



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 2, Number 2 (June, 2026)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

Website: <https://jppssuniuyo.com/> Email: jppssuniuyo@gmail.com

Received: April 30, 2026 Accepted: June 28, 2026 Published: June 30, 2026

Citation: John, Elijah O. & Edet, Caleb U. Logic, Language and Orality: A Philosophical Exposition." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 2 (2): 63-73.

Article

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LOGIC, LANGUAGE AND ORALITY: A PHILOSOPHICAL EXPOSITION

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Abstract

This research provides a critical philosophical exposition of the interplay between logic, language, within the medium of orality. Traditionally, the evolution of formal logic has been inextricably linked to the "literate revolution," leading to an epistemological bias that often equates rigorous reasoning exclusively with written, symbolic notation. This paper challenges that assumption by examining the "psychodynamics of orality" and the inherent logical structures embedded within spoken discourse. The study investigates how oral traditions, specifically proverbs, parables, and communal rhetoric, function as sophisticated logical systems. The methodology employed is a comparative analysis of "natural logic" versus "formal logic," utilizing the Nigerian socio-political landscape as a primary case study. By deconstructing indigenous proverbs into formal categorical syllogisms, the research demonstrates that orality is not a pre-logical state but a condensed, situational manifestation of universal logical principles. The study further explores the concept of "Secondary Orality" in the digital age, suggesting that modern communication is facilitating a hybrid return to oral-logical patterns. The paper concludes that a holistic understanding of logic requires a reconciliation of the "living word" with the "written code," advocating for an inclusive epistemology that recognizes the validity of diverse communicative modes in the pursuit of philosophical truth.

Keywords: Logic, Orality, Language, Formal Logic, Natural Logic, Secondary Orality.

Introduction

The tripartite relationship between logic, language, and orality forms the bedrock of human cognitive and communicative evolution. While logic provides the structural principles of valid

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reasoning, and language serves as its primary medium of expression, the dimension of orality introduces a dynamic, lived context to the logic. Historically, the transition from oral traditions to literate cultures marked a fundamental shift in how human beings conceptualize truth and consistency. When a society moves from oral to literate, "truth" shifts from being a lived, shared experience to an objective, static object. In the classical sense of formal logic, logic was often seen as being static, symbolic system, yet its roots are deeply embedded in spoken words. This explains why Aristotle asserts that "spoken words are the symbols of mental experience and written words are the symbols of spoken words" (Aristotle, *De Interpretation*, 16a). However, orality has been given lesser or no attention in logical discourse. This is resulted from the reasoning that orality is sometimes subject to additions, subtractions, exaggeration and distortion. Consequently, it is difficult to deduce truth from orality (Uduigwonen, 36). By so doing, considering literature and documentation upon which formalism is assessed, as the prerequisite for logic. Resulting from this, logic became a strict conformity to formal rules and principles as properly documented and traceable to Aristotle, hence, replacing natural logic with formal logic.

This exposition seeks to explore the tension between the formal rigidity of logical systems and the fluid, contextual nature of oral discourse. It investigates how pre-literate societies utilize "natural logic" that is inherent and manifested in oral traditions like proverbs, riddles, and communal narratives as a legitimate form of philosophical inquiry. By examining the psychodynamic of orality; the distinct ways human beings think, process information, and organize their consciousness in a culture where writing does not exist., alongside the shift from orality to formalism, this study aims to bridge the gap between abstract analytical structures of formal logic and the vibrant, auditory reality of human communication through natural logic.

Understanding Logic

It is pertinent, for the sake of this research, to understand logic beyond the popular conception of it being "the study of the rules and principles used to distinguish correct reasoning from incorrect reasoning" (Copi & Cohen, 3). Logic should be understood within the context of its original meaning, one that allows its scope to cover all forms of reasoning, whether natural or systematic, informal or formal. This does not in any ways equate logic with neuroscience and psychology because while neuroscience and psychology focus on how the brain functions as biological and behavioral sciences, logic is a normative science that evaluate the correctness and incorrectness of human thoughts whether formally or informally.

Originally, the word logic is derived from the word *logos*, which has a variety of translations, such as speech, discourse, reason, argument, and so on. The various etymological meaning of 'logos' do not obfuscate the meaning of logic in anyway. Considering their interrelatedness, it can be safely stated that these various meaning enrich the understanding of what logic is; the study of how human reason correctly.... (Darty, 18). From its etymological meaning, logic encompasses rational exercises and is expressible through speeches, oral discussions, as well as argumentation. This is possibly why Dennis Igwe, asserted that "logic as a branch of philosophy is concerned with reasoning, and human beings have the inborn capacity to reason" (71). This assertion takes logical discussion beyond literacy, it implies that by virtue of the fact that we are human beings, we naturally have the capacity of being logical irrespective of whether we are literates or not. Consequently, it follows that the origin of logic can be traced to human rationality. However, this kind of logic has a sharp distinction from what we know as formal logic that is traceable

to Aristotle. It is safe to say that this kind of logic predates formal logic, and since it is traceable to human rationality, it is natural, hence, natural logic.

The Structure of Natural/Informal Logic

Natural logic is a kind of logic that is grounded on common sense reasoning, persuasive speech, and dialectics. It is basically expressed in ordinary language rather than symbolic or structured forms. Natural logic is defined by the effort to perform valid reasoning directly on the surface forms of natural language, rather than translating sentences into a separate, formal symbolic language (MacCartney and Manning 140). To buttress this, Walter Ong believes that natural logic is situational rather than abstract. In his seminal work: *Orality and Literacy*, Walter Ong argues that "logic" as we define it today is actually a product of literacy. He suggests that people in purely oral cultures do not use formal syllogistic reasoning (like: "All men are mortal; Socrates is a man..."); and this is because logic is tied to practical use in an oral culture. In formal logic, "if all bears in the north are white and Novaya Zemlya is a place in the north, then the question is: what colours are the bears there?" A person with a background in the formal logic will respond: white, however, someone in oral culture will respond: "I don't know, I've only seen brown bears". The response given by the person in the oral culture of logic depends on his interactions or experience with bears (Ong 52). This is because natural logic uses clusters of ideas (epithets) rather than analytical breakdowns. In this kind of reasoning, knowledge is gained through personal interactions and oral performance rather than silent deduction.

Before the "logic" of Aristotle, natural logic was rhythmic and aggregative. In oral cultures, you cannot "look up" information, so logic had to be stored in memorable clusters (Ong 37). Problems were solved through characters and actions, not through definitions. Luria believes that logic was restricted to personal experience. This is because for the oral mind, logic is restricted to personal experience. To answer white would be seen as a guess or a lie because the speaker has not seen the bear. This is perhaps the reason Eric Havelock reasoned that natural logic (orality) is dynamic, active and involves the speakers, while literate logic (formal logic) is static, objective and separate the knower from the known (Havelock, 197). This implies that what we call logic today is actually literate logic, while natural logic is the older, more grounded way of thinking that relies on social context.

To say that natural logic is grounded on oral traditions without depending on literal way of communication does not mean that people that practice orality are unwise or unenlightened or illiterates. To be literate in an oral sense means mastering formulas, proverbs, and rhythms that made information sticky (Havelock 70). Scores of great and wise men that have contributed immensely to the development of knowledge in the world used oral way of communication and their teachings travel from generations to generations. It is pertinent to note that early Greek thinkers often practiced natural logic through dialectic - a method of oral argumentation involving questioning and answering in order to test ideas. For instance, Socrates used the Socratic method by asking a series of questions to expose contradictions in a person's beliefs, while Plato used dialogues to explore philosophical concepts through debate. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates expresses his preference for oral reasoning (natural logic) over written reasoning (formal logic) as he famously criticized writing, arguing that it would destroy memory and create a show of wisdom without the reality of it. It is worth noting that although their methods involved reasoning, they did not yet provide formal rules for valid arguments. Their reasoning was natural.

Aside from the Western tradition, there are important records of logical thinking in the East and in Africa before or around the time of Aristotle. Like the West, both the East

(particularly India and China) and Africa were conversant with oral reasoning (natural logic) before the advent of formal logic. For instance, in ancient India, logical thinking existed long before the development of fully formal logical systems. Early Vedic and philosophical texts show evidence of argumentation, dialectics, and reasoning about knowledge and reality. Philosophical reflection on reasoning was closely linked with questions about knowledge (epistemology), metaphysics, and debate practices (Gillon, n/p). These early traditions demonstrate the presence of natural or informal logic, where arguments were expressed in ordinary language and used in philosophical discussions rather than in symbolic structures.

In many African societies, the traditions of reasoning were developed within oral culture rather than written treatises. Logical thinking was expressed through proverbs, folk wisdom, storytelling, and communal debate. African proverbs often contain conditional reasoning, analogical inference, and deductive patterns. Scholars argue that these forms of reasoning demonstrate the presence of informal logical structures embedded in language and culture (Etieyibo, 34). For example, the logical function of proverbs has been studied in works analyzing reasoning patterns in African languages and sayings. These studies show that African linguistic traditions contain identifiable logical principles such as disjunction, inference, and evaluative reasoning (Lajul, 58).

Before formalism, logic existed mainly as natural/informal logic. People used logical thinking in everyday arguments, discussions, and philosophical reflections, but there was no formal system for evaluating arguments. Before the systematic development of formal logic by Aristotle, the nature of logic was largely informal, intuitive, and embedded in ordinary reasoning and philosophical discourse. It did not yet exist as a distinct and structured discipline with clearly defined rules. It was grounded on common sense reasoning, persuasive speech, and dialectics. This kind of reasoning was expressed in ordinary language rather than symbolic or structured forms.

History and Development of Formal Logic

The shift from informal (oral) logic to formal (literate) logic is one of the most profound transformations in human consciousness. It is not merely a change in "how we talk," but a restructuring of the human mind itself; a transition from situational reasoning to abstract categorization. This shift was catalyzed by the technologizing of words, the invention and internalization of writing. The shift began in Ancient Greece between the 8th and 4th centuries BCE. Before this, logic was embedded in Homeric orality, where truth was found in the rhythmic, memorable performance of tradition. Unlike earlier scripts, the Greek alphabet was fully phonetic, making it easier to read and abstracting the sound from the meaning (Havelock 115). Once words were frozen on a page, they could be looked at, analyzed, and defined. You no longer needed a story to remember a concept; you could have a definition.

Despite the discovery of literacy, logic was still used as a natural way of reasoning until Aristotle's syllogism. Aristotle developed syllogism, which is the ultimate formal tool for understanding reality, because it works regardless of the content (Aristotle, 12). Syllogism is "a deductive argument consisting of two premises and a conclusion" (Darty, 132). Syllogism resulted to a formal shift from natural reasoning. For instance, where natural/oral reasoning would say: "I know John is mortal because I saw him die" (experience-based). Formal/literate reasoning will say: "All men are mortal; John is a man; therefore, John is mortal" (rule-based). This move allowed logic to become autonomous. A syllogism can be "true" even if it describes something that does not exist, a concept that is often incomprehensible to purely oral minds (Luria 110). While Aristotle founded formal logic through the development of

sylogism, formal logic did not become the dominant way of thinking for the masses until the age of printing press. The presence of the printing press made logic to become a subject studied in a book, divorced from the art of conversation. This led to the age where reason was defined entirely as the ability to follow formal, mathematical steps (Ong 118).

Logic as a natural activity lost its foundations upon the development of formal logic by Aristotle. Formal logic arises from man's desire to study how humans can reason correctly and construct valid arguments (Darty, 18). This led to the structuring and formalization of thoughts to determine the validity of human reasoning which is believed to be in conformity to the laws of thought. From this, traditional logic was developed. Logical systems in traditional logic were in fidelity to the laws of thought upon which the bivalent principle was developed. The principle of bivalence states that "every declarative sentence expressing a proposition have one of two truth values: either true or false" (Edet, 112). It is pertinent to note that the bivalent principle reflects the metaphysics of the West, specifically, Aristotle's metaphysics. His two truth-value reflects his dualistic conception of reality. Hence logic becomes a tool used to study and understand reality. If logic is a tool used to study and understand reality and the reality of a people reflects their worldview, can logic, in this sense, be seen as universal? Considering that the culture of a people reflects their worldview and there is plurality of cultures in human environments, and this worldview forms their metaphysics, is it correct to say that metaphysics is culture bound? If metaphysics is culture bound, is there a universal tool for studying and understanding different metaphysics? Or does it imply that each metaphysics has unique tool that reflects its worldview? If metaphysics is culture bound and logic is the tool used in studying and understanding metaphysics then logic (particularly formal logic) is culture bound.

This reasoning draw a sharp distinction between natural logic and formal logic. This brief overview shows the transition of logic from psychologism (logic as a mental process) to formalism (logic as a formal representation). In regards to the question concerning the nature of logic. It is safe to say that logic as a mental process (natural logic) is universal in nature, whereas, logic as a formal representation (formal logic) is relativistic and, arguably, culture bound. The emphasis here is to show that logic is not enclosed within formalism. Neither is it expressed only through syllogisms or other logical rules and principles. Logic encompasses all forms of rational discourse whether written or spoken, systematic/formal or natural, insofar it involves reasoning. Hence, logic can be defined as the act of reasoning that is expressed through language.

What is Language?

Language is the vehicle that conveys meaning. It is a system of communication that uses symbols, sounds, or gestures to convey meaning and express thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Hornby defined language as "a system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country or area" (875). Language has a complex structure, including grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. It uses words, sounds, and gestures to represent concepts and ideas. The meaning of words or concepts in language is often influenced by cultural, social, and historical context. Ozumba posits that language is both an art and a science. It is an art because it requires some creative skills and the ability to weave ideas together into a well-woven network of thought. Language consists of words, and words are carriers of ideas and thought. And these make meaning, whether spoken or written. Language is a science because it is not fortuitous but systematic, coherent, and follows a discoverable pattern with roles and expectations (2004: 14). Language is a fundamental part

of human identity and culture, enabling us to connect, share knowledge, and build communities. Philosophically, it is the means of communicating knowledge.

Language is very instrumental to philosophy and it provides the raw material for reasoning. Oluwagbemi-Jacob has this in mind when she posits that "there is a link between logic and language. This linkage is buttressed by the fact that the logician is concerned with statements used in argumentation" (2). Language as communication is done through many means including writing and orality. Historically, it is arguable that communication began with orality, writing was adopted in the age of literacy. Writing has to do with the documentation of information and ideas through the use of writing materials so as to enable one to revisit the documented information or ideas for learning and communication sake. McLuhan claims that the invention of the phonetic alphabet (writing) acted as a "technological break" that destroyed the tribal world because writing forces the mind to translate sounds into static, visual symbols. This shifts the human sensory balance (the ratio) from the ear to the eye. Reading becomes a solitary, linear act. It allows for the development of detachment and objectivity; concepts that McLuhan argues are impossible in a purely oral culture (132). The "literate man" is an individualized man, separated from the collective "tribal" web. However, it is worth noting that the relationship between language and logic is not restricted to formal reasoning, it also involves orality since orality is consistent with informal logic.

What is Orality?

Orality is an ancient phenomenon that continues to the present. Before writing was developed, cultures passed along their traditions, such as history, identity, and religion, through stories, proverbs, poems, songs, riddles, etc. These are all oral art forms; that is, they are spoken, sung or chanted. They were (and still are) often woven into ceremonies, dramas and rites of passage. Purely oral societies pass along everything that matters from one generation to another without putting anything into writing. Orality refers to the act or quality of ideas being passed down or communicated through spoken language, rather than written texts. It highlights the importance of verbal storytelling and tradition in cultures. Orality refers to cultures or contexts, where communication is entirely spoken. It is a kind of communication process where information is conveyed orally. Orality is also known as oral tradition. Uduigwonen asserted that a tradition is oral if it has no written literature (38). *The Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Vol. 3)* defines oral tradition as "the process of handing down information, opinions, beliefs and customs, by word of mouth; for example: transmission of knowledge and situations through successive generations without written instruction" (3).

Orality as a tradition predates the age of literacy. It is the means whereby knowledge, beliefs and cultural heritage was shared among members of a community as well as the transmission of these values to the next generations. Philosophically, orality refer to the transmission of arguments, ideas, or traditions through spoken discourse, as opposed to written texts. This can impact how ideas are preserved, debated, and understood. Logic is embedded in oral expressions in the informal form as it is a fact in Indian, Chinese and African communities. McLuhan describes traditional oral cultures as tribal. In this state, the dominant sense is hearing, which is omni-directional and emotionally charged. He argues that unlike visual space, which is linear and focused, acoustic space is a world of many centers. Information is received from all directions simultaneously, leading to a deeply communal and interconnected social structure (142). He believes that because knowledge exists only in memory and must be shared through speech, oral societies are highly cohesive.

There is no "private" or "detached" point of view; to know something is to be involved with others who know it. This implies that the insight of oral tradition is compelling, educative, practical and a lived life experience. To buttress this, Walter Ong and Marshall McLuhan argue that oral thought is more "aggregative" (using clusters of ideas) and "agonistic" (combining knowledge with human struggle) rather than analytic and abstract. This implies that while orality is characterized by knowledge derived from human existential struggle (nature) and is common to human lived experience, literacy (formal logic) is a kind of reasoning that follows abstract principles with emphasis on analysis rather than lived experience.

The Philosophical Tension

Philosophy is derived from two Greek words, *Philos* and *Sophia*, meaning love and wisdom respectively. Philosophy is therefore defined literally as love of wisdom. This implies that a philosopher is one who naturally loves wisdom. The love of wisdom makes one desire for knowledge. It could be knowledge of the environment, knowledge of the self, knowledge of existence and so on. It creates in humans mind, the curiosity to know and make sense of the universe, specifically, the environment as a social being. In line with this reasoning, Ozumba asserts that a philosopher is one who "loves to know what he should know, strives to know it and believes that success in some form of knowing is possible" (2014: 17). This curiosity arises from the fact that humans are naturally rational. Humans by nature have the capacity to reason, this explains the ability to make choices and advancement from the stone age to the age of civilization. Hence, humans prior to the invention of formal logic operated on the basis of natural/informal logic. Accordingly, Okafor maintains that logic in whatever culture is concerned with the critical and constructive business that can be considered in terms of tactical human skills or creativity (4).

Natural logic refers to the kind of reasoning that occurs in ordinary human thinking and everyday language. It has to do with how people naturally argue, reason, and draw conclusions without using strict symbolic systems. For instance, it is a natural knowledge that "All humans need food to survive". If there is a human whose name is John, natural logic makes us know that John needs food to survive. This reasoning occurs naturally in human thoughts even without knowledge of logical symbols. Prior to the literacy era of formal logic, logic was a lived experience and embedded in the people's way of life. This explains why valid logical inferences are deducible from cultural values and oral traditions like proverbs, folklores, myths, dialogue, songs, chants, argument and so on. However, many criticism have been leveled against the assumptions of logic in orality. Some scholars strongly questioned and deny the presence of logic in orality, especially in Africa and some non-western context. One of the most influential arguments is that logic, properly speaking, requires explicit formulation, systematization, and written expression. Since orality lack symbolic notation and codified rules, they are said to fall short of genuine logic. For instance, Paulin J. Hountondji argues that what is often called "African philosophy" in oral cultures is better described as collective worldview or ethnophilosophy, not philosophy in the strict, critical sense. According to him, philosophy (and by extension logic) must involve individual, critical, and written reflection rather than anonymous oral tradition (orality) (Hountondji 63). This imply that orality may contain wisdom, but not rigorous logical analysis.

Critics also argue that oral traditions (orality) are communal and uncritical, whereas logic requires individual critical analysis and argument evaluation. In support of this, Marcien Towa maintains that authentic philosophy involves critical questioning and rational autonomy, which he believes are often absent in traditional oral systems that emphasize

authority, tradition, and consensus (Towa 27). For him, without systematic criticism and argument testing, there is no true logical activity. This is an unacceptable attempt to limit logic to formalism. Another argument is that orality relies heavily on myth, religion, and authority, rather than on demonstrative and systematic reasoning. Robin Horton compares African traditional thought (African logic) to scientific thinking but concludes that traditional systems are “closed” belief systems, meaning they rely on accepted frameworks rather than critical testing of alternatives (Horton 155). This follows from the reasoning that, if beliefs are not open to revision through formal argument, then logical reasoning is limited or absent. He feels reasoning should be measured and determined by established logical inferences and principles, however, this does not necessarily follow in a system where logic is a lived experience. That a logic does not follow a static, horizontal and rigorous pattern does not imply that reasoning is limited or absent.

Some scholars argue that orality do not develop abstract, generalizable principles, which are essential for logic. For instance, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl famously argued that so-called “primitive” societies operate with a “pre-logical mentality”, where thought is governed by mystical participation rather than logical consistency (Lévy-Bruhl 78). He feels that without abstraction and consistency, reasoning cannot qualify as logic. His reasoning was, perhaps, highly influenced by western formal logic. Another criticism that seems more peculiar with orality and easily reference is the argument that writing is necessary for the development of complex logical systems, because it allows for preservation of arguments, comparison of ideas, as well as systematic refinement. For instance, Jack Goody argues that literacy enables the development of formal reasoning and analytic thought, while oral cultures tend to rely on memory, repetition, and formulaic expression rather than analytic abstraction (Goody 37). He simply believes that without writing, logic cannot develop into a self-conscious discipline. This explains why critics often dismiss proverbs and other oral expressions as rhetorical or poetic, rather than logical. They usually feel that proverbs are ambiguous and context-dependent, that there do not follow clear inferential rules, and that they can support contradictory conclusions. Thus, they lack the precision required for logical analysis. The question is; is the substance of logic in the writing or in human nature as a rational person? Is logic a mental process or a formal representation expressed in writing? To what extent does the medium of communication (oral vs. written) determine the structure of a logical argument? It is worthy of note and emphasis that oral traditions (orality) do contain implicit logical structures, as such, informal logic does not require symbolic notation since reasoning can exist in contextual, analogical, and narrative forms.

The denial of logic in orality rests mainly on a narrow conception of logic; one that equates logic with formal, written, and systematic structures. Whereas logic goes beyond formalism and it is grounded on rationality as the reasoning is constructive and coherent. This explains why it is possible for someone who has not received any form of literacy education to still reason correctly, constructively and coherently. This is evident in our contemporary society, especially within the Nigeria context, where you will see men, woman and children in the interior part of rural areas, with no exposure to literacy, yet, have very high sense of logic expressed in their tradition, lifestyle as well as their relationship with others. This is possible because as humans, they use natural logic, grounded in their nature as humans and this logic is usually transmitted through oral traditions such as proverbs, adages, folklores and so on.

This tradition usually contains intrinsic logic which they learn from and use to form their body of knowledge. For instance, consider the Ibibio adage: "ekpu ufok ase kod ekpu

anwa udia" which is interpreted as "it is a rat in a particular house (environment) that usually invite another rat (from elsewhere) for meal". This adage is usually used when an incident of robbery and related crimes is being committed. It follows the reasoning that robbers do not rob a house or an environment without knowing or being familiar with the house or environment. There must be at least one member of the gang who knows the house or environment very well. It is usually an insider that invites outsiders by giving out information, for such operation to be carried out. The logic in this adage is natural and follows a lived experience rather than conformity to formal rules and inferences. Another example is seen in the Nigerian political language where a candidate's legitimacy is often established not through statistical data, but through the mastery of proverbial logic. Proverbs serve as enthymeme where the audience supplies the missing premise. This occurs when a politician uses a proverb like "The energetic hunter does not need a trumpet to announce his kill". At this point, they are employing a mnemonic logical structure that bypasses formal analysis and appeals to communal common sense.

Towards a Synthetic Study

The focus of this research is not to critique formal logic (grounded on literacy) nor to elevate natural logic (grounded on orality) above formal logic. It is an attempt or a call for a proper recognition of both literacy and orality as acceptable means of doing and conveying logic; whether natural or formal, from one generation to another. It frowns at the narrow conception of logic; one that reduces logic to formal, written, and systematic structures. There is the need to understand that the scope of logic goes beyond its conformity to formal rules, inferences and principles. It extends to discourse on natural reasoning which are heavily dependent on context, tone and lived-experienced, insofar it is constructive, meaningful and coherence. By implication, to say that someone is logical should not only imply that the person is literate and the reasoning conforms to formal structure, it should also imply that the person's reasoning is constructive and meaningful, hence, flows from natural logic. In other words, logic - whether in a formal setting or in an oral tradition - provides man with the rules of correct or rational thinking; that means logic helps man to think more critically, constructively, persuasively, rationally, productively and/or reasonably (Ozumba and John, 11).

This work reemphasizes Marshall McLuhan and Walter J. Ong's theories of secondary orality as applied in modern reasoning. Secondary orality refers to oral communication that depends on writing, print, and electronic media. Unlike traditional (primary) oral cultures, this form of orality is not purely spoken, it is shaped and sustained by technologies such as radio, television, phones, and the internet. It relies on electronic media (e.g., radio broadcasts, podcasts, social media voice notes). McLuhan reasons that electronic media collapses space and time, bringing back the omni-directional flow of information. We are becoming detribalized, moving away from the detached literacy of the book and back toward the high-involvement, emotional intensity of the spoken word (now delivered via screens). The disclosure established by this synthesis allows for a broader consideration of logical assessment since rational discourse has gone beyond mere conformity to formal rules and dependent on context and lived experience, but a cross-functionality of both. By implication, an oral traditional proverbs or adage can be interpreted to fit into a former structure and maintaining the same meaning. Consequently, it allows for the expression of logic by both literates and illiterates and can be communicated through local dialects.

To demonstrate the philosophical bridge between the "spoken word" (informal logic) and "formal logic," we can take a common Nigerian proverb and deconstruct it using the

tools of Western analytical logic. This exercise proves that orality is not the absence of logic, but rather the condensation of it. Consider the following Nigerian proverbs: "The person whose house is on fire does not hunt for rats". In a traditional setting, this is used to rebuke someone who is focusing on trivialities (the rats), while a major crisis (the fire) threatens his existence or foundation. It is an enthymeme; a syllogism where the major premise is so culturally obvious that it is left unsaid. To see the "logic" within the "language," we can translate this oral wisdom into a categorical syllogism:

- i. All rational agents are agents that prioritize the preservation of their primary sources of security over minor gains.
- ii. Agents that prioritize the chasing of rats over their houses while on fire are not rational agents.
- iii. Therefore, agents that prioritize the chasing of rats over their houses while on fire are not agents that prioritize the preservation of their primary sources of security over minor gains.

This shows that oral cultures do not lack logic; they simply value economy of expression. The logic is embedded in the language, and it is the job of the philosopher to extract it. For instance, In the Nigerian political context, a leader who ignores an economic crisis to focus on minor political squabbles is "logically inconsistent" according to this proverb. The community uses the proverb as a logical yardstick to measure the leader's sanity or competence. Additionally, the rise of social media in Nigeria (X/Twitter, WhatsApp, TikTok) has created a new form of orality where political violence (vigorous digital debate) uses written text that functions like spoken insults or praise-singing. For instance, in modern Nigerian politics, a meme or a short viral video clip acts as a "digital proverb." It carries a heavy logical weight, often disproving an opponent's entire argument through a single, shared cultural reference. From this digital proverbs, the knowledge often communicated are clear and logically vested.

Conclusion

The philosophical exposition of logic, language, and orality reveals that human reason is not a static, monolithic entity, but a dynamic process deeply influenced by its medium of expression (whether oral or written). While the literate revolution provides the tools for abstract, scientific, and formal logic by allowing for the dissection of thought into symbolic notation, it also risked distancing logic from its foundational roots in human dialogue and communal experience. As this study has demonstrated, orality is not a pre-logical state of being; rather, it possesses its own unique psychodynamics characterized by situational relevance, mnemonic precision, and a holistic approach to truth. By reintegrating the awareness of the spoken word into our understanding of language and logic, we move toward a more inclusive epistemology. We recognize that whether expressed through a formal syllogism on a page or a proverbial synthesis in a village square, the essence of logic remains the human quest for coherence, meaning, and valid connection. In an era of increasing digital secondary orality, the challenge for the modern philosopher is to maintain the rigor of literate logic without losing the vital, interactive energy of the spoken word.

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