulates the rights of the nations. In this theory, the relationship of the social stake holders is described in the power concerns based on wealth and the range of power. At the first, the theory was limited to the politics but later it was judged as the theory of criticism in literature. The concept of this ethics of values was presented by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1848). The essence of their socioeconomic ideology gave privilege to the values and socioeconomic construction of system. In the

* Corresponding Author

same way, Marxist theory has influenced the fundamentals of the ethics and values of life. Eagleton (1996) says that Marxism is the wide range of the theoretical analysis which helps to understand the ideologies, ideas, values, and experiences which a society experienced in time. It is also observed that Marxism is being discussed in context of the literary theory of feminism which is challenged by Marxism and addresses the power politics in the context of thinking of systems of the society.

As Marxism helps to manipulate the hidden power in the society; so, the competition of class and values is being manipulated through this theory. On the other hand, philosophy provides the basis to analyze the realities as are provided in the society. but the problem occurs When the relationship of classes of the society and the realities of the life is being discussed, then people have no choice to take the things such as power, being carried up in the society. The current study has tried to address the relationships of the literary theories and Marxism with the ground realities of the life.

Statement of the Problem

Literature is being studied now days under the perspectives of literary theories only but, due to this the ground realities of the time are being neglected which provides the basis for a deeper understanding of the pieces of writings.

Significance of the Study

The current study is unique in its nature which will provide a model to understand the relationship of Marxism and literary theories with the ground realities of phenomenology.

Objectives

- To understand literary theories and philosophy.
- To manipulate the relationship of Marxism and literary theories under the common grounds of phenomenology.

Research Questions

1. What is the Literary Theory and Philosophy in literature?
2. What are the common grounds of Phenomenology and how it is related to the Marxism and literary theories?

Limitation of the Study

The current study is limited to the relationship and exposition of the ground aspects of phenomenology, literary theories, and Marxism. In the present study, the two pieces of texts are being analyzed to support the relationships of the theories, Marxism, and phenomenology.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Emami (2011) conducted a research study in which it was described that Miller tried his best to illustrate that social factors have no influence on the characters of the society. It is also described in the study that Marxism's effect is not being shown in the novel as the capitalism put the impacts and values on the social life. It is concluded that the role of woman in the novel is limited to the persuasion of the things rather than discrimination. The society is being depicted to describe the social influence on the characters rather than the impact of Marxism on their lives.

Reddy and Visakhapatnam (2014) in his study illustrated that literature is being analyzed after the Marxism and critical theory because Marxism provides an extensive system - social and economic; so, by adopting the literary theory, it can address the social relationships of power and politics. In the study, further it is told that the intentions of the writers are to illustrate the things in artistic way and the writers of the literature must keep in concern that there is difference between literature and journalism as journalism is full of power and political aspects rather than literature that has the least concern with the social and economic powers.

Qin (2013) investigated the basis of the phenomenology which illustrates that the ground realities of life, where Terry Eagleton's critique highlights the historical and radical basis of life and the realities of the life, must be studied. The study also revealed that the historical perspectives are neglected in the phenomenological perspectives at a time when the study of the things must be done in the prescriptive way. It is also concluded that the reality-based theory which is appropriate in study of the life, is phenomenology.

Hamadi (2017) made a descriptive study in which he has described the prescriptive and descriptive approach of Marxist criticism in literature. It says that the concept of Marxist theory varies from time to time. The ancient concept of Marxist criticism was to manipulate the relationships of the socioeconomic systems and powers in the society but in recent time, the Marxist theory of criticism has

changed its way from the socioeconomic to the relationships of the society, the definition of values, ethics, legitimization of actions and the socioeconomic class issues. It is also illustrated in the study that the socio-political norms provided by Marxism are being criticized as the ideologies presented in the study are far deprived from the realities presented in the society.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study is descriptive and qualitative in its nature which is conducted to highlight the relationship of Marxism and literary theories in relation to the common grounds of phenomenology. Gay (2012) describes qualitative approach as the analysis of the issues in textual form in which the issues are discussed with respect to theories and ground realities.

Data Analysis Process

The current study is descriptive in nature in which the already conducted research studies of Marxism, literary theories and phenomenology have been discussed to make the relationship of manipulation among them. In this part, two pieces of texts are taken to support the idea of the relationship of phenomenology, literary theories, and Marxism.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Comparison of Philosophy and Critical Theories

Philosophy is the study of the nature and meaning of the universe and of human life in which the things are perceived and the questioning is raised towards the universe. There have been three different subdivisions which illustrate the philosophy more clearly and answer the questions about nature, values, and reality.

Common Grounds of Phenomenology and Literary Theories

Fuchs (2015) illustrated the dimensions of philosophy and its relations to critical theories. In philosophical aspects, he described critical theories with six different dimensions of the philosophy. Fuchs tells that the first dimension of the critical theory is the epistemology that deals with the theory of knowledge; this concept talks about the theory as where from these theories are being constituted and organized. The next dimension is ontology that talks about the reality of the masses as how the reality is being organized and developed. The third dimension is the praxeology that illustrates the study of actions especially the political and ethical. Fuchs illustrates the other three dimensions as the parts of the mentioned dimensions as these illustrate the relationship of philosophy with the theory; theory is the science of literature while the philosophy is the science of mind and soul. Fuchs describes the philosophical basis as the basis of theory neglecting the historical aspects.

Relationship of Marxism and Literary Theory

Fuchs in his study describes that critical theory is the science through which the contradictions of the society and characters are mentioned in literature as being manipulated. Similarly, Marxism also illustrates the socioeconomic and sociopolitical relationships among the masses - subject and object, commodities and money, no owners and owners, company and sector, gender and power, and wealth and work etc. These dimensions are also being illustrated by the Marxism which was, on the other hand, perceived only as the socioeconomic system in the past while in the recent research studies, it has addressed the contradictions in the society.

Sinha (2015) in his study describes that the postcolonial theory has left less masses to be discussed or criticized. In the same way, Marxism also narrowly allows to discuss the things as postcolonial theory says because the relationship of the things is the imbalance both in the postcolonial theory and Marxist theory.

In the contrast, it can also be observed that in the perspective of feminism, Marxism does not allow to be powerful. The feminist theory suggests that the status of the women is not given equally in the society; therefore, feminist theory cannot answer the things properly as the relationship of the things is being told by Marxism.

Textual Analysis

In the perspective of Marxism, literary theories, and phenomenology, the following text from *Pride and Prejudice* can illustrate this relationship more clearly.

“It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.”

Jane Austen's style of writing is to show the ground realities of the society through which the social and feministic issues are being described in her writing. In the feministic perspectives, it can be observed that the female characters of the society of that time had no specific emotions to be fulfilled; rather their parents were concerned with their marriage only. In Marxism perspective, the portrayal of the male characters is being shown as the symbol of wealth and the people who have wealth must have a wife. In Marxist perspective, the male characters would have a wife because they have wealth. In feministic perspective, as the role of female is limited given by the society; so, they are not given opportunity in selection of a husband. In phenomenological perspective, the marriage of female was the biggest problem at that time while the reality is being ignored as the power and wealth were the concern of the male members of the society only.

“For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbors, and laugh at them in our turn?”

Socioeconomic theory proposed by Marx describes the imbalance of the society where the capital is in the hands of some specific members of the society. It makes the imbalance and disturbance among the members of the society. The above lines illustrate the power of capital when a person has more capital, their attitude modifies and then the feelings of superiority are natural in their behavior. Similar thoughts are illustrated in these lines, if the ground realities and sociocultural theory are neglected.

CONCLUSION

The relationship of literary theories with Marxism and phenomenology is of extreme importance because by studying them jointly, the clearer picture of literature comes to show. The study of literature through perspective of literary theories helps to understand the hidden agenda of the writer but the literary theories in collaboration with Marxism presents a clearer understanding of the texts. After discussion, it can be observed that literary theories can be studied in the phenomenological perspective but the study of Marxism as theory cannot be well understood in the perspective of phenomenology. It can also be seen that phenomenology does not study the historical perspectives of the things as the literary theories and the Marxist criticism describe.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is strong relationship of literary theories and Marxism; so, by applying both as criticism, the literature can best be understood.
- Literary theories can be studied under phenomenological perspectives but Marxism neglects the ground realities. So, the text must be studied through literary aspects and phenomenology must be considered as the literary criticism as it advocates the ground realities of the time.
- Marxism is the least concerned with ground realities and phenomenology is unable to describe the past perspectives. So, in the analysis of literature, if both theory and philosophy are applicable, then it must be in these two dimensions.

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