Anatomy of Rhetorical-Lingual Techniques of Masnavi Satire Narrations

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Introduction

Humor and Satire is one of the ancient literary genres that in the last two centuries, with the development of literary criticism studies, the discussion of humor has been raised as a complex and polyhedral sociological, psychoanalytic, epistemological, and linguistic matter. Arthur Asa Berger, a prominent contemporary professor of communication science, from an interdisciplinary perspective regarded humor as a communicative issue which depends on usage of multifaceted literary, logical, identity, and action of routine language. In addition, he has presented a global and general model for humor function based on lingual-semantic structure which includes 45 lingual-rhetorical techniques, and has called it "humorous anatomy". In the present study, humorous narratives of 6 books of Rumi's Masnavi have been studied and analyzed based on Berger's view point.

Research method, background and purpose

This research has been done in a descriptive-analytical manner using library tools. Thus, after referring to relevant theoretical resources, the words humor and satire were defined and their position was expressed

in mystical texts. Then, Burger's anatomical theory was introduced and after that, humorous narratives which have been extracted from 6 books of Masnavi studied and analyzed based on Burger's point of view. So far, Berger theory has not been used in Persian satire research, but many studies have been done in Western research for example, in the study "Developing a Typology of Humor in Audiovisual Media" (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2009), 319 humor commercials have been examined on this basis, and it concluded that of 41 techniques available in the advertisements, 7 techniques were the most used. Mardiana et al. (2016) have examined burger techniques in a comedy television series and concluded language tricks and use of stories with logical techniques are the cause of laughter in this TV series. Therefore, the aim of the present study is investigating the anatomy of 76 humorous narratives of Rumi's Masnavi, one of the greatest works of Persian literature, in order to introduce Berger's theory in Persian satire research to know the most important lingual-semantic techniques used in Masnavi humor; and of four technique types of language, logic, identity and action, which one has the greatest effect on lingual-rhetorical structure of Masnavi humor narratives.

Discussion

Terms such as comedy, satire and humor have different definitions. Since humor means anything that intentionally or unintentionally causes laughter in the audience, and somehow encompasses all other forms of this genre, such as comedy, jokes, humor, etc., Burger also has chosen the word humor for his theory. Looking for a global model for any humorous speech, he found that laugher is created at the linguistic-

semantic level and is mostly the result of purposeful use of rhetorical tools. Burger, like Propp, who was looking for constructive functions of popular narrative textsp, concluded that there were 45 fixed linguistic-rhetorical techniques in various humorous texts that in different combinations made audience laugh. He categorized these 45 techniques into four groups: language, logic, nature (identity), and action. There are 76 short and long humorous narratives in 6 books of Rumi's Masnavi, in which 409 different techniques have been used. Studying the variety and number of these techniques shows that Rumi used less humorous narratives at the beginning of composing Masnavi especially in the first two books but with more artistic processing and technical variety which indicates the spontaneity and interest of the audiences present in Rumi's lesson sessions. The number of humorous narratives in the second book is more than the first, third and fourth books which may be due to the interruption and delay had occurred between composing the first and second books of Masnavi. On this basis, there is state of stability and balance in the third and fourth books; While in the last two books, which were certainly composed long after the beginning of the Masnavi's lesson sessions and his audiences probably might have lost some of their motivation, Rumi has been persuaded that during his speeches and lessons to use more humorous narrations as a tool to attract the audience's attention and create successive variations in his speeches. Although the number of humorous narrations in the last two books is too higher, in average number of techniques used in them are much less also in terms of frequency, 19 repetitive techniques in Masnavi's humor are: Stereotypes, Ignorance, Repetition, Satire, Irony, Embarrassment,

Absurdity, Allusion, Analogy, Before/After, Bombast, Eccentricity, Exaggeration, Repartee, Slapstick, Disappointment, Reversal, Impersonation.

In terms of categorization, the techniques relevant to logic category, such as Absurdity, Coincidence, Analogy, Reversal, Comparison, etc, that understanding of their working are related to the aspect of logical and argumentative thinking, have the greatest share in the structure of Masnavi's humor. In the next level, other language techniques such as Irony, Bombast, Embarrassment, Allusion, Facetiousness, Satire, Repartee, etc, Which are mostly related to the humorous aspects of everyday language using common and understandable rhetorical skills among people.

Conclusion

The present study has two main conclusions: first, introduce the Burger's anatomical theory and a new approach in Persian humor research, based on context-based and linguistic-rhetorical structural techniques. And second, indication the mechanism of Rumi's Masnavi humor. The results showed that what causes laught in Rumi's audience depends on the linguistic-rhetorical structure of these humors and the distinguished usage of these four categories of techniques by Rumi. His specific style is the use of techniques that depend on the reasoning aspect of language and mental operations. From a linguistic point of view, more emphasis is put on simple and conventional techniques such as Exaggeration, Bombast and Repartee. However, it was found that in immoral humorous narrations on the contrary irony and allusion, which are usually used for indirect reference, is applied more.

Keywords

Humor, Rhetorical-lingual structure, Arthur Asa Berger, Rumi's Masnavi.

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