Lecture - 11
The Post Modern Condition (Lyotard) – Part III

Hi. So hello and welcome to this NPTEL lecture on this course entitled Introduction to Cultural Studies. So at the moment we are doing Lyotard's The Post Modern Condition, A Report on Knowledge and we are looking at certain selected sections in the essay, in the work which are quite relevant to this particular course. Now I will just start off with what we ended last time and this is page 10 of the handout that we are using, it should be on your screen.

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> Of a different order again is the efficiency of a question, a promise, a literary description, a narration, etc. I am summarizing. Wittgenstein, taking up the study of language again from scratch, focuses his attention on the effects of different modes of discourse; he calls the various types of utterances he identifies along the way (a few of which I have listed) *language games.*[32] What he means by this term is that each of the various categories of utterance can be defined in terms of rules specifying their properties and the uses to which they can be put—in exactly the same way as the game of chess is defined by a set of rules determining the properties of each of the pieces, in other words, the proper way to move them.

So on page 10 Lyotard talks about language games and language games become a very important criterion of the postmodern condition and Lyotard obviously borrows the term language games from Wittgenstein whom he identifies as one of the first postmodern philosophers of the postmodern tradition really and the language games as Wittgenstein uses it the term is later appropriated by Lyotard.

And then he uses the particular term language games to talk about discourse formation, discourse reformation, discourse production and discourse reproduction. So what are language games because it is a very crucial category of postmodernism according to Lyotard and this is page 10

on the version that we are using and this is obviously highlighted in yellow where Lyotard talks about the Wittgenstein idea of language games.

And he defines it as Wittgenstein taking up the study of language games from scratch focuses his attention on the effects of different modes of discourse. He calls the various types of utterances he identifies along the way language games. So language games are different kinds of utterances within a particular discursive framework. So within a particular discursive framework we have certain rules. So every discourse, every discursive framework is defined by certain rules.

So within that certain rules every utterance that he can make by you know by combining the rules doing permutation and combination of different rules is a language game. So language games basically are utterances within a particular discursive framework, right and that is very crucial in terms of the postmodern condition because what Lyotard will go on to say from this point is the entire idea of postmodernity is basically a series of language games.

So essentially it is a citations, utterances, iterations within certain kind of a discourse frameworks. So within certain discursive fields the utterances you can make as an individual as an agentic individual would be defined as a language game and postmodernity or the postmodern condition instead of having grand narratives or you know metanarratives what you know what we have in place of metanarratives is a series of language game.

So language games become very important for Lyotard. So he classifies language game as a sort of key criterion for the postmodern condition. So language games are the various kinds of utterances you know within a particular discursive frameworks, within certain rules, pre-established certain rules the kind of utterances he can make within that particular discursive field would be defined as a language games or language game.

What he means by this term is that each of the various categories of utterance can be defined in terms of rules specifying their properties and the uses to which they can be put, in exactly the same way as the game of chess is defined by a set of rules determining the properties of each of

the pieces, in other words the proper way to move them. So the analogy to chess would be very useful in terms of understanding what language games are.

For instance if we sit down to play a game of chess you know the set of rules which are predetermined. So each piece moves in a particular way. You know the rules. So you would not have a game of chess unless you acknowledge and accept and agree on the rules which are pre-established. Now while you begin to play the game of chess it is perfectly possible for you to you know combine the different rules you know to make utterances to make moves within the particular discursive frame.

So in other words a game of chess would enable you to be creative in terms of how you use the rules without breaking the rules, right. so language game too can be understood as a series of utterances, series of iterations within a particular discursive field and each discursive field obviously comes with preconditions with a preset you know conditional rule.

So that rule or that series of rules, that set of rules is predetermined is preconditioned and within that particular field you can make moves, you can make utterances, you can make iterations etc. So the game of chess would be a very good analogy in terms of understanding what language games what language game is as Lyotard understands with borrowing or drawing on Wittgenstein. So this is you know these are various categories of utterance.

So you know these are utterances and of course utterance can be discursive. It can be citational utterance, it can be rhetorical utterance, it can be scriptural utterance. So all kinds of utterances within a particular discursive field would be classified as a language game according to Lyotard and this obviously he borrows from Wittgenstein. Now this is a key condition in terms of understanding what the postmodern condition is because the postmodern condition is a condition where the grand narrative is replaced by language games.

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> "Traditional" theory is always in danger of being incorporated into the programming of the social whole as a simple tool for the optimization of its performance; this is because its desire for a unitary and totalizing truth lends itself to the unitary and totalizing practice of the system's managers. "Critical" theory,[43] based on a principle of dualism and wary of syntheses and reconciliations, should be in a position to avoid this fate. What guides Marxism, then,

Now if you come to page this is page 12 in the in the version that we are using and it talks about the difference, a very important difference that it makes between traditional theory and critical theory. So in many ways I find this particular book require prophetic in terms of how we look at culture today and I think this is one of the key text in cultural studies and one must look at it in terms of sophisticated understanding of culture as we inhabit and consume today.

Now he makes a very important distinction between traditional theory and critical theory over here in terms of looking at how critical theory is more allied or more aligned to the postmodern condition as a commentary in the postmodern condition. So what is the difference as Lyotard understands it and this is where he delineates the difference. It is page 12 in the version that we are using.

So traditional theory is always in danger of being incorporated into the programming of the social whole as a simple tool for the optimization of its performance. This is because its desire for a unitary and totalizing truth lends itself to the unitary and totalizing practice of the system's managers. Critical theory based on the principle of dualism and wary of synteheses and reconciliations should be in a position to avoid this fate.

So traditional theory despite you know its revolutionary potential, despite its subversive potential it always aspires for totalizing whole, always aspires for totalizing unified whole. So in that

sense it is being incorporated or being consumed by the entire the organic system which controls it. Whereas critical theory which is very wary of any kind of synthesis, very guarded against any kind of synthesis is something which celebrates incommensurability.

It is something which celebrates incompatibility and in this celebration in this kind of an attitude or alliance with incommensurability or incompatibility is something which is more of a friend of the postmodern condition. So critical theory is more allied to the postmodern condition rather than traditional theory and this difference between traditional theory and critical theory is something that Lyotard keeps coming back to throughout this particular discourse, right.

So so what you are seeing essentially is postmodernism is a condition which is suspicious of totalizing tendencies which is suspicious of any kind of nostalgia for an organic whole for an organic origin etc. which does not make much sense for the postmodern condition because the postmodern condition would move away by default from any kind of an organic entity, any kind of a grand narrative which will offer a totalizing picture of an organic origin, organic entity etc.

In its place what we get is language games, a series of language games within certain discursive frameworks and the discursive frameworks and micro frameworks. So instead of grand narratives we have micro local narratives and inside the local narratives we have language games, utterances, citations, you know different kinds of scriptures or scriptural writings, different kinds of you know language utterances, discursive utterances, performative utterances, embodied utterances which are within that particular discursive field.

But the point is there is no the discursive field. We have a series of local, micro discursive fields within which these language games operates. So therein lies the subversive potential of language games. Therein lies the basic or fundamental difference between the postmodern condition and the modern condition.

Whilst in the postmodern condition you know in other words does not have any nostalgia, does not have any aspiration to recover a totalizing narrative, to recover an organic narrative which has been lost forever. There is no nostalgia, there is no mourning to recover something which has

been lost. Rather what we have in the postmodern condition is the celebration of incommensurability, a celebration of incompatibility, a celebration of factious you know which basically lend themselves to different language games at different points of time.

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> A *self* does not amount to much, but no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. Young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at "nodal points" of specific communication circuits, however tiny these may be.[56] Or better: one is always located at a post through which various kinds of messages pass. No one, not even the least privileged among us, is ever entirely powerless over the messages that traverse and position him at the post of sender, addressee, or referent. One's mobility in relation to these language game effects (language games, of course, are what this is all about) is tolerable, at least within certain limits (and the limits are vague); it is even solicited by regulatory mechanisms, and in particular by the self-adjustments the system undertakes in order to improve its performance. It may even be said that the system can and must

Now in page 15 Lyotard offers a really interesting definition of the self as it evolves in the postmodern condition. So what happens to the sense of self? What happens to the idea of the self? What happens to the experiential self, the self as you experience it in ourselves as an organic, biological, ideological, discursive entity. So what happens to a self when it is sort of bombarded by language games at different points of time in a postmodern condition?

So this is page 15 in the version that we are using and it should be on the screen highlighted in yellow where he says, a self does not amount to much, but no self is an island. Each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. So the idea of the self moves away from an idea of a totalizing, organic, isolated entity while rather the self is always in intersections or interaction with different kinds of discursive frameworks, right.

So in another words a self is a producer as well as a consumer of different sets of language games. So it cannot be otherwise. The self cannot be an island. The self cannot be, so the entire movement away from this idea of this pure, organic, isolated, alienated self which is romantic in

quality, which is nostalgic in quality it just goes away, that idea of self goes away in postmodernity.

And what we have instead is a self which is in a nodal relation to information, in a nodal relation to the different intersections of information and knowledge and language games. So a self becomes essentially a sight where different language games crisscross with each other. A sight for ideation exchanges for discursive exchanges etc., right and in that sense a self becomes quite postmodern according to Lyotard.

So the self exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and more mobile than ever before. A young or old man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at nodal points and nodal points is very important for Lyotard. It is a very crucial term this nodal point because what nodal points mean is that, that point that sight of intersection where informations crisscross each other, where ideas crisscross each other.

And where basic different discursive fields crisscross each other. So a self becomes a product, a process as well as a product of these kind of exchanges. So a self is essentially a product a process of exchanges, a process of information crossover right rather than an autonomous you know organic self. So that kind of an old idea of the self which is modernist, romantic gives away to a more postmodernist idea of the self which is essentially a nodal category, a nodal point, a nodal process, okay.

So a person is obviously located at nodal points of specific communication circuits. So the communication circuit becomes very important in postmodernity. So essentially all of us are inhabiting different intersections of communication circuits, right. So different kinds of media, different technologies of communication are being consumed, are determining who we are, are determining how we speak, are determining what our language games would be etc.

So we are essentially a product or as well as the process of the different communication circuits that we inhabit today in the postmodern condition. So however tiny these may be or better one is always located at a post through which various kinds of messages pass. So a self is essentially a

process. The self is essentially a site where different kinds of processes, different kinds of messages pass.

So a self becomes a bit of a journey, the self becomes a bit of a space. So the specialty of self is something which is highlighted in this (()) (12:43) that Lyotard offers. No one, not even the least privileged among us is ever entirely powerless over the messages that traverse and position him at the post of sender, addressee or referent. So it does not matter how agentic you are or how less agentic you are, how privilege you are or how under privilege you are he is always consuming he is always you know at a site where different kinds of messages are passing you, right.

And those messages could be of great importance, of profound significance, discursive significance. Or those messages can be very local in quality or very trivial in quality. But the point is you are always located at an epistemic exchange. The self emerges as an epistemic exchange, as a process through which different kinds of knowledge systems crisscross each other, right.

So and you take on the role of a sender, addressee or referent depending on your location, right. So you can be some sender as well as a referent as well as the addressee. So again this makes the self quite plural and quite plastic in quality and quite performative in quality as well, right. So we are moving away obviously from an idea of the self as some kind of a totalizing, organic one entity which is autonomous in quality which is romantically removed from the different material exchanges that take place.

So that idea of the self is completely done away with in postmodernism. What we have instead is a very mundane idea of the self which is located you know as an epistemic exchange, as a nodal point through which different kinds of messages and information crisscross each other. So self becomes a consumer as well as a producer as well as a manipulator of information, right.

So information becomes the key thing over here, the key category over here and if you extend the definition a little bit it sort of becomes a product as well as a process that lends itself to language games, right and we just saw what language games is or what language games are in

postmodern condition. So self becomes a process through which language games are formed. The self becomes informed by language games as well as in itself bends itself to language games in different historical points, in different discursive points that self-inhabits at any given point of time.

So one's mobility in relation to these language game effects; language games, of course are what this is all about, is tolerable at least within certain limits and the limits are vague. It is even solicited by regulatory mechanisms and in particular by the self-adjustments the system undertakes in order to improve its performance. So you know this goes back to the old definition that we just saw a little while ago that self basically becomes a product of language games.

So self becomes a self-regulatory mechanism through which it moves away from its autonomous idea of being isolated or romantically removed but rather it becomes you know a material process through which language games emerged at different points of time. Now, so and then Lyotard goes on to say how this entire idea of language games is an over determining factor. So we are all born into certain language games whether we acknowledge that or not, whether we realize that or not, right. And this is what he says you know to corroborate his point.

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> an open question. But there is no need to resort to some fiction of social origins to establish that language games are the minimum relation required for society to exist: even before he is born, if only by virtue of the name he is given, the human child is already positioned as the referent in the story recounted by those around him, in relation to which he will inevitably chart his course.[58] Or more simply still, the question of the social bond, insofar as it is a question, is itself a language game, the game of inquiry. It immediately positions the person who asks, as well as the addressee and the referent asked about: it is already the social bond.

So even before he is born, he is talking about he is talking about his self in terms of his over determination of language games. Even before he is born, if only by virtue of the name he is

given, the human child is already positioned as a referent in the story recounted by those around him in relation to which he will inevitably chart his course. Or more simply it is still the question of the social bond, insofar as it is a question, is itself a language game, a game of inquiry.

It immediately positions the person who asks as well as the addressee and the referent asked about it is already the social bond. So this is actually a very interesting definition. He talks about social bond and a social contract rather the very Rousseauian idea of the social contract becomes a language game in a postmodern condition.

So he says and even before he had born you are born into a particular language game, you are born into a particular series of language games and your existence as a social self depends on the negotiation, depends on how you navigate with the different language games at any given point of time. So this entire nodal navigation that happens is what makes a self a self in postmodern condition, right.

So it is a contract, it is an epistemic contract, it is a linguistic contract, it is a discursive contract into which he had born and it depends on how yourself, your sense of self depends on how you navigate through this contract, across this contracts at any given point of time, okay. now, we make a little leap from here and we move on to page 37 in this particular version. But the point is what Lyotard is offering us over here are micro games.

So he is moving away from the idea of the grand narrative, the grand idea of the self, the grand idea of society, the grand idea of the social contract. So he is moving away from the understanding of the self as if a social contract which is finistic in quality, which is sort of divine, quasi-divine in quality and rather he is offering a definition of self which is sort of micro in quality, it is local in quality and which is essentially a series of language games at any given point of time.

So the point is he is focusing more on the condition of, the postmodern condition as a micro condition, as a condition which comes after the grand narratives go away, right and obviously how the grand narratives go away.

10. Delegitimation

In contemporary society and culture—postindustrial society, postmodern culture[121]—the question of the legitimation of knowledge is formulated in different terms. The grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is a speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation.

The decline of narrative can be seen as an effect of the blossoming of techniques and technologies since the Second World War, which has shifted emphasis from the ends of action to its means; it can also

I mean the entire process of disappearance of the grand narratives happens through a process delegitimization, right. So certain grand narratives which have been legitimized through a discursive process, through you know ideological process are done away with a delegitimized in different kinds of social situations and it is a process of delegitimization that gives rise to the language games in micro conditions.

And these micro conditions lends themselves to the postmodernity the postmodern condition that we know today. So this is page 37 on the version that we are using and this is highlighted in yellow and the session is called delegitimization and he goes on to say, Lyotard over here, in the contemporary society and culture postindustrial society, postmodern culture, so this is the definition of culture that he uses.

So when he says culture or current culture he talks about he mentions or he means postindustrial culture or postmodern culture. The question of the legitimation of knowledge is formulated in different terms. The grand narrative has lost its credibility regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is a speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation. So there is no grand narrative left in a postmodern condition according to Lyotard.

So whether it is an emancipated narrative or narrative of freedom or narrative of liberation or a narrative of speculation so it does not matter whether it is speculative narrative or emancipatory narrative, there is no grand narrative left in the postmodern condition and this is not essentially or necessarily a bad thing according to Lyotard. So this attitudinal difference between postmodernism and modernism is what is mapped out by Lyotard over here.

Because in modernism this loss of grand narrative is more. There is a nostalgia for the grand narrative which is now gone forever. But by the time he come to postmodernism that nostalgia itself goes away. So there is no nostalgia left as well for the grand narrative. So not only is the grand narrative gone or not only other grand narratives gone but the nostalgia for the grand narrative is gone as well.

And what we have instead is language games which celebrate the loss of the grand narrative and which offers instead different micro narratives which places individual at different nodal points at different points of time, right and this is something which we just saw a little while ago and the idea of the self in a postmodern condition.

So and then he goes on to give you so a very quick summary of the reasons which may have contributed and which may have caused so this loss of the grand narrative in a postmodern condition, this idea of delegitimization and how do this happen? What were the reasons that may have contributed to this demise of the grand narrative. And then he goes on to say and I quote, the decline of narrative can be seen as an effect of the blossoming of techniques and technologies since the Second World War which has shifted emphasis from the ends of action to its means.

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be seen as an effect of the redeployment of advanced liberal capital-
ism after its retreat under the protection of Keynesianism during the
period 1930-60, a renewal that has eliminated the communist alter-
native and valorized the individual enjoyment of goods and services.

Anytime we go searching for causes in this way we are bound to
be disappointed. Even if we adopted one or the other of these
hypotheses, we would still have to detail the correlation between the
tendencies mentioned and the decline of the unifying and legitimat-
ing power of the grand narratives of speculation and emancipation.

It is, of course, understandable that both capitalist renewal and
prosperity and the disorienting upsurge of technology would have an
impact on the status of knowledge. But in order to understand how
contemporary science could have been susceptible to those effects
long before they took place, we must first locate the seeds of "dele-
gitimation"[122] and nihilism that were inherent in the grand narratives
of the nineteenth century.

It can also be seen as an effect of the redeployment of advanced liberal capitalism after its retreat under the protection of the Keynesianism during the period 1930-1960, a renewal that has eliminated the communist alternative and valorized the individual enjoyment of goods and services. So he gives you some scientific technological and comic reasons which may have contributed to the loss of grand narratives and it characterizes postmodernism.

So it could be the rise of capitalism, it could be the rise of you know technology, it could be the rise of the massive idea of micro technology since the Second World War. So all these material definitions, material conditions which may have governed which may have contributed to the loss of grand narratives in the postmodern condition. However, he is very quick to add that if you go on looking for material, historical reasons alone that will emerge to satisfy.

You know these conditions alone could not have contributed to the loss of grand narratives. There may have been some other reason, some more philosophical reason, some more abstract reason which may have contributed to the demise of grand narratives and again this brings us back to a very old argument that we have been using since the very inception of this course and that is the idea of culture as an entanglement, an asymmetric entanglement between material and abstract conditions. Material and abstract attributes.

You cannot have material attributes alone. You cannot have abstract attributes alone. So every material attribute comes with its abstract associations and vice versa, right. So he says if we go on looking for reasons in technology, if we go on looking for reasons and economics and economic policies then that would not be sufficient, that would not be adequate.

We need to look beyond and we need to look at the philosophy which may have contributed towards the demise of the grand narrative in a postmodern condition and what could have been a philosophical condition this is something he goes on to say. So he says and I quote over here, anytime we go searching for causes in this way we are bound to be disappointed.

Even if we adopted one or the other of these hypothesis we would still have to detail the correlation between the tendencies mentioned and the decline of the unifying and legitimating power of the grand narratives of speculation and emancipation. It is of course understandable that both capitalist renewal and prosperity and the disorienting upsurge of technology would have an impact on the status of knowledge.

So he says I am not denying that the rise of capitalism of the Second World War or rise of this massive upsurge of technology after Second World War may have contributed to the demise of grand narratives or may have changed the ontology the nature of knowledge that is absolutely undeniable. However, there must have been other reasons as well which have contributed to the demise of the grand narratives in the world we inhabit today.

But he says over here, but in order to understand how contemporary science could have been susceptible to those effects long before they took place we must first locate the seeds of delegitimization or delegitimation and nihilism that were inherent in the grand narratives of the 19th century. So he says and this is a very important term which he uses, nihilism.

So nihilism essentially is a philosophy of negation, the philosophy of annihilation, the philosophy of you know doing away with the sense of self etc. in a way a philosophy of destruction, right. So nihilism, so he says there was always a nihilisive tendency in the grand

narratives of 19th century. So that nihilisive tendency blossomed in the Second World War, after Second World War with the rise of capitalism, rise of technology etc.

So that nihilism in the philosophical and the current of the grand narratives of 19th century that lent itself to the rise of technology. That lent itself to the rise of the capitalist consumerist culture and together they brought around, they brought about the demise of the grand narrative. So the grand narrative's demise is a combination of the inherent nihilism of 19th century philosophy that were dominant as well as the rise of technology, the rise of capitalism etc.

So again we are looking at the combination of abstract and material conditions, right. So the material conditions with the rise of technology, the rise of massive upsurge of science and technology and micro communication systems after Second World War that was one and of course the rise of capitalism as an economic policy, the rise of consumerism as an economic policy, as a market policy.

But along with that there is also a degree of nihilism which is always a grand narrative of 19th century. So that lent itself to this material conditions and together it was basically you know an entanglement as I mentioned which you know lent itself to the fall of or demise of the grand narratives as we experience it today. So this is a very interesting definition of a fall. A very interesting definition of how the grand narratives you know experiencing demise in a postmodern condition you know due to some historical conditions, due to some material conditions etc.

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> Turn-of-the-century Vienna was weaned on this pessimism: not just artists such as Musil, Kraus, Hofmannsthal, Loos, Schönberg, and Broch, but also the philosophers Mach and Wittgenstein.[134] They carried awareness of and theoretical and artistic responsibility for delegitimation as far as it could be taken. We can say today that the mourning process has been completed. There is no need to start all over again. Wittgenstein's strength is that he did not opt for the positivism that was being developed by the Vienna Circle,[135] but outlined in his investigation of language games a kind of legitimation not based on performativity. That is what the postmodern world is all about. Most people have lost the nostalgia for the lost narrative. It in no way follows that they are reduced to barbarity. What saves them from it is their knowledge that legitimation can only spring from their own linguistic practice and communicational interaction. Science "smiling into its beard" at every other belief has taught them the harsh austerity of realism.[136]

Okay, now if you come to page 41 this is interesting and this is something which Lyotard should be really credited with and he says this loss of grand narratives is something which does not necessarily mean a bad thing, does not necessarily mean a loss of civilization, does not necessarily mean a loss of meaningful exchanges and he gives a reference of Vienna over here.

He gives a reference to a very Western, European condition which change fundamentally with the fall of the grand narratives which happen with the rise of postmodernism. And again he goes back to Wittgenstein and says Wittgenstein was one of the first philosophers who accepted, theorized and then celebrated the loss of grand narratives by offering the idea of language games and this is what he goes on to say and this is the highlighted section on your screen at the moment.

This is page 41 on your screen. And this is the reference of Wittgenstein. This is you know an acknowledgement, a tribute to Wittgenstein in some sense. So he says over here, we can say today that the mourning process has been completed. So the entire idea of mourning for the loss of grand narrative, nostalgia for the loss of grand narrative, that too has gone; that has been completed, right. So it is a finished project.

There is no need to start all over again. Wittgenstein's strength is that he did not opt for the positivism that was being developed by the Vienna Circle but outlined in his investigation of

language games a kind of legitimation not based on performativity. So the genius of Wittgenstein according to Lyotard over here is that he moves away from positivism, from a very empirical understanding of knowledge, from a very closer understanding of knowledge and you know he moved away from that.

And also he did away with the performative understanding of knowledge performative way means authoritative. So he moved away from the authoritative understanding of knowledge. He moved away from an empirical understanding of knowledge and rather what he offered was an understanding of a random nature of knowledge; a random introduced knowledge for language games.

And this idea of language games which Wittgenstein offered is something which is a big massive philosophical investment into understanding of postmodernism as we understand it today. And this is what Lyotard goes on to say and he credits Wittgenstein for that. That is what the postmodern world is all about. Most people have lost the nostalgia for the lost narrative.

So you know that not only is grand narrative gone but also the nostalgia for the grand narrative is gone and this marks a massive departure for modernism, right because in modernism we still have a sort of residual nostalgia, residual remembrance for the grand narrative which is still lingering as the romantic residual presence. But when he comes to postmodernism you know that kind of a nostalgia is gone. That kind of a mourning is gone forever.

Rather people move on with local narratives with little language games which you know offer themselves as you know plays which inform the postmodern condition. So that is what the postmodern world is all about. Most people have lost the nostalgia for the lost narrative. It in no way follows that they are reduced to barbarity and this is a very crucial time. He says it does not necessarily mean you know that because people have forgotten the grand narratives, people have forgotten the nostalgia for the grand narrative.

It does not necessarily mean or it does not necessarily follow that they have become barbarians that they become uncivilized. So this easy cohesion between grand narrative and civilization is

done away with in postmodernism and this is a really crucial and subversive statement that Lyotard is making that having a grand narrative, having a series of grand narrative does not make you civilized by default and a converse is also true that losing grand narratives or doing away with grand narratives or losing nostalgia for grand narratives does not necessarily make you barbaric by default, right.

So he say it does not its faulty to understand, its faulty to assume or presume that people are reduced to barbarity just because they move away from grand narratives. So what saves him from it is the knowledge that legitimation can only spring from their own linguistic practice and communicational interaction. So this is a very important statement. So he says the modern idea of legitimation, the modern definition of legitimation arises from language games, arises from people's interaction with language games.

So not only it no longer can we seek legitimation from some pre-established grand narrative. So what we have in its place is language games and we must seek legitimation, we must seek you know we must solicit authority. We must solicit legitimation from our interaction with language games, from being nodal points through which messages pass, through which interactions pass, through which communication exchanges pass and only then can we have meaningful exchanges, right. So meaning itself becomes micro in quality.

So meaning itself moves away from any grand quality, any grand definition of culture, any grand definition of emancipation, liberation, subversions, speculation. So all that grand definitions give away to local definitions which arises which emerge rather from interactions with little language games that we experience in our day to day lives. So the idea of language game becomes very important as you know I hope to have established by this particular lecture in postmodernity.

In the postmodern condition according to Lyotard is a series of language games which are you know citational in quality, which are discursive in quality, which are rhetorical in quality, which are linguistic in quality and so all the different language games that we establish in our day to day life that is the point, that is the section, that is the site from which we draw or you know sustain or legitimation or legitimacy.

Because no longer should we look for the older grand narratives which are now gone because the postmodern condition is characterized by not only a loss of grand narratives but also a loss of nostalgia for the grand narratives. And that loss of nostalgia that loss of grand narratives does not necessarily make the postmodern condition a barbaric condition, right. So again I just go back to what I said a little while ago its easy cohesion between civilization and grand narrative is a very Eurocentric idea of civilization.

It is a very Eurocentric enlightenment idea of grand narrative and civilization. That has been fractured in postmodern condition and the reason for the fracture as Lyotard just said that it is not just material. I mean of course there are material factors such as the rise of technology, the rise of science, the rise of capitalist consumeric society etc. But also and equally it is also because of the inherent nihilism which is always there in a grand narrative of 19th century.

So that nihilism combined with technology, combined with capitalism, combined with consumerism has brought about the demise of grand narratives and has offered in its place a play, a proliferation of local narratives which can be defined as language games in the postmodern condition. So thank you for listening and this concludes the lecture, this particular lecture. I am going to wind up on Lyotard with one more lecture in the next session. So thank you for listening and you know I will see you in the next lecture. Thank you.