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# **A STUDY OF GALBRAITH'S DEICTIC SHIFT THEORY IN "THE DREAM OF A RIDICULOUS MAN": A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS**

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<b>Abstract:</b>	<b>Keyword</b>
<p>The deictic shift theory supposes that fictional narration has various deictic fields as Galbraith (1995) explained. Deictic fields indicate a set of deictic expressions associated with a character, narrator, spatial, temporal and social relations. The study hypothesizes that readers can transit from one situation to another by shifting the deictic expressions. Thus, it indicates a psychological orientation to interpret the characters and events in the fictional world of the narrative text. The study aims to investigate and identify the deictic dimensions, identifying the most frequent deictic expression reflects the viewpoint in the narrative text. The results of the study show that the most prominent frequent deictic expression, namely: personal deictic shift which shows the narrator's inner struggle against the world he lives in, then when he moves to the new world (in his dream) , there is a deictic shift which clarifies the social-relation with the other people in the new society. The personal deictic shift manifests the narrator's new viewpoint towards the real world. Spatial and temporal deictic are closely related with the personal deictic expression.</p>	deictic shift, personal deictic shift, spatial deictic shift, temporal deictic shift

## **Introduction**

As human speech is realized in a certain circumstances, conditions and environments, human beings utilize the language in order to establish intercourse with one another. Thus, the main function of the language is to transfer a certain piece of information. However, this research tackles with deictic shift theory as a way of exposition of how the reader of the text takes a cognitive attitude within the world of the narrative and interprets the story from such perspective. This cognitive framing represents an essential part of the reader's involvement in narrative, in which the reader forms a story world by interpreting the deictic clues which are found in the text. In addition, deictic shift theory represents a set of assumptions about readers and stories that arose from the research on the function of deixis

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in fictional narratives. Studying deixis will make it easier to describe the function of pronoun, personal, demonstrative, time, and lexical futures which connect utterances with spatial and temporal relations and help capture reference meanings that include who, where, and when the utterance is uttered.

## 1.2 Hypothesis of the Study

The study hypothesises that readers involved in narrative work, comprehend and interpret a literary text by being familiar with more than one deictic expression. The study indicates a psychological perspective to explain and trace characters and events in the fictional world of narrative texts through the deictic shift. It hypothesizes that readers encode the deictic references to interpret the narrative text from various viewpoints.

## 1.3 The objectives of the study

The study aims at:

1. Investigating the deictic dimensions in Dostoevsky's "The dream of a ridiculous man"
2. Interpreting the possibility of readers to involve in the world of the text when they read it.
3. Moving from one position to another within the story world through the various deictic references in the text.
4. Classifying and identifying the most frequent deictic expression and its effect in the literary text,

## 2. Deictic Shift Theory

The reader, according to deictic shift theory, constructs a mental model of the story world and then transfers the deictic centre into that model. That is, the reader responds to the textual clues presented by the author throughout the reading process to create a deictic coordinate system in the narrative world. The reader then continues to reconstruct and reorient the deictic center as cued by the text throughout the course of the narrative. With respect to a particular narrated event, specific morphological, lexical, and syntactic elements of the text that direct the reader to an active spatiotemporal location within the mental model when and where the reader witnesses the event (Segal 1990, 1995). The identification and classification of these textual elements and their effects on the deictic center is one of the particular strengths of deictic shift theory (Bennett, 2005, 8).

Galbraith (1995,46) argues that adopting a cognitive stance in the fictional world within a particular deictic field results from reading and responding to deictic cues in the text. This might belong to the narrator or to a particular character. Nevertheless, this is not necessarily related to the text thoroughly, and our deictic position, as a result of many linguistic or non-linguistic cues, would be shifted and started interpreting events from a new deictic center once more.

The progress in reading can lead to a large number of deictic shifts and in turns a complex series of cognitive actions. For example, taking a novel and starting to read will make us in

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a shift into a deictic field within the world of the narrative. Concurrently, being in this fictional world will also lead to another deictic field shift which is shaped within a flashback in the story. Galbraith (1995) points out that because of our background knowledge about how stories work, we expect to return from whatever deictic fields that we have shifted into throughout reading the text. Hence, if we shift into a fictional world which is embedded within a larger fictional world, we expect to return from that embedded fictional world to the world that frames it (Lambrou and Stockwell, 2007, p125 as cited in Gheni, 2009, 134). Central to deictic shift theory is the notion of the deictic center. The deictic center frames the reality of the speakers and allows them to evaluate other deictic indicators from this core viewpoint. Speakers always assume that, by default, they always occupy the deictic center, thus any reference to other locations or time will be conceptualised in relation to their current here and now. So, the speaker and their circumstances form the origin from which shifts in deictic coordinates would take place. Deictic shift theory states that readers embark on a very specific form of cognitive exercise when they approach narratives for their current here and now locations are transposed to the specific parameters of the story world (Norgaard et al., 2010, 74).

Segal (1995, 15) argues that deictic shift theory is a theory that states that the deictic center frequently shifts from the environmental situation in which the text is encountered, to a location within a mental model corresponding to the world of the discourse. The deictic centre of the text is the viewpoint from which the reader experiences the elements of the story world as it contains who, where, when, and what components (Zubin and Hewitt 1995 as cited in Bennett, 2005, 9).

## 2.1 Deictic Terms

In order to understand the principles of deictic shift theory, it is essential to take into account the concept of deixis. Birner (2013: 74) points out that deixis is a "phenomenon of using a linguistic expression to point to some contextually available discourse entity or property". Deixis is classified into the following categories:

### 2.1.1 Spatial Deixis

This type of deixis is concerned with space and movement in relation to the speaker's position. This is accomplished with demonstratives such as (this, that, these and those) and adverbs of place like (here, there and anywhere) (Locastro, 2012: 25).

### 2.1.2 Temporal Deixis

Huang (2014: 182) states that time deixis is concerned with encoding temporal points and spans tied to the time at which an utterance occurs in a speech event. Adverbs of time like (now, then, today, next week, etc.) are used to indicate it.

### 2.1.3 Personal Deixis

The person category directly reflects the different roles which individuals play in the speech event: speaker, addressee, and other. As these roles shift throughout a conversational turn-

taking the origo shifts with them, for instance, A's I becomes B's you, A's here becomes B's there and so on (Levinson, 2006, 112).

### 2.1.4 Empathetic Deixis

Gheni (2009,133) argues that empathetic deixis "indicates psychological and emotional closeness or distance from whatever person, place or object is being described".

### 2.1.5 Discourse Deixis

According to Decker (2001: 55-56), discourse deixis, concerns with the usage of expressions within some utterance to designate certain portion of the discourse that involves that utterance, including the utterance itself.

## 3. Literature Review

This section reviews various related studies on the deictic shift theory in literary texts. Let's start with a study conducted in 2007 by Adel Al-Thamery, which is entitled " Deixis in narrative : the presentation of mental space in Hardy's Novel". The study aims to examine the work of deixis in narrative as it is the main element in building the text world. The researcher adopts text world theory as a methodological framework to study fictional discourse according to the pragmatic conditions and the cognitive effects of language choices in three of Hardy's novels : " far from the madding crowd", the return of the native", and" Jude the obscure". The study based on semantic and pragmatics work within cognitive constructs called" mental spaces" in cognitive linguistics.

In 2017 , Islam Adil Jabbar investigates " Deictic shifting and focalization in Morison's Beloved : A Cognitive stylistic study". It sheds light on the importance of deictic expressions in comprehension the contextual information of the events, characters to understand temporal and spatial dimensions in the text. The study aims to identify shifting in focalization level by focusing on shifting the deictic center in narrative texts. Thus, it considers three types of deictic expressions: person, time and place.

Another study in 2019 by Ali Abdullah Ghani which is entitled " A study of deictic shift theory as a stylistic approach in the analysis of point of view effects in fictional Discourse ". The aim of this study is to show the role of the deictic shift theory as a cognitive perspective to the point of view effects in the selected poem of Seamus Hearrey's Mossbawn. It focuses on shifting away from narrative techniques towards conceptual frameworks that address both reading and interpretation cognitive processes. The findings of the study show that the cognitive work of deictic shift theory is employed as a device in the poem to get a thorough understanding of the text. The deictic shifts have been used in the poem, including personal pronouns, locational , and temporal deixis and references which are interrelated between the poem's fictional text world and the reader's real central world. The analysis explores cognitively the transition between the past and the present, as well as rapidback and forth transition of deictic center that is tackled by the reader's viewpoint.

Zhang (2022) discusses the comprehension of deixis and its relation to deictic approach or shift. The study argues the relation of deictic shift with human cognitive ability. Deictic center and deictic context are defined more broadly when studied from a cognitive linguistic perspective. On the other hand, studying it from a cognitive poetics perspective reveals the cognitive justification for multiple interpretations of literary work.

## 4. Methodology: Deictic Shift Theory in "The Dream of Ridiculous man"

### 4.1 Introduction

Speaking, writing or thinking voices represent a deictic center, where a reader can detect the cognitive stance, that best tackles the coherence of a text. Deictic shift theory sheds light on some points in a text at which the reader can comprehend the movement of the deictic markers. Thus, the reader has to trace the variation of these voices and the relation between them. The researchers investigate and analyse the transition of the deictic shift that shows the transition from one relation to another. It is necessary to mention that, the transition of deictic shift is not limited to personal, spatial or temporal, the deictic orientation is also constructed by the reference to the shift of the tense as well.

### 4.2 Analysis and Discussion

Fyodor Dostoyevsky's short story "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man" was published in Russian in 1877 as "Son smeshnogo cheloveka." It discusses issues like original sin, human perfectibility, and pursuing an ideal society. The rationalist's incapacity to give solutions to all of life's problems is involved and discussed.

The interpersonal level of narrative discourse and the interaction indulged within the writer-text-reader is controlled by specific conventions of literary discourse. The narrative voice reveals a logical inner situation in the narrative, the speaking voice is the deictic center. The inner interpersonal relation is constructed in the narration world, produced by a series of personal pronouns occurring throughout the story: "*I am a ridiculous man, they call me mad,.... I did not still remain as ridiculous to them as before.* ", "*they* laugh at *me*,..... *I* would laugh with *them*, ..... not really at *myself*, but for love of *them* ", "... But none of *them* knew, ....anyone else of *my ridiculousness*, it was *I myself, I myself* was to blame, ....*I* suffered in *my youth* over being unable to help *myself*, ....in *my soul*,... the whole of *me*. *I* had completely ceased to think then: it made no deference to *me*. *I* resolved to kill *myself* that night. *I* was going to shoot *myself*. *She* was terrified by something, ...*I* turned *my face* to *her*, *she* was running and pulling at *me*, and in *her voice*, ...Though *she* did not speak all the words out, I understood that *her mother* was dying somewhere ". These are some extracted from the short story. The personal deictic markers manifest a man's consciousness against the world he lives in. The story begins with first narrator with self-description as "a ridiculous man". He believes in the absurdity of life, he realises the meaningless of life which is inside himself and surrounds him. He believes that nothing is true in the real world or the virtual world before him. All the personal deictic markers show the narrator's orientation of the absurdity of life, leading him to the idea of suicide. The deictic transition is clearly indicated the inner conflict that the narrator lives. He believes

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everything around him is worthless; however, he feels guilty about being selfish toward the young girl.

The reader can mentally perceive the transition of events from one situation to another due to the deictic shift which shows the narrator's voice transition from the real world that he lives in to another one which is neither real nor virtual. He travelled to a world after he had killed himself while sleeping (in dream). He was astonished at the new planet as if it was Garden of Eden. There are no science and technology, people live in harmony, as the following extractions: “ *we* were at an innate distance from *our* sun,.... *They* came to me *themselves*, *they* surrounded *me*, kissed *me*. *they* took *me* with *them* and each of *them* wished to set *me* at ease. *I* saw *them myself*, *I* knew *them* and was convinced, *I* loved *them*, *I* suffered for *them* afterward. *They* looked at *them*: as if *they* were talking with creatures of *their* own kind....*they* sang *their* beautiful,.....*they* ate *their* light food - fruit from *their* trees, honey from *their forests*, and milk from the animals who loved *them*. Among *them* there was no quarrelling or jealousy, *they* did not even understand what it meant. *They* barely understood *me* when *I* asked *them* about eternal life, but they were apparently so convinced of it unconsciously that it did not constitute a question for *them* ”.

The deictic markers show the inner passion that the narrator has got towards the people he saw for the first time. The deictic personal shift signifies possession relation tying specific group of people with their own place, as in ( *they/their own*), ( *they/ their beautiful*), ( *they/ their light food*). Everything that exists in the beautiful world or planet belongs to its owner not for a stranger ( the narrator in the story). The narrator's presence corrupts this idyllic place. They lost their happiness, desires, being liars , they fought with each other, the land is tainted forever “ *they* invented justice and prescribed whole codices for *themselves* in order, that *they* fell down before *their hearts'* desires like children, *they* deified *their desire*..... *we* torment *ourselves* ”.

The narrator awakens to realise it was a dream “ After *my dream*, *I* lost words. *I* saw it with *my own eyes* ”. Dostoevsky reveals that through the narrator's realisation that evil is not a trait of humans, and people have the opportunity to revert back to their innocent state.

The reader is able to comprehend the spatial deictic shift that occurs with locative expression to manifest the movement of places within the events of the story, as in “At \_first I kept thinking that instead there had been a lot before, but then I realised that there had been nothing, ...I became convinced that there would never be anything. As I placed it there, I remember asking myself. I'd shoot myself and there would be no more world, Not to mention that maybe there would indeed be nothing for anyone after me.....he is still here by me ”. Dostoevsky exhibits the adhesion of the narrator's thoughts with the place that he lives in. The narrator believes life is worthless everywhere, even if he lives in the moon or Mars. However, all of his thoughts are changed and we observed a change in special expression as well, as in “ why is *there* anguish in my love for them.....*Here* sorrow entered my soul with such force that my heart was wrung, and I felt I was going to die, and *here* . .well, here I woke up. *This* is an old truth, but what is new *here* is *this*: I cannot get very confused ”. The transition of special expressions shows the narrator's inner

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conflict again, as if he compares the real world he lived in and the new planet he saw in his dream. The use of special deictic shift indicates the variation of his feeling and orientation toward the world as a whole.

Temporal shift is closely related to special deictic expressions as well as, there is a clear shift of tense from past to present to show the sequences of events, as in “ I can do so **now**, I'm **now** almost convinced of it. It seemed clear that life and the world were **now** as if dependent on me. One might even say that the world was **now** as if made for me alone, ...then you do feel pain and it almost always wakes you up. what is coming to pass **now**, allow it to be here ”. The temporal deictic associated with the special markers shows the narrator's attachment with his thought of the valuelessness of life everywhere and at any time. However, the dream that he lives has changed his view towards the world and made him realise that humanity has a chance to change and produce valuable achievements.

The results of the study show that the most prominent deictic shift expression is personal deictic( 81.7%) which indicates the prominent of perceptual viewpoints. Followed by temporal deictic which is ( 11.2%) and spatial (7.1%), as shown in the following table:

Table( 1) The Frequency and Percentage of Deictic Markers

Deictic Expression	Personal Deictic	Temporal Deictic	Spatial Deictic
No. of Frequency	278	38	24
Percentage	81.7%	11.2%	7.1%

## Conclusion

In the light of the previous explanation, it is concluded that it is important to emphasize the role of the concept of deixis as a facilitative in comprehending and functioning of the textual world. Furthermore, deictic center identifies readers' reality and allows them to assess other deictic indicators from this central perspective.

The results show that the center of all these shiftings that occur in the deictic terms is the narrator's shifting from his past thoughts to his present perception and his transition from the world in which he lives to the other world which he encountered in his dream and everything he realized there. As stated in the table, personal deixis mostly appeared from other deixis, reflecting the narrator's conflict in the world he lives in.

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