Logic as a Cognitive and Determining System between Two Areas: Language and Literature

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Abstract

This research article tries to demonstrate that 'logic' plays a pertinent role in defining and fixing the boundary between language and literature. Literature depends on an illogical manner of language. Everyday language has its own logical structure. But in the sphere of literature, one can examine the illogical manner of language. As a consequence, everyday language transforms into literature when it loses its logical aspects. In this regard, it necessitates a new theory to emphasis on the logic both as a cognitive and determining system which works between opposing spheres: everyday language and literature. In this theory, logic can provide a cognitive system which has the suitable features for calculating linguistic and literary parameters. This system in addition not only recognizes the logical makeup of language but also is able to reconstruct literary sentences. Every understanding of literary texts is in fact a kind of a logical-making process. Any explanation of metaphors and similes renders literary texts logical and meaningful. This new impression which was mentioned by Sibawayh, a well-known Muslim grammarian and linguist in the eighth century; however, his thought has been ignored in linguistic studies. This paper is an attempt to present a logical system as an important contribution and step in [studies in] linguistics and literature.

Keywords: Language, Logic, Literature, System, Structure.

Sibawayh's View

This is very significant that Sibawayh (1990), a great grammarian, had categorized sentences into different types in his book *Al kitab*. According to him, some sentences are well-formed and correct, some are impossible, some are well-formed yet incorrect, some sentences are correct but obscene and some are impossible and purely false. To give an example of a well-formed and correct sentence: I came yesterday or I will come tomorrow. For him, the impossible sentences refer to those sentences in which the first piece of the sentence contravenes the second part. To give another clear cut example: I came you

tomorrow or I will come to you yesterday. With regard to, the well-formed sentence filled with untruth, the following sentence is a good example: I carried the mountain or I drank the sea. This grammarian by the correct but obscene sentence means that using words in wrong places in the sentence; to present an example: saw Zaid I (i.e. I sow Zaid). Lastly, the following sentences can be the best example for an impossible and purely false sentence: I will drink sea yesterday. The kernel of Sibawayh's view is drawing attention to the disparity and conflict between form and content. By being well-form, he indicates it as a standard sentence in terms, form, and content. The sentences which call as the well-formed yet incorrect, he mainly means literary sentences. In fact, Sibawayh tries to demonstrate the strains which take place between the literary sentences and the every language functioning on the basis of the logical and meaningful concepts, whereas the literary and imaginative sentences differ from the normal rules of the normal language. In fact, the aesthetical manipulation of language is defamilaring the ordinary language. To put differently, this strange- making process will result in the emergence of the literary texts which are more and more illogical.

Literary language and Logical Approach

The birth of literature is equivalent to the birth of irrational language. To deal with language, one can consider two approaches: the first one emphasizes on the aesthetical aspect of language and ignore its semantic side, whereas the second one emphasizes the semantic quality of language in literary discourse or on its communicative functions. Regarding the analysis of literary texts, interpretive strictures are employed to expound those literary sentences which challenge the sense of rationality. The logic holds its own instrument to sluice semantic abnormalities and restore order in sentences (Mohaghegg & Isotso 1993). Utilizing the logic for evaluating the meaning of literary discourse foregrounds its unique significance. The uniqueness of literature depends on its vague language. The first step in understanding literary texts is interpreting them and this elucidation involves the use of strategies which to make the ambiguous parts memorable and sensible. To understand this estranged language, we first examine it in our mind which functions on logical basis.

While dealing with abnormal sentences, our mind starts to understand and regulate the illogical manner of language, and this struggle assumes an aesthetical dimension. The delight of literary texts depends on the struggle between reader's observation and illogical manner of language. One method to make the sentences logical semantically is applying a familiar process. It is clear that any distortion in a literary statement creates a problem in

semantic level not in structure level. The logic keeps our understanding on literary statement secure and helps us to access to the deep-structure and real meaning of literary phrases. The application of logic for analyzing the literary statements does not mean that they do not have any not any value per se. Rather the purpose of logic is to unearth the real concealed meaning lost among the metaphors and metonymies and other literary tropes. Although, the real goal of logic is to recognize right from wrong, it can be also applied as an instrument to bring forth the underlined meanings of the text. This in mind, here three initial lines from T.S Eliot's famous The waste Land will show the point:

April is the cruelest month,

Breeding lilacs out of the dead land,

Mixing memory and desire,

The first line according to English grammar is well-formed, yet it is not correct semantically and logically. Naturally to be cruel is human beings' behavioral trait; however, in this line it is contributed to April. At the first glance, the poem seems strange, yet there is a hidden meaning a careful readers should discover it. For example the word 'cruelest' in the verse is contributed to April. The poet imagined the April as a living creature. The month of April is likened to a human that treats others very badly and without showing compassion. So this line in its deep semantic form can be categorised into two main logical statements: April is likened to a human the man and April is cruelest month of all. In the second part of poetry, April appears but in another form: '(April) breeding lilacs out of the dead land'. This line can be divided in this manner: in April it rains a lot so lilacs can grow out of the dry land. April has assumed a metaphoric aspect. The subject in this piece of poem is not real subject. April cannot do anything. April cannot be unkind and it cannot produce lilacs from the dead land, and this explanation does not disturb logical analysis. It is true that a salient aspect of literature has always been that its material existence (Hall.2005). According to the Arabic book of eloquence: Javaher Al Balagha true predicative sentences can be considered as false or wrong in the same time. This is also mentioned in great Arabic eloquent book Javaher Al Balagha, predicative sentences are the ones whose content has really happened in the real world (Al-Hashemi.1996).

The real meaning of logic as a cognitive instrument is the system that transmits disorganized literary sentences into new and well-formed sentences based on semantic rules. Literary language especially modern literature is a kind of unusual writing. Logical-making process changes the unusual literary sentences into usual and understandable

phrases. According to this principle, the logic can justify unnatural manner of literary statements and deduct logical structure from literary sentences. Therefore, the logic enables the reader to recognize a metaphorical position and the real position. In other words, without the logical observations, the recognition of metaphoric statements will be impossible.

As earlier mentioned, the objective of this paper is to show that logic change the literary phrases into the typical and logical common language. This is done via going from the form of the literary language to the form of common language by using semantic structure that is commonly logical.

Methodology

This article hinges on the premises that any phrase and any sentence in language is meaningful and logical. This fresh perception of language as a meaningful and logical structure bespeaks a new process which combines the semantic domain with that of logic. In this process, the logic as an interpretative system turns the literary sentences into the meaningful linguistic units. Additionally, as an epistemological system, the logic serves as a yardstick and determine whether the sentences are rational (true) or irrational (false).

Conclusion

It is pertinent to show that the above mentioned grammarians had a right image about the concept of language in all levels in particular Sibawayh who divides language into distinct parts. According to Sibawayh, the best structure in language is the one which is clear semantically and syntactically. Mainly literary sentences are syntactically well-formed, yet they are wrong semantically. In Islamic traditional studies this is the point that has been called lie. Meanwhile the literature as a lie has a meaning. To change the lies into truth demands an approach to separate the truth from falsity. This is possible through logic. Even though a logical understanding of literary sentences cannot be always true, yet it can be employed for explaining and clarifying unusual and unfamiliar language. In logical approach, literary sentences need to be reconstructed not only to be understood but also to solve its unusual dimension, which in return it will yield profound pleasure for the meaning making mind.

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