

Structuralist Reading of "Another Story"

"Another story" by John Cheever centers on phenomenon. At first glance, structuralist analysis are not seem directly applicable to Cheever's book, but there are some reasons that this story can be usefully approached from a structuralist perspective. According to structuralists, language is nonreferential because it does not refer to the thing in the world but only to our concept of the thing in the world. There are different branches of signs that include fresco, towers, houses, palaces, crowing, plush hat, prince, the centrality of signs potentially makes a structuralist critique.

The first and foremost sign is fresco, then the **signifier** is the group of letter written or pronounced as a unit (fresco), then the signified is the fresco you picture in your mind. Another example, If the signifier is a hat, then the signified must be the hat in your imagination that we can picture. Even we consider a plush hat as the pair of signifiers, then the signified is the plush hat you picture in your mind. Of course, in response to the signifier hat, different people will probably picture different kinds of hats.

According to the semiotics, there are three classes of signs include index, icon, symbol. An icon is a sign in which the signifier physically resembles to the signified. Based on the text, fresco above the door is an icon to the extent that the picture resemble the subject it represents. Therefore, the realistic painting is an icon.

Some noticeable marks in semiotics is that it limits its study to sign that function as a symbol. Of three kind of signs only the symbol is a matter of interpretation, so a plush hat is a symbol of a prince, means that the relationship between the signifier and the signified is neither natural nor necessary but arbitrary. In addition, it is decided by the agreement of some group.

To sum up, the ultimate goal of the structuralist is to understand the underlying structure of human experience which exist at the level of language. In short, the structuralist is not interested in what a text means, but how it text means is important.