REALIGNING THE LINGUISTICS-LITERATURE INTERFACE FROM A CONCEPTUAL STANCE

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ABSTRACT: Multimodality in the domain of linguistic and literary research and teaching emerged imperceptibly and laid the groundwork for an organic and systemic analysis of language-based phenomena. In this sense, literary theory is an extension of linguistic processes ensuing from the rudimentary thought-forming cycles. Nonetheless, linguistics is by no means *literatureless* and its multifarious theoretical frameworks can be neither vindicated nor demarcated as autonomous in their own right. The causality-corollary relation is incontrovertible and easily demonstrable. However, the notion of *inter-* and *post-disciplinary studies* is routinely dismissed or regarded contemptuously and with grave misgivings.

This paper aims to disprove such viewpoints by dint of theoretical evidence from the stockpile of cognitive linguistics. Conceptual categories will serve as the linchpin of the research tenor thus corroborating the premise that the generation of given textual or verbal discursive sequences inexorably reverts to the source upon its manifestation. In this manner, both the creative process and its deliverables are conceptually bound at the cognitive level. For the purposes of this small-scale survey, samples from fiction, poetry and prose alike, are selected and conceptually parsed.

KEY WORDS: *multimodality, interface, conceptual categories, literature, cognitive linguistics*

1. Introduction

The lodestone of this analytical probe into the inextricability between language and literature hails from the cognitivist provenance of intellectual thought and research methodology. It could be contended that the notion of conceptuality rests at the heart of human capacity for generative, creative, and deconstructive feats reflected in day-to-day communication with a relative magnitude of efficacy and admissible level of expediency. This is a small-scale study of how language is used in literature so as to instantiate the underlying system and occasion a back-loop transfer of the in-use discourse into the system matrix. The lexical accrual of a language is best echoed in the realm of organic use.

Although literature is hardly unrehearsed, it does resonate language in its resplendent array of resources. Text as defined in Systemic-Functional Linguistics stands for underlying scaffolding emerging as a spontaneous corollary of a meaning-propelled raft of usage-based practices. It is a cyclically causal concatenation of instances in which system is both engendered and reaffirmed through the materialization of a hypothesized linguistic and communicative foundation.

A multitude of linguists has thus far made bold attempts at the recalibration of the basic premise of linguistic study of the unique human enterprise. Chomskyan approach to this phenomenon primarily centred round grammatical structure rather than use and by extension meaning. Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik spearheaded the avant-garde of redefined linguistic priorities averring that 'a new kind of grammar is needed' which could provide an answer to a long-standing question 'How can I use grammar to communicate?'(Leech and Svartvik, 1975). Having enumerated the manifest of variegated components constituting the aggregate of a grammatical system, significant weight was attached to the notion of 'grammar in use' whereby different types of meaning and different ways of organizing meaning were systematically discussed. It signalled an epoch-making departure form employing exclusively a structural but rather communicative approach. This also meant that grammar could no longer be defined as 'a set of rules that allow us to combine words in our language into larger units' (Geenbaum and Nelson, 2002) or a syntactic framework describing admissible conflations to form ranking groupings i.e.

syntagmata, clauses and discursive stretches[77]. Grammar is by no means a source of arcane rules that cause mortification. It is a system of meaningfulness. This assertion is corroborated in at least two regards. The lexical system contains entries steeped in meaning. Those meaning rule delineated semantic domains in their own right and by means of grammar they are conveniently combined into higher-ranking linguistic strata of organization such as syntagmatic and clausal complexes allowing us to construct more elaborate instantiations of meaning. Grammar is a crucial expedient in the overall conceptual apparatus enabling us to access and actively engage the world (Langacker, 2008).

Traditional levels of grammatical, or more specifically, syntactic analysis are not to be roundly dismissed. For instance, the structure of a simple sentence conventionally referred to as clause, dissecting a lexical caucus into phonological, syntactic semantic/conceptual domains each of which has a distinct blueprint is a useful method of explication as to how linguistic rank-promotion and relegation transpires in natural communication. The structure of a given clausal construct is not a mere total of the abovementioned levels of parsing. It is paramount to encode the relationships amongst them (Jackendoff, 2002). The extent of overlapping and interplay has to be ascertained and in that manner a line of descent and merger will be traced paving the way for the apposite placement of structure in relation to the conceptual underpinnings.

Cognitive semantics is the mainstay of usage-based, meta-functionally-oriented and conceptually-anchored cognitive school of linguistic thought which emerged in the early 1970s as a herald of disapprobation and vexation at the dominant formal schools of linguistics at the time. Conceptualization resides at the heart of human thinking and categorization of extraneous stimuli. Cognitive linguistics is often seen as an open-ended and pliable framework since no traces of a uniform theory have as of yet been detected. Instead, a bracket of guiding precepts forming common viewpoints and assumptions came to be accepted engendering a gamut of complementary theoretical systems. As Evans and Green proposed, a 'character sketch' of this scientific enterprise unifies approaches concerned with semanticity (Evans and Green, 2006) and organicism of applicability.

The precedence of conceptualization notwithstanding, structure still bulks large in the overarching framework. The idea behind conceptualization is best echoed in the elucidation stating that language reflects patterns of thought and insights into the organizational nature of thoughts are adequately provided by dint of heuristic endeavours thus reaching the window into human cognitive faculties matchlessly belied in their instantiated form. As previously stated, text is functionally defined as data conveyed via written of spoken mechanism which in turn assume the role of embodiments of conceptual rudiments. Text is an immanent system surging towards the surface of recognizability. This is a highly theorized perspective but its merits are decidedly identified in everyday life.

2. Methods and Corpus

This paper, based primarily on the data from a sample totaling 5000 words, is concerned with the description of those features of the dichotomy between linguistics on the one hand as the system of organization and elaboration of language-related phenomena, and literature on the other, as a *magnum corpus* of language in use, which can be regarded as particularly characteristic of natural language.

The findings are classified into two main categories: theoretical and lexico-conceptual. At the theoretical level, language is characterized as being a vehicle of the conceptual domain underpinning the tenor of intuitive use. The lexico-conceptual analysis is a seamless continuation of the theoretical component of the paper delving into the example-based account. The analysis encompasses prominent postulates of the conceptual metaphor theory as well as ancillary modules segueing into the framework specifically conceived for the purposes of this paper.

The amalgamation of cognitive, systemic-functional and critically discursive theories was employed to submit the theoretical description herein discoursed upon. The article concludes by setting out corroborative assertions of the inexorability of conceptual processes of language generation and literature as both a testament to human creativity and solidification of the cognitivist approach.

3. Results and Discussion

On completion of the corpus data collation, the sample underwent thorough scrutiny from the linguistic, by and large cognitive, primarily semantic and tangentially syntactic, discursive and social standpoint. This necessitated a theoretical cross-section of the purposefulness of the meaning-geared approach to linguistic research furthering a less rarified and workable scheme evocative of a natural pattern of thought. Since meaning is at the fore of the conceptually meta-functional modus operandi of the framework adopted in this paper, semantics

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[77] The verb *describe* is purposely used here for it serves the role of distinction between the prescriptive tradition which stipulated acceptable norms and vehemently rejected *inadmissible* forms as ultimately incorrect thus precluding the organic progression and development of language.

warrants an interpretation in light of conceptuality. The nature of the human lexical repository is oft-debated over and myriad attempts at the comprehension of this phenomenon have been made with a relative degree of success.

The matter of the purported vastness of human faculty to memorize scores of arbitrarily morpholigized lexemes remains veiled in, if not an utter mystery, than undeniably ambiguity. How do language-users retain and compartmentalize semantic chunks with no apparent correlation to the referents they stand for and consequently formulate logically decodable stretches of speech? The formula is postulated in the domain of knowledge conceptualization.

Language is deemed to be instantiated in the form of discourse and discourse in turn is externalized by dint of social practices. Those mores are best observed in the following formula:

a) System/text →

b) Intermediary substratum (morpho-/phono-/syntactic level) →

b) Meaning as transposed with recourse to socially established commonalities   and   practices,   ultimate materialization.

Knowledge is the mainspring and cohesive force both generated and generative vis-à-vis communicative and linguistic facilities. It could be subdivided into four clear-cut categories.
1) Conventional
2) Generic
3) Intrinsic
4) Characteristic

According to Evans and Green (Evans and Green, 2006) conventional knowledge is widely known, and generic is non-specific in nature. Intrinsic is form-predicated and derived from the physicality of the entity in question. Characteristic knowledge is uniquely in phase with the entity per se.

Meaning is attained via processes of perspectivizing, highliting and activating the facet of knowledge domain required or best suited for a given set of circumstances. If a selected lexical phenomenon is perspectivized, it is semantically primed and roused to saliency i.d. activated.

(1) Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherised upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that flow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question….
Oh, do not ask, 'What is it?'
Let us go and make our visit.
(from *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*)[78]

In the foregoing example, several aspects may have been at the forefront of the author's mind when tapping into the encyclopedic found of semanticity. The impulse of inherent humanness led him to the feeling of espit de corps and togetherness. The second line indicates the conceptual metaphor at work, not least surface metaphor as the sky is seen as a tapestry and evening a pliable fabric malleable to fit the metaphorical easel. This belies the fundamental premise of our cognizance that is incontrovertibly predicated upon the embodied experience and idealized cognitive model. This experience as seen through the prism of our own is an echo of our own corporeal bounds, restrictions and capacities we inexhaustibly utilize as yardstick and determinant-formation. Comparison is detected in line three. Here, the notional body is exploited yet again and its infirmity reiterated as a memento mori. The author goes on to portray the remainder of the stanza as in phase of the journey metaphor accentuating gradualness and temporal consumption proving inevitable in the process. [79]

(2) War is our scourge; yet war has made us wise,
And fighting for our freedom, we are

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[78] Thomas Stearns Eliot

[79] Other metaphorical specificities and extensions are markedly identifiable in this morceaux, however, they are not to be further delved into at this point.

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For we have made an end of all things bae;
We are returning by the road we came.
(form *Absolution*)[80]

Excerpt 2 sheds light on the war-related metaphorical extensions. For instance, *argument is war* could be reversed for the purposes of illustration to the *war is a pathway* metaphor. Scourge in the context of the preceding excerpt propels two semantic predications. One refers to the actual instrument of punishment and the other is more figurative drawing on the signification of animate or inanimate source of hardship, predicament and plight. These two semantic zones are prespectivazed and materialized through use. In the third morceau extracted from the corpus, the notions of healing properties of the sun are foregrounded. Nonetheless, in this instance, medicinal qualities, though proverbial in nature, fail to deliver the desired effect for the body is grievously wounded and the deathly sores are impervious to treatment. Death and nostalgia are intertwined propending to the ineluctable demise.

(3) Move him into the sun –
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields half-sown.
Always it awoke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow.
If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know.
(from *Futility*)[81]

In excerpt 4, unlike in no. 3, futility is not omnipotent. It is patently detectable but does not hold unwavering sway over the protagonist. Our encyclopedic knowledge gives rise the ingrained depiction of solitude associated with free-flowing water combined with the seemingly lifeless idea of granite. Stones are typically hard as is the destiny of the love-forlorn. The adjective hard perspectivizes physical and connotatively transferred meaning.

(4) I have spent hours this morning
Seeking in the brook
For a dead pebble
To remind me of your eyes
(from *Images*)[82]

Oftentimes cultural literacy figures momentously in relating a desired sampler of information packaging and lays crucial groundwork for decipherment. In order for this subtype of perpectivization to be effective, both the addresser and addressee have to be conversant with the motifs discussed.

(5) But tell Jane Austen, that is, if you dare,
How much her novels are beloved down here.
She wrote them for posterity, she said;
It was rash, but by posterity she's read.
(from *Letter to lord Byron*)[83]

There have been numerous cases of mundanely-thematized contents in literature. In doing so, authors frequently exploit the vein of stereotypes reaffirming them into continuity. Love, birth and age are conceptual leitmotifs permeating oeuvres of poetry.

(6) Love by ambition
Of definition
Suffers partition
And cannot go,
From yes to no

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[80] Sigfried Sassoon

[81] Wilfred Owen

[82] Richard Aldington

[83] Wystan Hugh Auden

For no is not love; no is no
The shutting of a door
The tightening jaw
A conscious sorrow;
And saying yes
Turns love into success.
(from *Too Dear, Too Vague*)[84]

(7) I feared these present years
The middle twenties,
When deftness disappears,
And each event is
Freighted with a source-encrusting doubt,
And turned to drought.
(from *On Being Twenty-Six*)[85]

(8) Suddenly he started into life. It made he quiver almost with terror as he quickly pushed the hair off his forehead and came towards her.
(from *Sons and Lovers*)[86]

As previously asseverated, culturally relevant themes are routinely drawn on. Concurrently, their scope of perspectivization extends beyond the confines of their original target milieu.

(9) His Fordship Mutapha Mond! The eyes of the saluting students almost popped out of their heads, Mustapha Mond! The resident Controller of Western Europe! One of the Ten World Controllers. One of the Ten…
(from *Brave Neew World*)[87]

In excerpt 9, the components of several pivotal systems were compartmentalized into one gestalt. The idea of royalty is transposed by means of capitalization, the popularity of a car-producing company and Latinate word signifying the English equivalent of the lexeme world coalesce to re-denote a culturally pertinent notion comprehensible merely through the expedient of encyclopediaized knowledge.

(10) They are dark caves. Even when they are open towards the sun, very little light penetrates down the entrance tunnel into the circular chamber.
(from *A Passage to India*)[88]

(11) Yes of course, it it's fine tomorrow, said Mrs. Ramsay. But you'll have to be up with the lark, she added.
(from *To the Lighthouse*)[89]

There are thought to have been plethoric attempts to depict geographical reliefs and circadian rhythm with palettes of conceptual construal-enabling cues. In the last two excerpts, diurnal and geological forces lock

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[84] Wystan Hugh Auden

[85] Philip Larkin

[86] David Herbert Lawrence

[87] Aldous Huxley

[88] Edward Morgan Forster

[89] Virginia Woolf

into interplay as, yet again, conceptuality promotes the interpretation of an encoded message enveloped under the guise of denotation which irreverently abandons the confines of its form and segues into the connotative realm. The evidence of linguistics-literature interface is undeniable and abundantly patent, ultimately begging a question. Is it possible to explore philological science in discrete manner i.e. without the interface in place? The answer is in the resounding negative, nonetheless, a well-thought-out fusion scaffolding is to be conceived.

4. Conclusion

Linguistics and literature form a nexus of semantic mechanisms of transfer and communicative conveyance integrating cognitive processes and language output in the natural mould embodied in literature as an arena of creativity and the ne plus ultra of message-packaging trial performance and competence vindication. The platforms repeatedly employed for the validation of the linguistics-literature interface hypothesis include the conceptual metaphor theory, the theorem of system-instantiation in functional linguistics, the encyclopedic knowledge contingent on conceptuality and cultural factors integrate into a multi-modal approach of instruction and theoretical discussion.

It seems outré and exceptionally belaboured to venture any isolationist standpoint. Regrettably, at the tertiary level of education, this practice has gained momentum. Needless to say that this has to be tackled with and changed. Language is in a constant state of flux and the flux is best observed in the literary trove of words. It is this trove that treasures the most astonishing evidence of human capacity and if any headway is to be made in terms of language studying it has to be with the aid of this invaluable resource.

Literature is the genuine article and paragon of linguistic endeavour whereas linguistics and language by extension can by no means sustain the research base and naturalness of their existence without literature as the ultimate repository and testimony to what the creative enterprise of man is equipped to accomplish.

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