

Deixis and Focalization in Narrative : A Theoretical Review

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Abstract: Narrative texts create imaginative worlds that resemble the real world in its components. Deixis assist the reader to enter the fictional world and to follow up all its happenings, time, space, contradictions, modifications and opinions as if he were really experiencing them in the real world. In addition, deixis are important because they bring forward the contextual information which is crucial for understanding the narrative. They are essential for shifting the Deictic Centre (DC henceforth) in order to follow the progression of persons, times, and places to shift the focalization perspective in the story. The research involves discovering how it is possible to recognize shifting in focalization perspective by pinpointing the shifting of the DC in narrative texts. The goal is to show that deictic expressions are significant in making it easy to comprehend the contextual information of the incidents, the characters' behaviour and to understand the temporal and spatial relations in the text.

Therefore, basically the study considers three types of deictic expressions: personal, temporal and spatial in narrative .These three types of deictic expressions are related to deictic operations which work on introducing, maintaining and shifting the DC. In narrative, all the deictic expressions are tied to those operations. The main focus of the study is to investigate the relationship between the shifting operation in the DC and the focalization level which is either internal or external. In addition, the researcher studies how DC shifting affects shifting the focalizer and the focalized by shifting the personal deixis. Primarily, the researcher combines two theories to perfectly cover both sides of the issue. The first is the focalization theory proposed by Mieke Bal (2004) to detect the shifting of focalization level by linguistically tracking the shifting of the DC in *Beloved* and the second is the Deictic Shifting Theory proposed by David Zubin and Lynne Hewitt (1995).

1. Introduction: Authors of fiction create imagined worlds which are circumvented by a specific time and place; therefore, the reader succeeds in amalgamating himself in those invented worlds as if he were experiencing them in reality. To do so, the reader mentally depends on linguistic expressions to comprehend the components of the literary world, such as time, place, and events. This shifting from the real world to the fictional world and from one fictional world to the other in the same literary work requires an adaptation of the deictic expressions in the text which lead the reader throughout the modifications and shifting of different times and places. In addition, the reader has to activate a

cognitive ability to enable him to interpret the story from his own perspective and comprehend the artistic experience of literature (Stockwell, 2002: 3-4). One of the ways in which deictic expressions have a significant role is when they cause the window of focalization to shift. Focalization theory accounts for the angle from which a particular scene in literature is depicted. It is first proposed by Gerard Genette (1972) and then adopted by other scholars, such as Rimmon Kenan (1982, 2009) and Mieke Bal (1999, 2004). The theory of focalization according to Bal consists of the focalizer, the focalized, and two levels of focalization, which are the internal and the external level. There are two main polars in her theory: the first one is concerned with her different view of what is meant by internal and external focalization, and the second one with her belief that focalization level shifts from external to internal level. Accordingly, there are two possibilities: narrative is either focalized by the narrator focalizer, or it begins with external focalization and then shifts to internal focalization (Bal, 2004: 277-8). This very idea of level shifting is what the current research proves linguistically by amalgamating the theory of focalization with the cognitive stylistic theory of Deictic Shifting.

2.1 Focalization: The selection of the angle from which something is perceived is narratologically called focalization. The emergence of focalization goes back to a twentieth century literary style known as psychological realism which is one of the features of literary

fictional world as it appears to a particular character i.e. it concentrates on depicting the events as how a particular character perceives them. This results in narrative techniques, such as stream of consciousness and flashbacks (Jahn, 2007: 94–5). Stream of consciousness is the most prevalent technique defined by Cuddon (1998: 366) as the outflow of a particular character's personal experience.

Miller (2005: 125) says that focalization is similar to point of view in its basis. However, it does not only mean the position from which matters are seen, but bringing characters and objects to be in focus, such as perceiving them through a telescope. There are a number of other theorists who are interested in adopting and developing the theory of focalization. Niederhoff (2009: 115) defines focalization as "the selection or restriction of narrative information in relation to the experience and knowledge of the narrator, the character or other, more hypothetical entities in the storyworld". Abbott (2002: 66) defines focalization as the "lens through which we see characters and events in narrative". According to Herman (Jahn: 94) focalization is "the submission of narrative information to a perspectival filter". This research introduces the three major theories of focalization as developed by Genette, Rimmon–Kenan and Bal.

2.2 Genets Theory of Focalization: The French narratologist Gerard Genette is the first who proposed focalization theory. Genette (1988: 74) necessitates the distinction between who sees and who says; therefore, he classifies his theory of narrative under

two categories: mood and voice. Mood includes point of view and perspective and voice which is essentially related to the narrator and narration. His taxonomy is mainly dependent on the taxonomy of vision proposed by Pouillon and its development by Todorov (Schmid, 2010: 91) whose narrative theory revolves around three ideas: vision from behind (when the narrator knows more than any other character), vision with (when the narrator tells only what a certain character knows) and vision without (when the narrator knows less than the other character does) (Genette, 1983: 188–9).

In Genette's view, the term 'point of view' refers to two aspects of narrative: mood and voice. The first one is essentially concerned with the notion of perceiving the narrative i.e. whose point of view drives the narrative. The other term is more connected to who tells the narrative. Mood does not only include focalization but also other terms such as distance and perspective. Bal (2004: 267) suggests that distance is the extent to which the narrator is involved in the events, whereas perspective is defined by Genette (1983: 185) as regulating the narrative information. The main reason that tempts Genette to use the term focalization over the term point of view is his belief that the latter is associated with visual connotation only. Paradoxically, focalization refers to visual connotation as well as opinions. There are three types of focalization proposed by Genette: zero-focalization, external focalization and internal focalization. The comparison among

Table 1: Pouillon, Todorov and Genette Focalization (Taken from Genette, 1983: 188)

Pouillon	Todorov	Genette
Vision from Behind	Narrator > character	Zero Focalization
Vision with	Narrator =character	Internal Focalization
Vision without	Narrator <character	External Focalization

Narrative texts which are written with unrecognized focalizer are said to be presented with zero-focalization. It is the first kind of focalization in Genette's theory which is mostly attacked by other scholars who adopted his theory. The second type is external focalization which describes the kind of narrative with the actions performed by the characters without revealing their thoughts or accessing their emotions. The third type of focalization is internal focalization which is mainly used to describe the literary works which are written during the first and second world wars. It is also known as the type of focalization that remark the adventure and intrigue novels, such as the works of Walter Scott and Alexander Dumas. There are three sub- divisions of internal focalization: fixed, variable and multiple. Fixed focalization describes the condition when a piece of narrative is focalized by a certain character, such as Conrad's novel *The Ambassador*. When a narrative is focalized by more than a focalizer, it is called variable focalization, such as Flaubert's *Madam Bovary* which is focalized

by two main characters. However, if a certain narrative text is focalized by more than one character by provoking the same narrative situation, it is called multiple focalization such as Robert Browning's narrative poem *The Ring and The Book* (Genette, 1983: 189–191).

There are a number of scholars who attacked Genette's theory of narrative for his separation between mood and voice and his notion of zero focalization. One of the objections to Genette is made by James Phelan. Phelan suggests assimilating both voice and vision in narrative without any attempt to discriminate who sees from who says. Phelan's suggestion is based on the impossibility of separating the two mental procedures from each other, unless the narrator is a reporting machine (2001: 57). Therefore, Phelan suggests that when a narrator puts in words what others perceive, he cannot block his vision of what he is narrating. That is to say, perception and voice go hand in hand in the narrating processes since the narrator is a human with mentality, memory and perception. Otherwise, the sequence of events would be neither coherent nor logical. The narrator, consequently, would be just like the lens through which the audience perceive. Jesch and Stein (2009: 61) remark a number of complications and overlapping between Genette's three types of focalization that any type of them may be confused with another one. Thus, if a narrative work is focalized externally, it may be noticed that some parts of it are internally focalized. Furthermore, in some narrative texts, it is hard to distinguish the various types of

focalization. The complication certainly occurs between zero-focalization and variable focalization. A piece of narrative can be seen multifocalized. However, it is externally focalized. Concerning internal focalization, it is not always strict as a mood in narrative texts because the focalizer is always neglected and his thought and perception which constitute the ideology of the texts are not objectively analyzed or criticised by another one. Jesch and Stein (2009:

62) came up with the following diagram:

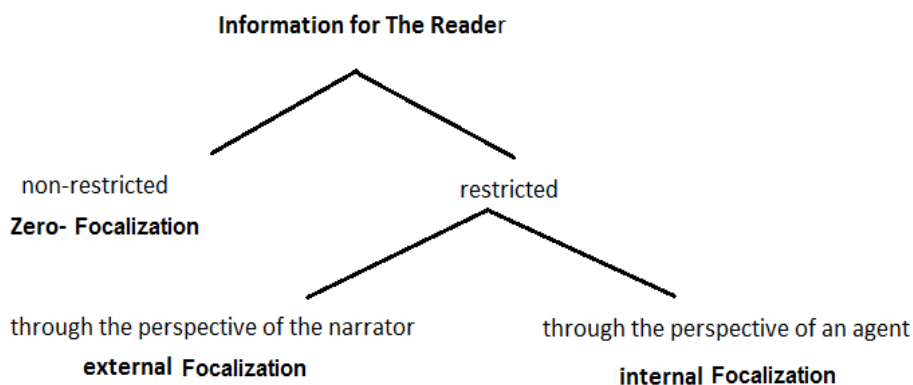


Figure 1 Genette's Typology of Focalization (Taken from Jesch and Stein: 2009: 62)

2.3 Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan Theory of Focalization: Rimmon-Kenan is a post- Genettean narratologist who adopts Genette's term focalization instead of the traditional term point of view. Fundamentally, she takes Genette's basic notions of internal and

external focalization and divides focalization into facets. The theory considers three main facets: the perceptual facet, the psychological facet, and the ideological facet. This section discusses her notion of focalization along with her focalization facets.

Rimmon-Kenan (2009: 76-7) distinguishes between the focalizer and the focalized. She names them respectively as the subject and object of focalization. She classifies focalization according to two criteria: position relative to the story, and the degree of persistence. Position relative to the story concerns Genette's notions of internal and external focalization. Rimmon-Kenan believes that external focalization is notified as nearer to the narrator. External focalization occurs in first person narrative either when the distance between the narrator and the character is temporally and psychologically far, or when the perception being presented is the narrating self not the experiencing self. The other one is internal focalization which takes the type of a character-focalizer. The degree of persistence means the changeability of focalization types in a certain narrative text. A text may have a fixed, variable or multiple focalization. She thinks that the mere visual sense of the term focalization is limited and it should include other aspect. Accordingly, she classifies focalization into facets: the perceptual facet, the psychological facet and the ideological facet. Those facets may concur and may also belong to different or even conflicting focalizers (ibid: 78- 9) The perceptual facet concerns smelling, tasting and seeing which are determined by the space and time coordinates in narrative. Starting with the place, it

is mainly concerned with the position of the internal/ external focalizer in narrative. External focalization displays the perceived happenings of the story from a position far above. There are two kinds of external focalization: panoramic and simultaneous. Panoramic view means the description which occurs at the beginning or end of narrative, while simultaneous view means narrating the events as they are happening. Panoramic and simultaneous views cannot happen when the focalizer is inside the story unless the focalizer character has an access to what is happening. The other dimension of the perceptual facet is time. When the focalizer is external unpersonified, it is called panchronic. However, if the character focalizes his own past, it is called retrospective. On the other hand, internal focalization might be synchronous which means that the focalization affects the temporality of the events. In conclusion, external focalization may handle the three temporal dimensions of a story: past, present and future, whereas internal focalization is only confined to the present dimension (ibid: 79– 80). The psychological facet concerns the thoughts and emotions of the focalizer and includes two components: the cognitive component and the emotive component. The cognitive component concerns knowledge, beliefs and memory of the focalizer, and the opposition between the external and internal focalization is a matter of the amount of knowledge each of them can present. The knowledge of the external focalizer is unrestricted. On the contrary, the internal focalizer knows only what any other normal being inside the story

knows. The emotive component is associated with the objectivity and subjectivity of the focalizer. The external focalizer presents what he perceives objectively as an outsider watching the happenings occurring in front of him without being involved. However, the internal focalizer is subjective because he necessarily presents characters, events and objects as they appear to him based on his own experience, background knowledge and environment. The psychological facet is mainly relevant to the focalizer since he is a human, but it might also be relevant to the focalized when he is a human. If the focalized is perceived externally, the emotions are to be inferred from the external observation but he is seen internally if his thoughts, emotions, recognitions, memories and emotions are presented (ibid: 81–3).

The ideological facet is associated with the norms and concepts of the story which are usually introduced by the narrator–focalizer. The dominating ideology of the focalizer might be subordinated by other supplementary ideologies that are being evaluated by the main ideology. In some complicated matters, an external focalizer introduces a versatile account of ideologies which conflict and oppose each other. A character may represent his ideological position in two ways: either; through discussing them or interpreting them into his behavior and the way he sees the world (ibid: 83–4). Jesch and Stein (2009: 63) came up with the following figure to illustrates Rimmon–Kenan's typology of focalization:

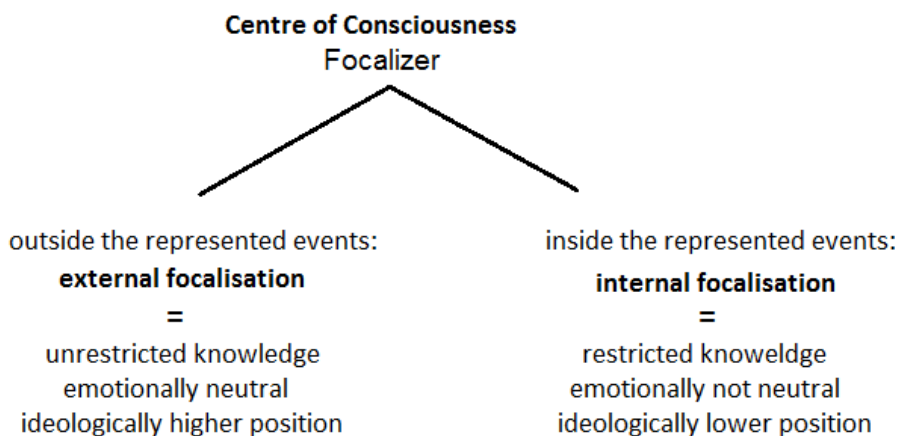


Figure 2: Rimmon–Kenan Typology of Focalization (Taken from Jesch and Stein 2009: 63)

2.4 Mieke Bal's Theory of Focalization: Mieke Bal is one of the first scholars who modified and developed Genette's theory of focalization. She has a number of reasons to consider adopting the term focalization over the traditional term point of view such as the technicality, the restrictive and extensive use of the term, and the possibility of using it for humans and objects (Bal, 2004: 269). However, she affirms that Genette's typology is confusing. The confusion, she says, is caused by the focalizer. While the focalizer in the second type sees, in the third type he is focalized or seen. In order to solve the problem of Genette's taxonomy, she prefers to distinguish between four terms in narrative: the focalizer, the focalized, the narrator, and the narrated. Obviously, the first two terms are concerned with who sees, and the second two are concerned with who speaks. She is also meticulous in considering

the role of the actors since they are tied to who focalizes (ibid: 270). Each of the actor, the focalizer, and the narrator has a role in the narrative. The actor produces the story and performs the kernels. The focalizer selects the angle from which the kernels are depicted and which kernels to depict. The narrator communicates the narrative and puts it into a text. Each of those agents has a receiver on the same level. Thus, the actor has another parallel actor, the focalizer has a focalized or a spectator, and the narrator has the hypothetical reader. In sum, each of the acting, focalizing and narrating activities has a subject and an object as follows:

The subject of narrating: the narrator.

The object of narrating: the narrated.

The subject of focalizing: the focalizer.

The object of focalization: the focalized.

Each of those three agents work hierarchically in narrative and help the story to be mediated from one level to the other. The reader tends to judge the characters which are visible to him because of the intermediation of another agent in the story: the focalizer. The focalizer affects the vision of the reader and causes the character to be seen in a certain way. The narrator is significant as the medium through which the sight is received. To illustrate this, Bal (2004: 174) provides the following figure:



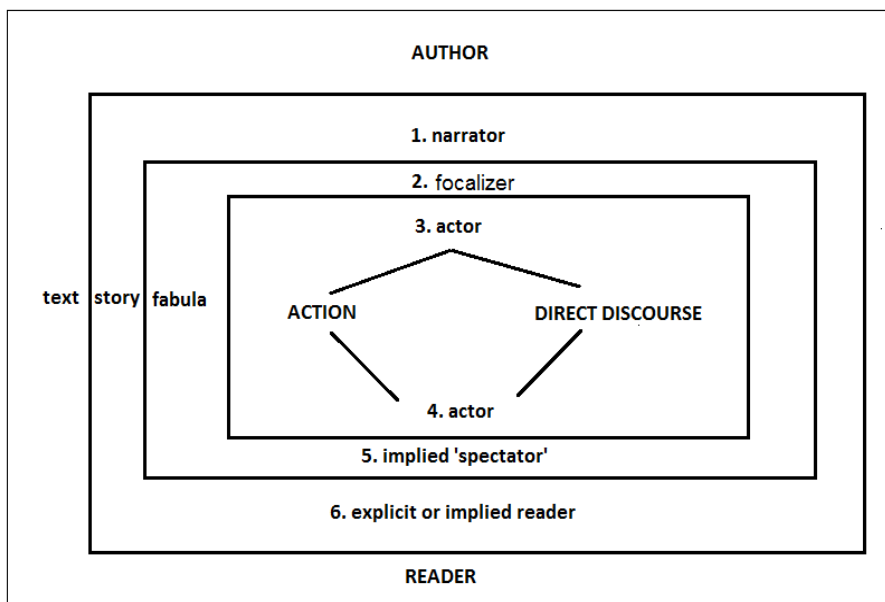


Figure 3: Bal's Theory of Narrative (Taken from Bal 2004: 174)

The narrator is either present or absent in the narrative text. Being present in the narrative requires the narrator to be part of the story, or what Genette calls homodiegetic. However, his absence means that he is outside the story. She also emphasizes the notion of narrative level which is crucial in her theory of narrative. The narrator describes a character and refers to him as a third person, afterwards he allows that character to speak. In this case, the third person (he/she) becomes a first person (I). It means that the narration transfers from one level to the other (Bal, 2004: 274). The narrated is the narrator's wording and his style of composition; therefore, there is a hierarchical subordination between the narrator and its subordinate object, the narrated. This hierarchical dependence is unfavoured by Bal, so she uses the two terms hyponarrative and hypodiegetic. When the narrator gives up

his narrative level to a character, then the character speaks in a reported speech. At the point when the narrative level shifts, the intradiegetic narrator becomes extradiegetic and the character forms a hyponarrative with the reported speech. In order for the direct discourse to be hyponarrative, it needs to be brought about; otherwise, it is called hypo-discourse.

Bal (2004: 276–7) suggests that the point of view has two meanings: it is either what someone gazes at or having an opinion of a particular subject. The first meaning corresponds to what is gazed at or the focalized. The latter corresponds to the subject that gazes or the focalizer. Likewise, the first meaning corresponds to Genette's external focalization whereas the second meaning parallels Genette's internal focalization. This means that internal focalization concerns focalizer and external focalization concerns the focalized. Bal uses only two types of focalization: internal and external. If the focalization is internal, it means that the characters, objects, places and events are presented by a character in the story. On the contrary, external focalization means that the characters, objects and opinions are presented by an outsider. The focalizer is not the narrator and it is not the focalized as well. When the narrator is absent, the focalizer is absent

too. Accordingly, Bal (2004: 277–8) pinpoints two potentialities: either the narrative starts out with external focalization, then shifts into internal focalization, or the knowledge of the narrator or character is neglected. In the first possibility, it is not necessary that the focalizer that changes, because the focalized sometimes changes. Bal (ibid: 278) lists a number of principles in which her theory of focalization differs from Genette's:

- It is useful in identifying the specifics of each type of narrative.
- Zero–focalization is disregarded since it is a limited term.
- The distinction between the focalizer and the focalized and how it clarifies the differentiation between external and internal focalization.
- Changes in narrative level might cause a change, not always, in the focalizing level.
- Things, +objects, events and places may be focalized besides the character.
- Finally, the focalized can be perceptible or imperceptible. She uses the word perceptible to mean the presentation of the external focalized, and imperceptible to indicate the internal focalized. This has nothing to do with the focalizer, it is only concerned with the nature of the focalized.

3. DC and the Notion of Window of Focalization: Toolan (2001: 60) says that in complicated narratives, viewpoint (focalization) tends to move around from the narrator to character, and from one character to the other. Deictic expressions are connected to focalization as far as they are able to move its

window. The window according to Zubin and Hewitt (1995: 132) is an imaginative shape in the storyworld that contains all the components of the DC: personal, temporal, and spatial. This window is the perspective through which the reader perceives the events of the story as it is told. The three components of the DC coordinate to form a focalizing perspective or origin of view. As a consequence, there has to be a focalized perspective which is consisted by the components of the DC. The figure below illustrates the focalization window.

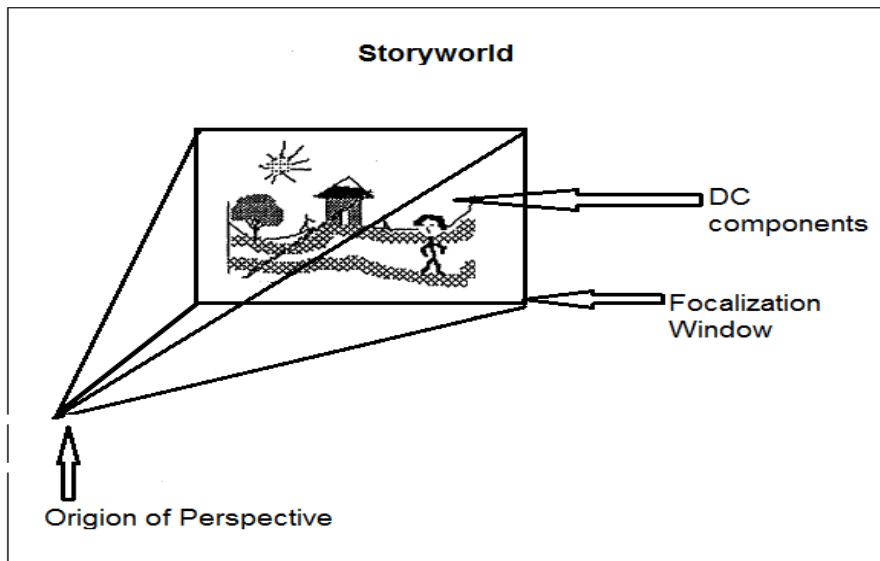


Figure 4: The Window of Focalization (Taken From Zubin and Hewitt 1995: 133).

The notion of window is taken from the American novelist Henry James. In the preface of his novel *The Portrait of a Lady*, James proposes the term window to account for the idea of who sees by employing the metaphor House of Fiction which has a

variety of windows. At each window, there is a person with a pair of eyes as the instrument by which he sees. Although many individuals may stand at the same window and watching the same view, their perspectives are dissimilar. In summary, there are three indispensable factors that determine the perspective: the window, the pair of eyes and most importantly the consciousness of the watcher. That is why different people watch and interpret the same view differently (Jahn, 1996: 252).

Jahn (1999) cites Ryan's approach of story–line window to delineate the idea of window. Ryan suggests a narrative screen and an imaginative narrative camera that continuously goes on the text. She borrowed this technique from film industry to suggest a referential break that cause a change in the window because the imaginative camera goes off–line causing a shift in the location, or the time of narrative shifts backwards or forwards. Accordingly, Jahn (1999) proposes applying the same case of story–line window to the window of focalization. Shifting the text's DC causes a shift in the location or shifting in time; e.g. when a shift happens, a new window opens. Bal also considers the importance of deictic expressions in moving focalization window in filming in her book *Thinking in Film* (2013). Another theory to account for the notion of window is called Field of Vision and was first proposed by Jahn (1996: 242–3). It is represented like a conic shaped area illuminated by a torch as perceived by an eye and the frame of it is delineated by the angle of vision. The eye is represented as a lens that aggregates the reflections in a point called focus. The eye

works as photographic lens that captures only a specific scene out of the field of vision. Eventually, the whole field of vision is a snap from the bigger story world of the narrative text: Kuno uses the term camera angle to describe the process. The deictic verb 'go up to', for example, requires the speaker "to describe the action from the camera angle of x rather than y". In contrast, the deictic verb 'come up to' requires the speaker "to describe the action from the camera angle of y rather than x". Elaborately, x describes going away from the camera angle, while y describes getting closer to the camera angle (Szatrowski: 2007: 330). The window contains the three components of the DC according to Zubin and Hewitt and provides two types of shifting: the focalizing perspective and the focalized perspective. Focalizing perspective means shifting focalization in person, time, and place from which the story world is exposed to the reader, and establishing a point of view on the events of the story. The focalized perspective means the content of the deictic window as it moves along its spatial, temporal, and personal coordinates through the story world. This represents the personal, temporal, spatial, and object contents of the story as viewed by the reader through the deictic window. In order to scientifically study the shifting of the focalization window, it is convenient to adopt DST which is concerned with the shifting in the DC that causes shifting in focalization.

4.1 Zubin and Hewitt Theory of Deictic Shifting: Zubin and Hewitt version of Deictic Shifting (1995) accounts for three

shifting. Shifting is especially important to focalization theory, that is why this version is adopted in this research. The components of the DC according to this model, the deictic operations, the principles, and stylistic features are presented and discussed below.

4.2 The Components of the Deictic Centre: There are four components in the DC aligning with the person, time, place and object. Those components construct the DC in narrative. They are labeled as the WHO, the WHAT, the WHEN and the WHERE. These four components of the DC are subjected to four operations by which they are introduced, maintained and shifted (Zubin and Hewitt, 1995: 133).

4.2.1 The WHO: The WHO is the participant which reflects the identity, behaviour, point of view and the cognitive position of the storyworld. The WHO in narrative is either a focalizing WHO that the one whose perceptions constitute the story, or a focalized WHO that the focalizing WHO describes. The focalizer and the focalized are usually two separate characters. However, they might be, in some cases, the same character. In such a case, the focalized WHO is a projected image of the focalizing WHO known as 'projected ego'. Conceptually, the focalizer and focalized are two separate entities, yet they are actually the same character in the storyworld. After presenting the WHO in the window of the DC, the properties, intentions and associations of the participants accumulate in the mind of the reader as he reads the story. This accumulation of information about the participants is called 'history'

which helps the reader manages references to characters, especially anaphoric references (Zubin and Hewitt, 1995: 134).

4.2.2 The WHAT :The WHAT is one of the components of the DC which has its significance in the storyworld. Simply, it is the entity which is emphasized and focalized by the focalizing WHO. It helps usually to carry the story forwards. The WHAT is either a subsidiary object carrying no significance to the perspective of the story, or has a crucial role in constituting the plot of the story. The WHAT may have a history by the accumulation of information, but it is not easy to deictically track since it is quick to deictic decay (Zubin and Hewitt, 1995: 135).

4.2.3 The WHEN:Events in narrative are not superficially related, but there are usually sophisticated relations that connect them. Events within the fictional world are not arranged symmetrically but they are mixed up together. The beginning of an event might be linked to the end of another event, while another event is going on in the DC window. Basically, one of the difficulties of time in narrative is past-tense. Thus, event are written in past tense, however, they do not occur in the past. But their phrasing in past tense has the function of getting the reader into the narrative mood. Concerning focalization, the reader constructs a Now point in narrative, then he generates the past events from the Now point that he constructs. This means constructing a focalizing WHEN which is the process of setting up an immediate temporal frame from which events are interpreted as past or future. In addition,

focalizing WHEN is either a flashback or a flash forwards. Finally,

the history of the Now points constitutes the history of the when (Zubin and Hewitt, 1995: 137–8)

4.2.4 The WHERE: The spatial component of the scene is known as the WHERE. The WHERE is deictically centered in the prior spatial origin from which the spatial references are understood. The origin is the perspective from which the story is perceived. The origin might be explicitly stated or it might be contextually understood. It worths mentioning that the viewed WHERE, which is deictically centred, is the place that is examined by the focalizer WHO. The history of the WHERE is constituted by accumulating the spatial centering of the scenes throughout the story when a nesting relationship is established between the various spatial centers. In addition, there is a technique called 'path trace' that connects the current scene with the previous one. On the other hand, there is an expansion–contraction effect which helps nesting the WHEREs. It either expands a current WHERE to include a wider WHERE, or contracts it to concentrate on a specific small area. Finally, understanding the story also depends on 'path–connecting' which means that the scenes in the story are connected by a default which is significant in creating an imaginative spatial universe in which the characters move (Zubin and Hewitt, 1995: 135–6).

4.3 The Deictic Operations: The set of mental construction processes that the reader operates on the DC while he is reading a narrative text is called 'deictic operation'. This section introduces the four types of deictic operations which are introducing,

maintaining, shifting and void. These four operations depend on the linguistic textual devices that are employed by the writer and being cognitively conceptualized by the readers. Introducing operation means introducing participants, spaces, times and objects into the narrative. Maintaining operation means maintaining the fixity of the DC. In this process, the writer depends on anti-shifting linguistic devices to maintain the stability of the DC. The third mental process that the reader performs is shifting which means that the WHO, the WHEN and the WHERE of the DC are shifted to another character, time and position. One kind of shifting is initializing which is establishing the WH, the WHEN and the WHERE at the beginning of the narrative sentence or paragraph. The forth DC operation known as void. Void is the deictic operation that occurs when one component of the DC shifts to a null category. (Zubin and Hewitt 1995: 141

4. The Conclusion : Deictic expressions and focalization perspective go hand in hand within narrative texts. Prior to their indispensable role in introducing, maintaining and shifting entities, deixis can be used in detecting the shifting of narrative level in stories. This study is based on combining the two theories. The first one is the focalization theory proposed by Mieke Bal (2004) and the second theory is Deictic Shifting Theory proposed by Zubin and Hewitt (1995). Throughout the narrative texts, levels of focalization shifts from the narrator focalizer to one of the characters or from one character to the other. Deictic expressions

and by deictic operations help detecting shifting in the focalizing and focalized perspectives.

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