

# “Developing the Language by considering the reader role as determinant of meaning: an investigative and analytical study“

## تطوير اللغة من خلال النظر في دور القارئ باعتباره محدد للمعنى

المدرس المساعد

يقضان رضا مهدي

الجامعة التكنولوجية

yaggienajafi@hotmail.com

### Abstract

This study probes the reader/learner role in determining the text meaning. It is based on the assumption that activating such role will be in favor of developing language for EFL learners. Such development can be realized if the comprehension is achieved via determining the meaning by reader (learner) due to the fact that the relationship between text meaning and comprehension has been well recognized by researchers and admitted by students .the reader role has been interrupted by moving towards other roles of the author or the text or even the context. Such problem has got worse by following the idea of text fixed meaning and the reader passive role as receiver not participant in learning process. To shed the light on role of the reader, this research analyzes meaning elements to be connected with the reader part and investigates the facts, principle and examples that confirm that role. Accordingly, it is found that non-fixed meaning of a text which refers to the indeterminacy in language and literature simply should not be interpreted as absence of meaning but each reader who is a member of an interpretive community will determine his own. A proof about indeterminacy and reader role is provided herein by studying the essay entitled (Is There a Text in This Class?), which was written by the American scholar Stanley Fish, a learner advocator. The reader and his or her knowledge to obtain a meaning are established in reader-response theory which is a part of reader-



response criticism, a school of criticism, in opposite to other traditional schools and theories that ignore the reader role. The reader creates real existence to the work and finalizes its meaning through interpretation in accordance with a group of cultural assumptions. Authorial intent and message that are included in these cultural assumptions are created by the interpretation done by a reader. The reader plays a vital role as meaning decision maker due to his presence in the context, linguistic and physical. The study ends up with a recommendation about the reader/learner, who represents the center of learning process, role and importance in the process of teaching and developing English language.

## Section one

### Introduction:

#### **1.1.problem, hypothesis, objectives, methodology, and significance.**

The meaning can be determined by its elements. These elements are author, text, context and reader or learner. Traditionally, the focus was on author, text and to some extent context, while the reader role and his interaction with other elements has not satisfactorily been considered. Furthermore, the problem has become even more complicated by adopting the concept of fixed meaning embodied in formal features or norms in the text and the reader should follow that in a passive role. This tendency has largely affected the way of teaching the language. Syllabuses and methods of teaching are organized according to that. The reader/learner who represents the core and the goal of learning process remains as an active receiver not as participant.

This study addresses these problems. Deriving from the problems, it has been hypothesized that the reader has vital role in deciding the meaning. The study aims at shedding light on the role of the reader in determining the meaning and his connection to other elements. Most important objective is take advantage of learner role in process of teaching language. The method used to examine the problem is by

analyzing its fundamentals. Starting with Indeterminacy in reader-response theory by Stanley Fish, which results from reader-response criticism, It is a school that emphasizes on the reader/learner and his or her level of experience to acquire meaning of a text, in contrast to other schools that focus attention mainly on the writer, the text, and form of the work and the role of reader in re-creating the works is ignored. The context as an element of meaning and as a field through which a reader can play is investigated. Regarding the author and his intention, they constitute the only possible meaning of a text, but again it is the reader who can announce and interpret that intent. The author's intention is a creation of the reader.

To prove the right of the reader as determinant of meaning and as learner of language, number of facts and examples has presented. Among which is the interpretive community that provides its reader with a specific way of reading a text. Fish claims that we interpret texts because we are part of that community. Not far from that, Fish's theory states that a text has a meaning not outside of a group of cultural assumptions, which often include authorial intent, though it is not limited to it. The center of this theory is the reader who creates actual existence to the work and finalizes its meaning through interpretation and not the text in itself. The study closes up the investigation with a proof and example for the views discussed earlier, such views stand as complete opposition to the views of the formalism and new criticism that held that meaning was embedded in the textual artifact.

The study is concluded with a number of findings that establishes the importance and the part of the reader in determining upon the meaning. Finally, to fulfill the big goal of the study, it has powerfully been recommended to take the reader role in consideration when teaching and developing language. This represents the significance of the study.

## **Section Two**

This section will present the relation between the reader and important elements and concepts dealing with meaning to show reader importance in the process.

### **2.1. The reader and text Indeterminacy**

The reader plays a vital role in determining a text meaning when its meaning is yet to be determined. So what does the term indeterminacy mean? As for literature, indeterminacy can be observed when a story ending is not wrapped up completely; there are still few questions should be answered. It contains when a reader particular culture and social background produce a text or when a language is such that the author's original intention is not clearly included in text language when the work is initially composed .In other words, it is when a part of or the whole meaning needs to be determined upon by the reader. However, the text being indeterminate does not mean that all meanings are of same validity but it means that all versions of meaning being drawn from it are incomplete and temporary and that the meaning we give to it is by itself a text accepts further interpretation. It may be also a principle of uncertainty that denies the presence of any final or determinate meaning of a text. Indeterminacy abundantly exists in classical languages due to their declined status. (Leech 1969, p.56)

According to Indeterminacy theory many texts may have multiple possible interpretations because the author's meaning or intent may not be clear, or new culture distort the meaning. The deconstructionists gave literacy meaning to this term. The new critics describe Indeterminacy in similar way as ambiguity, nevertheless it is applied to interpretations of texts along with literature.( Grey 2008, p.149 and Ashish 2009, P.8)

In poetry, indeterminacy is caused by certain sources such as deviation, register and dialect, metaphor and simile, invisible meaning of words, intended speaker meaning, etc. An example can be given

here is the poem written by T.S. Eliot ‘Marina’. It can be interpreted into different levels such as: a- the religious experience, b- the journey of the life, c- the spiritual enlightenment of the poet, d- the faith or the hope of the speaker (and Eliot behind him) which is restored after finding his daughter.(Leech 1969,p.205,)

In linguistic indeterminacy is used to refer to a state of a certain affairs in linguistic study. In such affairs there is uncertainty on the part of the native speaker as to what is grammatical and acceptable. It poses a major difficulty in linguistic theories which attempt to define the limits of grammaticality. As linguistics branch, Pragmatics deals with this phenomenon. It explains that sentence like (can you put *it* *there*) can only be interpreted if we know the context in which such sentence is uttered. Thus, indeterminate or indeterminacy remains an important aspect of both linguistics and literature. It is similar or additional to *multiple significance* and *indefinite significance*. Stanley Fish makes the idea of indeterminacy so clear in his theory which this study will discuss later on. (Wales 1986, p242).

## **2.2. Establishing the role of the reader by Reader-response criticism**

It is worthwhile to have knowledge about reader-response criticism for better understanding of the reader role. It is a general term for those kinds of modern criticism and language theory that emphasis on the readers responses of to work texts, rather than on the texts themselves which are considered as self-contained entities. It does not designate any one critical theory. On the contrary, it donates a focus on the process of reading a text that is shared by many of the critical modes that have come into prominence since 1960. It is not a single agreed theory so much as a shared concern with a set of problems involving the extent and nature of readers' contribution to the meanings of works, approached from different positions including those of followers of structuralism, psychoanalysis, phenomenologists, and hermeneutists. The common factor is a move from the description of texts in terms of their characteristic features to a discussion of meanings production within the process of reading.

Important contributions to this debate are made by Stanley Fish's in his essay entitled ( *Is There a Text in this Class?*)(1980), it presents the reader as an active and true producer of the text. (Tompkins, 1980 and Ashish 2009)

Modern reader-response criticism appeared in the 60s and '70s of last century, mainly in America and Germany, in works by Norman Holland, I. A. Richards, Stanley Fish and others. This school identifies the reader as an active agent who informs the real existence of the work and interprets its final meaning. Reader-response criticism argues that a work must be looked upon as a piece of performing art in which any reader generates his or her own, perhaps exclusive, text-related performance. It makes a full opposition to the views of formalists and the New Critic who ignored the reader's contribution to re-create works. New Critic had stressed that the meaning of a text is exist only in text itself. They neither pay attention to the author authority or intent, nor to the reader psychology of, in their discussions.( Wales 1989, p.254).

In short, Reader-response critics turn from the conventional notion that a work has a realized structure of meaning to the mental operation and responses as they read a text. By this change, any work is transformed into the reader activity. Thus, matters which had been considered by the traditional critics to be features of the work itself (e.g. the plot, characters, the narrator, etc.) are dissolved into an evolving process that include diverse kinds of expectations, violations, satisfactions, and deterrents in the flow of a reader's experience. Its critics agree that text meanings are the *creation* or *production* of the specific *reader*. Consequently, it is not logical for them that all readers agree upon one correct meaning.

### **2.3. The context and the reader**

In English, there are two kinds of context that can be taken in consideration, these are:-

- a- Linguistic context. It is known also as co-text. The form *Pupil* has at least two meanings(student at school and the opening of the eye),so how can we decide which meaning of the two is

meant in a certain sentence, it is the linguistics context (groups of other words come with the same word in a phrase or a sentence) that tells us which meaning is meant, as in (the pupils are clever),the words (are ,clever) represent the linguistic context to the form (pupil) and tell us which meaning is intended.

b- Physical context. If we hear the same form *pupil* that is uttered by an eye specialist when we visit his clinic, it is obvious which meaning is meant and that because of the place and time in which the form is used, i.e. it is the physical context.(Yule,129)

Above contexts plays a major role in determining the meaning in associating with number of linguistic phenomena that can be explained as follows:

It is impossible to find meaning of the sentence (the teacher tells *him* to bring *it tomorrow*) without knowing the physical context of italic words, these are known as deictic forms and the process involved here is called deixis. Moreover, in these two sentences (*Ahmed's* car is clean, he has just washed *it*), we know that the pronouns (he, it) refer to (Ahmed, car) through the reference process called Anaphora in which (Ahmed, car) are precedents and (he, it) are anaphoric expressions. Similarly, inference is necessary to understand the meaning of the sentence (I borrowed his Chomsky) in which the reader/hearer has to use additional information (a book written by the writer Chomsky) to understand of what is said. It is not correct to assume that words by themselves refer to people or things without a context or establishing a reference, words are not always in direct relation to things they identify. Finally, a lot of what we utter in daily life is based on our assumption that the listeners have knowledge of what we say. This knowledge is known as presupposition, for example, the hearer will presuppose two things from the sentence (he stopped smoking), the first is (he was smokers) and the second (he is not smoker now). (Yule, 131)

To sum up, it is clearly via the cases exemplified above that the context has vital role in deciding a text meaning specially the spoken

one, consequently, the reader will have much to do as meaning decision maker due to his presence in the context.

#### **2.4. The reader and the Authorial Intent**

Although Fish debates that the author provides his text with its only possible meaning, however, he argues that any try to find the exact intention of the author will bring about an interpretation made by the reader who belongs to interpretive community that helps the reader to making his/her interpretation. Fish distinguishes these two processes as a point of epistemology refers to what texts mean, while the latter as a point of sociology refers to what texts does. It concentrates on what happens in the reader's mind as he or she reads. It also is reflected in his compiling of essays titled *Is There a Text in This Class?* Specially the first half . He wants to understand the effect of a text or what it does on its reader rather than its meaning. (Geoffrey and Short 1981).

In the process of interpretation, Fish similarly discharges the idea of accepting authorial intent as the guiding principle. In analyzing one of his former critical works he suggests that the interpretive model of the reader is responsible for the formal units and intentions that do not exist in a text. ( Fish 1980)

According to Fish's theory, only the interpreter can declare the author intention and decode his message. Consequently, there will be different intentions and messages as long as there are different interpreters because these are created by the interpreter/reader and not the author. As for the theory of New Criticism, the author cannot live beyond the creation of his text, indeed, for Fish the author's intention is a creation of the reader.

#### **2.5. The reader and the reading**

For Anderson (1999), to build a meaning there should be an interactive between the reader and the reading text material s/he reads, meaning is neither found in the printed text nor the reader head, but there it a result of both the text and experience and knowledge of the reader. The reading of EFL students who uses their second language is

not fluent if they do not engage actively and meaningfully with the text. Similarly, Alyousef (2005) pointed out that reading fluency depends on the interactivity the reader does with the text. He added that dynamic interaction between the reader and the text provokes the meaning by different type of schematic and linguistic knowledge.

Blachwicz , Barr, and Sadow, (1990) also confirmed that encoding of writer message depends on the interaction between the reader and the text , the key for that encoding lies in the reader background knowledge . Dechant (1991) mentioned that once the reader fully comprehends the meaning, the reading process is completed; here the crucial element resides in the brain of the reader rather than in the information kept in the text. Mcknight (2000) believed that the reading objective depends on the ability of the reader to comprehend or to construct the text meaning that he or she reads out. .that comprehension or the construction of meaning is based on the reader’s experience and knowledge of different areas in language and above all his active and dynamic engagement while reading.

It becomes clear from aforementioned views that the reader, via his comprehension to the text, dynamic and active involvement while reading, his language knowledge and experience and his ability to encode the writer message, can create the meaning.

### **Section Three**

This section will discuss the facts and examples that prove the reader right of determining the meaning of a text.

#### **3.1. The Authority of the reader as given by Interpretive Communities**

Examining the relation between a reader and a text has dealt with by many reader advocates, they argue against the formalist belief that the text alone is the basic, knowable, neutral, unchanging component of literary experience, and has a fixed meaning. But in arguing for the reader right of interpreting and producing the meaning of a work, they skillfully avoid the old trap of subjectivity.

**Interpretive communities** are known as a theoretical concept resulting from reader-response criticism and invented by Stanley Fish. They appeared in an article by him in 1976 entitled *Interpreting the Variorum* (Text with notes by various scholars). This concept states that a text does not have meaning outside of a set of cultural assumptions as to the meaning intended by persons and their interpretation that needed to be done. This context of cultural type often includes authorial intent, though it is not limited to it. It is claimed that we interpret texts because we are part of an interpretive community that provides its reader with a specific method of reading a text. Furthermore, according to the concept, we cannot know whether a certain reader is a member an interpretive community or not, that is, because we cannot run away from our interpretive community and it is hard to identify its limits. Such idea has been both: very powerful and very controversial in reader-response criticism. It is frequently understood as a relativistic perspective that *words have no meaning*, though what is meant is quite the opposite, it rather means to point out that readings of a text are culturally constructed. (Wales 1989, p.256)

It is believed that interpretive communities, like languages, are purely conventional, that is, have constructions that are arbitrarily agreed upon. The method of how a community lives cannot be taken as a reflection of some higher reality; it is rather a construction that has been erected by consensus. The works in this field examine how the interpretation of a text is based strongly on the subjective experience of each reader in one or more communities, each of which is well-defined as a community by a distinct epistemology.

So according to this concept, no meaning can be obtained outside the interpretive community to which the reader belongs and as such the reader authority has been claimed. (Fish 1980)

### **3.2.the origin of reader role: Reader-Response Theory of Stanley Fish**

At this point it is worthwhile to investigate Stanley Fish's reader-response theory because as American critic, educator and scholar he, Fish, suggested that readers via using the value systems improved

within their cultural environments not to determine the meaning of a text but to create it. First here Fish's theory will be examined and then to connect it in more broadly with meaning privatization and other phenomena that happen in fields of philosophy and society.

There are really two kinds of reader-response criticism: one in which much of Fish's earlier work is characterized as a phenomenological approach to reading, and the other is Fish's later work characterized as an epistemological theory. The first method focuses on what happens in the mind of a reader when such reader reads. Fish includes this method in his first work (*Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost*). According to his thesis applied in this work, the supposed intent of Milton was to push the reader to see his own sin in a different perspective and be enforced back to grace of God. (Fish 1980)

Fish's concern at this point is with what is actually occurring in the act of reading and this is revealed in his compilations of essays entitled (*Is There a Text in This Class?*) specifically the first half of it. Fish outlines his phenomenological approach as the developing responses analysis of the reader regarding the words that succeed one another in time. His concern is with what the text can do versus what the text means. As suggested by J. F. Worthen, much of his work can be observed as a response contrary to the formalism views that described the era of New Critical theory which held that meaning was inserted in the textual artifact or, as Wimsatt and Beardsley called it as (the object). He proposes that it is important to answer the question (are formal features be present prior to and independently of interpretive strategies?). Fish eventually provides a negative response to this question; similarly, he also answering "No" to the question (Is there a text in this class?).(Firmat 1984)

From this point theories of Fish develop into a kind of criticism that rejects the author's intentionally and puts meaning exclusively in the field of readers who read a text. Thus his theory is sometimes named as *reception aesthetics* or *affective stylistics*. Fish argues that it is the interpretive community that creates its own reality. It is the

community that provides a text with meaning. He names those who claim that meaning is to be found in reality of some eternal superstructure or substructure as "foundationalists." His theory is epistemological in that it concerns not so much with literary criticism as with how one comes to know. In the following analysis of Fish's theory, the focus is primarily on his later reader-response theory.

### **3.3. Meaning in the Reader**

This aspect of Fish's theory is one of the most radical and controversial. There is a clear reference made by him to the indeterminacy of the meaning of a text. He postulates that the reader or the reading community has the meaning not the text. According to him, the reader has the meaning and not leads to it; he concludes that because the meaning for Fish has no stable base. There is no correct interpretation that will always be true. Meaning is found inside the reader and not exist out there somewhere. In his former work he made a claim that the reader experience defines what a text means. He defines the meaning as an experience that occurs and does something to us as readers; he goes so far as to claim that the meaning is equal to what it does, i.e. a text meaning is the effect of that text on its reader. Here Fish puts himself against the principles of the past formalists along with their supposed scientific agenda. ( Veerer 2000)

Fish's next step in his anti-formalist program is to reject the text as being an object, the matter that is considered very important by Wimsatt and Beardsley and the New Critics. For him, text objectivity is a dangerous illusion as it is so *physically convincing*. He does not deny the existence of the concern object; however, it is the context that illuminates what he is driving at. He does refute the independence of a text as a meaning repository. The meaning can be found in the text: despite being written upon a blank slate onto which the reader, in reading, actually writes the text.

Fish claims that an interpretive theory is itself circular; that the interpreter will always find what he/she is searching in the text, interpretive act of the interpreter constitutes the formal patterns of a text. He suggests at one point that: theories always succeed and they

will always create exactly the outcomes they predict, those who made the assumptions of theories will be immediately convinced by those outcomes and their self-evident principles are. Indeed, the trick would be to find a theory that didn't work.

For Fish *success is inevitable*. The outcome is already determined by the methods with which the reader approaches a text; the product is activated by the reader's presuppositions. For him, the text by itself includes nothing; rather the reader provides the text content. Actually, the shape of text, its form, and its content are all determined by the reader. This is how Fish can claim that a reader writes texts. Worthen's comment is apt that for Fish the reader finds his reflection in the text that can only serve as a mirror to its reader. (Ashish 2009)

### **3.4.Fish's essay(Is there a text in this class?) as proof of reader important role in determining the meaning**

This essay is an answer to the charges of the grammarians like Abram and Herish who believed that the utterances have a verbal meaning or there is a fixed meaning.

On the first day of the semester, one of his girl students went to one of his colleague and asked (Is *there a text in this class?*). His colleague answered confidently: - "yes. It is the Norton Anthology of literature". But the girl does not want to know that, so, she said :-( No, no, I mean in this class do we believe in poems and things or it just us?) This explanation helped the teacher to learn that the girl wanted to know if it is necessary to bring a text in the class on daily basis of the semester. (Firmat 1984)

This anecdote suggests that no text has a determinate meaning and that the meaning of the text is not stable. This question has two literal meaning and more other implied meanings. The first one is " if there is a particular text prescribed to this concerning course? His colleague got this meaning as of the academic Situation and the context in which it was asked. The second meaning of the question is about the instructor's position on the status of the text. This is an institutional meaning. His colleague got it when the girl student paraphrased her question. Fish adds that in the absence of educational context, one

could arrive at other meaning such as (I forget my text box in the class, have you seen it?)

Fish then objects the views of the grammarians Like Abram and Herish. They debate that utterances have verbal meanings and the speakers do not face any difficulty in decoding the message in it. The example given by the grammarians is (the air is crisp). They expect that the readers to agree with them that the sentence has only one linguistic meaning (the air is fresh). But Fish says that if sentence used in discussion about music, this sentence will be a fine comment on the performance of a musical instrument. Thus, it is true that it is impossible to think of a sentence independent of a context. When no context is given, the meaning is got in the context in which it is mostly used. (Turner 1973, P.134, 237)

Fish further says that he told the anecdote to several speakers of the language. Most of them could not arrive at the second meaning; however, few persons got it because it comes from Stanley Fish. His colleague also got the second meaning as he knows that the girl is student of Fish, otherwise, he would have arrived at the meaning after a long route.

Fish expects two charges from the critics against him. One of them is that he sophisticated relativist. He refutes the charge by saying that there is no individual can go away from his/her own assumption and beliefs.

The other expected charge against Fish would be that he is solipsist. The critics argue that the shared intelligibility is impossible. Fish refute this charge cleverly. He asserts that the individual's assumptions are not his own but belong to the society and circumstances in which he brought up. For example the colleague of Fish is brought up in the American educational system. The assumptions link the student and the colleague, and their communication, thus becomes successful because of their shared understanding. (Asish 2009, p.62)

Through Fish's views expressed in aforementioned essay, the importance of the readers in getting the meaning of a text has wisely and boldly confirmed

## Section Four

### **Conclusion:**

#### **4.1 finding**

According to views discussed earlier, the following findings are concluded:-

- 1- Indeterminacy rather than fixed meaning exists whether in linguistic or literary text. This does not mean that there is no meaning at all but the meaning of a text is determined by the reader or the reading community. The interpretation of a text is dependent upon each reader's own subjective experience in one or more communities, each of which is defined as a 'community' or 'reading community' by a distinct epistemology.
- 2- By work of scholars such as Fish, the concern turns from the traditional conception of a work as an achieved structure of meaning to the mental operation and responses of the readers reading a text.
- 3- It is not possible or determinate to access the meaning via the author intention though it is the only possible meaning of a text. The reader defines the exact intention of the author by an interpretation or meaning based upon his interpretive community. The former that refers to what texts mean is known as epistemological point of view, while the latter as a sociological point of view that refers to what texts do.
- 4-The meaning reached by one reader could be different from one reached by other, based upon the context to which a text belongs and the community norms where the reader brought up.
- 5-The meaning is unreachable accurately outside the context, linguistic or physical. The context along with associated phenomena (deixis, anaphora, reference, and presupposition) represents a crucial part in determining the meaning of a text, specially the spoken one. This part makes the reader role even more important.

- 6- The reader needs his comprehension to the text, dynamic and active involvement while reading, his language knowledge and experience, to define the meaning.
- 7- Only community norms and interpretive strategies resulting from interpretive community are useful and have superiority over formal features in understanding the meaning.

#### 4.2. Recommendation

After successfully establishing the role of the reader in determining the meaning of a text, it is strongly recommended to consider that role and importance in the process teaching and developing English language for EFL learners whether at first levels in schools or at advanced levels in colleges and even at postgraduate levels. It is the reader or the learner who represent the center of learning process, thus his/her role, participation, and engagement should be considered in teaching methods of language.

#### المستخلص:

تقوم هذه الدراسة بالتحقيق في دور القارئ أو المتعلم في تحديد معنى النص. لقد تم بناء الدراسة على الفرضية وذلك بأن تفعيل هذا الدور من شأنه تطوير اللغة باعتبارها اللغة الثانية للمتعلمين. يمكن الوصول الى تطوير اللغة في حالة تحقق الاستيعاب وذلك عن طريق تحديد المعنى من قبل المتعلم استناداً الى الحقيقة بأن العلاقة بين معنى النص واستيعابه هو أمر مفروغ منه لدى الباحثين ومعروف لدى الطلبة. لم يتم الاهتمام بدور المتعلم بشكل صحيح بل كان هناك توجه بالاهتمام بدور الكاتب أو النظر الى النص أو حتى السياق. ازدادت هذه المشكلة سوءاً حيث تم اعتماد مبدأ ثبات المعنى وتحميل دور القارئ كمتلقي وليس كمشارك في عملية التعلم. لإبراز دور المتعلم قامت هذه الدراسة بتحليل عناصر المعنى ليتم ربطها مع دور القارئ كما قامت الدراسة بتمحيص الحقائق والمبادئ والأمثلة التي تؤكد على ذلك الدور. نتيجتاً لذلك تم التوصل الى أن مبدأ عدم ثبات المعنى والذي يشير الى مبدأ اللاتحديد في

الأدب واللغة ليس بالضرورة يعني غياب المعنى بل أن كل قارئ والذي يمثل عضو في "مجتمع تفسيري" يصل الى معنى خاص به. تم تقديم برهان على وجود مبدأ للاتحديد ودور القارئ في هذا البحث وذلك بدراسة المقالة الموسومة (هل يوجد نص في الصف؟) وهي من تأليف الباحث الأمريكي ستانلي فش وهو من المدافعين عن القارئ. أسس لدور القارئ وقدرته على استحصال المعنى استنادا الى نظرية استجابة القارئ والتي هي جزء من مدرسة نقدية تحمل نفس الاسم وهذه النظرية والمدرسة هي على النقيض مع النظريات والمدارس القديمة التي تهمل دور القارئ. أن القارئ هو المعنى بتكوين الحقيقي للنص كما يقوم باكمال معناه من خلال تفسيره له اعتمادا على مجموعة من الافتراضات ذات الطبيعة الثقافية. يتم تحديد رسالة ومغزى الكاتب واللذان هما جزئان متضمنان في الافتراضات الثقافية من قبل القارئ عن طريق التفسير الذي يقدمه حول النص. يقوم القارئ بدور مهم وذلك كصاحب قرار في تحديد المعنى بسبب تواجده في السياق اللغوي والخارجي المحيط بالعمل. تم اختتام هذه الدراسة بتقديم توصية حول دور وأهمية القارئ أو المتعلم في عملية تعليم وتطوير اللغو حيث يمثل القارئ محور عملية التعلم.

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