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The Concepts of Deictic Shift Theory and Discourse Theory of Silencing

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the concepts of the deictic shift theory and discourse theory of silencing. It has been written on the basis of synchronic descriptive method in the study of the English language. For this purpose we wish to introduce a theoretical framework for the study and then we hope to present the deictic shift theory and discourse theory of silencing, to show the development of a set of questions that any reader may use to evaluate a work of fiction. It is noted in the article that while using the language in the narrative, these questions help to guide the reader to determine the context of the narrative. These questions also help the reader to determine the narrator's point of view, his strategy for silencing characters, and discover which characters in the narrative have been silenced. It is stated in the article that deixis depends on context, situation, and relationship within a narrative and Deictic Shift Theory is a set of premises about readers and stories that grew out of research on the function of deixis in fictional narratives. The article also covers discussion of linguistic views of scientists in this field.

Keywords: Deixis, Narrative, Deictic Words Anaphora, Cataphora, Narrator, Social Deixis

1. Introduction

As human speech is realized in a certain situation, condition and environment, human beings use the language in order to establish intercourse with one-another. The initial and the first function of a language is to transfer a certain piece of information. This is called a transactional function in linguistics. Languages help human beings to give information by order, request and instructions to one-another. The whole scope of actions, carried out as a result of these processes in the language, is called context. It becomes clear from the context, who is pointing to somebody or something by special words which are called deixis: *here, there, I, you, he, this, that, down, up etc.* Deictic words just carry out deictic function. In modern linguistics the word "*deixis*" has derived from the Greek word *deixnumi*. It gives the meaning of "*to indicate,*" "*to show,*" "*to point to.*"

By deixis is meant the location and identification of persons, objects, events, processes and activities being talked about, or referred to, in relation to the spatiotemporal context created and sustained by the act of utterance and the participation in it, typically, of a single speaker and at least one address. The word "*deixis*" traditionally is as to the semantics nearer to the "*indexial expression*" in linguistics. The analysis of recent studies in this field provides us with argument that deixis is a means, uniting semantics with pragmatics, because, language expressions are set up by means of pragmatic substitutions.

1.1. Objective of the study

The purpose of the article is to study the concepts of Deictic Shift Theory and Discourse Theory of Silencing in modern English, their means of expression, the analysis of Deictic Shift Theory being a set of premises about readers and stories that grew out of research on the function of deixis in fictional narratives.

1.2. Methodology

Research methods include direct contextual analysis, cognitive-linguistic, or linguistic description. With the help of these methods, the onomasiological typology of deixis (whether it is universal or special) is clarified. It is noteworthy to mention the fact that in the investigation of the problem may be considered completely for it is not possible to cover all the study by using one method. That is why the study of these concepts is needed to investigate deeply.

The following has been chosen during the investigation:

1. The method of tenacity within the pragmatic model:
2. To follow the systematization of the theory and practice the method of deduction is used as well
3. A qualitative analysis of the most frequently used deixis in English

1.3. Presentation and discussion

Deixis is a linguistic term for some units of language. These units of language indicate a self-world orientation. In this orientation the elements of language have the meaning when the reader knows who, when, and where the speaker or character can be in the narrative.

The reader needs a “reference to a NOW, a HERE, and an I” for full comprehension. He considers the deixis not to be limited to a few words, such as I/you, here/there, now/then. Deixis functions in all discourse as the “prerequisite for all reference,” and, most importantly, it functions as the indicator of the subjective perspective in language.

Deixis depends on context, situation, and relationship within a narrative. Every language contains words like I/you, here/there, now/then, this/that, yesterday/today/tomorrow which is recognized as deictic words. When these words are used in any narrative, they refer to as previously stated, or, less frequently, a yet-to-be stated, person, time, or location. While looking through the deictic words in discourse we see that they are the WHO, the WHERE, and the WHEN words or phrases. The simplest deictic sentence is the most difficult one to interpret: “*I am here now.*” Interpreting the meaning of this sentence requires knowing who speaks as “I,” what “here.” As we see, without context, this sentence has lexical meaning but no semantic content.

Context refers to information about place and time, circumstances, social roles, demographic variables, and so on. The term “deictic window” is used by deictic researchers rather than the less specific word context, but it is referred to the same element of story with this more specific term: “spatial, temporal and psychological coordinates establishing a deictic perspective in the narrated world.

Within narratives the situation that gives rise to any statement within that narrative is its context, its basis for interpretation and understanding by the reader. The simple sentence “I am here now” spoken by a girl to her parents who have been looking for her has a more different meaning than does the same sentence spoken by a co-worker entering a meeting ten minutes late. Van Dijk (2004) states that context opens the properties of the text. What is said and how it is said depends on which character in the narrative is speaking to whom, when, where, and for what purpose. We cannot tell stories without a context, so the context supports them. In order to tell stories we must refer to a speaker, a place or a time, that which deictically identifies the narrator, locates the narrator or character in the story, ascertains the time span of the narrative moment. That’s why, context is considered to be a constituent element of deixis.

Lot's of deictic words and phrases refer to a word or phrase within a narrative's context which were previously introduced, or, less frequently, to a phrase to be introduced; these are anaphora and cataphora.

Example: *A sound in the kitchen below worried him. Was Edyth coming up to have her bath before he had prepared it for her? No it was all right, she was going out of the back door. From the window he saw her disappearing round the side of the house into the small square garden. He didn't like her to be alone there. She was a shy person, but now new people had moved into the house next door, and there was a danger of some silly woman making friends with her. He didn't want **that** just now.*

The anaphoric reference word, in boldface, is the demonstrative **that** but this word does not clearly refer to just one element in the phrase that precedes it. *That* may refer to the content of the story, the act of the narrator, his anxiety.

As we know cataphora refers to a word or phrase later in the narrative, it clarifies its referent, a phrase in which the referent appears before its noun phrase. Examples below express the general intent of cataphoric phrases: "What I decided to do is this," or "This is what I have decided," in which the pronoun *this* precedes the explanation or definition that follows.

Anaphora and cataphora within a narrative are known as discourse deixis, the use of antecedents and precedents in a text. Such a question arises why anaphora and cataphora are described here because they are considered a fundamental part of linguistic analysis of narrative, but they will not be used in the reader's evaluative questions because these terms do not contribute to the reader's determination of context, narrator's point of view, narrator's marginizing strategies, or silenced characters.

Besides, social deixis is considered to fulfil another deictic function in narrative. So the words and phrases are used to determine the social status of a narrator and recipient, as well as the form of address (familiar, polite, honorific) within a narrative. Example: *Mirs Edyth never spoke to Ronald. When she passed Ronald would say with trembling voice: "Good morning, **ma'am,**" and she would wave her hands instead of answering (emphasis added).*

Socially deictic expressions in this selection are in boldface. In this passage, the narrator, Ronald addresses to Mirs Edyth by the polite form "*Ma'am.*" With this greeting Ronald shows deference and evidence of appropriate Southern social manners by saying good morning with trembling voice and speaking the expected greeting phrase, *Good morning*, followed by the equally deferential and required honorific, *ma'am*. This passage illustrates the full spectrum of social deixis: the familiar; the polite (*Ma'am Edyth*); and the honorific *ma'am*, although in the South, the use of "*sir*" and "*ma'am*" is so pervasive in all levels of social conversation that it may be more correctly considered a polite form of address.

The social forms of address in a narrative are clear indicators and the character of these indicators has dominance in a story situation, their title confers authority over other characters in a story, and it becomes easy for a reader to determine which character is privileged and which character is marginized or silenced.

1.4. Determination of Deictic Shift Theory

Deictic Shift Theory is a set of premises about readers and stories that grew out of research on the function of deixis in fictional narratives. Mary Galbraith considers the Austrian psychologist Karl Bühler to be the first researcher to note the operation of deixis in narrative text in his work, *The Theory of Language*. Here deixis is said to be constituted differently for fictional narrative.

Besides, we searched Deictic Shift Theory similarly to the state experienced by readers and writers in which they imagine themselves participating in a world that is not literally present, experiencing the events and situations from a position inside the story. Segal(2000) further explains that much of the meaning of the story may be understood only from a cognitive position inside the story.

Segal offers seven propositions and his first proposition is form and content. It is the study of linguistic features such as sentence and paragraph structures, verb tense, pronoun use, lexical choices, descriptive style of voice quality, and grammar style (conversational, academic, colloquial, idiomatic). Let's pay attention to form. Form looks at how text appears on the page and looks at such paralinguistic devices as punctuation style, blocking and shaping of text, paragraphing and other breaks in the text, and use of multiple fonts. A narrator opens a story with short phrases, and uses verb-less sentences throughout the text. In this way, he tells the reader as much about point of view, about story context, and tone of the story as the words tell.

Segal (2000) groups form and content together, but we consider them to be actually separate features of the text for the reader and they are formulated as separate questions. Form is the two-dimensional appearance of the text itself, the visual first impression. But content requires reading the story, it requires shifting from the lived world into the story world, and experiencing the story world from the point of view of the narrator or another character.

Content, and the next proposition, context, require the reader's ability to model the story world from her knowledge of the lived world. It is called as "mental modeling." Some readers have the difficulty understanding the content and context. They consider the content and the context to be the murky areas in the narrative. In this case some questions arise from an unclear understanding of a story, such as: What does this story mean to me? How can I know the narrator's point of view? Why do I need to know which character is silenced? The answers may be found in the language of the story through the process of asking specific questions of the text, questions developed to reveal answers to the four summary questions proposed in this study. The meaning of the entirety of a narrative is greater than the linguistic meaning of the text's contents. Analysis of context looks at the descriptive background and situational settings of the narrative's presentation - when, where, what, and who - and at the rhetorical and lexical choices the narrator uses to explore and exploit the story.

We consider that similar to content questions, the reader's questioning analysis of context presumes that the reader's general knowledge of her world, along with her understanding of social and life experiences, adds to the meaning of the narrative.

We consider that context is a problematic concept in linguistic research and discourse analysis in that it is often difficult to define what is and what is not to be included as context in studies of specific texts.

We consider the context in creative narratives to be the direct representation of the raw material of fictional reality... the phenomenal experience of a subject. We fully agree with several ideas on this field. Context in deictic studies as the specific story world assembled in the act of reading the words of the text.

Segal describes context as the "story world," as those "events of a story primarily take place within a single spacetime continuum" identified as the story world. The story world contains people, places, objects and events that exist in spatial, temporal and causal relationships with one another." The fully populated "spacetime continuum" constrains and limits the characters and situations in the story in a way that gives the reader the feeling of coherence.

While explaining the difference between context and content we can see that context provides the background and cultural and social milieu in which a particular story occurs. But content tells of particular characters, events, and times portrayed against the backdrop of context. Content is explicitly described in the narrative. But context is often implicitly assumed in the narrative.

Segal (2000) states that "Mental Model" is used in Deictic Shift Theory. It is a term that was borrowed from cognitive psychology and psycholinguistic research. It describes the lived experience of every human being. In the premises of Deictic Shift Theory, the reader of a narrative uses her life mental model to construct a model of the story's world as it is encountered in reading. We consider that the reader's mental model assumes that the events and objects in the story world will resemble those found in the lived world unless informed otherwise by the story contents or the genre, science fiction or fantasy narratives. And because the reader's mental model assumes a default of resemblance with lived experience, the narrator need not explicitly state everything about a

character or event; many details are assumed by the reader and made a part of the reader's interpretation of the story. Consider the example. It is an example from *How is your mother?* by Simon Brett which illustrates a gap filled in by the reader:

It was Monday morning, and Patridge was making his breakfast. He turned on his cooker and prepared to boil an egg. He looked out of the window with satisfaction. In the interval between the weekend and Monday he had dug the garden and planted all the roses/.

The narrator explicitly states that the day was Monday, then describes the scene occurring "between weekend and Monday." The narrator does not explain the process that Patridge did during the weekend. The narrator assumes the reader knows that Monday means for Patridge beginning a new working day and skips over the unnecessary details of where, when, why and how Patridge moved from weekend to Monday morning between sentences.

The process of the modeling the story world allows the reader to locate characters in a text both spatially and temporally: who speaks, when and where. Modeling also establishes a relationship with the story world and the characters, allowing the reader to participate mentally in the relationships created among the characters in the narrative.

Segal (2000) adds another aspect to the topic of mental models and constructs a mental model of the world of the story before and during writing, reader does.

The author "makes a deictic shift into the mind of the fictional narrator" and views the story world from the narrator's perspective. We believe that the narrative cannot be said to represent the actual author's thoughts, feelings, or beliefs. Therefore, this study will focus only on the narrator's experiences, descriptions, assumptions, fears, etc., as revealed in the text.

2. Determination of Discourse Theory of Silencing

The discourse theory of Silencing has arisen out of Critical Discourse Analysis. This theory shares all the theoretical and methodological perspectives of the Critical Discourse Analysis.

Silencing is a performative category of discourse. It is an act, which gives preference to some speakers (or narrators) and represses other speakers (narrators).

According to Blackledge(2005) CDA is neither a single theory nor a uniform and consistent methodology; its plurality and "eclecticism" and "dynamism" are evidence that CDA arose from a concern with the social rather than the "purely linguistic." CDA is a way of thinking about discourse, theory, as well as a way of recording data in discourse, methodology, and it is concerned with the identification of social behaviors as expressed in language. CDA refers to a wide range of perspectives that have their root in linguistics, all of which share a concern for critical examination of social and cultural practices CDA is more than just the "specific analyses of language structures and usages," it is the evaluation of relationships among language, social norms and ideologies.

Looking through the central features of CDA we see that the first feature is the analysis of relationships, predominantly the relationship of text to its "social, discursive and historical context." The CDA researcher searches for the structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. But we think CDA researcher searches for the attitudes and beliefs of power and social inequality.

The second feature is that CDA researchers are sure that the meaning of a text is not contained within the text itself. So readers or hearers make sense of the text by linking it to their previous knowledge and expectations, an essentially unlimited variable that is composed of not only the reader's knowledge, but constrained by the reader's interests and presumptions. The fact that readers link texts to their own experiences and that their interests and assumptions contribute to the understanding of a text is identical to the mental model presumption in Deictic Shift Theory research.

Blackledge assumes that CDA takes as its central purpose that of revealing structures of power in language; it is in language that discriminatory practices are acted out, it is in language that the “unequal relations of power” are replicated, and it is in language that inequalities and the rhetoric of discrimination is contested and corrected. We agree with Blackledge. So CDA emphasis is on the understanding of discourse in relation to social problems; to social structural variables such as race, gender, and class; and above all to power.

Social differences are constructed in language, in the structuring of language use in discourse. This means that language, and language ideologies, are “anything but neutral, especially in societies where some language and identity options are privileged above others”. Blackledge presents another research assumption: if racism (and this hypothesis could extend to any type of social problem or social discrimination under study) is reproduced in discourse, then it is reproduced across all categories of communication - social practices, discursive practices, and in texts.

The search for any type of discrimination in discourse means that the researcher is aware of discriminatory acts perpetrated through language and has adopted a stance -whether political, social, educational, personal - toward the discriminatory acts.

The political standpoint of the analyst will never be entirely absent, that it is not possible to conduct research free from value judgments, that “there is no value-free CDA, and that ultimately, there is no value-free science.” CDA “situates its analysis both in its social, cultural and historical context and in the perspective and position of the researcher(s), in particular, explicitly defining and defending its own sociopolitical position.”

CDA examines texts through three process lenses: 1. “*intertextuality*” 2. “*interdiscursivity*,” 3. “*recontextualisation*.” *Intertextuality* is considered to be a cornerstone of CDA research. He explains that “every text is embedded in a context and is synchronically and diachronically related to many other texts.” Blackledge states while it is occasionally easy to see the relationship of texts, it is more often difficult to identify embedded texts. Intertextuality is certainly a feature of creative short narratives – it is exemplified in the familiar expression, “There are no new stories, only new ways of telling them.” According to Blackledge(2005) *interdiscursivity* is the property of discourse. It connects the type of text to the expected context and quality of discourse. They are generally found in a specific social situation. Blackledge’s definition states that, “interdiscursive analysis links the particular conventionalized practices which are available to text producers in particular circumstances.” We agree to this definition.. Interdiscursivity is also a feature of narratives. It is a part of the reader’s mental model identifying a correct type of discourse for a context. Blackledge gives an example that in a story’s courtroom scene the reader expects to hear legal language, the reading of legal documents, and an adversarial cross-examination; this is the expected “conventionalized practice” extant in court settings. Legal phrasings and witness cross-examinations do not often happen in the supermarket, and the reader would instantly recognize it as an activity out of its usual discursive context.

Recontextualization of discourse is both the repetition of a discourse or text in a new context and the transformation of that discourse. The repetition of a text in a different context involves a transformation, because discourse will attract new meanings in new settings. *Recontextualization* is the mainstay of newspaper reporting, talk shows, magazine articles, any public debate, gossip, rumor, and the organizational grapevine, where public or private events are re-presented, accurately or otherwise. We agree with this thought and it seems logical that all narratives are *recontextualizations* of previous narratives.

We can see the reason that the mental model concept works so well in understanding how readers connect to stories. So such themes like-“*good overcomes evil*,” “*when one door closes, another one opens*” circulate in social conversation as platitudes and they are recontextualized in a variety of new story settings.

Recontextualization is a mainstay of Critical Discourse Analysis. It serves as the basis for many close and detailed discursive analyses of texts. *Recontextualization* is considered to be a fundamental presumption for all creative short narratives. It does not need to be developed into a question for readers. Studying the discourse theory of Silencing, we see that according to Thiesmeyer (2003), in the discourse theory of Silencing all discourse is an act

within the social sphere. Silencing is a “contradictory act” in that it operates through discourse, through “publicly learned and publicly used language with social frameworks and functions”. As an act, silencing is the expression of unequal power relations among participants that has personal, social and global consequences; it is a discursive relationship in which the social value of the exchange is unequal. Silencing incorporates these discursive acts and the social frameworks, the contexts, that sanction silencing. Silencing in this study and as used in discourse analysis is not the result of illness, injury, or impairment; it is an active and socially constructed practice, one that is, or can seem to be, the result of personal choice. But silencing “clearly involves choices made by other people as well as by the potential speaker.”

Silencing of characters is imposed in narrative in four ways: it may be externally- imposed, or it may be internally-imposed, it may be unrealized silencing, or it may be compliant silencing. Whatever the form, silencing is the result of social and political judgments about who may speak and who may not. We consider these forms of character silencing to be called *Forced, Chosen, Unrealized, and Compliant*. *Forced and Chosen* silencing indicate choices. These choices are made by individuals or groups to silence ideas and information selectively rather than allow free, open discourse among participants.

Unrealized silencing indicates either no choice or an unconscious acceptance of silencing. Clair(1998) states that in populations that have been discriminated against over long periods of time, the acceptance of silencing has become institutionalized and customary among the discriminated population (3). For example, customs which assign the legal status of property to women and children, a status that stripped their ability to claim rights as human beings or to speak for themselves, have silenced women and children for centuries. This custom, like so many others, has been so long a social reality. Acceptance of this status was unconscious and unrealized, because it was the condition of all women and children.

According to Thiesmeyer (2003), compliant silencing is a complex and coercive choice which participates in social discourse not through an individual’s own words or actions but according to choices made by others as to what is acceptable to speak and do. It is an act of discourse that disguises the silencing contained within it (8). Thiesmeyer (2003) states: Compliance can be maintained by awareness of possible unpleasant alternatives. It occurs rather than by the coercive use of unpleasant alternative themselves. The power of a discourse lies in the discursive system’s ability to preclude challenges.

Discursive assimilation is silencing by restricting an individual or group to a different acceptable kind of discourse expression than the expression the individual or groups might have independently produced. Discursive displacement, similar to discursive assimilation, is the silencing of forbidden speech and narrative by replacement with acceptable speech and texts that express dominant social ideas and customs, sacrificing or discarding the unacceptable discourse.

Discursive reproduction of accepted ideologies, unifying phrases, and conventional notions through mass media and educational institutions is silencing not only of personal voices but of the ideas and information these voices may have offered.

The goal of using acceptable discourse to silence unacceptable discourse is to eliminate the potential for any audience in the social sphere to gain access to unacceptable information. A society unable to hear about or be aware of the existence of ideas that differ too much from those normally permitted by the dominant ideology cannot use those ideas or information to challenge the dominant discourse.

Discursive reproduction is repetition, the re-producing, of acceptable discourse.

Consider the examples:

- “*We are a Democracy,*”
- “*It’s the American Way,*”
- “*We are all equal in the eyes of the law,*” or “*These colors don’t run*”

These are nationalistic slogans which are particularly obvious examples of discursive reproduction of a dominant ideology. This ideology has no factual basis in practice.

An individual's group's silencing by dominant powers may come about by discursive deprivation, displacement, or assimilation; any one of these forceful processes has the ability to produce silencing; and the ideas of an individual or a group may be silenced by the consistent reproduction of a dominant ideology. Identifying the locus of silencing and the means that produced it are important ideas in this study and will be used in developing the evaluative questions for readers.

3. Conclusion

In summary, the following premises of silencing have been selected from the discussion above. First, silencing works in and through discourse, and is an act of discourse. Second, the silencing of characters operates in four ways: Forced, Chosen, Unrealized, and Compliant. And, third, the silencing of discourse works through four processes: discursive deprivation, discursive assimilation, discursive displacement, and discursive reproduction. Having studied the Deictic Shift Theory and the Discourse Theory of Silencing, we may come to the conclusion that Deictic Shift Theory is a set of premises about readers and stories that grew out of research on the function of deixis in fictional narratives. Deictic Shift Theory is described similarly as the state experienced by readers and writers in which they imagine themselves participating in a world that is not literally present, experiencing the events and situations from a position inside the story. We have found out that "Mental Model" is used in Deictic Shift Theory. It is a term which was borrowed from cognitive psychology and psycholinguistic research. It describes the lived experience of every human being. In the premises of Deictic Shift Theory, the reader of a narrative uses her life mental model to construct a model of the story's world as it is encountered in reading. Analyzing the discourse theory of silencing we come to a conclusion that silencing is a "contradictory act" in that it operates through discourse, through publicly learned and publicly used language with social frameworks and functions. As an act, silencing is the expression of unequal power relations among participants that has personal, social and global consequences; it is a discursive relationship in which the social value of the exchange is unequal. Identifying the locus of silencing and the means that produced it are important ideas in this study and will be used in developing the evaluative questions for readers.

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