

Cultural Studies as Interdisciplinary Practices

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to give an awareness of the history, theory, methodology and subject matter of particular disciplines and to explore how exactly different disciplines are brought together, transformed or transcended in different forms of interdisciplinary and what new forms of knowledge are created by those interactions. Another that attempts to establish it as the interdisciplinary centre of the humanities in place of older humane subjects such as classics and philosophy. Cultural studies, therefore, is never a theoretical practice, even when that practice incorporates notions of politics, power and context into its analysis. Actually, it offers a bridge between theory and popular culture and has done so throughout its practice—is an important reason for its appeal to contemporary scholars. In cultural studies the politics of the analysis and the politics of intellectual work are inseparable. Above all, to analyses how the role of the intellectual affects and influences in social changes through the notion of cultural studies by interdisciplinary. Last but not the least, we would see through cultural studies how and why both the notions of power, inequality, resistance and domination, and the potentials for change and development in the future.

Keywords: Interdisciplinary, cultural studies, discipline, text knowledge

1. INTRODUCTION

For any interdisciplinary approach the most important thing is the relationship between texts to be studied and context from which they come. Traditional approaches based on the study of literature, history and politics, tends to favour certain kinds of texts at the cost of others, presenting an established canon of great works from which might be collected the essence of culture as a whole [1]. Certain kinds of texts were appropriate for persistent assessment while others were not. The debate over this is what should be included in the

canon has been competitive in recent years and is clearly related to the issues raised. Can the works of major writers in themselves provide an ample guide to the complexities of a culture as varied and as divided as that of the country? Are certain kinds of texts value more than others because they are more complex or contain particular revelatory or motivating qualities? In attempting to come to terms with these questions, our approach has been to retain an emphasis on the importance of certain forms of literary and artistic production which seem to us to require persistent and careful

reading, but at the same time not to limit ourselves to what has been traditionally included in such a category. We come to know through Lawrence Levine's work that the status of texts and writers is not fixed but has varied according to the pressure of specific historical events [2].

Cultural Studies from the outset has been concerned to explore the possibilities of cooperation between practitioners from diverse disciplines and even to develop an interdisciplinary methodology with its own distinctive working practices. However, in recent years, the quest for a unique national character has come under increasing criticism. Firstly, there is the trend to reduce questions of major national identity to some essential singularity and in doing so to give undue credence to the experience of particular groups and traditions in explaining nation at the expense of other groups whose experience is, as a result, forgotten or marginalised. Secondly, there has been an affinity to study society in isolation and in doing so to downplay those experiences which the country might have in common with other societies. In fact, all traditional cultural studies have grown out of challenges to understand the processes gradually shaping modern and post-war society and culture industrialization, modernization and mass communication [3]. Another aspect is due to the collapse of the Western colonialist empires and the development of new types of imperialism, the creation of a global economy and the intercontinental spreading of mass culture, the materialization of new structures of economically or ideologically encouraged

migration, and the re-emergence of nationalism and of racial and religious conflicts [4].

If we turn to the first major criticism, the difficulties of generalising about national identity become evident. It has been overwhelmingly argued over the last few years, and marked by division and opposition rather than agreement and consensus. Traditional conceptions of a unified national culture when examined, turns out to be partial and selective views of what the nation/state has been or ought to be grounded in the privileged status [5]. A country could be presented as a classless society, marked by a powerful degree of consensus and a low level of conflict only because historians and cultural critics had tended not to emphasise those factors which indicated deep-seated divisions in society, such as class, ethnicity, race, caste, gender, etc. Once these factors have been duly acknowledged, it becomes more difficult to accommodate them adequately within traditional notions of national identity. People in the end are divided as much as they are united, where unity was apparent, only possible because difference has been hidden by the practice of power. The dominance of specific groups and perspectives in any country has been obscured the fact that other groups were subordinate and played little part in creating a national identity [6].

If we define culture in a broad sense as 'a way of life' and then if we restrict the study of cultural products to a small handful approved texts, it may lead to the danger of passing over a great deal. The use of word 'interdisciplinary', generally considers some kind of critical awareness of the relationship. According to Roberta Frank (1988) the 'Interdisciplinary'

pleases everyone by its base, discipline, hoary and antiseptic[7].

As the term, 'interdisciplinarity' provides a democratic, dynamic and co-operative alternative to the old fashioned, inward-looking and cliquish nature of disciplines. However, we cannot understand interdisciplinarity without first understanding the existing disciplines, since interdisciplinary approaches are always an engagement with other disciplines such as sociology, psychoanalysis, anthropology, cultural studies, history and philosophy. It was first being used in the social sciences in the mid-1920s and became common currency across the social sciences and humanities after world war II due to the decline of general forms of education [8].

It might be helpful if we consider interdisciplinarity is a part of traditional search for a wide-ranging, total knowledge, or a more radical questioning of the nature of knowledge itself. In short, it interlocks within the concerns of epistemology and tends to be centred on problems and issues that cannot be addressed or solved within the exiting disciplines, rather than the quest for an all-inclusive synthesis. It generally suggests the forging amongst the connections across different and various disciplines. This can also be understood as establishing a kind of undisciplined space in the interstices between disciplines, or attempting a altogether transcend disciplinary boundaries [9]. Some critics have come up with other terms such as post-disciplinary, anti-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary. Though it is suggested that in the broadest possible sense of the term, interdisciplinarity means any kind of interaction or any form of dialogue between

two or more disciplines. It is always transformative, producing new kinds of knowledge in its engagement with discrete disciplines. Roland Barthes (1985) suggests that the Interdisciplinary work is not a peaceful operation, it initiates effectively with the break down of solidarity old disciplines. It is precisely the uneasiness with the classification which allows the diagnosis of the certain mutations [10].

Barthes also proposes that interdisciplinarity has the potential to do more than simply bring the different disciplines altogether [10]. It can form part of a more general critique of academic specialization as a whole, and of the nature of the university as an institution that slashes itself off from the outside world in small enclaves of expertise. Thereafter, it draws attention either implicit or explicit to what is studied and taught within universities is always a political question [11]. Aristotle's (1961) observation on knowledge in politics is very pertinent that the ordering of knowledge into disciplines was necessary but philosophy as the universal study of inquiry brought naturally a notion of unity in diversities. This influenced to craft the disciplines within the modern university [12].

As the complex nature of the term suggests, 'interdisciplinarity' assumes the existence and relative resilience of disciplines as modes of thought and institutional practices. The development and consolidation of disciplines in modern era was fundamentally related to both the growth of universities and the increasing complexity of European societies. Julie Thompson Klein (1990) suggests that universities like Oxford and Cambridge

replaced the medieval schools, and the term 'discipline' was being applied to professions such as medicine, law and theology because of the need to share education to meticulous political and economic ends [12].

2. THE EARLY CULTURAL STUDY

In the early part of cultural studies in Britain, there were no bibliography and no stable disciplinary base. To this Stuart Hall (1990) relied to the question about the bibliography of a cultural studies thesis. Cultural studies are required to draw necessary knowledge for a particular project and assignment [14]. In the course of its cross-national borrowings, some figures play different roles at different times and places. Richard Johnson (1996) suggests that in response to pressures of defining cultural studies it be seen as a kind of process, alchemy for producing useful knowledge about the broad domain of human culture [15]. If it is alchemy, the codification might halt its ability to bring in reactions. So, we have to learn from the past, it is now an alchemy that draws from many of the major bodies of theory of the last several decades, from Marxism and feminism to psychoanalysis, post structuralism and postmodernism. Hence, we need definitions of cultural studies to struggle effectively in order to make claims for resources and to clarify our minds of everyday life and also to decide priorities for teaching and research in the context of Britain and the US where we have to be maintained and extended "spaces" such as jobs, resources and opportunities for useful work [13]. For this we need academic tendencies to reproduce on the new ground such as literary sociological historical versions of cultural studies. Above all, review the

existing approaches, identify their characteristic objects, their good sense and to know the limits of their competence. It is a short of reforming the elements of different approaches in their relations to either sociology or linguistics.

Cultural studies by Johnson states, historically cultural studies trace it's recurrent dilemmas and to give perspective of its current projects, such as a sense of tradition and purpose [15]. So that culture remains useful not only a precise category, but also a kind of summary of a history. However, there is a sense of an intellectual-political connection in cultural studies due to the conflict. It seems cultural studies as the research project for political production. In a true sense, it is not for a particular party. So, the research should be as wide ranging and a profound, but also as politically directed as we can make it. One of the founding texts of cultural studies by Richard Hoggart (1958) who criticizes both contemporary popular culture and the subcultures that scholars of subsequent cultural studies have come to value [16]. It is however true that the efforts of cultural studies to recover working-class culture and history and to blend progressive traditions in Western intellectual history have had both clear and hidden political endeavours.

The methodology of cultural studies offers an equally uneasy indicator. For cultural studies there is no distinct methodology, ethno methodological, textual analysis or unique statistical. The choice of this practice is strategic, pragmatic, and self-reflective. The CCCS, aims to enable people to understand on going ways of thinking, strategies for survival,

and resources for resistance [14]. The research practice generally depends upon the questions asked, and their context. It is problematic for cultural studies to accept anything uncritically; any of the formalised disciplinary practices of the academy is required as much as the distinctions they inscribe. It is carried with them a heritage of disciplinary approaches and a history of social effects, towards which the cultural studies are inclined [17-18]. Hence, although there is no restriction against close textual readings in cultural studies, they are also not required. Moreover, textual analysis in literary studies carries a history of certainties that texts are properly understood as wholly self-determined and independent objects as well as bias about which kinds of texts are worthy of analysis but burden of associations cannot be ignored [19].

Clarity to cultural studies, the method of existing disciplines requires considerable work and reflection that can neither be done permanently or in advance. For cultural studies it has no guarantees about what questions are important to ask within given contexts or how to answer them. Hence no methodology can be privileged or even temporarily employed with total security and confidence, yet none can be eliminated out of hand [20]. To provide important insights and knowledge the textual analysis, semiotics, interviews, phonemic analysis, deconstruction, ethnography, rhizomatics, content analysis, survey research and psychoanalysis is required [11].

One way to understand cultural studies it is important to employ the traditional strategies by which disciplines stake out their territories and theoretical paradigms mark their

difference. It is done by claiming a particular object's domain, developing a unique set of methodological and carrying forward a founding tradition and lexicon. Although none of these elements makes cultural studies into a traditional discipline, how domain, method, and intellectual legacy help us further understand cultural studies [11].

The point is since 1960s merging possible departments into interdisciplinary programmes aim at downsizing and Machiavellian cost-cutting for universities managing budgets and demands of the marketplace. Its main agendas are driven by the need to balance budgets and generate income across the whole university. Interdisciplinary is like modernisation or neo-liberal idea helping to sweep away outmoded hierarchies and inefficient bureaucracy. There is always possibility of intellectual conflict and stage where disciplinary division can be subverted radically or even erased.

The centre for contemporary cultural studies at Birmingham (1960s and 1970s), guarantees the practice of cultural studies in every context but with no intellectual practice [20]. Thus it can be stated that it is impossible to agree on any mentioned definition and unique narratives about cultural studies [11]. Stuart Hall (1990) in this study states that Cultural studies can never be one thing and have vast knowledge with branches [14]. Even when the cultural studies are identified with a specific national tradition, it will always remain a diverse and contentious enterprise, and will encompass different positions with trajectories in specific contexts. It addresses many questions, from

nourishment of multiple roots and shaping it within different institutions and locations.

The point of explicating the semiotic reference frame that constitutes a culture, and that comprises all accepted rules of social behaviour, is to draw attention to the following distinction: In a very broad sense, what distinguishes culture from nature seems to be that cultural phenomena follow rules, whereas nature follows laws. The natural law differ from social rules without permitting exceptions. Moreover, the fact that there are instances when people do not abide these natural laws but is it valid. Natural laws are universal and precise and so the rules of social practice are generic, vague and fuzzy [21].

3. CONCLUSION

Cultural studies, therefore, is never a theoretical practice, even when that practice incorporates notions of politics, power and context into its analysis. Actually, it offers a bridge between theory and popular culture and has done so throughout its tradition—is an important reason for its appeal to contemporary scholars. In cultural studies the politics of the analysis and the politics of intellectual work are inseparable. Our attempt is to analyses how the role of the intellectual affects and influences in social changes through the notion of cultural studies by interdisciplinary. Above all, we would agree that 'culture is contested, temporal and emergent' and through cultural studies we can identify both the notions of power, inequality, resistance and domination, and the potentials for change and development in the future [22].

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

NA

5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have declared that there is no conflict of interest.

6. SOURCE/S OF FUNDING

NA

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