

Semantically Meta-cognitive Properties in Makhzanol Asrar

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ABSTRACT— In view of formalist theorists, literature illustrates aesthetic properties of language by foregrounding its strange dimensions. Accordingly, readership experiences a distinct language relative to the ordinary language. One of foregrounding processes is norm deviation, which is defined as a distance from the normative language. Linguistic deviations are regarded literary foregrounding when they create aesthetic components. This norm deviation is called a meta-normative deviation, which highlights literary properties of language. Analysis of Nezami's poetic language shows artistic elegance and his literary creativity. This analytical and descriptive study examines semantically meta-cognitive properties of Makhzanol Asrar [Treasury of Mysteries].

KEYWORDS: Formalism, defamiliarization, foregrounding, semantic meta-norm, Makhzanol Asrar [Treasury of Mysteries]

Introduction

One of formalists' primary theories is defamiliarization. Victor Shklovsky introduced this concept in *Art as Device* in 1917 by using the Russian terms *ostrannenja* [making strange] (Alavi Moghadam, 1998:105; Shamisa, 2001:158). Shklovsky (2001:60) points out: ((Art aims to convey the comprehended sense of things instead of the known sense of things)). Concept of defamiliarization is rooted in psychology of Gestalt: ((any sensual perception is transformed into habit and act as an automatic mechanism. Accordingly, we can guess contents by forms and view them as a known entity. Art mainly helps us put aside habits and feel things. Art attempts to create a feeling of things or analyze them on the basis of the observed manner rather than the known manner. Art makes all things unfamiliar and ambiguous and therefore makes the sensual perception a difficult path)) (Ahmadi, 2006:49). Literature can transform all familiarized things into a strange and unfamiliar entity. We perceive things through a relatively subconscious process because we view them as previously known (Burthens, 2005: 45). Regularly used words and expressions cannot attract attention of readership. All cases of irony are unfamiliar and strange for the then language users. But, they are used automatically for the given meanings and messages due to redundancy and meaningfulness. Therefore, they are no longer unfamiliar for language users. All elements of an expression receive focal attention at the beginning. At next times, their arbitrary meaning and concept are on focus. Its structural properties are not concentrated. Artists are required to revive verbal and spiritual strategies. All typologies of defamiliarization can be used for phonological and grammatical system, vocabulary, and rhetoric. For instance, rhyme, pun words, redundancy, and other figures of speech can be inserted in phonological and musical mechanisms (Poor Namdarian, 2010: 41-42). Any creativity and innovation in language and literature are viewed as defamiliarization. Shafiee Kadkani (2012: 100) regards defamiliarization as a relative mechanism: ((Things which are redundant in our view are strange and unfamiliar for the readership who do not experience them)). Afterwards, with the advent of Prague School, MocarSKI introduced foregrounding vs. defamiliarization. Foregrounding is a linguistic deviation by which poets maintain a distance from the automatic language. Automaticity of language is defined as use of linguistic elements for expressing meaningful contents without any emphasis on manner of expression. Conversely, foregrounding concentrates on manner of expression and unfamiliarity. Accordingly, foregrounding is a poetic and literary language (Alavi Moghadam, 1998: 82). Metaphors and figures of speech go through foregrounding process. Strange elements and familiar elements are mechanically and statically are intertwined in defamiliarization. Aesthetic properties play a significant role in foregrounding. Unlike defamiliarization, foregrounding does not take temporal truth into consideration especially when the considered literary work is an indication of facts during readership life. In this case, this work is more comprehensive (Taslimi, 2011: 47). MocarSKI suggests: ((Aesthetic functions of texts are varied in different periods of time and spatiality and by different persons. Aesthetically-valued works in a period of time may not hold their aesthetic value at the other time. Conversely, unaesthetically-valued works may encourage their aesthetic value in some other times. MocarSKI's aesthetics is a cyclic mechanism: sometimes his aesthetics reaches its peak and sometimes it reaches an inferior level. In foregrounding, ancient allegories and similes do not usually arouse a considerable hope because foregrounding is a subsequence of formalistic defamiliarization (Taslimi, 2011). Jacobson identifies the literary language by examining substitutive and syntagmatic arrangements of words. As this scholar suggests, selection of a word or expression from syntagmatically and substitutively equal words or expressions moves sentences from a communicative role into a literary role (Safavi, 1994:40). In view of formalist theorists, poets do an act in their language

by writing poems in a way that the readership makes a distinction between poetic language and ordinary language. Although language exerts a covertly-aesthetic communicative impact, the literature can foreground strange properties of language. Consequently, it can reflect a distinct understanding in readership.

Leitch offers two possibilities for foregrounding:

- Deviation: Texts are deviated from ordinary rules of language; and
- Extra regularity: Rules are added to automatic language rules (1994: 43)

Deviation

Deviation is described as any distance from norms of language; yet any deviation from language norms is not considered as foregrounding components. Consider this sentence: ((Iran got the first place in wrestling)). This sentence is an instance of deviation from linguistic norms. However, the literary foregrounding is covertly reflected. In other words, linguistic deviations are regarded literary foregrounding when they create aesthetic components. These deviations are called meta-normative. The difference between deviation and meta-norm lies in the fact that the former offers a covert picture of aesthetic properties and the readership experiences artistic components to a small extent while in the latter aesthetic functions and artistic elements are overt (Alavi Moghadam, 1998:84).

Semantic Meta-norm

Interactions among syntactic components within the speech continuum are called syntagmatic. These interactions are subject to semantics of language. Semantic meta-norms are deviations in deep structures of sentences (Fotoohi, 2012: 46). These meta-norms are deviations from semantic rules of language, which are indicated by figures of speech such as metaphor, paradox, irony, allegory, personification, symbol, etc. They are semantic figures of speech because they are related to semantic structures of language. Verbal figures of speech, conversely, are associated with external constructions of language. They involve redundancy, puns, phono tactics, initial repetition, and deviation from ordinary arrangement of words (Fotoohi, 2012: 47). There are a large number of figures of speech, all of which cannot be covered by this study. Here, some instances of imageries are covered, which are indications of poets' creativity.

Imagery

Imagery contains simile, metaphor, irony, and metonymy, which are offered in Makhzanol Asrar [Treasury of Mysteries].

Simile

The term *Bidad [cruelty]* can play two syntactic roles and subsequently two semantic roles (Nezami, 2003:9):

- Atash bidad [fire of cruelty] is a genitive of simile, by which cruelty is likened to fire; and
- Cruelty is adjective of fire, by which fire conveys one of its own fourth meanings.
- Shadow of garden and shadow of light are similes to exquisite lantern (Nezami, 2003: 145). These two similes create phonological balance in one hand and contrast on the other hand. These parameters are considered as aesthetic components.
- Dig Jasad [Corpse pot] and Namak jan [salt of body] are genitive of similes. Their co-occurrence creates an innovative meaning (Nezami, 2003:7).

Metonymy

- Adim is a metonymy, which conveys a meaning of existence (Nezami, 2003:72).
- Coin is a metonymy, which conveys necessity and value.
- Oil conveys a causal meaning and conceptualizes light (Nezami, 2003:125)

Metaphor:

Hyacinth and jewel are metaphors, which convey meaning of tress and Prophet Mohamad. These metaphors are frequently used by Nezami. They are defamiliarized by adding adjectives. Her tress is like hyacinth and it is a constellation in daytime. His essence is a jewel, which is created by sunlight. It adorns the sun with jewel or it causes the sun to be adorned with jewels. Additionally, puns of Sonbol [hyacinth] and Sonboleh [constellation] and analogy between jewel and sun makes contribution to beauty of the poem (Nezami, 2003:20).

- Glass and wind are metaphors for sky and sigh, which added to the beauty of the poem. Also, repetition of the sound ((sh)) is an indication of the wind blowing up the window. All these components create an extra regularity (Nezami, 2003:134).
- Bird of nature is an innovative metaphor for world (Nezami, 2003:99)

Implicit Metaphor

Raiment of sun (Nezami, 2003:68); mouth of stone (Nezami, 2003:5); nail of simin saman (Nezami, 2003:58)

Irony

Mostly-used ironies of Nezami are created by his own. Some of these ironies are unprecedented or are rarely observed: Nilgari [mourning] (Nezami, 2003:73); Khanbareyeh doodnak [heaven] (Nezami, 2003:122); rasan pich pich [heaven] (Nezami, 2003:134); Tefl 40 roozeh Kajmaj Zaban [Adam] (Nezami, 2003:71); Lobat baz [God] (Nezami, 2003:71).

Intellectual Rhetoric

Intellectual rhetoric contains paradox, contrast, exaggeration, conceit, and epanodos, which create meta-cognition in verbal level and transforms ordinary language into a literary language. This meta-cognition deepens the aesthetic understanding by causing interruption to meaning conveyance. The following are rhetorical figures of speech in Makhzanol Asrar [Treasury of Mysteries]:

- **Ambiguity:**

For instance, sarafkandeh [confused] (Nezami, 2003:44) conveys two meanings: (1) real meaning (for lighted candle, his head was cut); and (2) figurative meaning (modesty) which is intended by the poet. Also, Nafs (breath) (Nezami, 2003:125) has two meanings including breath and sigh.

- **Conceit:**

Nezami accounts for Prophet Mohamad's teeth breaking in Ohod war by a poetic cause innovated by him: A gem out of a narrow chest (Nezami, 2003:20).

Nezami highlights impact of abstinence upon spirituality through poetic devices. He views imprisonment of Prophet Yousef as an indication of this impact (Nezami, 2003:107).

Conclusion

The poetic language of Nezami Makhzanol Asrar [Treasury of Mysteries] is affected by foregrounding. This study examined his foregrounding within framework of semantic meta-norm. Specifically, his creativity in imagery and intellectual rhetoric was analyzed.

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