



Addis Ababa University

College of Social Sciences

Department of Philosophy

**Analyzing Meaning in Language: a Comparative Study of
Derrida's Deconstruction in Relation to Postmodern Thought,
Western Philosophy of Language, and Traditional Language
Theories**

By: Abraham Tsehay

October, 2025

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Philosophy, Addis Ababa
University, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of
Masters of Arts in Philosophy**

Advisors: Dr. Getahun Dana (PhD)

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Acknowledgements

Most importantly I am deeply grateful to my advisor Dr. Getahun Dana whose guidance, patience, and intellectual rigor have been of utmost value for the completion of this thesis. I have always been a great admirer of your professionalism that supports me to be familiar with research itself. Because of you, I know what research means. Without your valuable assistance, this thesis would not have been successful.

Finally, I am also immensely grateful to my dear friends and family whose encouragement, and belief in me provided the constant motivation to complete this thesis.

Abstract

This thesis is an exposition to Derrida's deconstruction. Thus, it is concerned with the discussion of deconstruction which reveals the complexity of the relationship between language, meaning, and interpretation in different thoughts. The review of the concepts within the research discloses the comprehension that language is an unpredictable or transparent medium of communication. Language is a dynamic, context-dependent system. In which its meaning is constantly being constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed. In terms of postmodernism in the philosophy of Derrida, it invites us to think meaning of language as plural, relational, and contingent. Derrida's deconstruction challenges also the traditional assumption of language as a transparent means of truth. Derrida challenges the binary oppositions frequently relied upon in western-oriented philosophies of language. The gist of this thesis is organized in a way to refute the deconstruction theory in relation to the thoughts of traditional theory, western and postmodernism taught to analyze the meaning of language.

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Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

This paper covers how Jacques Derrida, look at language and meaning in his deconstruction theory in relation to postmodern thought, western philosophy of language, and traditional language theories. The main goal is just to understand how language and meaning connect.

Philosophically language is more than just words. It influences how we perceive truth and reality. Just as the act of using language and making sense of it changes how we perceive the world, so to do people's interpretations of meanings associated with the use of language (Sudartini, 2024). According to Sudartini context is very important in contextualizing and understanding communication.

When language is framed within the context of postmodernism, its meaning tends to be neither fixed nor direct. In contrast to antiquity, it is now predominantly argued that postmodernism made it so that language is solely responsible in determining how people experience the concept of truth. Language isn't just words; it affects the way we see reality and truth, suggesting that meaning is not absolute. And that it differs based on how words are used in different contexts. Individuals may have difficulty in finding a common ground. The reason is that words and phrases absorb all types of new meanings in the contemporary world (Sudartini, 2024).

In this postmodernism era, language is challenged in terms of its meaning; now a day it is difficult to identify the boundary between truth and untruth in communication due to different contexts. Postmodernism is a vague philosophic concept that oppose enlightenment, and it is

opposed to concepts of objective truths, to universal laws, and fixed meanings which affects the meaning of language. Postmodernism prioritizes subjectivity, plurality, and individual interpretation; it refuses to believe in one stable reality but insists that meaning is produced through language, culture, and context (Onyeije, 2025). '

One of the most mysterious aspects of postmodernism resides in the fact that it is a notoriously slippery and indefinable term,' Brain Nicol stated. Post modernism doesn't give itself to absolute definition or timeless interpretation (Nicol, 2009). That is why in postmodern philosophy, language becomes central to the understanding of meaning and reality in different perspective due to many reasons.

It is clear that the philosophical direction moved away from language because of a few philosophers such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Jean-François Lyotard. The researchers found that knowledge and truth exist as social constructs which emerge from the interactions between power structures and discourse. Derrida's deconstruction shows that language lacks stability because meanings within texts keep changing throughout their existence. Foucault shows how power systems create social truths through his discourse analysis. Lyotard expresses doubt about universal truths through his concept of "incredulity towards metanarratives," it defines postmodern skepticism (Papadopoulos, 2022).

What about the traditional perspective of meaning in language and Derrida's deconstruction? Traditionally language is the stability of meaning and the referential function of language, but Derrida's deconstruction uncovers the layers of complexity and ambiguity that underlie our linguistic practices. According to deconstruction theory, language should not be

seen as a simple tool for only communication; it is beyond that as a dynamic interplay of signs that resist simple categorization.

In western thought also, the meaning of language is often viewed as fixed or constructed. However, Derrida's theory of deconstruction proposes that meaning should be inherent and unstable within language.

In general, especially the postmodern approach to language is highly swayed by Ludwig Wittgenstein. He views language as both the medium and the boundary of thought. Wittgenstein's claims that "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world" (Wittgenstein, 2001). This shows the postmodern belief that meaning exists only within linguistic and cultural frameworks. Language does not simply describe reality, it creates it. According to Bac and Thu Hang (2016) postmodern philosophers observation language as the fundamental structure. Language enables thinking and serves as the central element of existence. The concept of meaning exists through social agreement which changes based on context because it never stays constant.

Postmodernism deconstructs traditional hierarchies, and binary oppositions rooted in modernist thought. The theory states that words obtain their meaning through cultural practices and interpretive actions instead of directly representing reality. There is a difference in the meaning of words such as "ox" and "whale" within various societies. This sheds light on the postmodern notion of language being arbitrary and personalized (Bac & Thu Hang, 2016).

Varied routes towards understanding and connection are established due to the rise of postmodernism. The understanding encompasses an inherent connection between language and its intended meaning. It is stated that knowledge and truth rise from specific social and cultural

conditions. Communication is a medium through which language is interpreted. While postmodern philosophy plays a critical role in studying language and informing our understanding of reality. (Peter, 1993; Bac & Thu Hang, 2016).

The research notes the importance of human thought and social interaction. The research also makes a further attempt at explaining how language should be interpreted. Derrida's deconstruction is also a primary focus, as his work tackles significant questions. These questions are how western philosophy regards the concept of language, the definition of "meaning" in postmodern discourse, and how Derrida's theory disrupts traditional thoughts regarding language.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Language serves as a medium for depicting objective realities; antiquated philosophies speak of the intricate relationship between truth and reality. Whereas postmodernism suggests that language constructs reality instead of merely being a representation of reality. This poses critical questions: How do postmodern theorists like Derrida articulate the interplay between language and its meaning? In what ways do they challenge established narratives, and what implications arise for our understanding of knowledge and meaning?

Derrida argues that language is influenced by postmodern thought, even though there appears to be flexibility in this postmodern era compared to the modern and ancient traditional perspectives. That is why Derrida seeks to liberate language through his theory of deconstruction.

Derrida is one of the philosophers who affect the trend of philosophy of language in terms of meaning. Yegen and Abukan (2014) note that Derrida criticizes the western thought

system, which holds the hegemony of constructing and legalizing meaning in modernity through deconstruction, aiming to liberate meaning.

Abukan (2014) adds also that while modernism supports universality, postmodernism rejects universal truths, refuses a singular truth, and adopts a pluralist approach, supporting the principle that "anything is acceptable." Language in the postmodern era is influential in reshaping the perceptions of truth, making it an essential aspect of this thesis.

Flexibility to interpret language seems good, but it might be challenging to run every day's communication smoothly due to having the access to interpret the language differently due to different contexts. This is one of the major problems to bring mutual understanding among peoples. To clarify, as we have seen in the above paragraph there is the principle of 'anything is acceptable.' which is one of the major problems that brings misunderstanding among people because every individual exposed to interpret the language differently. However, Derrida agrees with the flexibility in interpretation of language that gives access to have different meaning contextually even if there is a problem to practice for the sake of bringing understanding among people.

Benson (2014) states in the early twentieth century, philosophy diverged into two camps: analytic and continental philosophy. Since then, they have isolated themselves, ceased communication, and, like groups separated by mountains or oceans, the languages they speak have become mutually incomprehensible (although bilingualism remains a possibility). Despite this separation, they have often developed in parallel ways along their respective paths.

Analytically or in terms of continental philosophy, the relationship between language and meaning has been a significant focus within philosophical discourse, influencing various fields

including linguistics, literature, political theory, and epistemology. Today the Postmodernists like Derrida, as a critique of modernist thought, reshapes traditional understandings of these concepts.

Therefore, this proposal aims to explore how traditional, western and postmodernism thought consider the meaning of language, and how Derrida's deconstruction argues with those thoughts in relation to meaning of language, often challenging the notion of an objective reality and revealing the complexities underlying the construction of meaning.

1.3 Research Questions

- How does Jacques Derrida's philosophy in the concept of deconstruction challenge traditional notions of language and meaning?
- What role does the concept of deconstruction play in re-evaluating language in postmodern thought?
- In what ways does deconstruction reveal the limitations of interpretation in language?
- In what ways does Derrida's deconstruction idea intersect with other postmodern thinkers regarding language and meaning?

1.3 Objectives

- To analyze Jacques Derrida's challenge to traditional notions of language and meaning by considering his deconstruction.
- To analyze the concept of deconstruction in re-evaluating language in postmodern thought.

- To analyze how Derrida's deconstruction reveals the limitations of interpretation in language.
- To analyze how Derrida's deconstruction idea intersects with other postmodern thinkers regarding language and meaning.

1.4. Methodology

This literature review uses qualitative analysis. Existing academic researchers were synthesized. Regarding the meaning of language in relation to Derrida's deconstruction. Primary texts by Derrida, as well as secondary sources that critique and expand upon his ideas, were analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of thought surrounding language.

The methodology will include:

- Textual analysis of key works or essays in relation to Derrida.
- Comparative analysis with other postmodern theorists to highlight Derrida's unique contributions.

Chapter Two

Deconstruction in Re-evaluating the Meaning of Language in Postmodern Thought

2.1 Introduction

Language has mostly been considered a representative of objective reality. For instance, to what extent can someone's heartfelt words of love be understood by their partner when they say 'I am in love with you' or 'I am crazy about you'? Does he comprehend her real feelings as such? It can be mentioned that different issues or questions arise on how conveyed messages can be fully understood among different people or parties politically, economically, socially, etc.

Traditionally, it was commonly believed that language has the full capacity to convey the real message of communicators through their words or other forms of languages. However, in this postmodern era, there is a new perspective on how language's meaning shapes our understanding of the world at all. Postmodern thoughts are challenging in almost every corner of the world, directly or indirectly, and have been affecting existing practices.

Postmodernism was defined by Lyotard (1984) saying incredulity toward metanarratives. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences, but that progress, in turn, presupposes it. The obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimating corresponds, most notably, to the crisis of metaphysical philosophy and of the university institutions that in the past relied on it.

Lyotard's idea clarifies that postmodernism is considered a counter to modernism, challenging the significance of uniformity and universality, which are ignorant of diversity.

Sudartini (2024) also stated that postmodernism is present to provide an alternative to new ways of thinking in knowledge, especially by prioritizing the principle of respecting differences in plural particularities as a counter to the thesis of modernism.

This openness and respect for differences brought by postmodernism affect the philosophy of language in terms of meaning. As mentioned in the above statement, the feature of language is believed to be a representative of objective reality, which is fixed rather than considering contexts or receiving differences and new thoughts. However, postmodernism's thought tells us how the meaning of language is exposed to be deconstructed because of its multiple natures. Its multiple natures mean the exposure of language to be interpreted differently according to different contexts or uses. This is one of the main arguments or problems regarding language - whether the language has the capacity to transmit the real meaning to be understood by communicators.

For instance, there is usually a misunderstanding between two people in their communication due to a lack of comprehension about the contexts that exist in their speech; either one or both of them might miss the core meaning in their communication. This issue will be discussed in this chapter, focusing on how postmodernism is practiced in re-evaluating the meaning of language related to Derrida's deconstruction.

2.2 Language in Postmodern Thought

It is known that postmodernism represents a departure from modernism. Modernist thought tends to emphasize agreement to some extent. However, in postmodern thought, there is a focus on self-consciousness rather than reaching agreement. This means that in the postmodern

era, the growth of individual perception has been influencing the meaning of language, rather than simply accepting what has been said or done so far.

However, this was not true in modernism era. Robins (2011) confirmed that in a modernist scientific perspective, we use words to represent the things we see as best as we can. This perspective is not unique to modernism; since ancient times, thoughts about language have primarily focused on simple communication purposes, directly conveying what the language brings or conveys about something rather than delving into the instability of meaning. (Instability refers to the shifting nature of meaning during communication that affects the message conveyed by language.)

Contrary to modernism, the instability of meaning in the postmodern thought is affecting the fixed nature of meaning in language. This instability or shifting nature of language indicates that language has a limitation to create mutual understanding between communicators due to different contexts that come from the environment and the perspectives of those communicators. That is why the meaning of language becomes dynamic rather than remains fixed in this post modernism era relatively. This is the impact of postmodernism thought.

2.2.1 Deconstruction and Language

Jacques Derrida, one of the postmodernists, extensively discussed the challenges of extracting the real meaning from written or spoken language in his philosophy of language. According to his thoughts, the meaning of language is not fixed or stable due to various factors. Louise (2014) pointed out that Derrida suggests that when trying to describe a feeling to others, the subject will often fail to capture the true meaning, instead merely engaging in the process of

what he calls differing. (Differing is simply the exposure of language to time and space that gives different interpretations affecting meaning.)

It is clear that a certain word can have different meanings depending on the speaker's or writer's context. For example, during an election campaign, a politician may promise to practice democracy in his/her speech for the nations. However, the questions may arise about how the politician's democracy is meaningful in the real lives of the people/electors. Concerning on this, at least here in Africa it is the severe headache of the nations which is a big coverage in everyday news. This is to what extent the importance of having a clear understanding of meaning in language during conversation or any idea exchange. Post modernism thought gives a space for individuals to ask this question 'what do you mean please?' for the sake of having a clear understanding.

Failure to understand the real meaning in any communication can lead to misconceptions. For instance, in historical narratives, there is often a dominant narrative from groups in power that can skew the interpretation of meaning and lead to misinformation. This is particularly true in communication through language. Derrida's deconstruction highlights these issues that arise from ignoring the instability or changing nature of language.

Derrida's deconstruction, particularly as presented in works like "Of Grammatology" (1996), is a method of reading that reveals the instability of binary oppositions, showing how supposedly inferior terms are interdependent and often required for the privileged term to hold meaning. In this statement, Derrida aims to focus on inferior or dependent languages to find their own meaning independently. There are languages in the world that are often overlooked in

communication, such as those spoken by females to males, children to adults, or black individuals to white individuals.

Here in Ethiopian context how the voice of females are valued by the society. Not only in terms of gender, there were ignored peoples who were voiceless in the previous time because of no ear from governors even if their contribution was valuable. This is how the context matters to be listened by others. This is what also Derrida concerns. An invitation to all voices “minorities” makes the world fairer. A lack of diversity affects communication and mutual understanding negatively. Whereas Derrida’s postmodern deconstruction, while being open to various forms of communication, still has limitations. For instance, western nations can influence biased meaning to communication. Derrida’s focus on deconstruction stems from his need to liberate language from most biases.

2.2.2 Instability of Language

The inconsistency of language is a new concept in post modernism. This makes it challenging to extract meaning. Language therefore lacks fixed meaning or consistency depending on the communicators.

The world is constantly changing, and people live in this ever-evolving environment. Fayelegaun (2012) stated that in an endless search for meaning, we are captivated by the human condition of desire and the need to understand ourselves, our world, and others. Fayelegaun (2012) also added that instinctual and learned languages are continuously changing, undergoing appropriation, and reinventing cultural values. Technology brings rapid changes in lifestyle, making it very challenging to create mutual understanding between parents and their children. There may be no common language in some of their communications at all.

So, the thing about language is that it keeps changing. What it means isn't always clear or the same for everyone. Like, if someone gets hurt, you might feel bummed out, or you might not. People see things differently, and that changes how they react. Where you're from and what you've been through also play a part. If you don't think about how someone else might see things, you can end up totally missing each other's point.

Basically, life changes, and language shifts with it, so words don't always stick to one meaning. We're all coming from slightly different places, so we don't always see eye to eye. Speaking of which, let's talk about comedy in Ethiopia for a sec. There are prominent comedians who may not resonate with the new generation. Today, most of comedians tries to associate their pieces of art work with the new generation like creating digitalized village for their comedy instead of using the old village where physically existed. This shows that how different generations have different perception in accessing the meaning contextually. It how those famous late Engidazer's nega to Tesfaye Kassa's comedy brings laugh for this time's generation with their old fashioned language? It is impossible unless those new generations/audiences have deep understanding about the context of the comedy before they get in to laughing.

Derrida's deconstruction supports this notion. As one of the postmodernists, Derrida dug into the meaning of language in relation to how reality is constructed through language interpretation. According to Yegen and Abukan (2014), the meaning and perception of language may vary for each individual. Deconstructing text or language allows for multiple interpretations and can help communicator's correct language to be understood by their receivers.

2.2.3 Derrida's Deconstruction and Positivists

However, there are thoughts that confirm reality is direct or stable contrary to Derrida's deconstruction, which stands for instability. According to Chia (2005) postmodernists claims that it is the structured nature of language that makes the impression that reality itself is stable, pre-organized, and law-like in character. Universalistic theories are defined by language used by positivist as a behavior and events. Postmodernists argue that language doesn't show real-world stability. Instead, it just makes the world seem that way (Robins, 2011).

Of course, in this postmodern era, there is another perspective, similar to what positivists have said. The positivists argue that language is used to describe reality empirically or in a straightforward scientific representation. However, for the postmodernist Derrida, he challenges this concept. He states that language shapes our understanding of reality rather than taking the meaning as it is or as fixed.

According to Derrida, we cannot see the meaning of language as it is; instead, we can stop being blind and reveal postponed and different meanings and perceptions by deconstructing the text or language (Yegen and Abukan, 2014). This indicates that there is no single or direct interpretation in communication through language, which means there are multiplicities or different factors affecting the meaning of language. This is how Derrida sees the meaning of language.

The deconstruction of Derrida's concept states that there is no one way of interpretation in order to discover the real meaning of language. David Hume has also sometimes doubted the fixed meaning of language. His reason is the flexibility of the mind to see things from different directions. According to Blackburn (2015), the Scottish empiricist David Hume (1711 – 76), held

that words are the signs of ideas in the mind, and ideas are either direct copies of perceptual experiences or complexes of such ideas.

In general, trying to make communication meaningful through language is very challenging according to the theory in Derrida's deconstruction. Sarah Louise (2014) said that language is all we have to express how we 'feel', yet it is also the very thing that fails to express this 'feeling' adequately. Her criticism is on Derrida's deconstruction, which points out the failure of language to express our feelings due to his critical investigation at each point.

Although it is not acceptable in most postmodern thoughts, in a few thoughts of postmodernism, the structure of language itself has the potential to create reality in the form of direct meaning or stability. For example, when someone says 'good', the word 'good' has a real meaning of goodness without additional interpretation. However, according to some other postmodernists like Derrida, it is believed that language doesn't always transmit the real meaning of something. For this reason, Derrida's theory becomes acceptable if we miss goodness from the one who is said to be a good person or thing by others.

Derrida aims to confirm the real relationship between words and what they stand to express; when they fail to connect with each other, it is said that the language fails to convey the real meaning. In language communication, the likelihood of falsehood occurring is due to various reasons. In various sectors such as politics, business, religion, etc., the problem of language interpretation can severely impact communication. The truth is knowingly and unknowingly omitted in language communication, which is why analyzing the meaning of language is very significant for the world, especially in this postmodern era.

2.3 Language in Pictures

There are some thoughts and experiments as evidence of how language is sometimes irrelevant to the signified objects, and the following examples show well how language is incapable of conveying the real meaning. Here are the examples that have a discussion about six paintings;

Those six displayed objects on a painting with their captions or languages used how their messages were interpreted: this painting shows six completely normal objects, with six words beneath them. Although I don't speak French fluently and don't know all the words used in the painting, I immediately noticed that, unlike what you would expect, the words don't match the pictures. However, I could also imagine that someone who does not know any French at all would henceforth think that "le Plafond" is used to refer to a candle. In this sense, I can see that language is a communicative tool, a system created by people without a direct link to the world it is sometimes assumed to represent (Robins, 2011).

According to Robins (2011), he added that language serves as a tool or system to express something as a representative rather than linking directly to reality meaningfully. There is no real connection at all. Thus, there is a critical question here: to what extent can we be sure whether someone's or something's speech, writing, symbols, etc., are real or not?

The language may come from somewhere with its meaning, but what does it really mean? Only the sender knows or understands. Is the language meaningful for the receivers, or even for the senders themselves, to convey the meaning fully? How can a certain communication through language be commonly understood among communicators? That is why the philosophy of

language is still in argument to be sure whether the language can really perform in conveying the language with full meaning or not.

In the case of this painting issue, the painters' language is simply the pictures, and those painters use their pictures or paints as language to convey what they think. They tried to shape the people's view by using those paintings as a language, ignoring the viewers' perceptions or other contexts. In terms of interpretation, there is a critical point regarding the influence of language in transmitting meaningful messages among painters and viewers.

It was understood that those pictures do not have the same meaning for different viewers. Such kind of difference is derived from different experiences that bring different understanding. In general, there is a clear difference among the painter, picture, and audiences or viewers. Thus, it cannot be sure that the messages from the painter do address their messages well through those pictures to the viewers. These gaps in communication tell to what extent language is under challenging in its power of communication to transport the full meaning among people.

2.4 Meaning of Language

2.4.1. Deconstruction in the Meaning of Language

Derrida's Deconstruction is a key element in postmodernism related to language. It is known that Derrida is widely recognized as a major representative of postmodernist thought and one of the prominent figures in twentieth-century philosophy. In his deconstruction, language is one of his crucial points in terms of meaning. To clarify Derrida's notion of deconstruction, the meaning of language is not easily constructed to be understood by different parties. Deconstruction shows the fragility of linguistic certainty that we often take for granted.

Laghari (2024) stated that Derrida's theory of deconstruction challenges us to view language as a dynamic, elusive system intricately bound with power, ideology, and cultural structures. His critique of language's "mask" invites a reconsideration of how meaning is constructed. It is evincing the inherent instability that underpins it. Moving "beyond the word," we will confront the complexity and ambiguity woven into each linguistic interaction.

The above statement clarifies that we cannot be sure that every word can express the real essence or truth of something unless it is deconstructed or analyzed to find the real meaning in it. However, when we try to apply Derrida's deconstruction thought, it is very difficult to even run our day-to-day communication because doubt becomes a barrier for mutual understanding among different parties.

According to deconstruction, the meaning of languages in words, sentences, paragraphs, essays, or any other communication tools in the form of speech, written documents, or symbols are not guaranteed to convey the truth. As an advantage, deconstruction plays a major role in understanding the complexity of meaning found in the instability between language and contemporary thought in detail.

Of course, the deep insight of Derrida is sometimes difficult to grasp in relation to analyzing the meaning of language or applying it in real communication. That is why Laghari (2024) suggested that it is necessary to understand that how we communicate is just as crucial as what we communicate.

In general, the positive aspect of Derrida's deconstruction is its supportive mechanism in helping us uncover what is really being communicated rather than accepting everything as it is. In today's fast-paced civilization, there is a risk due to the rapid growth of science and

technology that sometimes ignores humanity. For example, daily news reports reveal how some sectors such as politics, business, religion, and culture have become immoral for the sake of minority advantage, rather than considering the majority. The disadvantages faced by the majority are often facilitated by language focused on persuasiveness rather than truth. The real meaning may be hidden in language with influential speech or symbols. Speakers or writers should be criticized for what they communicate. Given such deterioration, it is crucial to uncover what is truly being communicated in the world. Deconstruction truly matters.

2.4.2. Meaning of Language

Mendie and Udofia (2020) confirmed how Derrida's deconstruction is difficult to understand. Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) was one of the greatest postmodern French philosophers of the 80s and 90s. A lot of people find his ideas kind of hard to get. Derrida raised complicated philosophical questions about writing and what they mean. He came up with the idea of deconstruction. It emphasizes the necessary incompleteness of texts. Deconstruction points out that a piece of writing always misses something.

The question of addressing the real message matters in Derrida's deconstruction. It shows how language is complex in terms of transferring real meaning. The thought of deconstruction considers that language is not a simple tool that serves only as a medium; sometimes, it goes beyond that, which means it is powerful enough to impact culture.

Today in the media, those advertisements are influential in convincing viewers or listeners by using powerful language. The question here is to what extent the advertisements are constructed with the real message. Surely, the marketing context affects the communication between marketers and audiences, influencing the content of the messages by using persuasive

words and symbols to create advertising fantasies. However, unless limitations of rules and regulations are applied to the media, marketers usually prioritize their sales by using persuasive language rather than delivering real products with a genuine message.

According to Zuckert (1991), the term "deconstruction," according to one of its champions, Jacques Derrida, is more than merely a method for interpreting texts; it is also a mode of political action, although it is not "political action" in the ordinary sense. In this idea, interpreting language is related to the work of politics, indicating that it requires power to implement.

The term deconstruction usually refers to a radical technique of reading texts in order to find the real meaning by reducing noises that block understanding the true meaning in communication. The communicators or receivers have the right to have different interpretations detached from the source (speaker or writer). This is one of the main problems, and that is why Derrida tries his best to solve such a problem in his philosophy of deconstruction.

Of course, the problem in language interpretation arises due to the receivers' context or, in simple terms, it might be a knowledge gap between the sender and the receiver. However, it seems that interpreting language is easy when we read this idea written by Mendie and Udofia (2020). Derrida argued that there are many possible interpretations of any given text, and readers can play with texts as if playing with toys.

This does not mean that understanding the meaning of language is easy but rather shows how texts can be interpreted from different angles by various readers or listeners according to their own perceptions. This demonstrates that the issue of meaning is not straightforward, nor does it imply that understanding the interpretation of language is as simple as playing with a toy.

Clearly, deconstruction mainly focuses on interpreting language to ascertain the real meaning based on the context. Mendie and Udofia added that, according to Derrida, "what we get when we read a text is not an objective account of logos or even what the author really meant, but our present interpretation or understanding of the text itself." To brief this point, logos is one of the rhetorical triangles of Aristotle that deals with the principle of reason. This means that the sender may have his/her own reason for why he/she says something, but the receivers also have their own reasoning on how and why they interpret rather than receiving the information directly.

To grasp the central point of this idea of Derrida's deconstruction, another point helps understand it well, i.e., the quote which is well known in the literature field; "the author is dead," which means that once the author writes, the interpretation is up to the reader rather than the author or writer.

The author does not have the right to dictate what he/she writes about to the audiences. However, the right of interpretation belongs to the readers. This is what Derrida means in his deconstruction. Haddad (2006) confirmed this idea within Derrida's argument as well. "Derrida argued at great length early on in his career that texts live on in the absence of their author."

To relate to the idea of deconstruction, how many of us have a common understanding of a certain book? For instance, the book 'Fikir Eskemekabir' by Addis Alemayehu here in Ethiopia is still a subject of debate in order to discern its central idea or the author's intention. There have been different critiques of it just to grasp the theme of the book. Most people consider the book focuses on the sacrificial love between the two main characters, Bezabih and Seblewongel.

However, critical readers argue that the book shows the decay of politics in that regime, warning the state to take care of authority and highlighting the country's overall failure. The book forecasts the impending worst events in the near future. This disparity among readers demonstrates how language is incapable of conveying the real message effectively unless different contexts are considered, and the communicators' ability to interpret the language plays a significant role.

These are the main points illustrating the difficulty in creating common understanding among communicators through language. Derrida suggests that context is the main factor in grasping the central point of language; otherwise, the language of the writer or speaker becomes unfairly dominant.

2.5 The Nature of Language in Modern and Postmodern Thought

As Derrida is one of the philosophers in postmodernism, his deconstruction indicates that language is unstable and does not have a fixed nature. It does not solely represent reality as a tool for a certain object or thing.

In postmodernism, language is subjected to being outside linguistic rules. Yegen and Abukan (2014) added to this issue, discussing the nature of language as well. In parallel with the importance attached to the language phenomenon in the 20th century, the meaning phenomenon, apart from linguistics, has been a philosophical and sociological study subject just like language and text. In this sense, according to Derrida, the language that formalizes the meaning became a problem in the aforementioned period.

Due to this problem, it is evident that Derrida developed ‘deconstruction’ to emphasize that meaning is not fixed but fluid, constantly shifting, and an interplay of differences opposing even most postmodernists. Yegen and Abukan also stated that Derrida developed the concept of ‘deconstruction’ to address this problem, pointing out that meaning can be constructed independently. Derrida’s deconstruction concept is actually a pursuit suggesting postmodernism challenges both modernism and some postmodernism thoughts.

Postmodernism creates a revolution in the philosophy of language, specifically the meaning of language or interpretation. Sudartini (2024) stated how postmodernism brought a change in the philosophy of language. To clarify, every language may not have only one meaning; diversified perception is the nature of language in the thought of postmodernism.

Sudartini (2024) introduced an additional perspective on the philosophy of language within postmodern thought. The postmodernism paradigm is an approach to philosophy, art, and culture that emerged as a response to the ideas and values of modernism dominant in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Postmodernism rejects the idea that there is a single truth that can explain the world and instead emphasizes diversity, complexity, and the relative nature of everything.

Truly, the world is a land of variety, but the dominants in this world do not accept differences well. The Western language is influential worldwide, excluding others for the sake of colonization and other benefits in every corner. Their languages have been dominantly colonized. Due to this, the interpretation about the world is westernized. It is understood that the language of the world is westernized and does not consider differences. This is what Derrida challenges, as Western-oriented postmodernism language is ignorant of difference. The result of

such Westernized language is a loss for the world due to the ignorance of different thoughts from various language resources. Therefore, openness is preferable to host diversification in language to liberate interpretation.

In general, postmodernism is the antithesis of modernism, aiming to liberate language. Sudartini (2024) also discussed the philosophy of language in postmodernism. In the context of its view on language, postmodernism offers several perspectives, among which the key ones are openness to the plurality of languages, the destruction of the concept of binaries and oppositions, the importance of meta-narrative, and intertextuality.

2.5.1 Postmodernism and Analytical Philosophy

Derrida is a unique postmodernist philosopher who introduces deconstruction theory in the philosophy of language. There is a reason why language is a focal point in Derrida's deconstruction. Derrida believes that language is abused, especially by Western societies. One of his reasons is to liberate such abusive Westernized language by deconstructing even their analytical philosophy because Westerners often create new language or modify existing ones to construct their own narratives for political, economic, and different ideological advantages.

In their created narratives, Westerners have dominated the New World. This dominance is evident in their history of colonization, where indigenous people lost their own identities due to the deprivation of their mother tongue language by the imposition of colonizers' language. In general, Western analytical philosophy aims to clarify meaning rather than focusing on the instability and internal contradictions of meaning that embrace diversity. Derrida's deconstruction is context-dependent, whereas analytical philosophy focuses on clarifying thought and language through logical frameworks and empirical evidence. Derrida criticizes the Western

thought system, the hegemony of meaning construction, and the legitimization of modernity through deconstruction; he aims to liberate meaning. Moreover, the metaphor phenomenon as an auxiliary element for Western thought is a target of Yegen and Abukan (2014).

There are additional reasons why Derrida focuses on Westernized language. It is believed that Derrida's deconstruction challenges Western philosophical thinking on language to liberate meaning because Westerners tend to limit the interpretation of language in the name of postmodernism. The meaning of language does not have freedom unless it aligns with their interests or conveys what they want to communicate as a source, rather than leaving the interpretation open to others.

Mark C. Taylor (2014) highlighted this argument Derrida shows us how to move beyond all that. That is, how to transcend an oppressive metaphysics of presence that excludes, marginalizes, and fails to acknowledge that which is absent, different, or other. Consider, for example, all the voices historically absent from the Western philosophical canon: the voices of women, Blacks, gays, the poor, and so on. By privileging presence, the canon fails to acknowledge what is not there, what is absent.

Taylor demonstrates how the West has disregarded important diverse thoughts produced by non-Westerners. How can we claim that the world is in balance without including the voices of all people from every corner of the globe? It is evident that there are biases based on color and gender that have been overlooked in the white-dominated world.

Language has been used as a tool or has been westernized, either distorting or ignoring others. It is apparent that those neglected voices of languages are excluded from the discourse due to distorted meanings.

In general, there is challenging to find the real meaning in every communication. I have been thinking even to what extent it is real here in my writing. When I go in deep to think how the things are meaningful, I am also in doubt in the meaning of my own speech or writing. This is what a difficulty to run our day to day lives with such investigation of meaning because human being is not away from language or communication. Whatever the case or the cost, trying to dig the real meanings in communication matters a lot because of its inclusive nature so as to give a chance for every communicators by considering different angles and contexts.

A basic issue in this chapter is to what extent language stands to transmit the real meaning; it was discussed also how postmodern thought and Derrida's deconstruction influence the discovery of meaning from language.

In addition to this, the discussion has shown how language is influential in shaping our world. The way we perceive things is influenced by the language we know and how we communicate. It is evident that there are contexts that affect the meaning of language, creating a gap or narrowing it between our understanding and the true essence of things. Such differences may arise from either the nature of the language itself or the communicators' experiences. Both of the things should be considered. It is clear that language is significant because it is a powerful tool to express almost all things. The idea cannot exist without language; it can be said that language is the body of idea which has potential to give fill meaning about that idea or object. But in terms of Derrida's deconstruction thought this does not mean that the contexts do not affect the language in terms of giving full meaning. Only speaking or writing idea by itself is guaranteed whether the meaning is real or not; contexts should be considered. Of course this is a very good idea of Derrida believe, and some of postmodern thoughts as well.

Let me add one idea, in our day-to-day lives, the accumulated pieces of information in our minds about something is very influential in understanding the meaning conveyed through language. However, it is true that the accuracy of that information is not always guaranteed. This poses a challenge in language philosophy. For instance, according to Louise (2014), Derrida's deconstruction theory suggests that language is all we have to express how we 'feel,' yet it is also the very thing that fails to adequately express this 'feeling.' When we consider this perspective, Derrida urges us to be skeptical in our communication, which can be very challenging in understanding what someone wants to convey and vice versa. On the other hand, deconstruction is helpful because it exposes hidden messages or agendas when someone analyzes the meaning conveyed through language.

Obviously the thought in the postmodern era offers a chance to see things from different angles. The interpretation of meaning differs due to the limitations of language itself in expressing something effectively, and context also plays a significant role.

To generalize one of the fundamental ideas of deconstruction is context-based interpretation to grasp the real meaning of a certain language in communication. If we ask why some postmodernists, like Derrida, do worry about the meaning in language, here is one of the answers that to defend the language's problem because of its domination in different aspects for example it served for colonization by distorting the true meaning of nation's demography. Such problem affects the lives of billions people worldwide. Therefore, deconstruction is preferable to protect abuse of meaning or how language should be interpreted to convey the real meaning because deconstruction reveals the instability and complexity of language's meaning to uncover the core message of that language by challenging the notion of fixed and absolute truth.

To conclude this chapter, when we see the relationship between postmodern thought and Derrida's deconstruction, they are almost in the same path for instance they are skeptic in absolute meaning, and they criticize the traditional perspectives which believes in fixed meaning. But, there is a difference methodologically between them. The postmodern thought tends in critique of culture or society's norm broadly, but according to Derrida's deconstruction, it focuses on language as we discussed in the above.

Chapter Three

Meaning of Language in Deconstruction and Western Thought

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the discussion revolves around the meaning of language, focusing on two aspects: Jacques Derrida's deconstruction lens and western views. L Hong (2019) stated that the philosophy of language explores the relationship between language and reality. However, it is known that nowadays, the gap between reality and unreality in the meaning of language is very narrow, making it challenging to draw a boundary line between them.

Before we are just going to in details, it is better to see a practical example illustrating the impact of language in terms of misleading the meaning even though it is not directly relevant with our philosophical discussion of language as such. As Ethiopians, it is unforgettable the Treaty of 'Wuchale' 17, and let's look into it to demonstrate the extent to which the meaning of language can be impactful.

The Treaty of Wuchale between African Ethiopia and Western Italy is a prime example of how language plays a critical role in international relations. The conflicting Amharic and Italian versions of the treaty's Article 17 led to war. The Amharic version affirmed Ethiopia's

independence, while the Italian version stated that Ethiopia would become an Italian protectorate. This difference in interpretation stemmed from a mistranslation or deliberate misinterpretation in the Italian version, sparking a major diplomatic dispute.

Although the Italy's invasion was unsuccessful, this exemplifies how the West (Italy) misused the language as a tool to maintain its advantage by misinterpreting the meaning. It appears that the primary issue lies in the translation, but history teaches us how it was misinterpreted due to the intentions from the invader side, i.e., Italy; intention influences the reality in the meaning of language. Hong (2019) confirmed that the philosophy of language is concerned not with language itself (the ontological or metaphysical perspective) but with how language interacts with the objective world or reality we inhabit.

Undoubtedly, the philosophy of language is a significant concern in most western countries, and it is evident that they implemented it during their colonization period; they altered the native language of the colonized nations to westernize them or change their perception. This illustrates how powerful language can be, even as a tool for colonization. In history, colonizers used language to enforce their cultural and political dominance. Colonial powers spread their language as a means to control and destabilize the culture of the colonized, which is what the concept of linguistic sovereignty (the right of a community or nation to control its language, including its use in government, education, and public life, free from external domination) refers to. The West utilizes language as a medium of conceptualization. Hong (2019) highlighted that language is viewed as a "medium of conceptualization" through which people comprehend beliefs and representations of the world

3.2 Deconstruction vs. Western Thought

When we look into our primary focus, which is the philosophy of language centering on Western thought, the concept of language's meaning is explored. In western thought, the meaning of language is often viewed as fixed or constructed. However, Derrida's theory of deconstruction proposes that meaning should be inherent and unstable within language. He argues against western thought's fixed or established meanings, thereby offering a radical reevaluation of how meaning functions in human communication.

Furthermore, a significant concern in language philosophy is how language interacts with reality. The dynamics between reality and the power of language are intricate. Language is a way of describing current reality and a language system. It can shape or construct our perceptions. It does not simply provide concepts and labels for things in the world but also filters our experiences through cultural presuppositions and subjective understanding.

Due to these and various other reasons, the understanding of reality that we grasp is often a result of external factors and how our language frames them. It becomes apparent that uncovering reality is a major focus of philosophy of language in general.

It is clear that western philosophy has predominantly operated under a framework where language is seen as a means of conveying clear, stable meanings. Philosophers like Aristotle and Descartes followed an indicative strategy with respect to language. Their words are tied directly to objects or concepts in the world. Meaning would be interpreted as absolute in this reasoning. It exists in an open relation between signs and signification.

This thought process has been vigorously challenged. Semantic accounts by Frege and Russell have presented a more advanced model of meaning. They included sense, reference, and

context. Wittgenstein also points out the pragmatic aspect of language. He contended that meaning is more because of usage rather than determinate definitions (Wittgenstein, 1953). However, these criticisms aside, the idea of a static relation between language and meaning persists.

The fundamental argument between western thought and Derrida's deconstruction lies in how interpretation functions. In western philosophy, L Hong (2019) noted that the philosophy of language originates from the relationship between words and the world. This implies that the Western concept of language hinges on the connection between words and the concepts they signify in the world. On the contrary, in terms of Western thought, words or languages can express objects, ideas, and actions in the physical or conceptual realm. This means that language is powerful due to its direct relation to what language says in the world.

Derrida argues against this viewpoint in his deconstruction; he argues against conventional meanings because he believes that language is a fluid concept rather than a stable one that aims to convey some idea directly or forever. Derrida's theory of deconstruction says language builds everything we think is real. He states how we understand it changes all the time depending on the situation. Bouchut (2024) pointed out that with Derrida's deconstruction; language's meaning is always changing. This means we can't have rock-solid truths like Plato talked about. This implies the meaning of language is not fixed by the speaker's or writer's expression. The speaker desires change since there is another set of factors that influence the meaning.

According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2024), Platonic metaphysics acknowledges that there is no consensus in the literature on how exactly an "abstract object" is to

be defined. To clarify, the Platonic concept upholds a fixed ideal 'form' or 'truth' that can be accessed through reason. However, in deconstruction, this notion is constantly evolving and varies within the contexts of language communication. It is evident that what was considered true at one point does not necessarily remain true, nor does it possess a permanent truth feature.

Despite the development of postmodernism, Western philosophy has rigorously tried to control the meaning of language. For instance, the definition of what democratic government means is constructed by them rather than being based on other contexts like Africa, Asia, or Latin America. Both in modernism and in postmodernism, western thought remain dominant. Yegen and Abukan (2014) confirmed that modernism can be defined as the thought and information system formed in modernity, encompassing cultural, economic, and political circumstances within its body. These cultural, economic, and political environments have reshaped the meaning of language.

It is obvious that Westerners are highly involved in the changing industry worldwide, which has brought significant changes in different sectors. Besides, the meaning of language remains impactful. Western language is typically westernized, often ignoring the thoughts of other nations; they exclude contexts relatively. Westerners, consciously or subconsciously, presume their own language to be universal by default. In modern times as well as postmodern times, westerners think it's widespread. They desire to see the world from their own viewpoint, which is not right. Even in this postmodern era, the Western system remains on a similar path by reinterpreting postmodern thought as an extension of modernity. Yegen and Abukan (2014) stated that the term "postmodernity," which expresses the age after modernism, is seen as a reinterpretation of modernism.

3.2.1 Western Thought on Language from Different Perspectives

Derrida tried his best to change the world's perception regarding language and other philosophical thoughts. Derrida is changing how the Western world thinks. He is pushing us to question the things we believe are true. He's trying to make philosophy matter more in our daily lives, in areas like politics and society. Philosophical thought, according to Derrida, should be turned into a common lifestyle and not an elitist intellectual minority subject (Bouchut, 2024).

Here are the Western thoughts and their challenges:

3.2.1.1 Western Language of Philosophy in the eyes of Wittgenstein's language games and Derrida's Deconstruction

The Western philosopher Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein's language games focus on how the meaning of words is determined by their use in specific, rule-governed contexts, while the deconstruction theory of Derrida would like to analyze texts to show how meaning is inherently unstable due to the underlying structure of language itself, especially through the deconstruction of binary oppositions. (According to Ferdinand de Saussurean, binary opposition is when two ideas are paired, but one is seen as better, like male versus female, mind versus body, and presence versus absence. These hierarchies replicate deeper assumptions about value, truth, and authority. Derrida discovers that these pairs are not impartial distinctions but systems of power that stabilize meaning by repressing ambiguity.) Both philosophers question determinate objective meaning, but they do it differently. Wittgenstein looks at how we use language in real life, while Derrida looks at how language and meaning are never really stable and always contradict themselves. For example, when someone orders coffee from the waitress and she brings it, this illustrates what a language game means because language games focus on language use.

Additionally, Erfan K (2025) clarified the philosophy of language related to Wittgenstein's concept of language games. Like different games, language changes based on who's using it and how, instead of being a hard set of rules like people thought before. He does not approve of the idea that words of a language have intrinsic meaning, but as he proposes, it is based on their uses in specific language games, where the understanding of a sentence or a word depends on recognizing their roles in specific contexts.

The idea of Wittgenstein's language game is about how language is as flexible as any other game, allowing for flexibility, which means that language does not have a fixed nature to necessarily stick to one meaning from one word. This aligns somewhat with Derrida's deconstruction.

In terms of Derrida's deconstruction, he challenges and dismantles especially the binary oppositions used to structure our understanding of the world. For instance, he does not agree with the binary opposition of 'man vs. woman,' where one term is historically given more value than the other. Derrida aims to analyze why such differences happen rather than providing the meaning as it was structured.

Wittgenstein also shows how language probes deep into finding the meaning in communication. Ara (2006) stated that in the later development of his thought, Wittgenstein seems to repudiate the earlier notion of the uniformity of language, which would restrict the word to a rigid and demarcated use, a use that would suit all cases. He came to think that language is flexible, subtle, and multiform. This is how both Wittgenstein and Derrida have similar thoughts in terms of how the meaning of language is complex and should not be seen in one direction.

When we revisit Derrida's deconstruction, the analysis of language goes beyond what the word wants to mean. For instance, it has contributed to different movements, directly or indirectly, such as gender bias, which is a burning issue of the 21st century. This world is familiar with gender, and some struggles are ongoing in the name of feminism, for example. In such movements, it is believed that women are inferior to men. This is what Derrida challenges because he is concerned about the wrongful use of language that unfairly makes something inferior or superior. In general, Derrida brings input that fosters new thoughts in ideologies, movements, histories, religions, and so on to reshape their perspectives overall."

To conclude, Wittgenstein claimed that language was actually a set of games that followed particular rules. Meanings of words are dependent on their use and the language games that they are being used in. In other words, given different contexts, a single word may have different uses and therefore mean different things. Language games include things like telling a joke, making up a story, or making up and testing a hypothesis. What determines the rules of these games and the use of these words is a common shared experience. Grammar is not an external system of rules but rather a shared set of norms and agreements about how we play the language game. Understanding what someone is saying requires an understanding of the language game they are playing. And words do not have objective meaning outside of these games (because their meaning will be different depending on the game). He preferred the concept of family resemblance between words when offering definitions to the commonly used necessary and sufficient conditions (Carneades.org, 2021).

3.2.1.2 The Language of Democracy in Western and Other Nations

For different nations, the meaning must not originate from the same source; for instance, the meaning of democracy in the West differs from that in China. Democracy in the West is

derived from the Enlightenment, focusing on individual rights and liberties, while Chinese democracy originates from Confucianism, emphasizing social harmony. This signifies that, philosophically, people from different corners of the world interpret things differently based on their own cultures, such as religion, politics, social attitudes, etc. This is a crucial point that shows how language should be interpreted contextually rather than being accepted as it is.

In western thought, as mentioned in Hong's (2019) study, language originated from the relation between words and the world. His study clarified that those pioneering theories (e.g., mental image, empiricism, rationalism, reference, etc.) reveal how ancient philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, etc., came to understand the relation between words (the basic linguistic unit) and things/facts (the basic unit of the world). Thus, Westerners would like to relate words with the world rationally or empirically and with different thoughts, and they want to see things all over the world based on their own definition or perspective.

For example, democracy for westerners refers to a political system in western democracies where leaders make political gestures on the ground rather than by excluding some other cultural perspectives, including religion or traditional values. That is their definition of what democracy is.

However, in China, democracy is incomplete without Confucianism. Gao and Walayat (2021) stated that Confucianism touches the “soul” of legal and political subjects and is not simply an alternative to democratic forms of government; rather, it may be compatible with creating an original Chinese democratic theory.

The authors also added that many communities have accepted certain abstract concepts in the democracy perspective yet still find secular democracy incomplete. This is not limited to

Confucian societies but is also found in Muslim and nominally Christian societies that seek to reconcile democratic ideals with their traditional values.

When we see the difference perspectives of democracy in China and western, the meaning in its ideology is impactful because it is divided the world politics in to two, China oriented and western oriented. Its impact is also extends up to here in our country that makes our government is in between them to keep its politics and economy safe. Its understanding and response is valuable in bilateral diplomacy. This is what ideology mean and its relation with the meaning of language to be understood in every corner of the world. The meaning issue of language is not simple. The difference in meaning sometimes brings ideological differences among governments and nations which can sometimes lead to the threat of war. That is why Derrida wants to take care of the meaning of language to bring detailed understanding and to grasp what certain language means both individually and high level.

3.3 Derrida's Deconstruction and Textual Analysis

When we try to observe what is going on in the perspective of democracy between China and the West, those in the West most probably label China as an undemocratic country compared to them. This is what Derrida criticizes in his deconstruction. It is known that the theory of deconstruction is a method of textual analysis that critiques Western metaphysics, which he labels as the metaphysics of presence or logocentrism. But, Derrida opposes with such logocentrism thought; this metaphysics seeks a stable, centered meaning or truth by privileging certain concepts over their opposites. I agree also with Derrida's thought; logocentrism is western oriented thought that make them advantageous by excluding others' thought. Westerners usually set their own definitions, for example, they focus on presence (now) over the past or future, good over evil, and so on by focusing on what they want to say rather than considering

the other side. They usually prioritize their own perspective compared to others like the western perspective over Chinese democracy. We can understand that according to Derrida and in reality, every practice should be treated contextually like China has been practicing her own meritocracy, the westerns have their democracy as well.

Reynolds (2010) stated that deconstruction has at least two aspects: literary and philosophical. The literary aspect concerns textual interpretation, where invention is essential to finding hidden alternative meanings in the text. The philosophical aspect concerns the main target of deconstruction: the “metaphysics of presence,” or simply metaphysics. Starting from a Heideggerian point of view, Derrida argues that metaphysics impacts all of philosophy from Plato onwards. Metaphysics creates dualistic oppositions and establishes a hierarchy that unfortunately privileges one term of each dichotomy (presence before absence, speech before writing, and so on). Due to rejecting such textual analysis (metaphysics) of Western thought, Derrida's deconstruction critiques both ancient and modern philosophies to liberate the perception of truth in terms of language and other thoughts. He criticizes elitism and advocates for philosophy to adapt to new social demands, challenging outdated rhetorical models and institutional authority.

Bouchut (2024) said Derrida's deconstruction pushes us to listen to new perspectives beyond our experience and background. By taking down the walls that keep certain voices from being heard, we enable more democratic and equitable intellectual and social systems.

Bouchut (2024) also noted that Derrida thought language was always changing. This means that solid truths, like Plato talked about, can't really hold up. His idea about difference shows how meaning moves around and how language can only do so much. To discuss the

approach between Western thought and Derrida's language philosophy, some points related to binary positions, white and black perspectives, speech and writing, and colonization are considered.

3.4 Meaning of Language in Binary Opposition

In many cultural contexts, males and females are seen as binary opposites that define gender roles and identity. However, the meaning of those opposite sexes sometimes leads to one of the two being considered either inferior or superior by assigning different roles through generational cultural practices. This gender issue is a problem in almost every corner of the world.

Not only in gender roles, but this practice is fundamental to how we understand and categorize the world. In the language of philosophy, which is called binary opposition, it works by creating meaning through contrast; for instance, 'good/evil,' 'right/wrong,' 'win/lose,' etc. Binary opposition is a concept in the philosophy of language often practiced in almost every corner of the world, including the Western world.

According to Iskakbekovna and Rezhepovich (2023), binary oppositional pairs reflected in the vocabulary result from human thinking, cognition, and knowledge of the world. Today, many linguists comprehensively consider binary oppositions based on literary works and political and public discourse.

Melissa Y. Rock (2023) also added that we often encounter binary oppositions in cultural studies when exploring the relationships between different groups of people, for instance: upper-class and lower-class, male and female, or developed and underdeveloped, and so on. This is how the difference is visible between those pairs. The author added to clarify that on the surface,

these seem merely like identifying labels, but what makes them binary opposites is the notion that they cannot coexist. As we mentioned in the above statement, in most cultures, the language practices in gender roles usually consider males as the most responsible and better than females.

However, the binary position is dismantled due to Derrida's deconstruction for the sake of having real meaning contextually rather than depending on Westernized thought that ignores the liberation of meaning within language.

Iskakbekovna and Rezhepovich (2023) stated that the world consists of the struggle and unity of opposites. The appearance of words with opposite meanings is related to a person's worldview. To clarify this point, most meanings usually derive from language practices in a culture; culture is known as the dominant factor in defining or giving the meaning of something by associating or opposing two things in language communication. It is clear how politics or religions reshape the meaning of languages; these kinds of determinants play a significant role in reshaping and creating the meaning of things. Language often serves those sectors as a conveyor of what they want to say. This is what binary opposition means in practice.

The Western world mostly perceives meanings based on either the similarities or differences of things, i.e., binary opposition. Gul et al. (2022) stated that our world is a combination of opposing things. Black opposes white, water opposes fire, right opposes wrong. According to Saussure (1916), language is also considered a system of binary oppositions. He also said that the system of binary opposition generally consists of two absolute oppositions; that is, to express the presence of one thing means the absence of the other.

This idea confirms that the meaning of one thing depends on the other, or in the presence of a certain thing, there is an absence of the opposite. This is what Derrida criticizes because

there are no coexistences between opposite words. Unless there is coexistence between two words, one of them becomes good or bad, superior, or inferior.

In general, the problem with a system of binary opposites is that it creates boundaries between groups of people and leads to prejudice and discrimination. One group may fear or consider a threat from the 'opposite' group, referred to as the other. The use of binary opposition in literature is a system that authors use to explore differences between groups of individuals, such as cultural, class, or gender differences. Authors may explore the gray area between the two groups and what can result from those perceived differences.

3.4.1. Deconstruction vs. Binary Opposition

Derrida challenges the binary oppositions frequently relied upon in western-oriented philosophies of language. For instance, when one thing is said to be good, there must be evil to compare it, or to emphasize the meaning of one word, there must be an opposite of the given word that is good for evil or vice versa. Good/bad, life/death, woman/men, etc., are indicators of how these are constructed in their opposite meanings. As mentioned, Derrida's deconstruction challenges these binary oppositions. He believes that these opposite words do not necessarily need to be put together; rather, they deconstruct each other to have their own meaning.

Reynolds (2010) pointed out, "Deconstruction is generally presented through an analysis of specific texts. It seeks to expose, and then subvert, the various binary oppositions that undergird our dominant ways of thinking presence/absence, speech/writing, and so forth."

The reason deconstruction stands to destabilize the hierarchy of such binary oppositions is to avoid the superiority of one over the others, which affects the meaning due to its dependency on the other. How much of those absent are ignorant to contribute their essence.

During colonization, the voice of black people was ignored due to the meaning given to black as unimportant for the world due to Western colonized narration. It was assumed that white is superior to black.

Deconstruction strongly challenges such binary oppositions. According to Derrida's deconstruction, the meaning in oppositions like good being the opposite of evil, presence being the opposite of absence, and mind being the opposite of body distorts the real meaning of those languages. Deconstruction argues that these binary oppositions are not fixed or natural; they are made through exclusion and difference.

According to Long (2024), deconstruction argues that all texts and ideas are composed of a series of oppositions or binary pairs, such as good/evil, presence/absence, or male/female. These binary pairs are often assumed to be stable and objective, but deconstruction asserts that they are actually unstable and subjective, and that true shared meaning is an impossible goal.

This shows how deconstruction challenges western thoughts, which centralize language to give meaning based on their own interests. For instance, the binary opposition of good and evil is not necessarily to be opposed each other. They may have their own meaning in their own context. Otherwise, truth affects the real meanings of languages deviate if they become westernized in the thought of binary opposition.

3.4.1.1. Saying and Writing

Jacques Derrida has a different perspective on the philosophy of language compared to the Western perspective. For instance, saying is prioritized in Westernized language over writing. The Western perspective argues that human beings naturally start their life journey with

speaking before writing; speaking is more preferable to writing in Western language for the sake of creating understanding easily and perfectly.

In terms of deconstruction, Yegen and Abukan (2014) stated that Derrida, who believes that the Western way of thought is voice-central/logocentric, claims that the aforementioned system perceives writing only as an “addition,” in other words, as an “accessory.”

However, these researchers pointed out how Derrida challenges such Western thought. According to Derrida, saying was given priority compared to writing, and this situation is a problem for Derrida. He believes that writing comes before saying. After this approach, Derrida observes the saying/writing dilemma and puts forward “voice centralism”; “the voice centralism is the name Derrida gave to the assumption that saying is superior to writing.

Contrary to most Western philosophers, Derrida believes that writing is a better language skill to understand history well, indicating that world history is better known through writing than speech due to its organized feature. He even does not agree with the idea that speech is the first language skill. According to Mendie and Udofia (2020) it is indeed probable that spoken language existed before written language. But Derrida speaks of the written being and the being written, which is suggestive of the notion that, even though speech is first and foremost, conceived and written in the mind (air waves), before their actual concretizations with signs.

He usually prefers writing to talking when he wants to really get what something means. This preference for writing is also confirmed by Yegen and Abukan (2014), as they support the idea that while writing deserves priority, saying has been given more importance than writing in all belief systems.

Basically, Derrida's deconstruction is a way to look at texts that questions set meanings. It does this by pointing out the hidden hierarchies in binary oppositions. For example, like good and evil or mind and body. It reveals the meaning of the concept is not fixed but depends on its difference from its opposite. And that opposite can turn out to be just as important. A good example is the pair writing and speaking, where Western philosophy has usually put speaking first. Deconstruction illustrates that the hierarchy is not essential. However, writing is key to spoken language, and it can be used to question the idea of one true meaning.

3.4.1.2. Black and White

Meaning of Language in 'Black' and 'White' Thought

I have read book which is called □□□□/'Yager Lij'. It was translated by Ethiopian author Birhanesilassie Birhanemariam. The original book is called 'native son' written by the American author Richard Wright in 1940. The book portraits the sever reality of living as a black man in a white dominated society like America, emphasizing the limiting and dehumanizing effects of racism.

Surely the words black and white are opposite each other in both letters and meaning, but the meaning that we give them for a certain purpose makes them different beyond their literal meaning. This is related to binary opposition which is a concept that reshapes the meaning of things from opposite viewpoints.

Ideas are given meaning not only by their own essence but also by referring to their opposites to be meaningful. One practical example is the racism thought in black and white language generated by Westerners the same as what we mentioned here in the above. In Hafizh's (2016) research, it was stated that binary opposition shows that the white skin race is identical to

all goodness, whereas the black skin race is identical to all badness. The first binary opposition found is that white-skin people are responsible for their social environment, whereas black-skin people are not.

It is evident that whether in the previous colonization period or in the modern world of color bias, language has been a major tool used to manipulate meaning. Hafizh (2016) added that the rationalization of white race supremacy towards the black race in British society has a close interrelationship with their background of language. This relates to the concept that has clung to their significations and perspectives on the language "black" itself.

In the Oxford English Dictionary, the term "black" before the 16th century was associated with dirty, sleazy, stupid things. Having dark purposes was translated as purposes associated with bad, leading to death and calamity, and so on. Black is a color that follows psychiatric conditions, a symbol of humility and crime, and a sign of danger and disgust. Included in that concept of Blackness, the opposition to black is White. There is no word as well as "white," as the opposition; each white person would have a black opponent, and each sweet would have a bitter opponent. White and Black connote holiness and defilement, purity and sin, glory and humility, beauty and ugliness, generosity and evil, and God and Satan.

In the context of binary opposition, deconstruction criticizes the way in which binary opposition perceives meaning because binary opposition sets a fundamental principle that every idea's meaning relates to its opposite, i.e., for the meaning of white, black plays a role in making white meaningful.

In literature, politics, economy, social, religion, etc., there is a real challenge related to racism, and language serves to manipulate the meaning. For instance, the color impact is still present in almost every sector, like the football industry. I have seen this post “Perhaps some people do not feel respect for me because I am black.” This is serious complain posted on the Cameroonian footballer Samuel Eto’s instagram in 2016 when he was playing for Turkey’s football club, Antalyaspor. Such complaints are not only in the football sector; racism and discrimination practices are continuing as major problems in this unjust world in terms of color discrimination.

Such a challenge has been affecting individuals psychologically up to diplomatic relations among nations. Language is severely manipulated; not only the word or language, but the intention through the meaning in those words matters a lot.

However, according to P. Benny (2022), the assumption that deconstruction challenges that there is no "universal truth" waiting to be found in a text or sign system. Surely this is a very good idea which is suggested to accept diversity rather than monopoly as a remedy for those meaning problems which exists still. In general, the meanings in language should be contextual rather than accepting or believing in what a certain source says or writes. Obviously, binary opposition and universality are western-oriented aiming to make the meaning worldwide which is context ignorant. However, deconstruction avoids this idea or does not accept such a thought because the meaning of one word in a certain area may not be the same as in another place.

3.5. Colonization

Language of Philosophy in Western Colonization

Derrida's arguments regarding language, and more precisely regarding colonization, are focused on the instability of meaning and the power relations inherent to linguistic structures. According to him, language is not a neutral point but one that is subject to the historical and social forces, like colonialism, that tend to privilege some perspectives over others. Derrida's deconstruction concept emphasizes that language is always embedded in a context of power relations, making it impossible to escape the influence of dominant discourses, even in attempts at decolonization.

Nowadays, no language retains its original meaning. Language has been utilized even in this post-colonial period better than in the past. Colonialists manipulated language significantly for their advantage. In the present post-colonial period, the narration of language is almost devoid of real meaning due to its impact extending from both pre-colonial and colonial periods; Western-oriented language has expanded worldwide.

Post-colonial writers rely on existing texts produced by colonialists and also on an acquaintance with and information about their political and cultural actions and behaviors towards other countries, investigating a biased approach of colonial studies of acts and their sovereignty effects, and vigorously challenging the expansionist and transgressor imperialism of colonial powers and especially those values that support imperialism and yet prevail in the Western world (Shakib, 2011).

This is how the Western world tries to impose its intentions on other parts of the world. Derrida's deconstruction does not accept any intention; it opposes anything that distorts the meaning of language without its own role, rather than being authorized by the author.

Mendie and Udofia (2020) stated in their study on Derrida's deconstruction that, in some sense, they write themselves: that is, they are independent of an author or his intentions. Thus, in Derrida's thinking, intentionality does not play quite the same role as is traditionally conceived in the philosophy of language; our intention does not determine the meaning of what we are saying.

In terms of the Western perspective, nothing is found in the meaning of language without intention in order to control colonized people through that language, which is fabricated by their own concerns. However, Derrida argues for the liberation of language instead of authorization by the speaker or writer. Mendie and Udofia (2020) confirmed that the thrust of Derrida's idea is that language is chaotic, and meaning is never fixed, meaning it is unstable, undecided, provisional, and ever-changing.

In colonization thought, it is clear that language is the major tool to control other nations due to its connection with the human mind through day-to-day cultural practices of those colonized people. That is why the colonization process is focused on controlling the language beside the land or resources because of its connection with the peoples' minds, i.e., in order to dominate their identity.

Syrotinski (2010) confirmed that culture and colonialism are bound together, then, in what Derrida terms an essential colonialist, by which he means that if colonialism is the process of appropriating the other as self and reinscribing alterity as identity, all culture, in so far as it is monoculture, is essentially colonial.

Obviously, most of the sources of information found in the human mind are the environment or cultures that have come through language. And, of course, during that

colonization period, one of the major tools for colonialists is language. It is very helpful to control the culture of the people at all. Those western colonialists are aware of the significance of language to convey their thoughts well so as to affect not only the meaning of language but also the meaning of life in colonized people at all.

“Being aware of the importance of language and cultural domination, during their colonialism, colonialists try to convey their thoughts, beliefs, and customs through language as a cultural tool in an invisible and imperceptible way.” (Shakib, 2011)

In addition to this, Shakib (2011) confirmed in his study that during colonization, colonizers usually imposed their language onto the peoples they colonized, forbidding natives to speak their mother tongues. This is understood that forbidding the natives to speak their mother tongues is one of the methods of losing their own identity.

However, Derrida’s thought, as expressed in the study of Syrotinski (2010), makes those western thoughts of language unacceptable; his argument can thus allow us to make better sense of the paradoxical assertion he begins with that I have only one language, or idiom, but it is not my own’ since ‘my language’ is always already the language of the other, and originality divided by arch violence. Derrida makes it very clear that his point is not to deny or minimize in any way the actual empirical effects of colonialism, or of other forms of political violence, but his argument is directed towards simultaneously questioning what he calls the hegemony of the homogenous’ and suggesting ways in which deconstructive thinking can effectively be deployed within more explicitly political contexts.

Shakib (2011) also added that most people believe that "language" is the basic tool used to give identity to a national culture. The relationship of language with the mind, soul, identity, and thought of those who speak in their mother tongue makes most colonialist societies focus on the language and language identity of those societies.

When the meaning of language is colonized, those colonialists have the chance to interpret what something means for the nation of the colonized state intentionally. This is the problem of meaning deviation in language due to its fixed interpretation opposing deconstruction.

Long (2024) said that deconstruction means there's no single way to understand anything. Instead, there are tons of meanings that are always changing. What you think a text means depends a lot on who you are, your background, and what you believe.

According to Derrida, language does not escape from the influence of colonization because of the power relations that existed during the colonization period, which create their context and bring a new meaning to the native language. Whatever the case, it is not only in colonization but also in other thoughts such as binary positions, color differences between black and white; Derrida challenges strongly the western thought that centralizes language to give meaning based only on their interests rather than leaving it to their context.

To generalize, it is clear that language is influenced by different factors. For instance, Derrida has a thought of "there is no outside-text," which means that language is always connected in a specific context of power and history. This is kind of a big deal when we talk about decolonization which means that we can't totally get away from how colonizers thought and spoke. Even attempts at building a completely pre-colonial or indigenous culture and

language are almost impossible. It can be attributed to the unavailability of colonization that shapes linguistic and historical contexts.

By looking at Derrida's idea of deconstruction, it shows how complicated language philosophy can be; the concept of matrix binary oppositions and how it affects textual analysis in particular. According to Derrida, these pairs aren't as stable as we believe. They are not always clear and are unstable. When we see things this way, we realize that old meanings might be hiding some unfair power stuff, like with colonization and how language can be messed with.

On the other hand, if we check out how people mix up colors, like black and white, we see that language doesn't just show what is up, it makes it up. These color pairs have been used to split people up and be mean to them. That is what it is said to be language is tricky! What it means changes all the time, and people can use it to push their own agendas, like those old stories that tried to squash cultures during colonization.

Derrida felt that speaking and writing are super important when trying to get how language works. Derrida thought writing wasn't just talking put on paper but how we actually make and share ideas. It makes us rethink how we favor talking over writing and how all ways of saying stuff are tied in together and up for grabs for new takes.

What it all boils down to is, when we try to take stuff apart like Derrida, we see that opposites mess us up. It's kind of important for seeing how language makes our ideas, who we are, and who's in charge. How we talk and write shows we should be careful with language. How we use it has some big results in society.

In the end, if we ask questions about language, we can understand things in different ways. It opens doors for a better reading of how people talk to each other. In this endeavor, we

not only highlight the contingent nature of meaning but also reclaim the power of language as both a tool of critique and a means for liberation.

To show the power of language, let's discuss one thing what was happened in colonization. During that colonization period, the colonizers changed the language of those colonized people to detach the people from their identity; as a result their communication failed both to protect themselves due to losing their mutual understanding. Here we can mention our 'fukera' and 'kererto' which are powerful songs to motivate the people to fight for the sake of defending their country. When the people hear those songs with their own tone, they understand each other emotionally. This is what a power in language to transmit meaning contextually. However, for the ones who are exposed to lose their native language, they definitely exposed for the invasion as it was happened in Africa and other continents. Even they cannot have unity to utilize their recourses well.

Here in our homeland, even if the country was not colonized, she was one of the victim nations in losing her native language, Geez. Because of this, Ethiopia has subjected to lose her wisdoms what she had in the ancient time when Geez was a major language of the nation. Even though there are few peoples who know Geez language, they are not potentially in retrieving full meaning of the language to access what is in it. That is one of the factors to fail our communication with our ancient wisdom. Now a day although Ethiopia is better relatively, the other African nations are in this sever problem still. It can be concluded that many of centralized languages has been distorting the meaning of the world at all. To mitigate this problem applying Derrida's deconstruction is very important so as to protect those abused meanings through language.

Let me wind up this argument with this great quote. It is a saying of Mandela “If you talk to a man in a language, he understands, that goes to his head, if you talk to him in **his** language that goes to his heart.” This is what the impact of colonization related to abuse of language which Derrida fights back by his deconstruction.

Chapter Four

Derrida’s Deconstruction vs. Notion of Traditional Language in Meaning of Language

4.1 Traditional Language

Traditionally it is believed that words usually tend to reflect their authors' attitudes and beliefs dominantly. It is considered that this point of view is more of a traditional notion. Nowadays, there are arguments about the extent to which language can disclose reality.

According to Kramsch (1998), “language is the major means whereby the people conduct their social lives. When it is used in contexts of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways.” The writer wants to indicate that language is influential in the day-to-day life of the societies not only as a means of communication but also for its big role in their social norm or culture for the sake of creating mutual understanding among them, which is basic for having common benefit in their lives.

Kramersch confirmed that the languages or words people utter refer to common experience. They express facts, ideas, or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share.

However, some language philosophers challenge that language is incapable of disclosing the reality due to different reasons. Derrida is one of them, even by criticizing the postmodernists.

This chapter argumentatively discusses different theories and thoughts concerning philosophies of language, focusing on its meaning relating to the critiques of Derrida's deconstruction of the traditional notions of language.

4.2 Language of Meaning in Construction

Construction is considered a more traditional view of language as a system of rules and structures that convey a relatively stable meaning, unlike deconstruction. Umeeogu and Ifeoma (2012) stated that construction is a personal thing, done by an individual to suit his desires, fantasies, and needs at a particular point in time."

Construction deals with how we build meaning by combining words: it does not have a critical approach to examine the meaning of language through both synthesizing and analyzing like deconstruction. To briefly discuss the construction idea, for instance, there are so many advertisements on audio and video that are influential in marketing activities by using language as a communication tool so as to persuade the people; the languages in those advertisements are constructed by the desire of marketers or advertisers rather than worrying about the reality that should be transmitted to the viewers. This is one of the challenges of language due to its manipulation exposure.

However, in the constructionist theory of representation, it is believed that a representation is very close to reality. This idea is confirmed in the study of Umeeogu and Ifeoma (2012); the constructionist theory of representation is actively involved in making meanings out of different language forms in our different societies... no room for representation without language. Language is the means of representation; one apprehends reality only through representation of reality, through texts, images, etc.

But construction is very traditional compared to deconstruction; construction, or the construction theory of representation, underlines how the meaning is formed or created, but in terms of Derrida's deconstruction, it is all about questioning and challenging the stability and fixedness of the language critically in order to dig out the real meaning.

In the traditional perspective, it is clear that language is influenced by culture rather than focusing on how to get the truth or the real meaning from the language in communication. The language is dominated by the society instead of giving a chance for the individuals to say how they interpret that spoken or written language. In the culturally bonded society, 'Who said this?' matters more than 'What is it?'

Robins (2011) stated that people who express their thoughts or observations are therefore not showing their individual rationality and making sure that we come one step closer to the truth but are rather participating in a process of cultural action and are changing people's understanding and actions. From a relational constructionist perspective, language mainly has a communicative role: we use it to communicate with each other, and by doing this, we construct our own reality via our relations.

This is what a traditional thought of language means. Obviously, culture and language have a strong connection to each other to facilitate one another. Culture is a collection of society's experiences that lives or moves from generation to generation through language in the form of oral, written, and other symbols. This implies that societies not only express experiences but also create experiences through language to make them complete and fruitful in the form of truth or reality. However, that reality is the result of agreements within those societies instead of undergoing continuous evaluation to determine the true nature of spoken and written languages. Traditionally, things become either acceptable or rejected once society reaches an agreement based on their life experiences, rather than continuously investigating the true meaning of things. In such societies, language is a powerful tool to transmit their norms. There is no concern for the meaning or reality in the language once it is decided upon by the members as a trend. The members of the society have their own fixed meanings about something that does not have the chance to change if it is fixed once as a reality.

However, the question of language philosophy is not solely about its message-conveying ability; it is about whether language can convey the true meaning of something. Derrida's deconstruction challenges this traditional thought, stating that there is no definitive interpretation of a text or idea, which means that the representational feature of language is not the only means to derive the true meaning from language. Deconstruction, in the view of Long (2024), implies the interpretive role of the reader or interpreter of a text. He argues that the reader's presuppositions and prejudices play a very critical role in determining a text.

Construction theory separates from deconstruction in that construction entails the discourse of how language is constructed and learned. While deconstruction aims to illustrate how already existing meanings are already incomplete. Both Derrida's construction and the

constructionist theory of representation presuppose a belief in the power of language to create meaning. However, deconstruction challenges the fixed meaning of constructionism due to its limitations in accessing the true meaning by deconstructing texts. Derrida's deconstruction argues against the constructionist theory of representation, which allows culture to shape the understanding of reality through language. This challenges traditional practices that obscure the true meaning of reality in communication.

4.3 Culture and Philosophy of Language

Language can be observed to exist in both culture and philosophy in the form of conveying messages and facilitating communication. Traditionally, language is intricately woven into culture. When we look at what language does in how we live and how we think, thinking about language gets into what meaning is, what we're talking about, and how languages, thoughts, and what's real relate to each other. How we live changes philosophical talks, which touches how we see ideas, what they mean, or how we understand things because of where we come from.

Kramsch (1998) highlighted the role of traditional language in culture the way in which people use the spoken, written, or visual medium itself creates meanings that are understandable to the group they belong to, for example, through a speaker's tone of voice, accent, conversational style, gestures, and facial expressions. Through all its verbal and non-verbal aspects, language embodies cultural reality.

In this traditional perception, it is evident that language is a key tool for transmitting society's values or plays a significant role in conveying everything that needs to be communicated among the members of a particular society. Generally, the role of language in

cultural contexts is conventional, rather than concerning itself with the extent to which reality is produced through it.

In addition to this, Kramsch (1998) confirmed language is a system of signs that is seen as having cultural value in itself. Speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language; they view their language as a symbol of their social identity. The prohibition of its use is often perceived by its speakers as a rejection of their social group and their culture. Thus, we can say that language symbolizes cultural reality.

Traditionally, the role of language not only serves as a communication tool but is a system in itself that indicates its value. In our day-to-day lives, the so-called cultural reality expressed through language is mostly confirmed or approved by different prominent institutions such as religions, family, neighborhood, school, ethnicity, government, etc. These institutions have established systems for how society should understand and use languages in various forms such as speech, writing, and symbols. These language forms (speaking, writing, and symbols) have been created by these institutions as systems rather than leaving the meaning up to the situation or context.

This trend presents a challenge for individual members of society to access the real meaning of messages in language through their own understanding instead of being influenced by social norms. One reason is that these institutions may dominantly affect the meaning by shaping the language while disregarding context.

However, Derrida's deconstruction challenges such traditional thoughts; it states that there is no definitive interpretation of a text or idea and argues for multiple possible meanings that are always in flux. Long (2024) confirmed this viewpoint, emphasizing the role of the reader

or interpreter in shaping the meaning of a text, and highlighting that the reader's biases and assumptions play a crucial role in understanding a text.

Traditional language focuses on day-to-day language rather than interpreting the real meaning of language. Traditionally, communicators reach agreements rather than focusing on the reality between them. Their agreement is not based on reality or truth derived from language; they agree based on their relationship rather than the context.

Both traditional and deconstructive approaches consider different contexts in the creation of meaning between sender and receiver. Kramsch (1998) supports this perspective. Common attitudes, beliefs, and values are reflected in the way members of a group use language for example, what they choose to say or not to say and how they say it. Thus, in addition to the notion of a speech community composed of people who use the same linguistic code, we can speak of discourse communities to refer to the common ways in which members of a social group use language to meet their social needs.

Not only do the grammatical, lexical, and phonological features of their language (for example, teenage talk, professional jargon, political rhetoric) differentiate them from others, but also the topics they choose to talk about, the way they present information, the style with which they interact, in other words, their discourse accent.

As we can see from these statements, it explains how culture sets a system in language even according to groups or ages. Therefore, it is understood how language is changeable in terms of its meaning based on age categories, lifestyle, locations, language differences, etc. For instance, Americans have been socialized to respond 'Thank you' to any compliment, as if acknowledging a friendly gift: 'I like your sweater!' 'Oh, thank you!' The French, who tend to

view such a compliment as an intrusion into their privacy, prefer to downplay the compliment and minimize its value: 'Oh really? It's already quite old!' The reactions of both groups are based on the differing values given to compliments in both cultures and the varying degrees of embarrassment caused by personal comments. This cultural view focuses on the ways of thinking, behaving, and valuing currently shared by members of the same discourse community.

This discussion gets into the extent to which language is closely related to a society's culture and serves as a valuable asset in fostering mutual understanding among people who live closely together, whether real or not.

The question arises regarding the creation of real meaning contextually. Being in common understanding among societies does not guarantee the reality conveyed through language. This is where deconstruction raises critical ideas about the language's role in effectively conveying real meaning by challenging traditional language thinkers who focus on creating consensus rather than investigating the true extent of language's multiplicity.

4.4 Language and Meaning in Deconstruction

Clearly, culture is highly related to language and its influence to express and facilitate culture traditionally. But, here is the point of how the meaning may or may not affect the practice of language.

No doubt that language has a marvelous potential to make things meaningful relatively. However, there are different arguments about the philosophy of language in relation to meaning or the quality of meaning that the language needs to be valuable in conveying the real meaning.

In this philosophical era, Jacques Derrida is one of the prominent philosophers in the philosophy of language who challenged the traditional concept of language significantly in his deconstruction theory.

According to Long (2024), Deconstruction is a critical approach to literary analysis and philosophy that was developed in the late 1960s, most notably by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida. It challenges the traditional notions of language, meaning, and truth by exposing the contradictions and inconsistencies within texts and ideas.

According to Ajvazi (2021), Derrida states that deconstruction is not an analysis, a critique Augustyn (2018), or a method in the traditional sense that philosophy understands these terms. His central idea is that deconstruction is beyond the analysis of the meaning of language. He also argues that the meaning should not be left to the speaker or signifier fully, as it might affect the real meaning of the original language.

It is clear that Derrida challenges how language becomes meaningful in his deconstruction by arguing the idea of fixed meaning, i.e., very traditional; it emphasizes the fluidity and contextual nature of language contrary to conventional language practice.

Ajvazi (2021) added, Derrida confirmed that if the origin of meaning is transcendental, then meaning can be absolute. This is what Derrida argues. He said that the transcendental origin halts the play of signifiers. Signification will not "play" in the context of absolute meaning because the place occupied by the signifier is absolute or fixed; there can be no movement.

This is how deconstruction argues against the traditional notion of language. To briefly explain this idea, the traditional perception of the meaning of language believes that the thing has a direct relation with the word that was signified by it. However, in Derrida's deconstruction, for

instance, the word 'tree' has meaning in relation to other words (for example, a tree is a bush, not a flower). The meaning of "tree" also shifts when used in different contexts, leading to a complete understanding only when those contexts are considered. So, the fixed meaning of language is not acceptable according to Derrida's deconstruction because it is ignorant of the context.

Yegen and Abukan (2014) stated that Derrida's deconstruction aims not only to understand language, text, or meaning but also the postmodern universe, which replaces the modern one and in which we live. It is contrary to other traditional philosophers like Plato and Aristotle.

Relative to Derrida's thought, those philosophers believe that language stands to convey fixed meaning, i.e., the words in the language have a direct relation to the meaning of the object, or those words tell the full meaning of the things expressed by the speaker or writer.

4.5 Plato vs. Derrida's Deconstruction

According to Plato's philosophy, words have natural correctness. He believes that language is a perfect and eternal archetype of everything that exists beyond its tool of communication. Plato's philosophy of language primarily explored in his dialogue *Cratylus*, centers on the idea that words are not arbitrary but has a natural connection to the things they signify. This is one of his philosophies.

Pleshkov (2017) indicated that in the discussion concerning the origin and nature of language in the *Cratylus*, Plato consistently attacks the radical conventionalism of Hermogenes and proposes an extensive etymological excursus to justify the essential interconnection of words and things (*Crat.* 385a–427c). But at the end of the dialogue, he notices that 'we should be

content to have agreed that it is far better to investigate them [e.g., things] and learn about them through themselves than to do so through their names' (Crat. 439b), implying that a naturalistic conception cannot explain the language in use and presupposing the preference of conventionalism. Respectively, in the discussion of the role of language in the process of knowledge, language is considered a necessary and exclusive tool for the search for the truth (Phaedo 99e–100a); nevertheless, language inevitably presumes the mixture of the true and false.

Even if Plato considers that language is a very important tool to search for knowledge or truth, he underlines that language is not free from error in terms of conveying full meaning because he believes that language is a mixture of true and false; he suggests further investigation to know about the language well. That is why language comes under question in terms of conveying the full meaning or not.

It is confirmed that Plato leaves the room to investigate the capacity of language, whether it is perfect or not, to carry the truth or the full meaning of the thing because he pointed out that language inevitably presumes the mixture of true and false. Of course, he believes in the good performance of language to carry truth or be a preferable tool in the search for knowledge, even though he is in doubt about the true nature of language.

That is why Derrida invites us to reconsider language's assumptions through a lens of fluidity and complexity to clear the confusion of meaning. In terms of the traditional notion of language, the meaning of language has no space to treat the changeability of meaning when there is an exposure. Derrida's deconstruction strongly argues against such a perception.

4.5.1. Plato's Argument against Writing

Like Socrates, Plato prioritizes speech over writing, especially in his dialogue *Phaedrus*; his reason is that speech is the better way of communication because of its authentic feature of communication compared to writing, according to his thought. Plato also views that writing has a misleading nature in representation. May-Hobbs (2023) stated that Plato's belief is that the text can give us nothing to clarify what is already there, no resolution to our questions beyond what can be found in its single speech. Additionally, Socrates believed that writing was not an effective means of communicating knowledge. To him, face-to-face communication, which means dialogue or speech, was the only way one person could transmit knowledge to another.

On the other hand, Derrida challenges Plato's philosophy, which gives hierarchy to speech over writing. Derrida deconstructs that both speech and writing are unstable in giving full meaning. However, Plato prioritizes speech over writing; he believes in the authenticity of speech as a means of communication. Derrida asserts that writing is not derivative but fundamental to the meaning-making process. May-Hobbs (2023) added to Derrida's idea from his take on Plato's *Pharmakon*. Like Plato's dialogue, the *Phaedrus*, chats about speeches and talking, among other things. In *Phaedrus*, Socrates goes for a walk into the country with *Phaedrus*, who possesses a copy of *Lysias's* speech on love he recently heard in Athens. Derrida's 1972 essay on the *Phaedrus*, 'Plato's Pharmacy,' discusses the ambivalence of the Greek word 'pharmakon' as an exemplary instance of polysemy: the existence of multiple meanings in a single word. Derrida opposes the polysemy of the written word dismissed in the dialogue as a misleading echo of speech to the logocentric philosophical tradition instantiated by Plato, which treats the spoken word (or *logos*) as the proper substrate of philosophy and meaning. Derrida's essay turns a lot of the criticisms leveled at Plato back onto them. He enjoys

the ambivalence and semantic density of the untranslated 'pharmakon.' He accuses the logos, not writing, of being tricky and misleading.

Derrida's logocentric theory also faults the Western philosophical tendency to favor oral over written language (Derrida, 1976). The logocentric tradition assumes that oral speech is immediacy and direct expression of thought. It presumes that writing is only a secondary derivative, an imitation with no genuineness. Derrida argues against this binary to hold that writing actually celebrates the very instability of meaning.

Apparently, Derrida has held that language in spoken or written form is characterized by the complex relationship between signs, both forms of which are accountable for creating and interpreting meaning. This perspective undermines the long-standing assumption that meanings can be effectively pinned down, thereby revealing that the linguistic act is fraught with ambiguities and uncertainties.

However, Hobbes (2023) pointed out that Plato believes that writing holds a secondary position in terms of the quality of meaningful language: "Writing for Plato is at best a mere reflection of the living word, and at worst a dangerous and misleading substitute, but in any case, it is always secondary. The author also added that for Plato, the hypomnēsis (the art of memory) of writing is necessarily inferior to the anamnesis of thought and speech, which brings the truth back to life in the moment of its utterance. (Anamnesis means recollection).

The language of philosophy is still in argument among different philosophers in terms of its meaning, contrary to the traditional notion. However, in the focus on the quality of meaning or the hierarchical relationship between speech and writing, it differs from the traditional ones for Derrida. His concern is to what extent the meaning is affected in both speech and writing.

Augustyn (2018) also said that the point of deconstructive analysis is not to show that the terms of the speech/writing opposition should be inverted, that writing is really prior to speech, nor is it to show that there are no differences between speech and writing.

4.5.2 Conventionalism and Naturalism in the Meaning of Language

Plato discusses the meaning of language in his book, "Cratylus." According to David Maibner (2018), it is known that "Cratylus" is the only Platonic dialogue devoted exclusively to language and its relation to reality. There are also some major ideas in "Cratylus" about the meaning of language. Dunne (2023) stated; this dialogue is structured around a three-way discussion between Hermogenes, Cratylus, and Plato's 'avatar,' Socrates. Cratylus is typically understood as a challenge to the very possibility of developing a theory of meaning. There are two kinds of theories of meaning that are discussed in Cratylus. First, there is conventionalism, the theory that holds that words are conventionally determined signs, in the sense that the meaning of words (what they signify) is entirely a matter of social convention or implicit agreement.

To summarize the above statement, conventionalism in the philosophy of language generally suggests that the meaning of words is established through social conventions or agreements among communicators traditionally. In addition to this, Caldwell (2015) stated some points concerning the dialogue. The dialogue "Cratylus" is centrally concerned with the question of giving names, or 'onomastics' (from the Greek for 'name,' onoma). We are presented with what appear to be two opposed theories about names. Hermogenes offers a conventionalist account: he holds that it doesn't matter what name we give a person or object so long as everyone agrees to use it. By contrast, Cratylus proposes that names must have a naturalistic

basis that is, that they somehow describe or resonate with that to which they refer, so that a name correctly assigned has a certain natural rightness about it.

In this dialogue, it is clear that Plato presents two views or two kinds of theories of meaning. One is that Plato wants to establish the fixed relation between language or words and the things they name, i.e., conventionalism by Hermogenes. The other one is naturalism, as stated by Cratylus, who supports a more naturalistic perspective, suggesting that names should reflect the nature of the things they signify.

Plato's theory of forms also suggests that words are merely shadows of the true forms, which contradicts Derrida's deconstructive thought. Wilkerson et al. (2023) stated that Plato argued that what people see and experience in their daily lives is actually just a representation of actual reality. However, Derrida argues against all the concepts mentioned. According to his philosophy, meaning is inherently unstable and context-dependent rather than permanently fixed. In his theory of differance, it is highlighted that meaning is always deferred and never fully present.

Traditionally, concerning religious concepts, there is also an issue related to Abraham, focusing on the relationship between the name and the thing that was given the name. Biblically, 'Abraham' was promised to be 'the father of many nations' throughout his life because of the blessing he received from God. The question arises about the extent of the fixed relation between the name 'Abraham' and being 'the father of many nations,' logically, unless it is only considered in a religious context. How is it acceptable that the name is naturally connected with the given blessing?

In relation to this point of view, there is an additional point in Caldwell's study (2015): a simple example of what Cratylus means is that of a boy named Theophilus (meaning 'beloved of the gods'), which is appropriate if he grows up pious, but not if he becomes a blasphemer and desecrator of temples. (The consequences of inappropriate naming in our own times are explored by Johnny Cash in the song 'A Boy Named Sue.').

According to Plato, the name of Theophilus is naturally connected with being pious or the opposite for a blasphemer. Plato emphasizes the impact of words or names. The question raised is how these relationships produce real meaning. Similarly, the name of the Bible's Abraham is naturally connected with his blessing.

Of course, according to the interpretation of the Bible, God blessed Abraham first, and the name was given after. There are two arguments here; the first one is that the relation between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. On the other hand, there is a direct relation between the signifier and the signified. Both are unacceptable in deconstruction.

Which comes first in the naming story of Abraham in the Bible, the blessing or the name? Clearly, he was blessed before being named. The name Abraham became meaningful because of the context provided by the name giver. In such a case, Abraham by itself cannot be meaningful unless his blessing of 'the father of many nations' was given by God, i.e., context, even if it has less significance to give real meaning.

It is evident in such cases that the name or language is meaningless unless there is a blessing for Abraham. There is somehow a context, as mentioned. However, a major point here is that context matters in the meaning of language, even if it is traditional. The name Abraham

becomes meaningful within a certain context by relating the name Abraham to the concept of ‘the father of many nations.’

However, deconstruction critically challenges the tradition of language's manipulation, whether there is context or not. In such a case, the Bible states that God changed Abram to Abraham as part of a covenant promising him to be the ancestor of many nations. This is true for Bible believers. But Derrida's philosophy in his deconstruction aims to liberate language for multiple interpretations, suggesting that the right of interpretation is not solely held by the source of language. Unless the receiver has the opportunity to interpret, it is not acceptable. The concept that the ‘author is dead’ comes into play here, or the relationship between the name and the name receiver is not always directly related an additional point to strengthen the relationship between the name and the thing signified by that name, according to Caldwell (2015).

At one point in the dialogue, Socrates proposes an analogy between naming and picturing: a word may in some manner better or worse ‘resemble’ or ‘imitate’ the object to which it refers in a similar way to that in which a picture may be said to be a better or worse representation of its subject. For instance, the sound of the bird we call ‘cuckoo’ in English and ‘Kuckuck’ in German is reflected in its two equally effective onomatopoeic names in the two languages. But this system doesn't take us very far, for most names, and most words in general, don't work in this way: what is aardvark-like about the word ‘aardvark’? For us, a theory that demands an intrinsic relation between a word and its object fails at the first hurdle.

The above point helps us understand that there is not always a direct relation between the object and the word given as a name for the thing. This point of view creates a difference between Derrida and Plato.

4.6 Derrida and Aristotle's Thought in the Meaning of Language

From the perspective of traditional philosophy and Derrida's deconstruction, there are a few points to consider here. Aristotle and Derrida agree that language operates within a system. Aristotle views language as a way to communicate meaning in social structures. Derrida criticizes such conventional ideology in spite of the fact that he concurred that language operates within structures or systems.

Their difference is in the definition of meaning. Aristotle admits that words carry specific meanings as per conventions set by society. Derrida's deconstruction asserts that meaning is always deferred. It can clearly be seen that Derrida's definition of 'difference' implies meaning is always deferred, which is completely opposite to Aristotle's.

Dunne (2023) stated Aristotle is a conventionalist about sound and the meanings borne by sound and a naturalist about the relation between meaning and reference (between, roughly, the thing we have in our heads when we understand a word and the 'real' correlate of that thing). On Aristotle's view, two kinds of relations are established by way of social practice: the relationship between the written word and the spoken word, and the relationship between the spoken word and the aforementioned psychological state.

Regarding Aristotle, his philosophy suggests that language is a social construct to convey reality. However, Derrida's deconstruction reveals the instability of meaning and the way language makes the world and does not represent it according to contracts between societies.

Derrida introduces 'difference' to explain the way meaning is always being deferred and never there, contrary to the notion of a privileged self-present meaning in speech. The clear illustration of 'difference' can be found in the simple word "tree," which derives its meaning not

only from its intrinsic qualities but also through its contrast with other terms such as "bush" and "forest." Therefore, meaning is not fixed but perpetually in flux, dependent on the surrounding context and interconnections within the language system."

Qiu (2014) confirmed, "Aristotle thinks that the meaning of human language is established by human convention. He regards human language as a kind of man-made arbitrary symbol; the meaning of this symbol is not from the voice itself but established by convention among human beings."

Both in Derrida's deconstruction and Aristotle's thought on the meaning of language, there is recognition of contexts. For instance, Aristotle acknowledges some contexts, like moral qualities and environments, as factors for meaning. Aristotle believes that human language is social and diverse. Human language expresses not only natural feelings but also moral qualities, which are not innate but social. What is innate and universal for Aristotle is not human language but "voice." The formation of "speech" is not only related to innate conditions; different environments will often facilitate different "speech" (Qiu, 2014).

When we consider the thoughts of Plato and Aristotle, we can see both similarities and differences. Plato and Aristotle both viewed language as a tool for expressing thoughts about reality, but they differed on its foundation: Plato linked it to the context of dialogue and the abstract 'forms,' while Aristotle argued that linguistic meaning was conventional and grounded in the mind's perception of the world.

In general, unlike conventional views that posit words as direct signifiers of ideas, Derrida contends that meaning is constructed through a web of relationships among signs, each of which derives its significance from its differences with others, opposing Aristotle's thought.

In challenging the conventional notion of a stable linguistic framework, deconstruction compels us to consider the implications for our understanding of truth and knowledge. If meaning is constantly in motion or shifting, this raises very serious question about the nature of the language representation of reality to bring reality. However, Derrida argues that all interpretation is determined by the socio-historical context, and therefore the search for one privileged meaning is impossible (Derrida, 1982).

For as he insists, "there is nothing outside of the text," a statement that underscores the fact that our knowledge is irrevocably shaped by the structures from which it emerges (Derrida, 1997). This insight does not lead to relativism but rather promotes an awareness of the diverse interpretative lenses through which we engage with meaning."

In general, Derrida's deconstruction invites us to acknowledge the limitations inherent in traditional linguistic theories and challenges the presuppositions that have shaped philosophical discourse for centuries. He challenges fixed reality. By revealing the fluidity and instability of meaning as fundamental characteristics of language, deconstruction compels us to reconsider our frameworks for understanding the nature of language, thought, and reality.

However, it should be underlined the importance of traditional philosophy of language. It helps to create common ground to convey meanings among people, which balances the gap that isn't fulfilled by deconstruction. It is clear that there will be a problem if we are going to practice what Derrida wants to apply with his deconstruction, which forces everyone to be skeptical of each word of our language. It really becomes complex, especially to access by a general audience, because deconstruction challenges the idea of fixed meaning and fixed understanding, which smoothens day-to-day communication among people even if there are misunderstandings.

But, for some of the high level hierarchies, deconstruction has a significant role in order to dig out the meaning or to grasp the intention behind every issue in language, like political communication and negotiation on economy between states, continents, and internationally.

To conclude, we have discussed the major issues like constructing and deconstructing. Construction theory focuses on how individuals, particularly children, build knowledge and meaning by integrating new information with their existing understanding. In contrast, Derrida's deconstruction is a critical approach to language that destabilizes the idea of fixed meanings. While construction theory describes a process of creating meaning, deconstruction analyzes how those meanings are built and can be dismantled. This indicates that for the ones who are in the infant stage in acquiring knowledge, construction theory prefers deconstruction.

What about the main difference between Plato and Aristotle and Derrida's deconstruction? Plato and Aristotle believed language could express universal truths through logic and reason, privileging speech over writing. In contrast, Derrida's deconstruction argues that meaning is unstable and generated by the play of differences within a system of language itself, subverting the search for a singular, present meaning by showing how language is a system of traces and is inherently unstable. Plato and Aristotle's philosophies established what Derrida terms logocentrism (the privileging of speech) and the metaphysics of presence (the belief in a stable, foundational truth), deconstruction exposes the hidden complexities and hierarchies within language that undermine these very ideas. In general, Derrida's deconstruction challenges the idea that the source of language should be from only one source to have real meaning of language. He emphasizes also that not only speakers or writers but also receivers have the main role in producing or accessing the real meaning of language, and the contexts matter as well.

Conclusion

The contents within the chapters have consistently been one fundamental philosophical question: how much meaning is actually conveyed by language? It's deeply rooted in postmodern philosophy and shown in Jacques Derrida's deconstruction. It reveals the complexity of the relationship between language, meaning, and interpretation. The review of the concepts within the research discloses the comprehension that language is an unpredictable or transparent medium of communication. Language is a dynamic, context-dependent system. In which its meaning is constantly being constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed.

Language is not just a tool for naming or describing reality. Language has an active role in shaping human perception and knowledge of the world. Meaning derived from words is a function of multiple contexts. Such contexts are cultural, historical, psychological, and social. It also includes the lived experience of the speaker and the listener. This mutual dependence of language and context proves that understanding is never complete or absolute. There is always a play between intention and interpretation. Our previous knowledge and assumptions frame how we decide meaning. But such knowledge can never be certain. Such epistemological skepticism is highlighted in the philosophy of language. Derrida's deconstruction shows us that language isn't always consistent. It questions the idea that language can truly express what we feel or think.

Derrida's said that language is all we have to communicate how we feel. Yet it is also cannot quite carry this feeling. This sums up the paradox. His deconstructive theory advises us to be skeptical about the possibility of established meanings. Communication is not just the conveyance of information. It's a process filled with gaps, ambiguities, and interpretations. But it's this uncertainty that lets hidden meanings, assumptions, and the power plays that affect meaning get brought out. Deconstruction is a way to critique ideas. It gets rid of the idea that meaning is fixed, and it also shows deeper layers of meaning that you might miss with regular language analysis.

In terms of post modern thought, postmodernism in the philosophy of Derrida invites us to think of meaning as plural, relational, and contingent. The theory of context-oriented interpretation becomes vital in this regard. Meaning is not an absolute. It is produced by differences within the language system itself. This theory central to Derrida's deconstruction challenges the traditional assumption of language. It's as a transparent means of truth. Language is a position of power where meanings are constructed. Language is fought over and sometimes manipulated. The postmodern condition thus rejects the notion of objective truth. It favors an array of perspectives that reflect the diversity of human experience.

This perspective is also pointed out in Derrida's statement that "there is no outside-text." What Derrida suggests here is that all meaning is always facilitated through language. Which itself is conditioned by social and historical forces. Linguistic power arrangements are connected with any effort at communication, interpretation, or even opposition to main ideas. Let's come to colonization period also, colonial and postcolonial contexts understanding are recommended through this view. The study reveals that it is impossible to completely avoid the influence of the colonizer's language. The efforts to reclaim pre-colonial or indigenous identity are inevitably

filtered through the history of colonization. Therefore, language serves as both a tool of oppression and a potential instrument of liberation.

The paper shows that the analysis of binary oppositions such as speech/writing, presence/absence, and black/white demonstrates how traditional structures of meaning work to hide hierarchical power relations. Derrida confirms also the instability in such binaries. By showing that within every pair, one term is always privileged over the other. However, both need the other in order to be defined. This mutual dependence for definition invalidates the stability that should be preserved by such oppositions. For example, the black/white opposition goes beyond color symbolism. It resonates with social and political hierarchies fixed in language. These opposites show how language has been used to justify exclusion, control, and inequality. Language doesn't just show reality; it creates it. It shapes how people and societies see and react to the world.

Derrida's deconstruction against speech versus writing goes against years of philosophical ideas that started with Plato and Aristotle. Classical philosophy had seen speech as an immediate representation of presence and writing as a secondary representation. Derrida argues that writing plays a role in the constitution of meaning itself. Both speech and writing are susceptible to the same interpretive, deferring, and differing processes. This overturns the metaphysics of presence, the presupposition that meaning is immediately present and self-present in speech and shows that all communication is mediated, incomplete, and open to reinterpretation. In doing this, deconstruction not only destabilizes linguistic hierarchies but also opens up our understanding of expression as an expansive network of signs and traces.

The relationship between construction and deconstruction also accounts for the philosophical depth of Derrida's philosophy. Construction theory emphasizes the process by which individuals create meaning by integrating new information and prior experience. Deconstruction reveals that these constructed meanings are always provisional and susceptible to reinterpretation. Construction seeks to establish coherence. Deconstruction, on the other hand, aims to reveal its limitations. Construction and deconstruction do not combat but complete each other. Together they illuminate the dynamic tension between meaning-making and meaning-unmaking that forms human communication.

Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle represented the classical philosophy of language. They were searching for a universal truth. Derrida's deconstruction overturns this search. He showed that meaning is created by difference. He revealed that words get their significance by how they relate to and differ from each other. Derrida challenges logocentrism. Logocentrism puts more weight on speech as the reliable source of meaning. It is the metaphysics of presence. It supposes that there is a fixed relationship between word and meaning. Thus, it exposes the hidden power structures in language. Deconstruction critiques the foundation of western thought. It also opens the philosophical debate to plurality, ambiguity, and uncertainty as inherent in language.

The study recognizes the balancing function of traditional linguistic theories. It provides a common ground for communication. Deconstruction reveals the vagueness of meaning while traditional theories remind us of the need of common ground. Derrida's deconstruction says that meaning is never final, complete, or fully objective. It is always in the course of change. It is marked by context, difference, and interpretation. Language can never be reduced to a representation of reality. Language is an active force in the creation of meaning and the

formation of thought. Postmodern philosophy through deconstruction liberates meaning from firm structures. It invites us to engage with language critically as a living and dynamic system.

The discussion during the research states that language is both a limit and a possibility. It restricts us within systems of representation. It also enables us to confront, reinterpret, and rearrange the same systems. Deconstruction by Derrida is not intended for the destruction of meaning. It's intended for revealing its multiplicity to open new paths to meaning, dialogue, and criticism. Language is an instrument of expression. It's also a site of constant discovery. It's where meaning is negotiated rather than imposed. Deconstructive philosophy tells us to remain sensitive to the play of language. It lets us be conscious of the traces and contexts that make up meaning. It helps us embrace the constant unfolding of interpretation as the condition of human communication.

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