The Pragmatics of Truth and Fact: Mind Realisations and Knowledge Manifestations

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The paper discusses a dichotomy that some scholars consider as a concept, and they lay the limitations for it, while others consider it as a problem that should be solved through setting up certain differences between truth and fact, and how they will be understood in texts. The paper aims to tackle these two concepts by analysing them pragmatically, since it will refer to the context of semantic meanings relating to the conditions of use in the text, the psychological dimension of the author, and the effect of the text on the receiver, which makes the poetic text the field of application. This paper is an attempt to discuss the stages of realising these concepts in an Arabic mind and how the cognitive awareness develops. The research includes three readings: the first is the concept of truth and fact and the differences between them. The second reading is the cognitive realisation of an Arabic mind, and the third one is the poetic gift and the effect of culture on it.

Key words: Pragmatics of Truth, Knowledge Manifestations

The First Reading: The Concept of Truth and Fact

Truth and concept are among questionable concepts including: What is truth? What is fact? Is fact a full or partial synonymy to truth? There is no complete agreement on the concept, its conditions, or features among researchers after tracing the difference between these two concepts and the pragmatic dimension through consulting Arabic lexicons.

The linguists interpret truth in relation to its contrast (lying) as mentioned in *Al-Sihah* that truth is the opposite of lying, and the one who bears witness to the truth is the one who believes you. (Abdulhadi, 1983). We can find the same understanding of the concept truth for Ibn Mandhur, as the opposite of lying. Or to tell the truth means to tell him/ her truth only. It is said that 'he/she tells truth to people' means to 'tell them truth only'. (Abdulrahamn, 1998) But understanding the word is still inaccurate; if truth is the opposite of lying, this motivates the receiver to ask, what is lying? How do we identify or define truth in the poetic experience or other literary works, because some aspects of these literary works are built on the poet's imagination.

In order to observe the manifestation of the word clearly that bears a specific understanding for the receiver, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Wasit* does not refer to truth as an opposite to lying but says truth means to tell truth. It is said that someone tells truth means he tells only truth, so he is truthful in case of exaggeration. (Abdulsalam, 1998) So, truth is the fact of the news that corresponds to reality, without imagination, and it is clear and accurate, but this leads us to another question which is, what is truth?

Al-Jawhery in his *Sihah* has mentioned that truth is the opposite of metaphor and truth is what man has to protect. We say that someone is the protector of truth. It is said that truth is the flag (Abu Nasir, 1976) as a reference to the clear apparent thing. "The truth is what is agreed on to use as its origin, and metaphor is the opposite of this. Metaphor is used for three reasons including elaboration of meaning, emphasis, and comparison. If these three conditions are not available, it is the clear truth." (Ahmed, 1994) Truth is what we use in its original meaning, the truth of the thing is its essence, and truth is the definite and undoubted essence of the thing. (Ameen, 1980) With regard to the linguistic meaning of the two words, we can say that there is a similarity in the meaning. Both refer to a definite and absolute thing that is opposite to lying and metaphor, both of which carry imaginative meanings, which contradict reality. Abdulqahir Al-jarjani has described the limit between fact and metaphor "the description of the word as being fact or metaphor is decided through its meaning in the sentence rather than being Arabic or foreign or original or a new coined one. The definition could be applicable on all words that have meanings" (Hind, 1981) It means to judge whether the word is fact or metaphor through context that removes ambiguity. Some researchers see that fact refers to the complex term that denotes contradictory location within semiotics as fact is positioned in the discourse since it is the result of verification processes that disperse any relation with external reference. (Ibn Tabataba, 2015) It means the use of the word refers to its original meaning that is realised by mind without any contextual reference. Some critics called fact a mind element that realises facts, ideas, and right, without imagination or secondary meanings that are away from the central ones. Some researchers see that this fact refers to the complex term that refers to the paradoxical location within semiotics where the truth is put into the discourse, because it is the result of verification processes that

differentiate any relationship with an external reference. The use of the word means referring to its original meaning, which the mind perceives without any contextual reference. Some critics have called truth 'the element of reason' which realises facts, ideas and truth without imagination or secondary meanings far from centralisation.

The understanding of fact as a term is not far from understanding truth as a term, which is contradictory to lying. This means voluntary action to deceive the receiver and it is not true for the sender. (Ihsan, 1983) What is realised by the mind without need for imagination or delusion to mislead the receiver or get secondary meanings called truth, requires its legitimacy from the authenticity principle, truth, fidelity, and the realisation of the cognitive mind of this fact. Based on what is mentioned above, we can raise a question about the extent of an Arab's mind realisation of these two concepts, truth and fact. How can the dimensions can be drawn and set pillars for understanding?

The Second Reading: Cognitive Realisation of an Arab's Mind

Authenticity, fidelity and loyalty, is one of the pragmatic principles that has its roots in the Islamic heritage, which takes different images (Lisan, 1414) including: "truth of news, work, and action, the way we advise others to do." (Mohammed, 1980) The aim of these different images is that the news, behaviour, and action should be in accordance to reality. So, truth means telling facts and that kind of truth has three preferences: (Munir, 2007).

A- It is better for the speaker to act what he does not speak than to speak without action.
B- It is better that the speaker's action precedes his words than his words precede his action.
C- It is better that the speaker should understand what he says than others understand better than him.

This image is close to Grice's understanding that he introduced a quality rule in the cooperative principle that includes:

- Don't say what you think is a lie.
- Do not say what you do not have enough evidence.

He emphasises practising truth that communicates between the speaker and the receiver "whenever the speaker tells truth in news, work, and act as he says, the communication opens between him and the receiver and they become close to each other" (Nooruldin, 2012) But there are certain situations when some of them violate this principle unintentionally or intentionally so the statement will move from explicitness into implicature. So, the Arab mind establishes certain regulations and rules of sincere expression since the social nature of the Arab mind may distance itself from truth and seeks to metaphor, and all this is because of

the Arab's poetics. So, is metaphor a type of lying because it gives facts new clothes? Ibn Tabtaba thinks that if the poet wants his poetry to be accepted, he should distance it from exaggeration, similes, and the tales that the poet uses in his poetry. (Saeed, 1985) Whenever poetry becomes unreasonable, we judge it as a being a kind of lying. Ibn Tabtaba does not deny that the poet mixes facts with imagination, he says that "poetry is not empty of things that existed in souls and minds." (Nooruldin, 2012) He focuses on proportionality, which is the secret of beauty, and truth is parallel to a poem's beauty. Proportionality is a mental work that is presented to our mind to accept or judge it, and our mind does not accept only truth and refuse falsehood and lying. Moreover, truth means correct language that is empty of mistakes in grammar and meaning. (Munir, 2007) The judge that finds facts and draws the line between truth and lie is the mind. Much poetry is transformed from its explicit words into discourse implicature based on situations. This transformation does not mean that it moves from truth into lie, but it reveals the role of the mind to clarify the evidence and make a final decision. The receiver does not have the ability to judge whether it is truth or lie because the issue does not have one regular and clear standard. Moreover, the receiver's way of reception may vary from one time to another. (Lisan, 1414) This idea leads us to ask how does an Arab's mind judge the poetic and literary products? How do they classify these experiences as truth or lie, as real or as what the poet adds from his imagination?

Ibn Tabtaba sees that truth is defined through three levels: author, text, and receiver. The first level is related to author in which the poet has to be truthful in his experience to affect the receiver because poetic meanings do not affect the receiver unless it appeals to emotions and reveals the hidden feelings. (Abdulrahamn, 1998) The truth of poetry is to write about the poetic experience without exaggeration while lying is to tell things with exaggeration and ambiguity.[19] The poet has to be truthful with himself as he reveals his agonies and emotions or when he tells of a historical incident, and he should not call the coward as the brave or the generous as the miser. The poet's talent is to employ his text plot realistically depending on his knowledge, and the receiver's culture and judgment on the text credibility. Does this mean that the poet or the author's dedication to the hadith is an invitation to tell false news or unrealistic facts? Al-Jahiz's words are not far from the truth because the Arabs, because of their life, nature and psychological structure, are characterised by intuition without influence because intuition is more prevalent in speaking. Speaking as an artist, every artist provides a degree of sensitivity and ability to convey feelings using improvisation and creativity, every artist is sufficiently talented to create effective literature, the first part of the answer as mentioned earlier. These are the most important intellectual fundamentals that Arabs have established to reveal the hidden points of the text to judge it. It leads us to the question of how do we understand talent and culture effects on communicating text realistically and credibility, in addition to establishing a link between the two ends of the communication process.

The Third Reading: The Effect of Talent and Culture on Communicating the Text

The ancient critics directed their attention to inference and improvisation, and what Arabs have is part of God's gift. This improvisation is part of their nature and comes in the form of inspiration without preparation. As he wants to say something and identifies the purpose, meanings overflow voluntarily from his imagination. This image is clear in Al-Jahidh's words: "everything for Arabs is a kind of intuition and improvisation as if it is an inspiration rather than suffering or agony, thinking or borrowing, it is an intention to target a certain purpose." Does it mean that the poet's or the author's dedication to speak is a call to tell untruthful news or unrealistic facts? Al-Jahidh's speech is not far away from truth since Arabs, due to their life, nature, and psychological construction, are characterised by intuition without affectation because intuition is more prevalent in speaking and the speaker is an artist. "Each artist is provided with amount of sensitivity and ability to convey feelings"[22] but, does this improvisation create creativity? Is the talent sufficient to create effective literature? The first part of the answer is mentioned previously. Moreover, culture and acquired knowledge as skill and insight have a great role in creating innovative man who has an effective role in his true text because "man in his/her essence is a cultural creature…..culture enables man not only to adapt with his environment but the environment adapts with him, with his needs, and projects. It means that culture makes turning the nature, possible."[23] The coordination between talent and culture will lead to the creation of a truthful writer or poet, especially when related tools are prepared.

The question that rose about truth and fact, or speaking about talent and culture, is what is the link between the two issues? Dr. Hind Hussein Taha answered that "it is necessary for the poetic experience to be realistic, but is not the poet's duty to be truthful." (Lisan, 1414).

Based on what is mentioned above, how can the poet be truthful and take from metaphor, which includes exaggeration, overstatement, and superfluity? Here, how the role of talent and culture emerge in creating text depends on artistry and literature to communicate the poetic experience. The poet's innovation lies in what features he adds that mix reality and imagination in the text. The poet should be honest with himself when he reveals his suffering and emotions or when he narrates a historical incident, and he should not describe the coward as brave or the miser as generous. The poet's talent is to employ his plot realistically, based on his knowledge, the recipient's culture and his judgment on the authenticity of the text. These are the most important intellectual foundations that the Arabs set to reveal the hidden points in the text in order to judge them. It leads us to understand the effects of talent and culture on delivering the text realistically and reliably, as well as creating a link between the two sides of the communication process. There are "two things that turn the poet into a real poet, the first is the subject and the thought, and the second is the expression and style that become the poet's unique style." (Abdulrahamn, 1998) The developed text should include

innate and acquired talent, subject and thought, which is a product of external fact. The poet has to reconstruct that fact in his own style, which distinguishes him from others.

Nature is of great importance in creation and its effect is related to other components that establish a solid base in the creative process. Talent and culture enable the poet or the author to tell facts in a different way from other people. The author or poet manipulates words and descriptions, depending on his talent, to convey his experience. The author has to be truthful with himself when he reveals hidden emotions, and truthful in his experience in a way that reflects his sincere feelings, beauty of imagination, and the power of effect.

The issue of literature and creating literary man is one of the great and complex issues since it is in direct touch with the human soul, and passions which play on the string of sensitivity. In conclusion, Arabs realise that good poetry is incomplete unless there is a talent, even if the poet is diligent in his achievement. So, talent is a condition to success[26] and polishing this talent could be what makes poetry successful.

Poetry is an art and a craft that needs techniques, tools, and styles, and is where critics dedicate pages of their books. Collected by Ibn Tabtaba Al-Alawy under the word 'mind', he says that "the collections of these tools is the perfection of mind that distinguishes opposites, shows justice and beauty, avoids ugliness, and sets things in their proper positions."[27]

Therefore, mind is the one that realises the minors to reach the majors, and realises the core of things and images, then interprets them into news from the speaker to the hearer. The issue of truth, lie, talent, and culture is related to the views of accepting or rejecting literature and diagnosing the problems that hinder understanding of the text, or referring to the reasons for rejection, which may include complexity or ambiguity in transferring news.

The creative and the text cooperate to carry the message for the receiver. The basic of the text immortality is to create an aesthetic language with some ambiguity on the condition that the text should not be turned into codes or talismans stripped of smoothness. The main point here is the ambiguity that instigates surprise and astonishment in the receiver.

Conclusion

1- The dichotomy of truth and fact is seen through our mind's thinking but thinkers and researchers do not agree on the limits.
2- Truth and fact are linked by semi-synonymous relations. Both of them refer to the decisive and confirmatory thing, and both are opposed to lying and metaphor that carry references of imaginative things contrary to reality.

3- Fact is the realisation of the mind for reality that is mentally interpreted and conveyed in a form of honest news.

4- The criterion of showing facts and the line between truth and lying is the mind. Many speeches and poetry may shift from their explicit words into their discourse implication depending on the situation. This kind of shift does not mean they come out from truth circle into lying, but it focuses on the role of the mind to clarify references to issue a judgment.

5- Nature has a great role in the creation of the artist, which is related to the components that establish a solid base of the creative process. The talent and culture enable the poet or the author to write about facts in a way that is different from the public.

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