

# **ASPECTS OF DEIXIS IN ZULU**



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# **ASPECTS OF DEIXIS IN ZULU**

by

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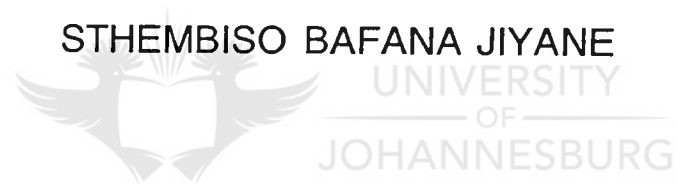
**Supervisor: Prof. L.C. Posthumus**

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## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my two sons,

and



MNCEDISI XOLANI JIYANE

and to my mother,

JOHANNA NOMASONTO CHOKWE

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## SUMMARY

This study is concerned with deixis as a subcategory of semantics and/or pragmatics which has not been dealt with thoroughly in the African languages. A number of English scholars indicate that the subcategories of deixis which may be identified are: person deixis, spatial deixis and temporal deixis. They also indicate how these subcategories are grammaticalized in English. This, then, led to the question: is deixis grammaticalized in the same way in Zulu? This study attempts to answer that question.

The research method used is the inductive method, where facts and findings which come from other scholars' publications were taken into consideration. A general survey of the available published sources on deixis has shown that very little research has been done on whether Zulu deixis belongs to semantics and/or to pragmatics, hence the discussion of this categorization in this mini-dissertation. The framework employed in this study to investigate deixis in Zulu is the synchronic functional approach.

This study is aimed at investigating deixis in Zulu, with special reference to the subcategories and the relationship between them. Though only three of the subcategories, namely person, spatial and social deixis, are discussed in detail, this work encompasses all five of the subcategories found in Zulu. The other two subcategories of deixis, namely temporal (time) and discourse (text) deixis, which are also identified in Zulu, are briefly discussed.

Person deixis refers to all deictic words which are related to person. Person is then identified in discourse as either the first person (speaker), the second person (addressee) or third person. The first and second person are necessarily deictic, whereas the third person may or may not be deictic. In Zulu, the subjectival and objectival morphemes and/or emphatic pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, interjective demonstratives and the possessive pronouns are used to express person deixis.

Spatial deixis refers to the location of discourse participants in space. Traditionally, this referred to the three-way referential system indicating the three types of spaces: proximal, medial and distal, i.e. being proximal to the speaker, medial or distal from the speaker. Traditionalists explained the referential meaning of the demonstrative pronouns and the copulative demonstratives of the African languages in terms of this hypothesis. Modern researchers, however, take the view that spatial deixis, in the case of the African languages, realises in terms of a three-way relationship in discourse: the relationship between the speaker, the addressee and the object of reference.

Social deixis is realized when social distinctions which hold between the speaker(s), the addressee(s) and the referent are grammaticalized. In Zulu this includes examples such as *hlonipha* language, taboo expressions and language used to indicate respect and/or politeness.

The findings in this mini-dissertation show that deixis in Zulu is grammaticalized and realized in five subcategories, namely person, spatial, social, discourse/text and time deixis. Each subcategory of deixis is identified and exemplified by its meaning.

The relationship between the five subcategories of deixis is indicated.

## OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie ondersoek deiksis as 'n subkategorie van semantiek en/of pragmatiek. Dit is nog nie uitvoerig behandel in die Afrikatale nie. 'n Aantal Engelse taalkundiges het die volgende subkategorieë van deiksis geïdentifiseer: persoonsdeiksis, plekdeiksis en tyddeiksis. Daar word ook aangedui hoe hierdie subkategorieë in Engels gegrammatikaliseer word. Dit lei tot die vraag: word deiksis op dieselfde manier in Zulu gegrammatikaliseer? Hierdie studie poog om 'n antwoord op dié vraag te gee.

Die navorsingsmetode wat gevolg word, is die induktiewe metode, waar feite en bevindinge in die publikasies van ander taalkundiges in aanmerking geneem word. 'n Algemene oorsig oor die beskikbare gepubliseerde bronne oor deiksis toon aan dat daar baie min of geen navorsing gedoen is om te bepaal of deiksis tot semantiek of pragmatiek behoort nie — vandaar die bespreking van dié kategorisering in hierdie skripsie. Die raamwerk wat in hierdie studie gebruik word om Zuludeiksis te ondersoek, is die sinchronies, funksionele aanpak.

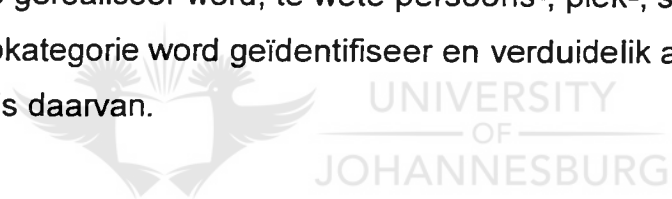
Hierdie studie is daarop gerig om deiksis in Zulu te ondersoek, met spesiale verwysing na die subkategorieë en die verhouding tussen sodanige subkategorieë onderling. Alhoewel net drie van die subkategorieë, te wete persoons-, plek- en sosiale deiksis in besonderhede behandel word, omvat hierdie studie al vyf subkategorieë wat in Zulu aangetref word. Die ander twee subkategorieë, naamlik tyddeiksis en diskoers-/teksdeiksis, wat ook in Zulu geïdentifiseer word, word kortliks bespreek.

Persoonsdeiksis verwys na alle deiktiese woorde wat verband hou met persoonsverwysing. Persoon word in die diskoers geïdentifiseer as eerste persoon (die spreker), tweede persoon (die aangesprokene) of derde persoon. Die eerste en tweede persoon is vanselfsprekend deikties, terwyl die derde persoon deikties mag wees of nie. In Zulu word die onderwerps- en voorwerpsmorfeme en/of die emfatiese voornaamwoorde, demonstratiewe voornaamwoorde, interjektiewe demonstratiewe en besittlike voornaamwoorde gebruik om persoonsdeiksis uit te druk.

Plekdeiksis verwys na die ruimtelike posisie wat die deelnemers aan die diskoers inneem. Tradisioneel verwys dit na die drierigting-verwysingsstelsel wat die drie tipes ruimtes aandui: naby, verwyder en ver, d.w.s. naby die spreker, verwyder van die spreker en ver van die spreker af. Tradisionalistes het geglo dat hierdie indeling ook kenmerkend is van Zulu en alle ander Afrikatale. Moderne navorsers huldig egter die mening dat plekdeiksis wys op die bestaan van 'n drierigting-verhouding in die diskoers: die verhouding tussen die spreker, die aangesprokene en die referent.

Sosiale deiksis kom tot stand wanneer die sosiale onderskeidings wat bestaan tussen die spreker, die aangesprokene en die referent gegrammatikalisier word. In Zulu sluit dit aspekte in soos *hloniphataal*, taboe-uitdrukkings en taalvorme wat gebruik word om respek of hoflikheid uit te druk.

Die bevindinge in hierdie skripsie toon aan dat deiksis in Zulu gegrammatikalisier is en in vyf subkategorieë gerealiseer word, te wete persoons-, plek-, sosiale-, diskoers- en tyddeiksis. Elke subkategorie word geïdentifiseer en verduidelik aan die hand van die gebruik en betekenis daarvan.



Ten slotte word die verhouding tussen die vyf subkategorieë van deiksis aangewys.



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# **CHAPTER 1 — INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The primary focus of this study is on 'deixis' and it concentrates on the classification and description of various aspects of 'deixis'. Deixis may be defined as the devices of all natural languages that link the utterance with its spatio-temporal and personal context (Posthumus, 1989: 2).

Deixis accounts for the specific location, the specific time of production, the speaker and the addressee of discourse (Tanz, 1980: 1).

Deixis is, thus, a prerequisite for the interpretation of an utterance in terms of the context of that utterance, however, may not be overtly marked. The meaning of deictic expressions depends crucially on when and where, by whom and to whom they are used (Posthumus, 1989: 2).

## **1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of the study is to investigate, firstly, whether deixis belongs to semantics and/or to pragmatics, and, secondly, the different ways in which deixis is marked in the African languages, especially in Zulu.

It is necessary to clarify whether the study of deixis belongs to pragmatics, as Levinson (1983) has stated, or to semantics. Few scholars have investigated deixis in Zulu, or indeed, in any of the African languages, and this field of research deserves attention. Posthumus (1989 and 1991) has proved that in the African languages, especially in Zulu, five distinct subcategories of deixis may be distinguished.

This study is an attempt to determine whether the distinction of the subcategories of deixis as cited by Lyons (1977), Levinson (1983) and Fillmore (1975), and the basic types mentioned by Fromkin and Rodman (1986) and Palmer (1990), can be compared with those of the scholars of the African languages, such as Posthumus (1989 and 1991), Moeketsi (1992) and Phaahla (1994), who distinguish the following subcategories of deixis: person, spatial, temporal, social and discourse deixis. A secondary aim is to discuss the relationship between social deixis and sociolinguistics.

### **1.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH**

The inductive method was followed in this mini-dissertation to research the concept of deixis. From grammar books, published articles, unpublished papers and dissertations, some facts and ideas have been deduced regarding deixis. Information given by scholars such as Fillmore (1975), Lyons (1977), Tanz (1980), Levinson (1983) and Posthumus (1989 and 1991) formed much of the basis of this study. From their works background information regarding deixis was extracted.

In this study, a synchronic, functional approach to the study of deixis has been followed. This approach is used to refer to the study of deixis in African languages, as it is realised in current speech. Some of the speech utterances used by speakers in everyday language were observed. Material found on deixis was clarified and applied to the deictic items occurring in Zulu. Wherever available, research and views of different scholars were critically compared. This led to a deeper understanding of the concept of deixis.

These methods raised questions such as: What is deixis? How many subcategories of deixis are found? Which examples may be used to demarcate the subcategories from each other? What is the relationship between these subcategories? Do they overlap? These questions demanded detailed answers.

An exhaustive search was undertaken for discussions on forms of deixis. However, it was discovered that there is simply not enough information available on the subject of deixis, especially in Zulu.

Conclusions reached by other scholars formed the background of this mini-dissertation. Information regarding deixis was gathered, assumptions and deductions were made having the background information of studies from other languages.

#### **1.4 SCHEME OF WORK**

This mini-dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 contains introductory comments on deixis. In this chapter the aim of this study and the method of research used, are explained. Central terms are defined. The historical background of deixis is also discussed.

In Chapter 2, the concept 'deixis' is defined. An explanation of what is understood by the term 'deictic centre' is given. The different subcategories of deixis, i.e. person, spatial, temporal, social and discourse deixis are introduced.

In Chapter 3, personal deixis is examined. Personal deixis is discussed, using the views of various scholars as a point of departure.

Spatial deixis is discussed in Chapter 4. The three-way nature of Zulu spatial deixis is highlighted, i.e. the fact that in discourse a relationship exists between the speaker, the addressee and the object referred to. An explanation of the three types of spatial deictic expressions, namely gestural, symbolic and anaphoric, is given. The concept of 'localism' is dealt with briefly.

In Chapter 5, social deixis is defined and examined. The relationship between society and language is clarified from the perspective of sociolinguistics, with reference to the relationship between social deixis and sociolinguistics. Zulu

examples in the subcategory of social deixis, such as kinship terms and *hlonipha* language are discussed. Short notes on the definition of pragmatics and semantics are included in this chapter.

Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter. Here the relationship between the five subcategories of deixis is examined. Finally, a list of the sources which were consulted, is given.

## **1.5 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS**

Some concepts used in this study need to be clarified. This is done in the following paragraphs.

### **1.5.1 Deixis**

The notion of deixis (which is merely the Greek word for 'pointing' or 'indicating' — it has become a technical term of grammatical theory) is introduced to handle the 'orientational' features of language which are relative to the time and place of utterance. Personal pronouns and adverbials of place and time are just the most obvious instances of the way in which the grammatical structure of language may reflect the spatio-temporal co-ordinates of the typical situation of utterance (Lyons, 1968: 275).

### **1.5.2 Deictic Words**

All languages contain small sets of words, the meanings of which vary systematically according to who uses them and where and when they are used. These words are called deictic words. A deictic word is a word which takes some element of its 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).

Examples of these 'pointing' or 'indicating' deictic words are words such as *le* (this), *leyo* (that), *lapha* (here), *lapho* (there), *manje* (now), *mina* (I), *wena* (you), *thina* (we). These deictic words have distinct kinds of deictic usage, which can be any of three alternatives, i.e. gestural, symbolic or anaphoric. Gestural deictic words are deictic words which need to be accompanied by gestures, i.e. when these words are uttered, they are accompanied by pointing, either by a finger, hand, head or eyes. However, not all deictic words are gestural, as indicated in Fillmore (1975: 40-41), Bühler (1982: 11) and Levinson (1988: 65-67). The original pointing function of deictic words is seen to lie with those visibly active body parts, which is the reason why deictic words are sometimes referred to as 'indexicals' (from the index finger). The indexicals may be differentiated from the somewhat more complex 'indexical symbols' — all of them often taken together as 'indexes' (Daalder, 1988: 1).

To expand on the above, the deictic words *le* (this), *leyo* (that) and *lapha* (there) are used in sentences 1. and 2. below to show how they may be used as gestural deictic words:



1. *Ungithengele ingubo le kanye naleyo.*  
He bought me **this** blanket and **that** one.
  
2. *Ukudla sekulungile, ngenani endlini yokudlela, wena hlala lapha, umnewethu ahlale lapho bese kuthi umnawami ahlale laphaya.*  
Food is ready, come to the dining room, you sit **here**, my elder brother should sit **there** and my younger brother should sit **there**.

### 1.5.3 The Deictic Centre

According to Lyons (1977: 638) the deictic centre is a fixed point determined by the speaker himself, who is central to the speech act and relates everything to his viewpoint. In the deictic context, the speaker is at the zero-point of the spatio-temporal co-ordinates.



## 1.6 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since the historical facts regarding deixis will be of value to a student making his/her first acquaintance with deixis, an historical overview is necessary here.

The research on deixis was initiated by a professor of psychology, Karl Bühler (1879-1963), in 1934 in his classical work, *Sprachtheorie: Die Darstellungsfunktion der Sprache*. He introduced a new frame of reference for the analysis of the so-called 'demonstrative pronouns' as well as the 'demonstrative adverbs'. He coined the terms '**deixis**' and '**deictic**' to denote the grammatical linguistic characteristics of demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative adverbs. The *Ziegefeld der Sprache* (pointing field of language) contains distinct forms which are word categories that are bound to the actual speech situation. He explained speech activity and how it provides the theoretical framework within which the analysis, description and explanation of demonstratives can be handled.

Today his studies are acknowledged as fundamental to the field of deixis. His work has been insightfully expanded and refined by, amongst others, Fillmore and Wunderlich. Bühler's reflections and discussions regarding the theoretical implications and consequences of his studies are of importance. According to Jarvella and Klein (1982: 317), however, Bühler did not elaborate on his conceptualization of deixis in a systematic manner, which is why he did not cover the full field of deixis.

Although the study of deixis in European languages is further advanced than the study of deixis in African languages, a few scholars have published in this field. Posthumus (1989 and 1991) has done research on deixis in the African languages, with special reference to the Zulu language. Another Africanist who has treated tense forms from a deictic point of view is Van Wyk (1981: 90). Moeketsi (1992: 23-48) also elaborated on deixis in her discussion of Southern Sotho discourse. Deixis was also briefly studied by Phaahla (1994: 3-10) in her discussion of first and second person in Northern Sotho.

## CHAPTER 2 — DEIXIS

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, various definitions of deixis, as given by various scholars, are cited and discussed. The term 'deictic centre' is also discussed in detail in this chapter, since it has a great influence on deixis. The five categories of deixis, i.e. person, spatial (or space), temporal (or time), social and discourse (or text) deixis are then examined.

### 2.2 DEFINING DEIXIS

A number of scholars, notably Fillmore (1971(a)), Lyons (1968 and 1977(b)), Tanz (1981), Bühler (as cited in Jarvella and Klein, 1982), Levinson (1983), Crystal (1985), Posthumus (1991) and Moeketsi (1992), have defined the term 'deixis'. Some of these definitions are given below.

Fillmore (1971(a): 39-40) defines deixis as the name given to those formal properties of utterances that are determined by, and which are interpreted by knowing, certain aspects of the communication act in which the utterances in question can play a role. These include, the identity of the interlocutors in a communication situation, covered by the term **person deixis**; and the place or places in which these individuals are located, which is then called **place deixis**; the time at which the communication act takes place, which can be divided into **encoding** and **decoding** time (referring to the time at which the message is sent and received respectively), is also identifiable and this is known as **time deixis**. There is also the matrix of linguistic material within which the utterance has a role, that is, the preceding and following parts of the discourse which we may refer to as **discourse deixis**. Finally, the social relationship

on the part of the participants in the conversation is identified. This social relationship determines, for example, the choice of honorific, or polite or intimate or insulting speech levels, which we can group together as **social deixis**.

Lyons (1977b: 637) refers to deixis as the location and identification of person, objects, events, processes and activities being talked about or referred to in relation to the spatio-temporal context created and sustained by the act of utterance and participation in it, typically of a single speaker and at least one addressee.

Tanz (1981: 1) states that all natural spoken languages have devices that link the utterance with its spatio-temporal and personal context and this linkage is called 'deixis'.

Bühler and Lyons are in agreement on the definition of deixis, but Bühler (as cited in Jarvella and Klein (1982)) argues further that in the case of gestural deictic terms, 'deixis' involves a face-to-face interaction in which the speaker and the hearer can comprehend each other's facial expressions and gestures when they are at the same temporal-spatial domain.

With reference to the precise nature of deixis, Levinson (1983: 54) states:

The single most obvious way in which the relationship between language and context is reflected in the structures of languages themselves, is through the phenomenon of **deixis**.

He explains that the term 'deixis' is borrowed from the Greek word for pointing or indicating, and has as prototypical or focal exemplars the use of demonstratives and first and second person pronouns. Levinson (1983: 54) then expounds on the philosophical aspect of deixis as follows:

... deixis concerns the ways in which languages encode or grammaticalize features of the **context of utterance** or **speech event**, and thus also concerns ways in which the interpretation of utterances

depends on the analysis of that context of utterance. Thus the pronoun **this** does not name or refer to any particular entity on all occasions of use; rather it is a variable or place-holder for some particular entity given by the context (e.g. by a gesture).

Crystal (1985: 86) asserts that deixis is a term used in linguistic theory to subsume those features of language which refer directly to the personal, temporal or locational characteristics of the situation within which an utterance takes place, whose meaning is, therefore, relative to the situation.

According to Posthumus (1991: 14),

Deixis is a (grammatical) term derived from the Greek word *deiktikos* meaning 'to point' or 'indicate'.

He explains that essentially deixis concerns the direct and indirect ways in which languages encode or grammaticalize orientational features of the context of utterance.

Moeketsi (1992) states that the definition of deixis has shifted from mere 'pointing' to a more specific notion whereby discourse participants, the time and place of utterance, the social and cultural circumstances of the interlocutors and, in fact, the whole universe of discourse, are identified.

Deixis, then, can be regarded as the way in which languages bring to the fore conforming rules and principles to make people familiar with features of context in the way of speaking with regard to time, place and social environment.

Traditionally, demonstratives and demonstrative copulatives were regarded as being exhaustive of the concept 'deixis'. According to Nkabinde (1986: 157), demonstratives and demonstrative copulatives are words which function to indicate or point at something which is expressed by a noun, and are divided into three positions.

Traditional scholars' three positions theory disregarded the distance of the person who was spoken to (addressee) and only referred to something in relation to the distance between speaker and referent, whereas the modern scholars' three position perspective pertains to the relationship between the three, i.e. the addresser, addressee and object.

Doke (1927: 90) states that in Zulu there are three positional types of demonstrative pronouns indicating proximity to or distance from the speaker. These are: *lo* (this), *lowo* (that) and *lowaya* (that yonder), indicating the relative distance of objects in relation to the speaker.

- 1) Proximity to the speaker:

*Leli bhubesi lizombulala.*

This lion will kill him.

- 2) Remote from the speaker:

*Kunjani lapho eMnambithi?*

How is it there in Ladysmith?

- 3) Distal from the speaker:

*Loyo mfana uhlala ngenhla komfula.*

That boy stays up the river.

Modern perspectives such as those espoused by scholars like Kotzé (1985: 82) indicate that a reclassification of these demonstratives is needed. As a relationship exists between the speaker, the addressee and the object referred to in a discourse, the choice between the different 'positions' depends on this three-way relationship.

Le Roux (1988: 54) seems to agree with Kotzé (1985: 83) when he states that the demonstratives can function deictically. This may be seen when he asserts that:

Die demonstratief word deikties aangewend wanneer dit 'n saak aanwys wat fisies teenwoordig is binne die onmiddellike konteks. In hierdie geval

bepaal drie vaste verwysingspunte watter stel demonstratiewe aangewend sal word om bepaaldstelling te aktiveer, naamlik die spreker, die aangespronkene, en die saak.

### 2.2.1 The Deictic Centre

As previously stated, Lyons (1977b: 638) believes that the deictic centre is a fixed point determined by the speaker himself, who is central to the speech act and to whose viewpoint everything relates. In other words, the speaker casts himself in the role of 'ego', in terms of his viewpoint.

Bühler, in Weissenborn *et al* (1982: 2), states that deictical expressions refer to the 'indexical field', the zero point of which (the 'origo') is fixed by the person who speaks: - *mina* (the 'I'); by the place of utterance: - *lapha* (the 'here') and by the time of utterance - *manje* (the 'now'). The role of the speaker is transferred from one participant to another in a conversation so that the 'centre', i.e. the 'origo' of the deictic system, switches.

The point is that in Zulu, for instance, *ngi-* and *mina* do not refer to the same person throughout a conversation, such as the conversation given below:

- 4) Nomakhosi: *Ngithanda ukukhuluma nawe Nomasonto.*  
I would like to talk to you Nomasonto.
- 5) Nomasonto: *Yimina okukudala ngifisa ukukhuluma nawe.*  
It is I who has always wished to talk to you.

The pronominal form *ngi* in (4) is used by the speaker to refer to herself (Nomakhosi), while in (5) it is used to refer to the erstwhile addressee, now the speaker, Nomasonto. The abbreviated pronoun *we(na)* in (4) refers to Nomasonto, while the same pronoun in (5) refers to Nomakhosi. This example illustrates how the same

deictic word may refer to different people as the discourse participants change roles in the conversation.

The deictic centre in any discourse is thus the speaker because everything that relates to the speech act is centred around him/her and relates to his/her viewpoint.

## 2.2.2 Subcategories of Deixis

According to Posthumus (1989: ii) there are five basic categories of deixis to be identified, i.e. person, spatial, temporal, social and discourse deixis. We shall now briefly look at how each of these subcategories is explained by various scholars:

### 2.2.2.1 Person Deixis

Person deixis concerns the encoding of the **role** of participants in the speech event in which the utterance in question is delivered: the category **first person** is the grammaticalization of the speaker's reference to himself; **second person** the encoding of the speaker's reference to one or more addressees, and **third person** the encoding of reference to persons and entities which are neither speakers nor addressees of the utterance in question (Levinson, 1983: 62).

### 2.2.2.2 Spatial Deixis

Levinson (1983: 62) refers to spatial deixis as place or space deixis. He explains that it concerns the encoding of the place of the participants in the speech event. In example (6) the boy, *umfana*, who is at a medial distance from the speaker is called to come to a proximal distance to the speaker, and then return to a position which is distal from both the speaker and the addressee.

- 6) *Woza lapha mfana, usuke lapho, uye laphaya eduze nomuthi.*  
Come **here** boy, move away from **there**, and go **there yonder**  
next to the tree.

### 2.2.2.3 Temporal Deixis

Temporal deixis is also referred to as time deixis. It has to do with the position of the speech act in time, i.e. time deixis encodes the temporal points and spans anchored to the time of utterance. Time deixis is grammaticalized in Zulu in the tense system and in adverbs of time, such as *manje* (now), *namhlanje* (today), *ngaleso sikhathi* (then or at that time), *kusasa* (tomorrow) and *kulo nyaka* (this year).

Fillmore (1971(a): 44) states that time deixis may be divided into encoding time and decoding time, which in general refers to the time of the 'communication act'.

He further asserts that there is a need to distinguish encoding time from decoding time. The problem is to establish whether encoding time is the time at which the utterance as a whole is being uttered, or the time at which the deictic time word is being decoded. Fillmore argues that deictic time categories are that of identifying a particular time as coinciding with, being close to, or being contained in the moment of speech or coding time. The terms 'past', 'present' and 'future' refer to times earlier than, coinciding with, or later than the time of the speech act, respectively.

### 2.2.2.4 Social Deixis

Social deixis concerns the encoding of social distinctions that are relative to participant roles, particularly aspects of social relationship holding between speaker and addressee(s) or speaker(s) and some referent (Levinson, 1983: 63).



The term or concept 'social deixis' in Zulu includes kinship terms and the taboo language (the language which is completely avoided in certain circumstances, such as insult in the presence of adults). Social deixis also includes *hlonipha* terms which refer to the language of avoidance used mainly by married women and by men to a certain extent, to avoid the usage of their in-laws' names.

#### 2.2.2.4.1 Social Deixis versus Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is related to social deixis with regard to language, culture and societal behaviour. Sociolinguistics is defined by Hudson (1980: 1) as the study of language in relation to society, the study of dialects, the relation between word-meaning and culture. Sociolinguistics throws light on both the nature of language and on the nature of society.

#### 2.2.2.5 Discourse Deixis

Discourse deixis is also known as text deixis, according to Posthumus (1989: 11). Discourse deixis has to do with the encoding or reference to portions of the unfolding discourse in which the utterance is located. See the examples that follow:

- 7) *Inja yalapha ekhaya iyakhonkotha. Le nja ibheka umuzi.*  
The dog here at home is barking. **This** dog watches the house.
- 8) *U'G' we-alfabethi umele umsindo lowo ongumalakeni.*  
The 'G' of the alphabet stands for **that** sound which is velar.

Examples (7) and (8) contain the portions of discourse which refer to information which has already unfolded or is known from the preceding text or discourse.

Levinson (1983: 85) defines discourse deixis as that which concerns the use of expressions within some utterance to refer to some portion of the discourse that contains that utterance (including the utterance itself). Since discourse unfolds in time, it seems natural that time-deictic words can be used to refer to portions of the discourse; thus analogously to *ngeviki eledlule* (last week) and *ngoLwesine oluzayo* (next Thursday) we have *evikini lokugcina* (during the last week) and *enyāngeni elandelayo* (during the next month).

Compare the following examples:

- 9) *Ngikhulume naye emavikini adlule wathi wayenesifiso sokungibona ngeviki eledlule, kodwa wathembisa ukungibona ngoLwesine oluzayo.*  
I talked to him during the previous weeks, he said he had a wish to see me in the previous week, but he promised to see me next Thursday.
- 10) *Wabala izinyanga ezimbili namaviki, wathi uzofika evikini lokugcina enyangeni elandelayo.*  
He counted two months and some weeks and said he was going to arrive in the last week of the next month.

Examples (9) and (10) indicate the use of expressions which include time deictic words which refer to some portions of the discourse that contains the utterance itself.

*Le* can be used to refer to a forthcoming portion of the discourse as indicated in example (11), and *leyo* to a preceding portion as indicated in example (12), while *lapha* has been re-used as indicated in example (13):

11) *Ngibone ingane egulayo kwadokotela; le ngane kuthiwa iphethwe isifo sofuba.*

I saw a sick child at the doctor's place; **this** child was said to be suffering from tuberculosis.

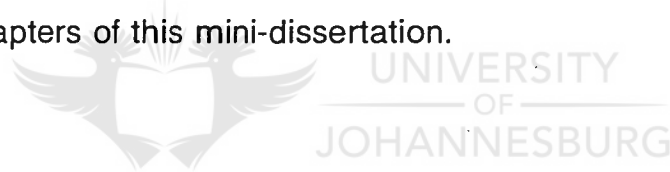
12) *Wathi ufuna incwadi yakhe elahlekile, leyo ncwadi kwakungeyesanyensi.*

He said he was looking for his book which was lost, **that** book was a science book.

13) *Lalisa ingane lapha. Nathi sizolala khona lapha ebusuku.*

Lay down the baby **here**. We are also going to sleep **here** tonight.

The five basic subcategories of deixis have been mentioned above, but only three of these — person deixis, spatial deixis and social deixis — will be dealt with in detail in the following chapters of this mini-dissertation.



## 2.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, deixis has been defined, and the deictic centre briefly referred to, and examples of how discourse/text deixis function, were given. It was concluded that there are five subcategories of deixis and these have been identified and briefly discussed. Scholars seem to be in agreement as to the identification of these subcategories. These five subcategories of deixis are consistently grammaticalized in Zulu.

## CHAPTER 3 — PERSON DEIXIS

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, person deixis, which is the first of the five basic subcategories of deixis identified, is discussed, but since the categories of deixis are interrelated, the discussion of one may include references to the others.

### 3.1 THE THREE PERSONS

Boas (1911: 39-40) states that logically our three personal pronouns are based on the two-concept reference of self and not-self, the second of which is subdivided according to the needs of the speech utterance into two concepts: that of the person addressed and the person spoken of.

Bühler (1934: 113), as cited in Jarvella and Klein (1982), analyses the category of person in a manner more in accordance with Jespersen's (1924: 212) classification, namely into speaker, person spoken to and anyone or anything else spoken about.

According to Bloomfield (1935: 224) the category of person is divided into the speaker, the hearer and the third person.

*The New English Dictionary*, as quoted in Forchheimer (1953: 4), defines the concept 'person' in grammatical terms, as:

Each of the three classes of personal pronouns and the corresponding distinction in verbs, denoting or indicating respectively the person speaking (first person), the person spoken to (second person) and the person or thing spoken of (third person).

The preceding information is in accordance with Zulu language usage, which reflects person deixis according to the first, second and third person. Zulu also indicates a relationship between *okhulumayo* (first person), *okukhulunywa naye* (second person) and *okukhulunywa ngaye* (third person). First and second person are necessarily deictic while third person may or may not be deictic.

### 3.3 PERSON DEIXIS

According to Posthumus (1989: ii), person deixis is grammaticalized in the pronominal system of first person, second person and third person. While first and second person are necessarily deictic, the third person need not be. This refers to the fact that whilst first and second person are necessarily part of the speech context, the third person may or may not be or can even be left unidentified. That is why it is said that person deixis concerns the encoding of the role of the participants in a speech event.

Fillmore (1966: 220) states explicitly that person deixis involves the category 'participant' (i.e. participant in the communication act), the two subcategories being the speaker and the addressee.

Phaahla (1994: 8) quotes Levinson (1983: 62) who points out that person deixis concerns the encoding of the role of participants in the speech event in which the utterance in question is delivered: the category 'first person' is the grammaticalization of the speaker's reference to himself and 'second person' the encoding of the speaker's reference to one or more addressees.

Comrie (1985: 4) explains person deixis clearly when he says:

Person deixis defines first person as the speaker and second person as the addressee, with everything else being the third person.

The subjectival and objectival morphemes, together with the absolute or demonstrative pronouns and the possessive pronouns of the African languages are used to mark person deixis. The absolute and the possessive pronouns for first and second person are necessarily deictic while those of the third person may or may not be deictic depending on whether the third person is part of the speech context. Table 1 below, as explicated by Posthumus (1989: 5) substantiates this.

		Absolute pronoun	Subject morpheme	Object morpheme	Possessive pronoun
1st person	singular	<i>mina</i>	<i>ngi-</i>	<i>-ngi-</i>	<i>mi</i>
	plural	<i>thina</i>	<i>si-</i>	<i>-si-</i>	<i>ithu</i>
2nd person	singular	<i>wena</i>	<i>u-</i>	<i>-ku-</i>	<i>kho</i>
	plural	<i>nina</i>	<i>ni-</i>	<i>-ni-</i>	<i>inu</i>

Compare the usage of the above absolute pronouns, possessive pronouns, subject and object morphemes in the example sentences below.

### Absolute Pronouns

- 1) *Mina angilufuni ubisi.*  
I do not want it, the milk.
- 2) *Wena umbonile kodwa thina cha.*  
You saw him/her but we did not.

## Morphemes

- 3) *Uhamba nathi namuhla.*  
You are going with us today.
- 4) *Uyakushaya ubaba.*  
He is beating you, father.

## Possessive Pronouns

- 5) *Incwadi yami ilahlekile.*  
My book is lost.
- 6) *Umfana wakwethu usenga inkomazi.*  
My brother is milking the cow.

The italicized absolute pronouns, morphemes and possessive pronouns are all deictic. As already cited previously, the third person, unlike the first or second person, does not correspond to any specific participant role in the speech event.

The subject morpheme of the second person plural *ni-*, may be used in the greeting and salutation with reference to one person to mark politeness as indicated in examples (7) and (8).

## Greetings

- 7) *Sa(ni)bona(ni).*  
Good morning / Hello.

## Salutation

- 8) *Sala(ni) kahle.*  
Good-bye.

Politeness is also marked by formulating an utterance as a question using third person singular *u-* as a form of address to a superior, as is evident in the following examples:

- 9) *Umama ubekhuluma (< ube ekhuluma) nami na?*  
Was mom talking to me?
- 10) *Ubaba ubebiza (< ube ebiza) thina na?*  
Was father calling us?

In the above examples, *u-* and *e-* are third person forms used to express politeness when addressing the second person (singular).

Moeketsi (1992: 30-31) refers to cases where the Southern Sotho '*lona*', second person plural, which is the equivalent of the Zulu '*nina*', is used to indicate politeness and respect. Her view may be illustrated by the following Zulu discourse, using *nina* and *ni-* of the second person plural.

- 11) Xolani: *Baba seniqedile ukusika utshani?*  
Dad, have you finished mowing the lawn?
- Baba: *Cha bo! Ujaheni mfana?*  
Oh, no! Why the hurry, boy?
- Xolani: *Ngempela nina uma nisika utshani niyazigedla.*  
When you mow the lawn, you take your time.



Baba: *Sizokwenzenjani ngoba amandla asisenawo?*

What shall we do because we no longer have strength?

In the above discourse, Baba (father) understands that he, as a single person, is the addressee. Such use of the second person plural to refer to the addressee, does not invalidate the distinction of number in the second person. This simply confirms that it is used to mark politeness and respect.

In response Baba replies using first person plural subject concord *-si* (we) which could be an acknowledgement and appreciation of the respect entailed in Xolani's *ni-* (you). On the other hand, it could be a grammatical response to the plural *ni-* used by Xolani, which implies co-operativeness on the part of Baba.

### 3.4 CONCLUSION

Fillmore (1975), Lyons (1977), Levinson (1983), Posthumus (1989 and 1991), Comrie (1985), Moeketsi (1992) and Phaahla (1994) appear to agree with regard to the definition of person deixis. They all state that person deixis may entail reference to the first person (the speaker) and the second person (the person spoken to) {and the third person (the object of discussion)}. While the first and second person are part of the discourse, the third person may or may not be part of the discourse, and in some cases may even be left unidentified.

## CHAPTER 4 — SPATIAL DEIXIS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

A definition of spatial deixis is given in this chapter. The different views of various scholars on this subcategory of deixis are given.

#### 4.1.1 Spatial Expressions

A spatial expression explains where an object is situated. These expressions describe the spatial characteristics of particular objects, their extension in space and their shape (Lyons, 1977: 690).

Man is referred to as merely a middle-sized physical object that lives and moves normally on the surface of the earth in an upright positional-dimension in a three-dimensional space. The surface of the earth gives us a fixed 'zero-point' at ground level. He sees the difference between upwards and downwards. Entities are identified by certain spaces they occupy (Lyons, 1977: 693), for example:

- 1) *Phosela iphepha phezulu.*  
Throw the paper upwards.
- 2) *Lahla imali phansi.*  
Throw the money down.
- 3) *Ngizokulinda emotweni.*  
I shall wait for you in the car.

These examples indicate place in accordance to a person's situation (somewhere) and his ability to indicate 'up', 'down' or 'in' with reference to other objects in his immediate environment.

#### 4.1.2 Localism

The term 'localism' is used to refer to the hypothesis that spatial expressions are more grammatically and semantically basic than various kinds of non-spatial expressions.

Levinson (1983: 85) refers to localism as the theory that attempts to reduce non-spatial to spatial expressions. He further asserts that deictic locations always have to be specified with respect to the location of a participant *at coding time*, i.e. place deixis always incorporates a covert time deixis element, while the converse is not true.

Localism is treated under spatial deixis because it explains the interdependence between spatial deixis and temporal (time) deixis. Levinson (1983: 84-85) again states that it may sometimes happen that a speaker might use a place deictic term to refer to a temporal location. Compare examples (4) and (5) below:

4) *Yima lapha, ngifuna ukukhuluma nawe.*

Wait **here**, I would like to talk to you.

5) *Lapho amaphoyisa embopha uvuke indlobane.*

**At the time/When** the police arrested him, he started a fight.

#### 4.2 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SPATIAL DEIXIS

The conceptualization of spatial deixis is invoked by linguistic forms. There are some linguistic forms which can have both deictic and non-deictic functions. In example (6)

the word *isinxele* (left) has been used non-deictically, while in (7) the same term has been used deictically.

6) *Ingane yayihleli esandleni sesinxele sikamfundisi.*

The child was sitting at the priest's **left** side.

7) *Yini lokuya okubonakala kukhanya ngakwesokunxele nesihlahla samapentshisi?*

What is that shiny object over there, just to the left of the peach tree?

As stated earlier on, example (6) indicates the non-deictic use of the word 'left', the location of the speaker at the time of speech is completely irrelevant. In example (7) the term *ngakwesokunxele* is also used deictically where the location in space of the speech participants in the conversation is absolutely essential to the understanding of the question (Fillmore, 1975: 16).

This distinction is reiterated by Le Roux (1988: 54) regarding the demonstrative in Tswana. He distinguishes between the deictic and non-deictic functioning of the demonstrative. This distinction may be observed in the Zulu examples (8) and (9) below.

8) *Wena hlala lapha yena ahlale lapho omunye ahlale laphaya.*

You sit **here**, he will sit **there**, the other one will sit **yonder**.

9) *Uthe abantu baningi kabi lapho emasimini.*

He said there are many people **there**, in the fields.

In example (8) *lapha* (here), *lapho* (there) and *laphaya* (there yonder) are used deictically, whereas in example (9) *lapho* (there) is used non-deictically.

Fillmore (1975: 16) explains the difference between deictic and non-deictic conceptualization of space and time using a sculptured representation of a human

figure as opposed to a photograph of a human being. A sculpture does not represent any particular observer's point of view, while the photograph does — since the camera had to be positioned at a particular place in front of, or to the side of, or above, or below, or on the same level as the model.

#### 4.2.1 Deictic spatial reference

Deictic spatial reference refers to a referent which is present in the physical reality (immediate context) in which the speaker and addressee find themselves (Le Roux, 1988: 54). In such a case, the three reference points are recognised, i.e. the speaker, the addressee and the object which is referred to are identifiable. For example:

10) *Yifihle **lapha** ngaphansi komcamelo imali.*

Hide the money **here** under the pillow.

11) *Ngimthola **lapho** kuwe ngazo zonke izinsuku.*

I find him **there**, at your place, every day.

In examples (10) and (11), both *lapha* (here) and *lapho* (there) are used deictically.

#### 4.2.2 Non-deictic spatial reference

According to Le Roux (1988: 54) non-deictic spatial reference is indicative of the fact that the object referred to is not physically present within identified discourse in which the speaker and the addressee find themselves. See the following examples:

12) *Ngimthengele izincwadi esitolo ngazishiya **lapho**.*

I bought him books at the store and left them behind **there**.

13) *Umama umthungele ingubo emsebenzini, wayibeka **lapho**.*

Mother sewed her a dress at work and put it **there**.

In Le Roux's view examples (12) and (13) indicate a non-deictic conceptualization of spatial reference. Fillmore (1975: 41) regards forms such as these where a word like 'there' is used to refer to a place or a location which was identified earlier in the discourse as anaphoric usage.

Since Le Roux's (1988) view with regard to non-deictic conceptualization of spatial reference is shaky and not convincing, we tend to align ourselves with Fillmore who regards it as used anaphorically and dependant on known information in the discourse. See example (14):

14) *Uthe asibohlala lapha esikoleni simlinda khona.*

He said we should sit **here** at school and wait for him **there**.

### 4.3 DEFINING SPATIAL DEIXIS

A number of scholars have defined spatial deixis, and they seem to be in agreement as to the nature of spatial deixis.

According to Levinson (1983: 79), place or space deixis concerns the specification of locations relative to anchorage points in the speech event. The importance of locational specifications in general can be gauged from the fact that there seem to be two basic ways of referring to objects — by describing or naming them, on the one hand, and by locating them, on the other.

Posthumus (1989: 8 and 1991: 78) agrees with Levinson, but goes on to state that the anchorage points are generally the locations of the speech participants; the speaker and addressee. Objects may be referred to by either describing or naming them or by locating them. A typical example of an object specified relative to a reference point which is thus non-deictic is:

- 15) *Uma ubheke eMbabane wenyuka ngomgwaqo oqonde eNtshonalanga weqe umfula ugudle intashana uze uyofika esitobhini esikhulu bese uthatha omunye umgwaqo...*

If you are going to **Mbabane** you go up the road westwards, cross the river, go along a **hillock** until you come to a big **stop sign**, then you take another road...

Example (16) illustrates the location of an object relative to other objects, where the book the addressee is looking for is identified relative to other objects around it, this then constitutes non-deictic reference:

- 16) *Ngicela ungifunele incwadi eseshelufini ngaphansi kwefasitela.*  
Please search for the book **on the shelf** under the window.

Fillmore (1975: 16) refers to place deixis as a subcategory of deixis which has to do with the linguistic expression of the speaker's perception of his position in three-dimensional space. He points out that it is the place or places in which the person is located. He states that place deixis necessarily includes a covert reference to time deixis since it always has an indirect reference to coding or decoding time, i.e. it refers indirectly to the time of the communicating act or the time at which the message is received. He also mentions that there are certain person deictic categories which are relevant to the description of both place and time deixis. These are: the speaker of the utterance (who is the sender of the message and is referred to by grammarians as the first person), the addressee (who is the message's intended recipient, referred to as the second person), and the audience (which is part of the conversational group, but not the speaker or the addressee) (Fillmore, 1975: 40).

Perkins (1992: 138) defines the term place deixis in terms of the proximity of the entity referred to with respect to the persons involved in the speech event and asserts that:

Demonstrative deictics that are bound to nouns characterize the location of participants in the narrated event with reference to the speech event. The distinction is normally based on the proximity of the entities referred to with respect to the location of the persons involved in the speech event.

Moeketsi (1992: 35) defines place deixis as basically that part of spatial semantics in which the physical bodies of participants in a communication act are relevant, and are taken as significant reference points for spatial specifications.

Moeketsi is in agreement, regarding spatial deixis, both with Fillmore (above) and Levinson (1983: 79) who assert that:

It is that aspect of deixis which involves referring to the locations in space of communication act participants and it concerns the specification of locations relative to anchorage points in the speech event.

It is evident from the definitions of spatial deixis given above that spatial deixis depends on the participants, the spatial locations and the speech event.

#### **4.4 THE THREEFOLD NATURE OF ZULU SPATIAL DEIXIS**

The English language has the adverbs 'here', 'there' and 'there yonder', (the demonstratives 'this', 'that' and 'that yonder' along with their plural forms), as the most obvious place deictic terms (Fillmore, 1975: 40). According to Posthumus (1991: 74), these deictic words were traditionally used to indicate how spatial deixis is generally manifested in a basic three-dimensional spatial system pivoting around the speaker. Although this hypothesis has been generally accepted for the semantic (deictic) interpretation of the demonstrative pronouns and the locative copulative demonstrative of the African languages as well, it is unacceptable in the case of Zulu (and the other African languages).



Moeketsi (1992: 36-37) observes that place deixis differs from language to language in having two or three categories. English, in contrast to the African languages, has two place deictic terms, viz. proximal, i.e. near the speaker at utterance time (here, this) and distal, away from the speaker at the time of speaking (there, that).

Spatial deictic reference in Zulu is grammaticalized in demonstrative pronouns, copulative demonstratives and place deictic adverbs. Examples of such place deictic adverbs are:

- |     |              |              |                |
|-----|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| 17) | <i>lapha</i> | <i>lapho</i> | <i>laphaya</i> |
|     | here         | there        | there yonder   |

Posthumus (1991: 74) clarifies the point that demonstrative pronouns of Zulu are grammaticalized differently. Traditionally, they were regarded as three sets of deictic words describing the position of the object in relation to the speaker, as indicated above in example (17). Research, however, reveals that the relationship between the speaker, the addressee and the object referred to has to be taken into consideration in each case. The choice between the different 'positions' of the demonstrative pronoun is determined by the relative distance of the object in relation to the interlocutors, the speaker and the addressee. The traditional approach does not take the addressee into account as an important member of the discourse situation (Kotzé, 1985: 82, 86).

Place deixis in Zulu and other African languages, on the other hand, differentiates between three spatial regions which might be exemplified by the set of demonstratives that are used in regard to the speaker, the hearer and the object referred to. See the example below:

- 18) **First position — Proximal to the speaker (but medial from the addressee)**  
*Incwadi lena.*  
This book.

**Second position — Proximal to the addressee (but medial from the speaker)**

*Incwadi leyo.*

That book.

**Third position — Distal from both the speaker and the addressee**

*Incwadi leya.*

That book yonder.

The copulative demonstratives of Zulu also consist of a tripartite system which pivots around the speaker, addressee and object referred to in the same way as the demonstrative pronoun system (Posthumus, 1989: 9-10). See the following examples:

- 19) *Nanti*                      *Nanto*                      *Nantiya*  
Here                              There                              There yonder

The 'referential value' of these copulative demonstratives lies in the fact that when *nanti* is used, the object is closer to the speaker but medial from the addressee; whereas *nanto* refers to the object which is medial from the speaker and proximal to the addressee; while *nantiya* refers to an object which is distal from both the speaker and the addressee. See example (20) below.

- 20) *Thatha nanti idokwe, udle ngokhezo nanto, bese unginikeza igeja nantiya.*  
Take the porridge **here**, eat it with the spoon **there**, then pass me the axe **there yonder**.

## 4.5 THE USE OF SPATIAL DEICTIC WORDS

Deictic words or expressions can be used in three different ways, depending on the nature of the information which actually identifies the location. According to Fillmore (1975: 40), these referential subcategories are used gesturally, symbolically and anaphorically.

### 4.5.1 Gestural Use of a Spatial Deictic Expression

'Gestural use' means that it is a use by which a deictic expression can be properly interpreted only by somebody who is monitoring the physical aspect of the communication situation moment by moment (Fillmore, 1975: 40).

Posthumus (1989: 10) explains that the referential category of gesture will be accompanied by a physical gesture and may be glossed as the pragmatically given space proximal to the speaker's location at coding time, constituting the location gesturally indicated. See the following example:

21) *Lisuse lapha lelo peni.*

Remove it **here** that pen.

### 4.5.2 Symbolic Use of a Spatial Deictic Expression

'Symbolic use' refers to the use made of a spatial deictic expression, the interpretation of which involves merely knowing certain aspects of the speech communication situation, whether or not this knowledge comes by current perception (Fillmore, 1975: 40).

According to Posthumus (1989: 10), symbolic use of a spatial deictic expression indicates a position in the spatio-vicinity of the addressee. An example showing the distinction between gestural and symbolic use is the identification of the following two referents, one being a body part and the other not being a body part. The one which

is a body part is followed by a gesture, whereas the other (non-body part) is symbolic and is not followed by a gesture.

22) *Lo munwe.*

This finger.

(‘This’ is usually followed by a gesture, unless used anaphorically.)

23) *Lesi sikole.*

This school.

(‘This’ is not necessarily followed by a gesture, and may be regarded as symbolic.)

When a speaker uses a phrase like *lo munwe*, he will make a gesture indicating **which** finger he is referring to. However, when a speaker refers to *lesi sikole*, the addressee will not be dependent on a gesture for understanding which school is being discussed (Fillmore, 1975: 41).

#### 4.5.3 Anaphoric Use of a Spatial Deictic Expression

Anaphoric use of a spatial deictic expression means that use which can be correctly interpreted by knowing what other portion of the same discourse the expression is co-referential with. Strictly speaking, it is non-deictic as it refers anaphorically to a location mentioned earlier in discourse (Fillmore, 1975: 40-41). The word *lapho* is used in the examples below to illustrate gestural, symbolic and anaphoric cases respectively:

##### Gestural

24) *Ngifuna uyibeke lapho.*

I want you to put it **there**.

(In this case, you have to know where the speaker is pointing, to identify the place ‘there’.)

## Symbolic

25) *Ukhona uJabu lapho?*

Is Jabu **there**?

(Here we understand the word 'there' to refer to the place where the addressee is.)

## Anaphoric

26) *Ngishayele imoto ngaqonda endaweni yokupaka ngayishiya lapho.*

I drove the car to the parking lot and left it **there**.

(The word 'there' refers to a place which has been identified earlier in the discourse, namely the parking lot.)

## 4.6 CONCLUSION

The above discussion has indicated that English has a two-way contrast of spatial deictic terms. Zulu, on the other hand, is different. Its system was inappropriately mapped by earlier scholars: the demonstrative pronouns of Zulu were subcategorized according to the three-way relationship, where position 1 is proximal to the speaker, position 2 is medial to the speaker and position 3 is distal from the speaker. Traditionally, the demonstrative pronouns of Zulu (and of other African languages) were grouped into these three sets. This classification of a specific demonstrative into one of these sets was seen as being dependent on the position of the object in relation to the speaker, disregarding the addressee as a factor in the discourse. Later research has revealed, however, that the existence of a three-way relationship between the speaker, the addressee and the object referred to, must be considered in every discourse situation to define the meaning of deictic demonstrative pronouns and copulative demonstratives in Zulu properly.

## CHAPTER 5 —SOCIAL DEIXIS

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the third subcategory of deixis, namely social deixis, will be discussed and a definition thereof will be given. The fact that sociolinguistics appears to have some similarity to social deixis necessitates a clear distinction between these two concepts. An explanation of the difference between social deixis and sociolinguistics is given. In language, we have two kinds of social deictic information which is either relational or absolute. Three types of honorifics, i.e. the referent, addressee and bystander honorifics are discussed here. In the other subsections of this chapter, speech acts and their relationship to discourse are subdivided and examined. The choice of pronouns, *hlonipha* and kinship terms are also discussed.

### 5.2 DEFINING SOCIAL DEIXIS



Posthumus (1989: 22) indicates that social deixis concerns the encoding of social distinctions which are relative to participant roles determined by certain realities of the social situation in which the speech act occurs, particularly aspects of the social relationship holding between speaker(s) and addressee(s) or speaker and some referent. He furthermore mentions that the *hlonipha* custom results in an intricate genealogical referential system encoded in everyday language (Posthumus, 1989: iii).

Levinson (1983: 89) believes that the term 'social deixis' is restricted to those aspects of language structure that encode the social identities of participants, (proper incumbents of participant roles), or the social relationship between them, or between one of them and persons and entities referred to. There are of course many aspects of language usage that depend on these relations, but these usages are only relevant to the topic of social deixis in so far as they are grammaticalized.

In many languages, distinctions of the fine gradations between the relative ranks of the speaker and addressee are systematically encoded throughout. Such distinctions are often encoded in the morphological system, choices between pronouns, summons forms, vocatives and titles of address (Posthumus, 1989: 22-23).

Levinson (1983: 89) quotes Fillmore (1975: 76) when he asserts that social deixis concerns:

... that aspect of sentences which reflects or establishes or are determined by certain realities of the social situation in which the speech occurs.

Phaahla (1994: 8) seems to agree with Levinson when he says that social deixis concerns the encoding of the social distinctions that are relative to participant-roles, particularly aspects of social relationship holding between speaker and addressee(s) or speaker(s) and some referent(s). This entails the choice of honorific, polite, intimate or insulting speech levels. This is also borne out by Fillmore (1971: 40), who defines social deixis by grouping together under the term social deixis the social relationships on the part of the participants in the conversation, that determine, for example, the choice of honorific or polite or intimate or insulting speech levels.

### **5.2.1 Definition of Sociolinguistics**

Various scholars hold different views on what sociolinguistics actually is, but all seem to include language, culture, society, linguistics and sociology in their definitions. Trudgill (1974: 33-34) defines sociolinguistics as that part of linguistics which is concerned with language as a social and cultural phenomenon. Sociolinguistics covers the study of language in its social context. The language studied, is the language spoken by ordinary people in their everyday lives. Linguists are seeking the answers to questions such as: How and why does language change? How can we improve our theories about the nature of language?

Hudson (1980: 1) defines sociolinguistics as the study of language in relation to society. It is also the study of dialects and the relation between meaning of words and culture. It throws light both on the nature of language and on the nature of society. Dell Hymes (1972: 69) remarks that sociolinguistics identifies an area of research, whose problems can be studied by members of a variety of disciplines. The term, sociolinguistics, raises the question: How is linguistics related to sociology? The definitions given above, constitute a foundation on which the researcher may examine the relationship between social deixis and sociolinguistics.

### **5.2.2 Social Deixis versus Sociolinguistics**

The linguist interested in delimiting the scope of an overall linguistic theory may be concerned that the description of social deixis will simply merge with that of sociolinguistics, and on this basis would exclude or would not consider social deixis for formal description of language at all. This problem, then, necessitates a solution.

A boundary can be drawn between deictic issues and wider sociolinguistic ones. Social deixis is concerned with the social relationships that hold between the speaker and addressee(s) or speaker and some referent. Sociolinguistics is also, and perhaps, primarily, concerned with issues of language as a social and/or cultural phenomenon. Social deixis is concerned with the social situations in which the speech act occurs, while sociolinguistics is concerned, *inter alia*, with how these items are actually used in concrete social contexts classified with reference to the parameters of the relevant social system (Levinson, 1983: 93). Social deixis can be systematically restricted to the study of facts that lie firmly within the scope of structural studies of linguistic systems, leaving the study of usage to another domain.

### **5.2.3 Semantics versus Pragmatics**

The mere question of whether deixis belongs to semantics and/or pragmatics calls for the inclusion of the definitions of both concepts.



### 5.2.3.1 Deixis as a subcategory of Semantics

Semantics may roughly be defined as the study of *meaning*, where meaning refers to a number of faceted phenomena. 'Meaning' may be regarded as the dictionary definition of a word, however, lexicographers depend on the way in which the speaker uses a word for the actual meaning of that word (Bissantz and Johnson, 1985: 175).

According to Bissantz and Johnson (1985: 178), meaning is a complex phenomenon involving the relationship between a language and the minds of its speakers, the relationship between a language and the world and the relationship between a language and the practical uses to which it is put.

Levinson (1983: 1) asserts that semantics is the study of 'the relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable'.

In defining semantics, a conclusion can be reached that deixis would not belong to semantics, because features such as spatial location, discourse and its participants are not included in the scope of semantics.

### 5.2.3.2 Deixis as a subcategory of Pragmatics

According to Levinson (1983: 5), pragmatics is 'the study of language usage'. This definition seems insufficient to indicate what practitioners of pragmatics actually do. It is the study of those relations between language and context that are grammaticalized, or encoded in the structure of a language. Furthermore, it studies those aspects of the relationship between language and context that are relevant to the writing of grammars. This may be regarded as a restrictive definition which includes the study of **deixis**, including honorifics, **presuppositions** and **speech acts** and excludes the study of the principles of language usage (Levinson, 1983: 9).

Khoali (1994: 56-67) cites a number of scholars — including Crystal (1985: 240), Traugott and Pratt (1980: 407) and Richards, *et al* (1985: 225) — who view pragmatics as:

... the study of the use of language in communication, particularly the relationship between sentences and the contexts and situations in which they are used.

According to Richards, *et al* (1985: 225), as quoted by Khoali (1994: 56-57), pragmatics includes the study of **utterances**, **speech acts** and how the structure of sentences is influenced by the relationship between the speaker and the addressee which are the main concern when discussing deixis.

Pragmatic function relates to language use, the choice made by the user, the constraints they encounter in using the social interaction and the effect their use of language has on other participants in any given act of communication. It can also be said that pragmatics deals with how language operates in context (Khoali, 1994: 59-60).

The definitions given above indicate that deixis belongs more to pragmatics than to semantics, since pragmatics includes the relationship between the speaker and the addressee in a communication act or discourse. Pragmatics, therefore, also includes all the subcategories of deixis mentioned previously, i.e. person deixis, spatial deixis, social deixis, time deixis and discourse deixis.

Pragmatics relates to the way in which language is used among participants and even in context and this is also the scope of the subcategories of deixis.

### 5.3 SOCIAL DEICTIC INFORMATION

There are two basic types of social deictic information that appear to be encoded in every language around the world: absolute and relational. According to Fillmore (1975: 70), social deictic information which is encoded in an **absolute way** is known as **authorized speakers** and **authorized recipients**. Language forms which are reserved for certain speakers may only be used by authorized speakers as illustrated in the sentences below.

Sentence (1) is an utterance which will never be said by a woman, as she cannot be the head of the household. Sentence (2) is the vow of a woman using the name of her father-in-law, Gama. This vow is restricted to married women. Sentence (3) is the vow of a husband, using his mother's name, MaMlotshwa. Only a man will take a vow of this nature.

- 1) *Kungavuka abeNguni uma ingane idelela lapha emzini wami.*  
The Nguni ancestors will wake up when a child shows disrespect in my house.  
(This implies that such a thing will not happen.)
- 2) *Uma ngingagezela izingubo umlobokazi, **uGama** angema ngohlangothi.*  
When I wash the clothes for the daughter-in-law, Gama can stand on his side.  
(This means that she will never do it.)
- 3) *Uma ngingamupha imali lo mfazi, kungavuka **uMaMlotshwa**.*  
If I give this woman money, MaMlotshwa can wake up.  
(This means that it is out of the question.)

References to language related to a king, his praise name, illness, house, death or burial indicate instances of social deixis of the authorized recipient kind. The synonyms of the words written in bold are given in brackets.

- 4) *ISilo samaZulu (inkosi), uZwelithini, uzofika.*  
The King of the Zulus, Zwelithini, will come.
- 5) *Inkosi izofihlwa (izongcwatshwa) ngomhlomunye.*  
The King will be buried the day after tomorrow.
- 6) *Umntwana (indodana yenkosi) uGatsha Buthelezi uye ngaphesheya kwezilwandle.*  
The son of the King, Gatsha Buthelezi, has gone overseas.

### 5.3.1 Honorifics

The different kinds of honorifics will be discussed briefly.

According to Comrie (1976), as cited by Levinson (1983: 90), and Brown and Levinson (1978: 180), the relationships between (i) speaker and referent, (ii) speaker and addressee, (iii) speaker and bystander, and (iv) speaker and setting, are all honorifics in the sense that they show relative rank and/or respect. Fillmore (1975: 81) indicates the use of honorifics for respect by giving an example of the Japanese who use the honorific-endearament kinship terms to members of their families, but the humble equivalent when talking to people outside the family.

There can be talk of honorifics just where the relation in (i) and (ii) (as is also illustrated on the next page) concerns relative rank or respect, but there are many other qualities of relationship that may be grammaticalized, for example, kinship relations, totemic relations, clan membership, etc., as made available by the relevant social system (Levinson, 1983: 90).

Levinson (1983: 90) quotes Comrie (1976) who distinguishes between the first three kinds of honorifics and points out that traditional descriptions have often confused (i) and (ii). (See below.) When explained in detail, it may be shown that respect can be conveyed by referring to the target or not, where the referent happens to be the

addressee. In some sentences and by choice of a linguistic alternate the speaker can encode respect to the addressee without referring to him, in which case we have an addressee honorific system.

The third kind of relational information, that between speaker and bystander, is more rarely encoded in bystander honorifics. (The term 'bystander' here does duty as a cover term for participants in an audience role and for non-participating hearers.)

To these three kinds of relational information we may add the fourth, namely the relation between the speaker (and perhaps other participants) and setting (or social activity). While the first three kinds of information are relative strictly to the deictic centre, here the emphasis is on the social standing of the speaker and formality is perhaps best seen as involving a relation between all participant roles and situations (Levinson, 1983: 91).

The relational variety of social deictic information is the most important form of expressing social deixis. The relations that are, typically, expressed are those between speaker and addressee, speaker and referent, speaker and bystander and speaker and setting.

Examples (7), (8) and (9) indicate the first of the three types of relational information, i.e. speaker-addressee. Examples (10) and (11) are also socially and relationally deictic taboo expressions. Example (12) indicates speaker-referent social deixis, while (13) indicates speaker and setting social deixis.

- (i) Speaker and addressee (e.g. addressee honorifics), refers to the opposite of (ii) below, since here relationally deictic expressions are expressed without referring to the target of respect, for example:


7) *Wena owakhula silibele inhloli ifika nezindaba ezimbi.*

You, who grew up while we had forgotten the spy, arrive with bad news.

- 8) *Mfana biza unyoko!*  
Boy, call your mother!
- 9) *Uyihlo uyakubiza wena ngane!*  
Your father is calling you, child!

Sentence (7) is uttered without referring to a particular target of respect and sentences (8) and (9) are taboo expressions which indicate relationally deictic expressions, uttered by a father and not by a son respectively, the son indicating respect, where we would be dealing with speaker-referent social deictics.

Examples (10) and (11) refer to a type of socially, relationally deictic taboo expression. Examples (10)(a) and (11)(a) may be uttered by the father to a son while the son is not allowed to utter these examples to the father, he will use utterances (10)(b) and (11)(b) because he respects his father (Posthumus, 1991: 77).

- 
- 10) (a) *Umama umfazi kababa.*  
Mother is father's wife.
- (b) *Umama inkosikazi yakho.*  
Mother is your wife.
- 11) (a) *Lena indoda yendodakazi yami.*  
This is my daughter's husband.
- (b) *Lona ngumyeni wendodakazi yakho.*  
This is your daughter's husband.

- (ii) Speaker and referent (i.e. referent honorifics). An example of this would be respect conveyed to the target of respect as in clan names, for example:

- 12) Msimang → Thabizolo  
 Mkhize → Khabazela  
 Simelane → Gatsheni  
 Sibeko → Maziya

*Hlonipha* terms used for objects which are respected, and terms of politeness, also belong to the category of speaker-referent social deictics. Examples of *hlonipha* are the following:

- 13) *amandambi* > *amanzi* (water)  
*inyathuko* > *indlela* (road)  
*ingcanga* > *inja* (dog)  
*izimanta* > *izinkomo* (cows)

To indicate respect, a senior might be addressed in the plural form of the second person, for example:

- 14) *Sanibonani* instead of *Sawubona*  
 We see you (pl.) We see you (sing.)

*Ninjani* instead of *Unjani*  
 How are you all? How are you?

(iii) Speaker and bystander (i.e. bystander or audience honorifics). The *hlonipha* system is a form of speaker-bystander deictic reference. The wife who respects the male relatives of her husband will avoid using their names or words which sound like their names, since it reveals the descent of the in-laws of the speaker. This is bystander honorifics and not addressee honorifics because it is used even in the absence of the target of respect.

(iv) Speaker and setting (i.e. formality levels). This form of honorifics refers among others, to companionship amongst friends, peer group, colleagues, team

mates, who use informal expressions amongst themselves (Posthumus, 1989: 24-26). For example:

15) *Siphumelele ukhlohlwa, ntanga yamashinga, sizoya eNyuvesi ngonyaka ozayo.*

We have passed, my equal friend, we will go to the University next year.

#### **5.4 OTHER ASPECTS INCLUDED IN SOCIAL DEIXIS**

Here three further aspects which fall into the subcategory of social deixis are briefly examined.

##### **5.4.1 Speech Acts**

Since speech acts fall into the category of social deixis, it is more appropriate to include them in this chapter. Speech acts indicate that not all utterances produced are, in fact, statements. Statements, questions, commands, requests, exclamations, etc., contain an amount of non-descriptive information which may be expressive (indexical and social) where 'indexical' is related to pointing, and 'social' relates to the manner in which people speak to each other in different situations or to different people with different status (Lyons, 1977: 725).

Levinson (1983: 226) explains the notion of speech act theory, as seen by linguists, as variously applicable to problems in syntax, semantics and second language learning.

Austin (1962: 12) defines the speech act theory by saying: 'It is to say something that means to do something.' Three different 'senses' or 'dimensions' of the 'use of a sentence' or 'the use of the language' are distinguished. These are locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.



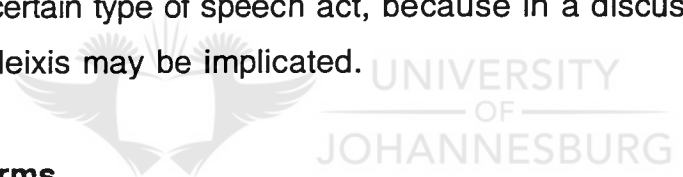
Levinson (1983: 236) quotes Austin when he says that he isolates three basic senses (as indicated above), in saying something one is doing something, and hence, the three kinds of acts are simultaneously performed.

According to Kock (1984: 49), a speech act is the making of an utterance which is at the same time the performance of an action.

Fromkin and Rodman (1983: 194) postulate that the study of how things are done with utterances is actually the study of speech acts. Context is needed to determine the nature of a speech act. In a sentence like:

- 16) *Ngiyakucebisa wena ukuthi lapha edolobheni kukhona amaphoyisa.*  
I warn you that here in town there are policemen.

performative verbs like 'warn', used with a deictic word such as *wena* (you) and *lapho* (there), indicate a certain type of speech act, because in a discussion of speech acts aspects of social deixis may be implicated.



#### 5.4.2 Kinship Terms

Kinship terms in Zulu are characterized by the fact that they are divided into three sets. Zulu kinship terms have a three-pivot system differentiating between the speaker (first person), the addressee (second person) and the referent (third person). See the examples below, which have been taken from Ntuli (1988: 22):

	1st person	2nd person	3rd person
17) (a)	<i>umalume</i> my maternal uncle	<i>unyokolume</i> your maternal uncle	<i>uninalume</i> his/her maternal uncle
(b)	<i>ubabezala</i> my father-in-law	<i>uyihlozala</i> your father-in-law	<i>uyisezala</i> his/her father-in-law

(c)	<i>umntakwethu</i>	<i>umntakwenu</i>	<i>umntakwabo</i>
	my kinsman/-woman	your kinsman/-woman	his/her kinsman/ -woman

The examples above deal with speaker-referent social deictics. The usage of the kinship terms to show respect is a characteristic of the Zulu people. There is an elaborate system of reference to indicate family relationships. Another example is given under (18).

18)	(a)	<i>Umntanakithi</i>	<i>umntanakini</i>	<i>umntanakubo</i>
		my sister/brother	your sister/brother	his/hersister/brother
	(b)	<i>Umfanakithi</i>	<i>umfanakini</i>	<i>umfanakubo</i>
		my brother	your brother	his brother

### 5.4.3 *Hlonipha*

*Hlonipha* is also included in social deixis. The term '*hlonipha*' generally describes the custom of showing respect between relatives-in-law, but not exclusively. This custom applies to women, who, when married, are not allowed to pronounce or use words which have for their principal syllables any part or syllable of the names of their chief or their husband's relations, especially their father-in-law. Custom dictates that they must keep their distance from their father-in-law's male ancestors. *Hlonipha* also includes an interesting facet of the application of avoidance, that of avoiding ritualistic praise names of ancestors of one's in-laws (Finlayson, 1984: 38). An example of this would be a case where a daughter-in-law, married into the Nzima family, will avoid using the family name. In the case where she has to refer to a black cow (also known as *inzima*) she will use the term *umnyama* to refer to it.

Fillmore (1975) refers to two basic kinds of socially deictic information which is encoded in languages in general and which are absolute and relational. Where the absolute social deictic information includes the authorized speaker (i.e. language

forms which are reserved for certain speakers only). Language referring to the king's praise names, illness, death or burial are reserved solely for the king. Relation social deictic information is information encoded in a language as being relationally expressed between the speaker and addressee, referent, bystander and setting.

Example (19) refers to a number of names used to refer to the king:

- 19) (a) *Mntwana* (child)  
(b) *Ngonyama* (lion)  
(c) *Umlomo ongathethi manga* (The mouth that does not talk lies)  
(d) *Isilo* (lion)

Example (20) is an example of terms used when the king is ill and then dies:

20) *Inkosi ibidunguzela yase ikhothama.*

The king was ill, then he died.

Example (21)(a) is an example of language used by men as opposed to expressions used by women as illustrated in (21)(b):

21) (a) *Kungavuka abeNguni.*

The Nguni ancestors may wake up.

(b) *Abakhwekazi bangema ngezinyawo.*

Mothers-in-law can stand on their feet.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

Social deixis is not only applicable to Zulu, but forms an integral part of all the African languages. Various illustrations have been used to indicate that social deixis can be systematically restricted to the study that is delimited within the scope of social

studies of linguistic systems, leaving the study of usage to other disciplines, such as semantics and/or pragmatics.

Even though social deixis is used to demarcate, grammarians and sociolinguists should not simply ignore social deixis, because in many languages there are quite a number of sentences that cannot be properly described from a linguistic point of view only without referring to social studies of linguistic systems like the analysis of social deixis. This chapter has shown that social deixis is closely associated with sociolinguistics and is more appropriate as a part of pragmatics than of semantics.



## CHAPTER 6 — THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SUBCATEGORIES OF DEIXIS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a summary of the subcategories of deixis which were discussed in the previous chapters of this mini-dissertation. Three subcategories of deixis have been treated in detail, namely person, spatial and social deixis.

In this concluding chapter an attempt shall be made to summarize some of the thoughts that have run through this mini-dissertation by considering the relationship between the five subcategories of deixis that have been discussed.

### 6.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FIVE SUBCATEGORIES OF DEIXIS

The notion of deixis is introduced to handle the orientational features of language in terms of the **speaker** — the particular person making the utterance; the **addressee** — the person to whom the utterance is addressed; the particular **place**; the particular **time**; the particular **social context** and the particular **discourse context** within which it is made (Posthumus, 1989: 2).

Deixis is generally (but not invariably) organized in an **egocentric** way. The typical situation of utterance is egocentric, with the speaker in the centre of the discourse. As the role of speaker is transferred from one participant to another in a conversation, so the 'centre' of reference of the deictic system switches. Deictic expressions refer to a deictic field of language whose zero point — the origo — is fixed by the **person** who is speaking (*mina/ngi-/ngi-/l'*), the central place being the speaker's location at the time of speech (*lapha*, 'here') and the central **time** being the time at which the speaker encodes the utterance (*manje*, 'now') (Posthumus, 1989: 2).

The five basic subcategories of deixis are person, spatial, temporal, social and discourse deixis. The analysis of deixis often focuses on the overlapping of these five deictic categories. Therefore, in Zulu, greetings may include person, temporal and social deixis, while demonstratives involve person, temporal, spatial and discourse deixis and imperatives include person, temporal and social deixis (Posthumus, 1991: 74). See the following examples:

1) Greetings:

*Sanibonani* for singular, instead of *Sawubona* indicates social deixis, while person deixis is indicated by *-ni*, second person plural.

2) Demonstrative:

*Le ngubo yakho ilahlekile, leyo oyithenge ngenkathi indali ilapha eGoli.*

Is **this** blanket of yours lost, **that** which you bought **during the time** when the market was **here** in Johannesburg.

Example 2 indicates place deixis (*lapha*), person deixis (possessive pronoun *kho*), and temporal deixis (*ngenkathi*).

3) Imperative:

*(Nina) Fundani le ncwadi manje!*

(You) read **this** book **now!**

Example 3 indicates temporal and social deixis — where *-ni* from *nina* indicates person deixis and *manje* temporal deixis.

According to Posthumus (1991: 73) one of the important prerequisites for the interpretation and description of Zulu deixis is that a clear distinction has to be drawn between addressee and bystander (*hlonipha* is a form of speaker-bystander social deixis). Another important factor is the manner in which kinship terms form a three-pivot deictic system around the speaker, the addressee and the referent. The clan

membership referential system of the Nguni (and the totemic referential system of the Sotho) are instances of speaker-referent social deixis.

Politeness is grammaticalized by using plural forms instead of singular forms in the salutation, while in a question, the superior is addressed in the third person instead of the second person. At the same time, relative tense is used instead of absolute tense (Posthumus, 1991: 73).

### **6.3 CONCLUSION**

The field of study of deixis has brought about a number of postulations, including the question as to whether the study of deixis belongs to semantics and/or pragmatics. The conclusion that deixis belongs to pragmatics rather than to semantics, has been reached.

Five basic subcategories of deixis are to be identified in Zulu, as expounded by Posthumus (1989 and 1991). This is corroborated by scholars of other African languages such as Moeketsi (1992 and 1994) for Southern Sotho and Phaahla (1994) for Northern Sotho. It is also concluded that these subcategories of deixis are interrelated because the discussion of one subcategory may include the other.

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