

Abstract

This study is a critique of Gadamer's concept of universality of hermeneutics. The purpose of this research is to do a detailed study of the universality of hermeneutics and to demonstrate that hermeneutics' claim is universal despite Habermas' criticism. Gadamer calls his philosophy philosophical hermeneutics. He asserts that the use of scientific method is inappropriate to solve problems in human science. Philosophical hermeneutics arises from two kinds of alienation: aesthetics consciousness and historical consciousness. Gadamer's method of philosophical hermeneutics begins with dialogue with others. For him, language is important as a medium to make understanding possible. There are some conditions of understanding such as prejudice and play. The goal of philosophical hermeneutics is understanding and all understanding eventually leads to self-understanding. Understanding emerges from a fusion of horizons. An important philosopher who disagrees with Gadamer's notion of universality is Habermas. Habermas thinks that prejudice is authority over human beings while Gadamer presents prejudice as a positive experience for human beings. At the end of the research, the researcher gives reasons for agreeing with Gadamer that prejudice has no absolute authority over human beings. Society would not have made any progress, if prejudice were authoritarian and oppressive.