

1) Intro: - Logic: relationships between entities, events, actions and attributes  
- attempt to systematically describe systems  
- language also used to describe the world  
- question: is the world of speakers of other languages different from ours? Is thus their logic different?

2) Example: cause and effect (drop a stone); laws of nature the same; social responses may vary due to cultural idiosyncraties

3) Understanding logic and language as synonyms: flawed concept (language only a way of communicating information; logic a way of analysing processes in the surrounding world); different ways of expressing does not entail fundamentally different reasoning

4) Logic shows features inherent to all languages described by Oshima & Hogue (coordinators, indirect approaches)

5) Concl.: concept of ethnical varieties of logic as such is nonsensical, ways of expression and cause and effect in societies may vary, however; must be dismissed

The peoples on planet Earth form by no means a homogenous group. Our cultures differ from one another, we have different concepts and ideas, different ways of life, priorities and moral views. One question pertaining to this abundance of differences and varieties is clearly the depth to which we differ from one another in our understanding of the world. Dufrenne (1963) claimed that a person's logic depended on their nationality, i. e. a Greek Aristotle necessarily developed a different system of logic than a Mexican would have done. Now, this claim must not stand unchallenged. Firstly, what one may understand by the term logic is simply a way of systematically describing systems, i.e., for instance, relationships between entities, events, actions and attributes. Although this definition may be regarded as shallow and imprecise, it will suffice for our purpose to discuss the issue of nationality and logic. Secondly, we need to find an element that combines logic and nationality. According to Oshima & Hogue (1983), this clearly has to be language, as languages are our means to describe the world and communicate information. Oshima and Hogue thus see a connection between logic and language that goes beyond a mere resemblance, but claim that both are well-nigh identical. In this essay I intend to show that this concept is flawed and that logic is by no means a national issue.

Firstly, we will shortly discuss the issue of cause and effect. If I drop a stone, gravity will cause it to drop to the surface of the earth, unless a black hole should appear in orbit. This is understood in Great Britain as well as in Mexico or Japan, and every Mexican or Japanese could deduce from their knowledge about physics that this will happen again and again, based on nothing less than logical thinking. At least rudimentary knowledge of the laws of nature enables everyone on this planet with the necessary intellectual capacity to come up with the same answer, and inventions and machines all around the globe are based on this concept that gravity will pull objects towards a larger object. Thus, we have a fairly clear indicator that concepts of logic cannot be entirely different, since cause and effect exist everywhere, and the concept of cause and effect is used everywhere on the planet. What may differ according to cultural idiosyncrasies, however, is the social response to certain events and actions. Yet, these are just as well predictable by individuals familiar with the society. Familiarity and knowledge are prerequisites of logical thinking of any kind,

since it makes little sense and is downright impossible to understand a system without any information pertaining to it.

This leads us to the, fundamentally flawed, assumption that language and logic are the same. Languages are arbitrary systems, developed to communicate information among members of a language community. Logic is, however, a basic necessity to survive in a potentially hostile world. If one sees a predator, and knows it is a predator, one can deduce one is in danger; whether one should decide to communicate that, or in which language, is a horse of a different colour. Language can be employed to use logic, but even animals that may lack a complex language, or a language at all, may display logical thinking. Should language determine one's logical thinking, many communities may not have survived as their way of assessing the world would have been quite different. However, a stone will fall to the ground, whether the person who drops it speaks English or Suaheli; and bot individuals are likely to know this will happen.

Thirdly, logic shows traces of all the languages and nationalities that are discussed by Oshima & Hogue. Coordinators exist just as well in logic as does linear thinking or indirect approaches (if, for instance, an event is broken down into various smaller events and then discussed in detail. An English writer, in contrast to Oshima & Hogue's claims, may also reason that entity A is dangerous and exit B is safe and thus deduce that leaving through exit B while entity A is in the room may be advisable. This simple example shows features of coordinating information and embedding it into a linear sequence. Had the claim that language is logic be correct, a native speaker of English would be quite incapable of drawing this conclusion.