

**Deictic Expressions in E.M. Forster's " The Suppliant"****Asst. Lecturer. Abid Ali Nayif Hasan****University of Babylon- College of Basic Education- Dept. of English****1- Introduction**

"Deixis is a technical term (from Greek) that means pointing Via language" (Yule, 1996: 9). " The deictic qualities of a Sentence Point to its location in relation to a spatio-temporal-personal context." ( Flower, 1971: 61). This indicates that there is spatial, temporal and person deixis. Spatial deixis can be expressed by means of adverbs of place such as here and there as well as demonstrative pronouns this and that; furthermore, Verschueren ( 1999: 19 ) affirms that verbs of motion such as come, go and others can be mentioned to express spatial deixis. Temporal deixis is indicated by adverbs of time such as now, then and others. On the other hand, Quirk et al ( 1985: 184 ) point out that the present and past tenses can express temporal deixis. Person deixis operates on pronouns for the first person I who is speaking ( or writing ) and functioning as a subject of the verb; the second person you , the addressee, that functions either subject or object, and the third person he , she or it .

The present study aims at investigating the deictic expressions found in E.M. Forster's short story, " the suppliant " Which is mostly written in terms of a conversational style. It can be hypothesized that person deixis is more commonly used than temporal and spatial deixis. The study under investigation may benefit those interested in reading short stories in that it gives them some insight about the deictic expressions and how they work to make the short story understandable.

**2- Deixis in English**

Deictic expressions are the words that take the elements of their meaning from the situation, i.e, the speaker, the addressee, the time and the place of the Utterance in which it is used ( Hurford and Heasley, 1983: 63 ). Such deictic expressions are mentioned to help the hearer identify the referent of a referring expression through its spatial or temporal relationships with the situation of an Utterance ( Ibid: 64 ) .

**2-1 Person Deixis**

In English, personal pronouns such as I , me , she , your and others may distinguish person, number, gender and grammatical relations. Accordingly, I means the person speaking (or writing) who is the subject of the verb; you is the person or persons addressed that functions either subject or object, and her is the female possessive adjective or object. The pronoun we can mean I and the addressee or I and some other persons not spoken to. These are termed the "inclusive" and "exclusive" senses respectively of the pronoun ( Hudson, 2000: 315- 316). In the same respect Yule ( 1990: 10 ) points out that the addressee may be of higher or lower social status. Expressions mentioned to indicate higher status are referred to as " honorifics" . On the other hand ( Ibid ) states that the third person is not a direct participant and is considered as distal forms. Lyons ( 1981: 170 ) indicates that the interpretation of I or you is determined by the speaker's adoption of a certain role and assigning another role to the addressee. Similarly, Fromkin et. al. ( 2003: 218 ) point out that the reference of many words and expressions including deictics relies primarily on the situational context of the utterance in which case you must know who the speaker and listener are in order to interpret them. In this respect, Hurford and Heasley (1983: 68- 69 ) affirm that the context of an Utterance is a small subpart of the universe of discourse shared by speaker and hearer, and includes facts about the topic of the conversation and facts about the situation in which the conversation takes place. Fasold ( 1990: 15 ) mentions that "speakers often avoid address altogether because they don't know their addressee". Concerning gender, Kramer ( 1975: 200) notes that "men address women more than women do men" .

For illustration, Consider certain instances taken from the short story under analysis. The sentence number henceforth is ( SNo.):

**SNo.2:** His appearance was ruffianly.

The possessive adjective his refers to an old man stated in ( SNo.1)

**SNo.3:** " Good evening, gentlemen" , he said.

The pronoun he , functioning as subject, points to an old man.

**SNo.4:** Will you subscribe to my son's railway journey, .....he.....and he produced.....

The pronoun you points to the addressees " Obaidulla and his brother" .

The possessive adjective my refers to the old man, whereas the pronouns he and he point to the old man's son.

**SNo.10:** " I think you need a clerk " .

The pronoun I points to the old man whereas you refers to Obaidulla, the addressee.

**SNo.13:** We live very simply, as you see.

We is an exclusive pronoun that refers to " Obaidulla and his brother" .

You points to the old man, the addressee.

**SNo.69:** Then....., he added in sterner tones.

The pronoun he points to the suppliant.

It can be noticed that all the pronouns and their referents are stated in table(1) and the frequency and percentages of such pronouns are shown in table(2) .

Table ( 1 ) pronouns and their referents

| SNo. | Pronouns | referents                 | SNo. | Pronouns          | referents                 |
|------|----------|---------------------------|------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 2    | his      | an old man                | 23   | my, he            | the old man               |
| 3    | he       | an old man                |      | them              | Obaidulla and his brother |
| 4    | you      | Obaidulla and his brother | 24   | I                 | the old man               |
|      | My       | an old man                | 25   | our               | the old man and his son   |
|      | he, he   | an old man's son          | 26   | I                 | the old man               |
| 5    | he       | an old man's son          | 27   | he                | the old man               |
| 6    | I        | Obaidulla                 | 28   | he, he , his      | the old man               |
| 7    | your     | an old man                |      | my                | Obaidulla                 |
|      | he       | an old man's son          |      | them              | servants                  |
|      | them     | two rupees                | 29   | he                | the old man               |
| 8    | I        | an old man                | 30   | We, us            | the old man and his son   |
|      | you      | Obaidulla                 | 31   | it                | tea                       |
|      | he       | an old man                |      | his               | Obaidulla                 |
| 9    | he, he   | Obaidulla                 | 32   | he, he , his      | Obaidulla                 |
| 10   | I        | an old man                |      | us                | the old man and his son   |
|      | you      | Obaidulla                 |      | they              | Obaidulla and his brother |
| 11   | I        | Obaidulla                 | 33   | Our, we           | Obaidulla and his brother |
| 12   | I, I     | Obaidulla                 | 34   | his               | the old man               |
| 13   | we       | Obaidulla and his brother | 35   | we                | Obaidulla and his brother |
|      | you      | an old man                |      | he                | the old man               |
| 14   | you      | an old man                | 36   | his               | Obaidulla                 |
| 15   | I        | an old man                | 37   | we                | the old man and his son   |
|      | your     | Obaidulla                 |      | he, his, his, his | Obaidulla                 |
| 16   | you      | an old man                | 38   | us                | Obaidulla and his brother |
|      | I        | Obaidulla                 | 39   | we                | Obaidulla and his brother |
| 18   | their    | Obaidulla and his brother |      | him , he          | the suppliant             |
| 19   | they     | Obaidulla and his brother |      | his               | Obaidulla                 |
| 22   | I        | the old man               | 40   | he                | Obaidulla                 |

| SNo. | Pronouns     | referents                  | SNo. | Pronouns | referents                    |
|------|--------------|----------------------------|------|----------|------------------------------|
| 41   | he           | the suppliant              | 60   | I        | the suppliant                |
|      | my           | Obaidulla                  | 61   | you      | Obaidulla and his brother    |
| 42   | we           | Our friend and his brother | 62   | he, him  | the suppliant                |
|      | him          | Obaidulla                  |      | we       | Obaidulla and his brother    |
| 43   | we           | Our friend and his brother | 63   | he, his  | the suppliant                |
| 44   | I            | Obaidulla                  | 64   | we       | Obaidulla and his brother    |
|      | you          | Our friend and his brother |      | he       | the suppliant                |
| 45   | him          | the suppliant              |      | them     | eyes                         |
|      | I            | Obaidulla                  | 65   | you      | Obaidulla and his brother    |
| 47   | I , I        | Obaidulla                  |      | me       | the suppliant                |
| 48   | he           | the suppliant              | 66   | you      | Obaidulla and his brother    |
| 49   | he, I , I    | the suppliant              | 67   | I        | the suppliant                |
| 50   | I, I , I , I | Obaidulla                  | 69   | his , he | the suppliant                |
|      | you, you     | the suppliant              | 70   | you, you | the Critic                   |
| 51   | your         | Obaidulla                  |      | I        | the suppliant                |
| 52   | I            | the suppliant              | 71   | you      | the Critic                   |
|      | your         | Obaidulla                  | 72   | we, we   | the suppliant and the Critic |
| 53   | I            | the suppliant              |      | them     | money and food and houses    |
| 54   | I , I        | Obaidulla                  | 73   | your     | the Critic                   |
|      | him , he     | the suppliant              | 74   | you      | the Critic                   |
| 55   | he , he      | the suppliant              |      | our      | the suppliant and the Critic |
|      | you          | Obaidulla                  | 75   | you      | the Critic                   |
|      | us           | Our friend and his brother | 76   | I        | the suppliant                |
| 57   | I            | Obaidulla                  |      | you      | the Critic                   |
| 59   | he           | the suppliant              |      |          |                              |
|      | it           | the money                  |      |          |                              |

Table ( 2 ) Frequency of the pronouns and their percentages

| Pronouns | Total number | Percentage |
|----------|--------------|------------|
| I        | 30           | 39.47%     |
| he       | 30           | 39.47%     |
| You      | 18           | 23.68%     |
| We       | 11           | 14.47%     |
| They     | 2            | 2.63%      |
| them     | 5            | 6.57%      |
| us       | 4            | 5.26%      |
| his      | 12           | 15.78%     |
| my       | 4            | 5.26%      |
| your     | 5            | 6.67%      |
| their    | 1            | 1.31%      |
| Our      | 3            | 3.94%      |
| him      | 5            | 6.57%      |
| it       | 2            | 2.63%      |
| me       | 1            | 1.31%      |

## 2-2 Spatial Deixis

In English, spatial deixis is expressed by means of adverbs of place such as here and there. Furthermore, some verbs of motions like come, go and others are mentioned to indicate spatial deixis when used to mark movement towards the speaker or away from the speaker (Yule, 1996: 12 ). Deixis is a form of referring that is tied to the speaker's context with the most basic distinction between deictic expressions being "near speaker" or "away from speaker". "The near speaker" or "proximal" terms are this and here whereas the "away from speaker" or "distal" terms are that and there (Ibid: 9).

Fromkin et al (2003: 218) affirm that expressions of place deixis require contextual information about the place of utterance such as here , that place , this city , there , etc. In this respect, Hudson (2003: 316) states that there are the demonstrative pronouns such as this, that , these and those. This , for instance, in I'll take this, may mean a rose , a book or whatever depending on the context of its use. Here may indicate a place in Chicago when spoken in Chicago.

As far as directional terms are concerned, Fromkin et al ( 2003: 219) point out that " before/ behind , left / right , front / back " are deictic when someone needs to know the orientation in space of the conversational participants to recognize their reference. Yule (1996: 13 ) notes that physically close objects can be treated by the speaker as psychologically close. Similarly, something that is physically distant will be psychologically distant, e.g., that man over there. However, a speaker may mark something that is physically close as psychologically distant, e.g., I don't like that. That here doesn't have a fixed meaning. Instead, it is "invested" with meaning in a context by a speaker.

Spatial deixis can be expressed in the following instances taken from the short story " the suppliant":

**SNo.1:** Our friend.....had been sitting in Verandah .....When an old man approached.

Verandah is a place in which our friend, Obaidulla , and his brother had been sitting. Approach is a verb of motion which indicates that an old man came towards Obaidulla and his brother.

**SNo.4:** ..... in order that he may reach Calcutta?

Calcutta is an Indian city which the old man's son would like to reach.

**SNo.8:** I think you have come here to practice as a barrister.....come as a verb of motion together with the adverb of place here point to India in which the old man lives.

**SNo. 12:** I have as yet no connexion in the city,.....

The city points to English from which Obaidulla, the speaker, came.

**SNo.31:** Tea there was always delicious .....

The adverb of place there Points to India which Obaidulla reached.

**SNo.32:** .....nor could he come to tea with us.....nor could they both come fearing to leave the house.

Come is a verb of motion that indicates moving towards the speaker. In this sentence Obaidulla and his brother could not move or come towards the old man.

**SNo.35:** And from inquiries in the bazar.....

Bazar indicates a place at which people always do shopping .

**SNo.53:** I go .

Go is a verb of motion that indicates moving away from the speaker.

**SNo.55:** So he came straight round to you, .....

Came is a verb of motion that indicates moving towards the speaker. In this sentence the old man moves towards Obaidulla.

**SNo.56:** It is a disagree to India.....

India is the state in which such events took place.

**SNo.67:** I should not have behaved like this in England myself.

This indicates the recent behaviour of the suppliant.

England points to the state from which Obaidulla came.

### **2-3 Temporal Deixis**

There are certain deictic expressions of time such as now, this time, two weeks from now, then and other. It is necessary to recognize the time at which the utterance was said in order to understand what specific time such expressions refer to.

Next week, for instance, has a different reference when uttered today than a month from today ( Fromkin et al, 2003: 218).

In the same respect, Hudson ( 2000: 316 ) indicates that today means this day when spoken today, and yesterday When spoken Yesterday.

On the other hand, Akmajian et al ( 1997: 242 ) state that "some indexicals involve explicit descriptive information as well as indexicality such as yesterday and tomorrow. Yesterday, for instance, means something like the day before the day of this utterance of yesterday". It can be added that now is mentioned as a proximal form to indicate both the time coinciding with the speaker's utterance and the time of the speaker's voice being heard, Whereas then refers to both past and future time relative to the speaker's present time. (Yule, 1996: 14-15).

Consider the following instances taken from the short story under investigation:

**SNo.3:** " Good evening, gentlemen". He said.

Evening indicates that the old man come to Obaidulla and his brother at night.

**SNo.16:** You are most kind, but at present I do not need a clerk.

The word present here means now.

**SNo.18:** .....and the brothers spent the evening arranging books.

The evening refers to the time at which Obaidulla and his brother were unpacking some books.

**SNo.20:** But towards mid-night a ghari rolled up piled with luggage.

Mid-night is the time before which the brothers were arranging books.

**SNo.28:** He kept my servants up all night.....and today he complains of them.

Night points to the time at the beginning of which the brothers were arranging books. Today refers to the next day after the night had finished.

**SNo.29:** He sighed, then said, laughing.....

Then indicates a succession of events, i.e. after sighing he said something.

**SNo.38:** Next morning the suppliant called on us.

Next morning points to the day immediately after that when the complaint took place.

**SNo.44:** Now I can tell you.

Now refers to the present time of the utterance.

**SNo.61:** ..... , and today will you both come to tea?

Today indicates the day at which the suppliant called on them.

**SNo.69:** Then turning to his other critic, .....

Then expresses a succession of events, i.e. after saying " it seems jolly funny ", the speaker turns to his other critic.

#### **2.3.1 Tense**

As far as tense is concerned, Gramely and Patzold ( 1992: 248 ) indicate that deictic functions can be expressed through the appropriate use of tense, e.g., the present tense is normally used to describe scientific apparatus. On the other hand, Quirk et al ( 1985: 184 ) point out that the present and the past tenses can be added to other pairs of deictic items. Similarly, Yule ( 1996: 15 ) states that " the present tense is the proximal form and the past tense is the distal form".

The short under analysis is filled with past and present tenses from which the following instances are chosen:

**a: Present tense**

SNo.8: " I think you have come here to practice as a barrister", .....

SNo.10: " I think you need a clerk".

SNo.12: I have as yet no connexion in the city, .....

SNo.13: " We live very simple, as you see".

SNo.44: Now I can tell you.

**b: Past Tense**

SNo.1: .....When an old man approached.

SNo.3: ....., he said.

SNo.30: We left depressed.....

SNo.42: We congratulated him, .....

SNo.63: He listened in silence, .....

**3- Conclusions**

It can be concluded that :

- 1- Person deixis is more commonly used than spatial and temporal deixis as shown in table (1) in which all the personal pronouns mentioned in the short story under investigation are listed.
- 2- As far as the personal pronouns are concerned, the pronouns I and you are more commonly used than other personal pronouns as indicated in table (2) in which the percentage of each pronoun is clearly stated.
- 3- Personal pronouns functioned as subject are more frequently used than those functioned as objects or possessive adjectives as the percentages illustrate in table (2)
- 4- Concerning gender, no female pronouns are mentioned, i.e. all the participants in the short story are masculine.
- 5- The pronoun we is exclusive in the sentences in which it occurs, i.e. the addressee is not included.

**References**

- Akmajian, A., Demers, R., Farmer, A. and Harnish, R. (1997). Linguistics. An Introduction to language and Communication. Fourth Edition. Cambridge: The MIT press.
- Fowler, Roger (1971) An Introduction to transformational Syntax. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., and Hyams, N. (2003) An Introduction to Language . Seventh Edition. United States: Thomson.
- Fasold, R. (1990) The Sociolinguistics of language. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Gramely, S. and Patzold, K. (1992) A Survey of Modern English. London: Routledge.
- Hudson, Grover (2000) Essential Introductory Linguistics. United States: Blackwell.
- Hurford, J. and Heasley, B. (1983) Semantics: A Course book. Cambridge: Cambridge University press
- Kramer, C. (1975) "Sex-related differences in address systems", Anthropological Linguistics 17:198- 200.
- Lyons, John (1981) Language and Linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. and Svartvick, J. (1985) A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language. London: Longman Group Limited.
- Verschueren, Jef (1999) Understanding Pragmatics. London: Arnold.
- Yule, George (1996) Pragmatics. Oxford: Oxford University press.

رقم الإيداع

في دار الكتب والوثائق ببغداد

١٣٠٩ لسنة ٢٠٠٩م