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Discourse on the Logic of Language by M. NourbeSe Philip

Form and content are essential elements of writing that are used in the poem *Discourse on the logic of language* to develop different themes. **This article tries to explain how form and content are used to strengthen the themes of the poem.** The two main themes presented in the poem are an expression of issues and silence. Ideally, the poem concentrates on giving different but firm opinions and thoughts on issues like sexism, racism and the era of colonialism in general. The two themes aim at discussing the issues at hand with the aim of explaining the position of people who fall victim to sexism, racism, and even colonialism. In the poem, there are visible shapes, the configuration of issues and content that integrate to highlight the important themes of the poem. Unlike most poems, *Discourse on the logic of language* has been structured differently, by inter-playing both form and content to develop the themes. For instance, the writer uses the tongue to mean different things as well to pass across different messages. The author structures the use of the tongue to explain many issues that are happening. Also, the use of such a style is unconventional, as well as significant because it helps capture the attention of the reader. The content of the whole poem carries a lot of weight especially concerning the critical issues and themes. The use of short sentences as well as the idea of being blunt tries to explain the theme of expression in a transparent manner. In the poem, the author uses the form regarding language to explain how the language of English qualifies to be the father tongue, and thus develops the issue of colonialism. Also, the poem is written by use of form and

content to explain the sad and painful experiences that people were subjected to, in a situation where language silencing was common. Additionally, the form of using the tongue goes ahead to explain the anguish and hardships that people in the colonial period had to face because they did not have a mother tongue by which they would communicate with.

*Discourse on the logic of language* is not an ordinary poem in many senses. The unusual part of the poem is the many texts that draw the attention of a reader. Ideally, the texts are all unique, begging for the attention of the reader simultaneously. That is a form of writing that develops on the themes of the poem. The content of the text is also unusual. There are texts of stuttering nature that make the poem look different. The stutters are backed up by stories about a mother and her child, with texts in italic that explain the situation of slaves at that time. Such content contributes significantly to the different themes of the poem. In the poem, there is a narrator who is not lucky enough to have a mother tongue. The speaker, therefore, has no choice but to speak out with a language that they do not understand. The language leaves the speaker “dump-tongued.” The idea of the poem is to use the stuttering as a form of instrument that explains why the narrator was silenced, thus develop the theme of silence and expression. In the poem, there is an element of pain. The narrator of the poem finds it hard to express herself in the language of English. For the speaker, English is a language that is foreign. Additionally, English is a language that was forced to them in a violent manner, thus casting shadows of pain. Such content is only used by the author of the poem to amplify the themes of silence and expression that are dominant. The author configures the struggles of speaking through the stutters. The stutters show the pain and effort that speaking English brings to the narrator. She can not tell her story in English and maintain her terms of information delivery. Circumstances force her to speak it, though. The English language is used as a symbol and form of racism, sexism and western culture. The colonialists imposed the language of English on the speaker, and they had the tendency of cutting out

the tongues of slaves. Such issues configure situations that explain and develop the themes of silencing, expression, and colonialism.

The idea of using intertexts has a feel of domination both literally and culturally. All authors who use the intertextual concept show their mastery of literature. The intertextual composition of *Discourse on the logic of language* helps develop the different meanings of “logic.” The style enables the reader to understand the different meanings of a word or situation, and how the word or situation is used. The word logic has different meanings in the poem. The author uses the word logic to give different perspectives on various situations. It is clear that a person reads a poem or an article to seek different meanings that are hidden in the work. *Discourse on the logic of language* has different meanings, and it is up to the reader to derive the meanings from work. One meaning that “logic” represents is the idea of the speaker using a language that is unfamiliar, yet try to make it logical. The speaker in the poem clearly struggles to make sense with the language of English, but she carries the message across somehow. Logic can be derived by the reader in this situation, and it depends on how the reader understands the meaning of certain words. Poems are usually structured from different traditions and cultures. The logic comes in when the author tries to incorporate different cultures in a situation that is not suitable for either of the people who belong to different cultures.

### **Conclusion**

The texts used in the poem may not make sense to some people, but there is a logic behind them. The stutters and half words make logic concerning how they have been used and the situation they were used. Ideally, the texts used in the poem have an apparent effect, primarily because they are used to evoke specific emotions. When a person reads the poem, they find themselves in a situation where they have to relate to the text, giving it logic altogether. In the poem, the process of finding meaning in the lines only provokes logical thoughts. The author of the poem has done well in making logic out of situations that may present themselves as illogical. For instance, he uses the idea of stutters to explain

the hardships and pain that the woman had to go through. A person who understands that situation will make logic out of the texts. Therefore, the use of intertexts has proved successful in the poem

*Discourse on the logic of language.* A reader can derive meaning from a situation and a text.