AKIN ODEBUNMI AND K.K. OLANIYAN

——————————— ঽ

Perspectivization in Fiction
A Deictic Study of Wole Soyinka's *Aké*

ABSTRACT

This essay examines how characters are perspectivized in Wole Soyinka's *Aké* through deictics, motivated by the gap existing in the literature both in this aspect of Soyinka's works in particular and in linguistic approaches to fiction in general. All of the conversations between the characters in the text are sampled and analyzed, using insights from literary pragmatic theories. The findings reveal that deictics of place, time, and person, which make proximal and distal references, are used to express the involvement of characters in issues or events, to indicate where they seek other characters' views, to keep other characters or their actions in view, and to bring other characters into focus. The essay concludes that deictics are useful pragmatic resources for examining how fictional characters are developed in narrative.

Introduction

STUDYING THE LINGUISTICS OF LITERARY DISCOURSE is a recent development in the global spread. Until 1982, efforts in the 1970s in this direction were made by literary critics such as Seymour Chatman.[1] According to Jacob Mey, "the first linguist who got seriously into the game was Ann Banfield, with her epoch-making book *Unspeakable Sentences* (1982)."[2] Other scholars who have worked in the area include Ehrlich, Fludernik, and Mey himself.[3] While Banfield and Ehrlich work strictly within the area of syntax, Fludernik and Mey operate in an expanded frame that

---

[1] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse*: *Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca NY: Cornell UP, 1978).

[2] Jacob L. Mey, *When Voices Clash: A Study in Literary Pragmatics* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2000): 18.

[3] Susan Ehrlich, *Point of View: A Linguistic Analysis of Literary Style* (London & New York: Routledge, 1990), Monika Fludernik, *The Fiction of Language and the Languages of Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1993), and Mey, *When Voices Clash.*

looks at both the linguistic structures and the context of the text, albeit with varying emphasis and scope. One recent application of the principles proposed by these scholars is that of Wale Adegbite, who has studied the pragmatics of diplomatic communication in Ola Rotimi's play *Ovonramwen Nogbaisi*.[4]

No work that we are aware of has specifically studied how characters in fiction have been focalized through deictics alone. The common trend is that deictic features are taken along with other linguistic elements.[5] Given the high place deictics occupy in human communication, it is essential to isolate them for study to explore the degree to which they influence character projection in fiction. This work will therefore not only add to the material on this area, it will also facilitate character appreciation in fictive works. The text, *Aké*, is examined at length, and only the deictics that occur in conversations between characters are sampled. Examples of deictic usage are picked out at random to exemplify deictics of time, place, and time as they occur in the text.

Characters and Voice in Prose Fiction

Characters are the pivots of prose fiction, "no matter how sketchily delineated."[6] According to Ayo Kehinde, paraphrasing *Encyclopedia Britannica,* while the inferior novelist emphasizes the plot, the superior one emphasizes the people (including their actions) in the novel.[7] This view corroborates Henry James's idea of characters as the illustration of incident, and vice versa. Characters fictively bring alive events in human society as they show the complex intercourse between the human mind and the environment in which the individual exists. They enforce the reality and realizability of the story, such that we can immediately distinguish between make-belief and stories possessing verisimilitude. Generally, characters are portrayed through the de-

---

[4] Wale Adegbite, "Pragmatic Tactics in Diplomatic Communication in Ola Rotimi's *Ovonramwen Nogbaisi*," *Journal of Pragmatics* 37 (2005): 1457–80.

[5] See Mey, *When Voices Clash*.

[6] Akachi Ezeigbo, *A Companion to the Novel* (Lagos: Vista, 1998): 13

[7] Kehinde, Ayo. "Character and Characterization in Prose Fiction," in *Readings in Language and Literature*, ed. Lekan Oyeleye & Moji Olateju (Ile Ife: Obafemi Awolowo UP, 2003): 233–42.

scriptions offered by the author, through the action of such characters, and through the reports made on them by other characters.[8]

Writers (of fiction) voice or vocalize their characters: that is, "they populate (the) narrative universe with characters, giving them each a voice as a way of expressing their relations to this universe and their relationships with one another."[9] This process necessarily implies focalizing and localizing the voices in the text. Through focalization, the characters are perspectivized, and their place in the fabric of the text is defined such that their voices can be heard. Each character speaks from a perspective that is relative to his/her temporal and spatial location as designed by the author. Hence, it is impossible to sever perspective from voice.

> Every point of view belongs to a character, hence every focalization happens according to a character's perspective; similarly, every character's voice presupposes the existence of a focalizing perspective in which that character is vocalized.[10]

In fact, a good fiction is judged not only by the dominance of action in it but by its ability to make the characters meet the expectations of the reader through their personalities and what their voices reveal them to be.[11] These voices are managed through their alternation, as in two-party conversations, through the use of deictics, and through quoted discourse which appears without a verb "announcing the corresponding expected shift in voice."[12]

However, voices may clash. This occurs when the voice and the character claimed to possess the voice do not match or when there is disharmony as a result of the projection of two or more voices. A voice clash may occur as a trash, a mash, and a crash. Overall, a voice in fiction mediates between the fictive universe and social realities that feed the text.

℘ ঽ

---

[8] See Kehinde, "Character and Characterization in Prose Fiction."

[9] Mey, *When Voices Clash*, 189.

[10] *When Voices Clash*, 149–50.

[11] See Mey, *When Voices Clash*.

[12] *When Voices Clash*, 118.

The Text and Analytical Framework

Summary of Text

The text *Aké* serves as background to Soyinka's creative writings. It is an autobiographical fiction which narrates the childhood experience of the author. The story highlights such character traits of the writer as doggedness, determination, and inquisitiveness. The story is set in two different places – Ake in Abeokuta and the Ijebu town of Isara. "In terms of its traditional Yoruba flavour and its earthiness, Isara is sharply contrasted with Aké."[13] Wole's family lives at Aké's parsonage. The parsonage is a highly religious micro-section of the larger Abeokuta community, secluded from the rest of the community. Isara, where the family usually spend their end-of-year holidays, is the very opposite of Aké. In Isara, Wole's grandfather, called 'Father', is an adherent of traditional religion. Wole's experience of the two different worlds greatly influences his awareness of the complex nature of modern African society.

Besides, Wole's parental background exerts tremendous influence(s) on him as he grows up. His father, nicknamed 'Essay', is depicted as a strict, meticulous man. He is a Christian and the stern headmaster of the famous and prestigious St Peter's primary school. Wole's mother, Eniola, nicknamed 'Wild Christian', perhaps due to her religious zeal, is also a disciplinarian. She does not condone indolence or irresponsible behaviour in her children. Little Wole is also influenced by the Reverend and Mrs Ransome Kuti (Daodu), and his wife (Beere), together with his peers, siblings, relatives, and neighbours, such as Osiki, Bukola, Mrs B, Joseph, and Broda Pupa.

Analytical Framework

As already indicated, the present essay relies on the concept of deictics as an analytical tool to examine the voicing of characters in *Aké*.

> Deixis belongs within the domain of pragmatics, because it directly
> concerns the relationship between the structure of language and the
> contexts in which they are used.[14]

---

[13] Oyin Ogunba, "Ake as Background to Soyinka's Creative Writings," in *Soyinka: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Ogunba (Ibadan: Syndicated Communication, 1994): 2.

[14] Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983): 55.

Also referred to as indexicals (having been formed from the same root as 'index' the finger), deictics are special words engaged in pointing at things, with presuppositions of existence of reference. The reference of indexicals shifts with utterances, depending on the current user, and their referents are "partly determined by extra-linguistic context (for instance, the time and location of the speaker and the speaker's intentions)."[15]

Three types of indexicals have been identified in the literature: deictics of time, place, and person. Levinson has discussed two others: discourse and social deictics. For operational reasons, however, we shall concentrate only on the three traditional types.

Deictics of time appear as temporal adverbials and tense items. They represent time as diurnal or calendrical units, and ultimately refer to the roles of participants. Markers of time such as 'today' and tomorrow' indicate items that are relative to speakers. Tense is deictic in the sense that "nearly all sentences when uttered are deictically anchored to a context of utterance."[16] In this regard, time deictics prove useful in the management of time in utterances. Mey has identified the speech time (ST), the event time (ET) and the reference time (RT). The speech time, also called the coding time (CT) by Levinson, is the time when the utterance is made; the event time is roughly equivalent to Levinson's receiving time (RT): i.e. when the event spoken about happens; and the reference time refers to the time pointed to by temporal indicators. Quentin Smith has demonstrated that time deictics refer to times in a non-formulaic way. For example, he has rightly shown that present-tense locutions are capable of pointing to past times, future times, imaginary times, and non-temporal times.[17]

Place deictics relate to "the encoding of spatial locations relative to the location of the participants in the speech event."[18] Objects in spatial reference are either described/named or simply located. Either kind of referencing is achieved through demonstratives and place adverbials. These items locate objects along the proximal or distal dimension. 'Here', 'this', and 'these', for

---

[15] David Braun, "Indexicals," in *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (2001, rev. 2007), http://plato:stanford.edu/entries/indexicals (accessed 28 March 2010): 21.

[16] Levinson, *Pragmatics*, 77.

[17] Quentin Smith, "The Multiple Uses of Indexicals," *Synthese* 78 (1989): 167–91; http://www.qsmithwmu.com/th multiple uses of indexical Quentin smith.htm

[18] Levinson, *Pragmatics*, 62.

example, indicate proximity, while 'there', 'that', and 'those' suggest distal-
ity. According to Akin Odebunmi, 'here' often involves a participant, in ac-
tive or passive terms, in the event described, but 'there' may not achieve this
at equal frequency with 'here'. In an instance like *'Here* is the news', Ode-
bunmi observes that 'here' does not occur as a possible antonym of 'there', as
is more commonly seen:

> the whole expression could graduate to such meaning as (the impera-
> tive) 'Listen to the news [as being read by me]'; and if replaced by its
> contextual antonym 'that': i.e. if we have 'that was the news', it could
> mean 'you have just listened to the news'.[19]

John Lyons suggests that a contextual switch from 'that' to 'this' may neces-
sitate what he calls empathetic deixis.[20] It is also possible for the proximal–
distal dimension to be systematically neutralized "when it is not especially
relevant."[21] En route to a more coherent theory of indexicals, Smith has ob-
served that 'here' can be used to indicate an unperceived place where the
speaker is not located, and can be used to refer to non-spatial items.[22]

  Person deixis "depends upon the notion of participant roles and upon their
grammaticalization in particular languages."[23] It is realized through personal
pronouns in several contexts of use. The first-person pronoun includes the
speaker, the second person includes the addressee, but the third person ex-
cludes both the speaker and the addressee.[24] Smith notes that the first-person
pronoun can make multiple references to someone other than the speaker, a
group of people, an imaginary person, and an impersonal item.[25] Mey argues

---

[19] Akin Odebunmi, *The English Word and Meaning: An Introductory Text* (Ogbo-
moso: Critical Sphere, 2001): 12.

[20] John Lyons, "15.4. Tense and deictic temporal reference," in Lyons, *Semantics*
(Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977), vol. 2: 677.

[21] Levinson, *Pragmatics*, 81.

[22] Smith, "The Multiple Uses of Indexicals."

[23] Cliff Goddard, *Semantic Analysis* (New York: Oxford UP, 1998): 638.

[24] See Robbins Burling, *Man's Many Voices: Language in Its Cultural Context*
(New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970), David Ingram, "Typology and Uni-
versals of Personal Pronouns," in *Universals of Human Language*, ed. Joseph Harold
Greenberg (Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1978): vol. 3: 213–47, and Levinson, *Prag-
matics*.

[25] Smith, "The Multiple Uses of Indexicals."

soundly that "personal pronouns are important in establishing the current point of view, and as such are extremely sensitive to changes in that perspective."[26] A complement to this view which has central relevance to the inputs of deictics in appreciating characters in prose fiction states:

> A more complex (and in many ways, more effective) method of keeping tract of the voices is the use of deictics, by which we are able to maintain a distinction not only between the different speakers and their voices, but also between what they say as the expression of their personal beliefs, and other (explicit or implicit) indications of their points of view.[27]

Deictics and Perspective in *Aké*

Deictics in *Aké* make both proximal and distal reference. Proximal reference which dominates the conversations points to closer referents or objects within the immediate textual environment. The few distal references made with deictics lack immediate anchorage.

Both proximal and distal references serve the functions of expressing characters' involvements in issues/events, seeking other characters' views or involving them in issues, keeping other characters or their actions in view, bringing other characters into view, focusing, specifying or seeking a location and stating time.

The first-person pronouns 'I' and 'we' are engaged to express the current speaker's perspective on situations. Invariably, they state the nature and depth of the speaker's involvement in the context. The conversation between Bukola, the constantly reincarnating daughter of Mrs B and Wole, is important here:

EXAMPLE 1

> "Can you see when you do that with your eyes"?
> "Only darkness."
> "Do you remember anything of the other world"?
> "No. But that is where *I* go when *I* fall in a trance."[28]

---

[26] Mey, *When Voices Clash*, 46.

[27] *When Voices Clash*, 113.

[28] Wole Soyinka, *Aké: The Years Of Childhood* (1981; Ibadan: Spectrum, 2002): 16. Further page references are in the main text.

'I' vocalizes Bukola, and also focalizes her ways. It establishes her involve-ment in the supernatural process of voluntary reincarnation. Her 'going' and 'falling in a trance' are conscious and deliberate. This agrees with the Yorùbá world-view expressed by the narrator:

> Bukola was not of our world. When we throw our voices against the school walls of lower Parsonage and listened to them echo from a long distance, it seemed to one that Bukola was one of the denizens, of that other world where the voice was caught, sieved, re-spun and cast back in diminishing copies. (16)

In an interaction between Wole and his father and mother, the first-person-plural pronoun 'we' is used:

EXAMPLE 2

> My father nodded in agreement, smiling. "How did you know that was the right thing to do?"
> I looked at him in surprise, "but everybody knows"
> Then he wagged his finger at me, "Ah-ha, but what you don't know is that *we* have already done it. It's all back in there while you were asleep." (28)

'We' collectively picks out the parents. The transition from the first-person singular perspective and the third-person descriptive focus to first-person plural perspective goes with power and assertiveness. Essay, the narrator's father, intends to convince Wole to believe what he has said. The parents, re-presenting the narrator's source of living, are trusted, and their voice, espe-cially when projected by his father, being respected as superior and feared, supersedes whatever impression Wole, a mere child, would have formed. The deixis 'we' is, therefore, a grammatical ploy to psychologically twist Wole into believing that his lost teeth have grown back when, in actual fact, they have not. Through the deictic choice, Essay is presented as an intelligent and dynamic individual who understands the demands of the situation.

Sometimes, pronominal deictics are engaged to keep some person, event or object in view. In the course of Wild Christian's narration of her childhood experience with spirits to the children, Wole asks what the voice of the spirit was like. It is useful to cite some of the interaction:

EXAMPLE 3

> "It was as if Uncle had been expecting the visit. He came out of the house and asked him [the spirit] what he wanted. We all huddled in the kitchen peeping out."
>
> "What was his voice like? Did he speak like an *Egungun?*"
>
> "I'm coming to *it.* This man, well, I suppose we should call him a man. He wasn't quite human." (6)

Wild Christian engages 'it' to keep Wole's question on track, without necessarily allowing it to obstruct the line of the narration. The pronoun 'it' goes back to the way the spirit sounded, which does not constitute the current focus of narration. It is therefore a strategy employed by the current speaker to avoid a voice clash. The current speaker concentrates, first, on the arrival of the spirit in their compound and his encounter with Rev. Ransome Kuti, the current speaker's uncle. The speaker feels it rather preposterous to talk about what the spirit says before reporting on the actual encounter; but Wole's childish fancy is more for the voice than for the encounter. The interests of Wole and his mother clash here. Wild Christian's ability to manage the situation effectively portrays her as a calculating and meticulous personality.

The second-person pronoun 'you' features largely where some character seeks another character's view or wishes to involve the character in a matter. What follows is an example:

EXAMPLE 4

> Suddenly her eyes would turn inwards, showing nothing but the whites. She would do it for our benefit whenever she asked her. Tinu stood at a distance ready to run away; somehow she expected terrible things to follow. I asked Bukola:
>
> "Can *you* see when *you* do that with your eyes?"
>
> "Only darkness."
>
> "Do *you* remember anything of the other world?"
>
> "No. But that's where I go when I fall in a trance."
>
> "Can *you* fall in a trance now?'"

As stated earlier, Bukola is an abiku. In this interaction, Wole quizzes her on her adventures in the spiritual world, his inquisitiveness being put on display. With 'you', he directly addresses Bukola. In doing so, he seeks her views on her habitual trances: "can *you see* …? Do *you* remember …?" Wole's obvious

illocution is to make her explain her involvement in the spiritual process. In a way, 'you' picks out not only Bukola but also all the abikus. Bukola's per-locutionary explanation, therefore, seems to speak for all the members of the abiku group.

In all cases where the third-person pronominal deictics 'they' and 'he' are used in interaction, they bring some person or object and their activities or roles into view. These instances can be considered:

E XAMPLE 5 :

> "Do you actually hear *them*?"
> "Often."
> "What do *they* say?"
> "Simply that I should come and play with *them*?"
> "Haven't *they* got anyone to play with?"
> "Why do *they* bother you?" (16)

E XAMPLE 6 :

> … discovering that Osiki had an *Egungun* which emerged from their compound every year was almost the same as if we also had one of our own. We crowded round him and I asked if he knew which of the dead ancestors it was. He shook his head. "I only know it is one of our ancient people."
>
> "Are you actually there when he emerges from the bottom of the earth?"
>
> He nodded yes. "Any of us can watch. As long as you are male of course. Women mustn't come near."
>
> "Then you must come and call me next time," I said. "I want to watch."
>
> "You want to what?" It was mother, her voice raised in alarm.
>
> "Did I hear you say you want to go and watch *egungun* in *his* compound?"
>
> "Osiki will take me," I said.
>
> "Osiki is taking you nowhere. Better not even let your father hear you."
>
> "Why not?" I said, "*he* can come too."
>
> "Osiki, we can take *him* can't we? *He* is not like Mama, *he* is a man too." (32)

Example 4 is the sequel to Example 5. It continues the conversations between Wole and Bukola on the latter's reincarnations. 'Them' and 'they' pick out Bukola's mates in the spirit world. It is these spiritual beings that have been brought into view: their intrusive nature as perceived by Bukola. In Example 6, 'his' endophorically identifies Osiki, while 'he' exophorically locates Wole's father. 'His' in "… watch *egungun* in *his* compound" comes with Wild Christian's abhorrence of egúngún and her intention to condemn Wole's intended action. Although Osiki is present at the interaction, 'his' locates him and or his compound somewhat distally to delineate Wild Christian's detachment from what he stands for. 'He', referring to Essay, brings Wole's father into the conversation within Wole's focal point. In this context, 'he' is perceived as a superior figure, who possesses the cultural credentials to watch the egúngún, as against 'Mama', who does not. Values and points of view are here contrasted with the use of 'his' and 'he'. Wild Christian speaks from Christian-oriented hindsight, and therefore sees Wole as being ignorant of the right Christian values. Wole, for his part, speaks from the background of a patriarchal and seemingly male-chauvinistic perspective, assuming the same position with his father, and seeming to see his mother, and perhaps the whole female gender, as disadvantaged.

Quite a number of place, discourse, and time deictics are employed to achieve focusing. Some of the items are *this, that, here*, and *then*. Examples abound on pages 55, 60, 65, 76, 88, etc. Two interactions can be examined:

EXAMPLE 7:

> The 'habit' had developed unnoticed by me. As for Essay – nothing escaped him. One day I was walking from the front room to the pantry, a course which took me between the Wash-Hand Basin and his dining-table when he, shouted:
>
> "Stop."
> I froze.
> "Why did you do *that*?" (60)

EXAMPLE 8:

> … when they came to our house, Wild Christian stood and watched until she judged that Mrs. B was ready for appeasement. Then she stopped the drumming and singing and beckoned to the maid to come nearer.
>
> "Is *this* a good thing for you?" she demanded (88)

'That' in Example 7 has no immediate referent. In fact, in the present context, given the automation that attends Wole's present action, the perspective expressed is initially speaker-based. Wole himself, having had the 'habit developed unnoticed' could not immediately find the deictic centre of Essay's 'that'. In actual fact, Wole's father means to refer to Wole's "cleansing rite" performed in the Wash-Hand Basin, with his "arm snaking out of its own volition, dipping in the basin…" (61). In Example 8, 'This' points to the show of shame that Mrs B's maid has been exposed to, having constantly pissed herself overnight. Wild Christian's "Is *this* a good thing for you?" announces her disappointment at the maid's disgraceful habit. It goes a long way to de-monstrate the extent to which Wild Christian can be blunt with issues, when it is highly necessary to do so. Evidence of this bluntness further glows in her relationship with her children and their peers or friends, especially Osiki. This manner does not, however, make her rigidly confrontational. On a few occa-sions, she has been diplomatic. A good instance of this diplomacy shows in the tact with which she handles the gluttonous intrusions of Mr Adelu.

Spatializers such as *here* and *there* specify across the text, locations, and various spatial settings; sometimes 'nowhere' does the job. The examples be-low can be considered:

EXAMPLES 9:

> After prayers, Essay sat in the front-room, reading. Of his knowl-edge of *Le-moo's* presence in his background, he betrayed no sign […]. When the house had fallen completely silent, Essay went through the parlour to the yard. I heard him shout.
>> "Is Odejimi *there*?"
>> "Present sir, I'm right *here* sir, very sorry sir." (75)

EXAMPLE 10:

> "Where are you going to?" Wild Christian opened the windows as I sneaked past.
>> "Only to the school compound."
>> "To do what?"
>> "To pick some guavas. They'll be plenty on the ground after rain."
>> "Tell Bunmi to go. You will only catch a cold."
>> "She can't. It's my guava tree."
>> "Are you mad?'… come back *here*." (99)

In Example 9, each of the speakers speaks deictically. Essay speaks from his own location, somewhere prior to when he reaches Odejimi's location in the yard. The distal – proximal tokens – *there/here* suggest their relative spatial occupations, given the context of the utterance of 'there', finding Odejimi, who is under the punishment and restriction of the boss. Essay, locates a predictable space from where Odejimi is not expected to have moved. That Odejimi's location is expected is confirmed by the use of the spatializer 'here' together with all the deferring tokens that go with it (e.g., 'sir'). Thus, a boss–subordinate relationship is clearly established. Essay is here shown to be strict and firm in administering discipline. He expects his orders to be obeyed to the letter, hence seems to hinge his decision to pardon *Lemoo* on his being in the yard: i.e. "there," a step he takes immediately he gets the confirmatory cue "here sir." In Example 10, the deictic motion verb 'come' combines with the spatial marker 'here' to direct the movement of Wole. His course has thus been altered from a movement to the school compound to a movement towards the speaker. Here, a superior–subordinate relationship is again confirmed. Wild Christian asserts her authority over Wole by insisting that he opt for her own spatial choice rather than his. This trait further confirms her disciplinarian tendencies and her firm grip on the manners of her children.

Finally, temporal markers such as *'this* tim*e*', '*that* time', 'before,' 'soon', 'then', 'now' dot the text to spell out different times of event. The encounter between Wole and Essay about the Hand-Wash Basin provides a good instance of time deixis.

E X A M P L E 1 1 :

> At the end of a minute I was taking that ninety-degree turn past the
> Hand-Wash Basin when the order came,
>   "Stop!"
> I froze. Fastas the order had come, it was too late for whatever pur-
> pose he had in mind. Again he studied me intently.
>   "Go back again. *This time* when I say stop, stay exactly in whatever
> position you are …" (60)

The phrase 'this time' indicates the presentness of the activity. But it reveals a coding rather than an event time, for the event is yet to be experienced by the addressee. In a way, the temporal marker, together with the dominant present tense in the utterance, prepares the addressee for the task. The temporalizer also seems to introduce a different rule of the game, which the addressee

needs to countenance for a successful performance. By the use of the time deictic token, Essay's firmness is further established. He works with a clear focus and does not waver on the way to his target. The following example can also be examined:

Example 12:

> "Good. So it's you. I thought so. I've always known it."
> "We will wait, until your father comes. When he has finished with you, you will *then* come and eat my own punishment." (91)

In Example 12, 'then' indicates a future event, just like every other event in the utterance. At least three events, coded currently, have to precede the 'then' event: (i) the prospective beater has to wait; (ii) the father has to arrive; (iii) the father has to punish the addressee. 'We' and 'my' contextually locate the same referent (Wild Christian) and set up a link with the temporal marker 'then' 'We' picks out both Wild Christian and Wole, who both, by cultural demand, have to wait for her father to come before serious sanctions can be placed on Wole. The deictic "we" in this interaction presents Wild Christian as a submissive woman who allows the husband's authority to precede and supersede her authority over the children.

Conclusion

We have shown in the foregoing that deictics are capable of projecting voices of characters in fiction. Through deictic tokens of person, place, and time, which make proximal and distal references, the author has exhibited such functions of deixis as expressing characters' involvement in issues or events, seeking other characters' views or involving them in issues, keeping other characters or their actions in view, bringing other characters' into view, focusing, specifying, or seeking a location, and stating time.

The deictics have inputs in developing characters in the work; for example, in various capacities and manifestation, they have helped to depict Wole as inquisitive and exploratory; Wild Christian as a discipline-instilling, meticulous, and calculating mother, and a tactful and submissive wife; and Essay as a strict administrator and a firm, diplomatic father and husband. By and large, it can be concluded that, apart from literary and stylistic considerations, such as the sociology of characters and their lexico-semantic choices, deictics can also be consulted in analyzing characters in fiction.

Works Cited

Adegbite, Wale. "Pragmatic Tactics in Diplomatic Communication in Ola Rotimi's *Ovonramwen Nogbaisi*," *Journal of Pragmatics* 37 (2005): 1457–80.

Banfied, Ann. *Unspeakable Sentences: Narration and Representation in the Language of Fiction* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982).

Braun, David. "Indexicals," in *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (2001, rev. 2007), http://plato:stanford.edu/entries/indexicals (accessed 28 March 2010).

Burling, Robbins. *Man's Many Voices: Language in Its Cultural Context* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970).

Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse*: *Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca NY: Cornell UP, 1978).

Ehrich, Susan. *Point of View: A Linguistic Analysis of Literary Style* (London & New York: Routledge, 1990).

Ezeigbo, Akachi. *A Companion to the Novel* (Lagos: Vista, 1998).

Fludernik, Monika. *The Fiction of Language and the Languages of Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1993).

Goddard, Cliff. *Semantic Analysis* (New York: Oxford UP, 1998).

Ingram, David. "Typology and Universals of Personal Pronouns," in *Universals of Human Language*, ed. Joseph Harold Greenberg (Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1978): vol. 3: 213–47.

Kehinde, Ayo. "Character and Characterization in Prose Fiction," in *Readings in Language and Literature*, ed. Lekan Oyeleye & Moji Olateju (Ile Ife: Obafemi Awolowo UP, 2003): 233–42.

Levinson, Stephen C. *Pragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

Lyons, John. "15.4. Tense and deictic temporal reference," in Lyons, *Semantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977), vol. 2: 677–89.

Mey, Jacob L. *When Voices Clash: A Study in Literary Pragmatics* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2000).

Odebunmi, Akin. *The English Word and Meaning: An Introductory Text* (Ogbomoso: Critical Sphere, 2001).

Ogunba, Oyin. "Ake as Background to Soyinka's Creative Writings," in *Soyinka: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Ogunba (Ibadan: Syndicated Communication, 1994): 1–18.

Smith, Quentin. "The Multiple Uses of Indexicals," *Synthese* 78 (1989): 167-91; http://www.qsmithwmu.com/th multiple uses of indexical Quentin smith.htm

Soyinka, Wole. *Aké: The Years Of Childhood* (1981; Ibadan: Spectrum, 2002).

ȹ ঽ