

A Pragmatic Analysis of Spatial Deixis in the Discussions of the General Budget by the Jordanian MPs for the Financial Year 2017

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ABSTRACT

Pragmatics as a sub-branch of applied linguistics deals with language and its context. Deixis belongs to the area of pragmatics because it directly involves the relationship between the structure of language and the context in which it is used Levinson (1983:55). The present study investigates the use of spatial deixis in the speeches delivered by the Jordanian parliament members discussing the general budget. Ten different speeches were randomly selected from a number of speeches delivered by members of the eighteenth Jordanian parliament in discussion of general budget 2017. The study analyses spatial deixis in terms of occurrence frequency. The study concludes that proximal terms are the most frequent used by MPs followed by distal terms whereas medial terms were the least occurred ones.

Key words: Spatial Deixis, Proximal Expressions, Medial Expressions, Distal Expressions
Parliament of Jordan

INTRODUCTION

This study is entitled a pragmatic analysis of spatial deixis in the discussions of the general budget by the Jordanian MPs for the financial year 2017. In fact, parliament of Jordan has 130 elected members as 110 male MPs and 20 female MPs thus; the investigator selected 10 different speeches of the excellences.

Deixis as a universal phenomenon is observed to be a fundamental part of any language all over the world. Chapman (2011) adds that deictic expressions are divisions of linguistic trying to establish the existence and the location of pragmatics and semantics borderline. These expressions are to link usage of language with its context in which they occur.

According to Yule (1996) deixis is a technical term originally from Greek which means 'pointing' via language. Pointing is called a deictic expression and also sometimes is called indexical. Deictic expressions can be differentiated into personal deixis *me, you* etc. location or spatial deixis *here* and *there*, and time or temporal deixis *now* and *then*. Deixis is a form of referring that is related to the context of speaker. Moreover, English distinguishes between the near speaker (proximal terms) like *this, here* and *now* or away from the speaker (distal terms) as *that, there* and *then*. Proximal terms are interpreted in terms of location of the speaker, which is also called deictic center, Yule (ibid). Birner (2013) claims that deictic expressions are sub branches of indexical expressions.

Fillmore (1997:61) states that "deixis is the name given to those formal properties of utterances which are determined

by certain aspects of the communication act in which the utterances in question can play a role". He identifies five kinds of deixis: person deixis, place deixis, time deixis, discourse deixis and social deixis. It should be noted, however, that these categories have been identified mostly in relation to Indo-European languages and to English in particular.

Levinson (ibid) and Yule (ibid) distinguish between three levels of deixis; *person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis*.

According to Diessel (1999:2) demonstratives are deictic expressions serving specific syntactic functions, and they are semantically characterised by having at least two forms which are deictically contrastive: proximal and distal.

Spatial Deixis in Arabic

Arabic as a Semitic language displays more deictic expressions in the space since it specifies three dimensions from the deictic centre proximal, medial and distal. Therefore, Arab grammarians like Ibn Mandhour (1997), Hassan (1973) and Al-Ghalayyini (1993) argue that the dimensions *haḍa* هذا, *haaḍihi* هذه are used to show that the referent is close to the speaker (proximal to the speaker), *ḍaak* ذلك denotes that the referent is a bit far from both the speaker and hearer (medial) and *ḍalika* ذلك indicate that the entity referred to is far or away from the speaker and hearer. Unlike Arabic, English has only two-dimensional expressions to denote whether the referent proximal *this* and *here* and distal *that* and *there*. Moreover, there are some sounds which can be added to the

morphemes of Arabic demonstratives referring to spatial deixis, to indicate to proximal and distal terms. The sound/h/ is used to refer to near referents for both masculine and feminine (Sibawayh, 1316 H). Whereas, the sound/k/is to refer to medial distance, and the sound/l/ is added to indicate to distal referents (Anees, 1979).

REVIEW AND PREVIOUS RELATED STUDIES

Lyons (1977:636) stated that in linguistics, the term *deixis* comes from a Greek word meaning ‘pointing’ or ‘indicating’ and is used to “refer to the function of personal and demonstratives pronouns, of the tense and of a variety of other grammatical and lexical features” which concern to the spatiotemporal coordinates of the act of utterance.

Spatial deictics or deictics of place, “do not mean much in isolation, it is only when you know where the speaker is standing or what the speaker is indicating that they become truly meaningful” (Thomas,1995:9).

Adetunji (2006) pointed out the use of personal, spatial and temporal deixis as used by president of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo and came out with the deictic centre is nearer the plural *we* than the singular *I*. Also, the deictic *I* preponderates because the speaker speaks from a personal point of view, verbalising a particular conviction whose general (the populace, its royal arm) acceptability we may not be sure of his occasional use of *we* is an appeal to ideological common sense.

Hussein (2013) investigated spatial deixis in James Joyce’s *Araby* and found that there are 658deictic expression were used in Joyce’s *Araby* and out of which 185 are spatial deixis, 176 are temporal deixis, 162 personal deixis, 131 discourse deixis, and 14 are social deixis.

Al Aubali (2015) studied the similarities and differences between English and Arabic and found that in person deixis, Arabic uses gender, number and case besides the deictic dimension. Regarding the case of second person, Arabic has five forms, *anta* أنت, *anti* أنتِ

antum أنتما, *antum* أنتم, and *antuna* أنتن, whereas English has only one form *you*. The third person pronouns of the two languages also show great differences. The proximity dimension of the demonstratives may be neutralized, in which English case uses *that* as a distal term, whereas Arabic uses the proximal terms *haḍa* هذا, *haḍihi* هذه.

Pangaribuan et al (2015) examined deixis used in business brochures text. Their findings revealed that there are five different types of deixis used in business brochures text, as 16.33% for person deixis, 5.71% for spatial deixis, 5.31% for temporal deixis, discourse deixis 63.27% as the most dominantly used type in business brochures, and social deixis 9.39%.

Bouk (2016) investigated the use of place deixis in the speeches of Xanana Gusmao as a former Prime Minister of Timor Leste. He concluded that the place deixis *here* and *this* indicate that the prime minister tried to introduce his country to the outside world. Moreover, He was seriously thinking about his country which is still under the process of developing. Xanana wanted to draw the attention of his audience who came from different countries to Timor Leste.

METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

The study is descriptive and quantitative in nature as it adapted a mixed method in collecting and analysing the data. In this study, the researcher aims at classifying the forms of investigation of spatial deixis in the parliament of Jordan. The primary data used for the analysis are the You Tubes of their speeches which are available in the website of the parliament. Therefore, the data in this study are the spatial deixis used by 10 different speeches of MPs of Jordan which were selected randomly. This part examines the Arabic spatial deictic referencing, mainly, *haḍa* and *haaḍihi* ‘this’, *ḍaak*, *ḍalika* and *tilka* ‘that’ as well as the locative adverbs *huna* ‘here’ and *hunaka*, *hunalika* ‘there’.

Table 2 shows the frequency of the use of proximal expressions in the speeches of MPs. The MPs have used the proximal expression *haḍa* 89 times, followed by *haaḍihi* 75 times and the least occurrence was for the proximal *huna* 16 times.

Having a look at Table 3, one can observe that the medial expression *hunaka* has been occurred 18 times with one time only for *ḍaak*.

Table 4. shall reveal that the MPs have used distal expression *ḍalika* 33 times, followed by *hunalika* 14 times and 0 time was the occurrence of *tilka*.

RESULTS

The following section is devoted to the analysis of results of the spatial deixis namely; *haḍa*, *haaḍihi*, *huna*, *ḍaak*,

Table 1. The three dimensions of deictic expressions in Arabic

Type	Referent	Proximal	Medial	Distal
Singular	Masculine	haḍa هذا	ḍaak ذاك	ḍalika ذلك
		this this	that that	that that
	Feminine	haaḍihi هذه		tilka تلك
		this this		that that
	Locative deictic	huna هنا	hunaka هناك	hunalika هنالك
		here here	there there	there there

Table 2. The frequency of proximal expressions

haḍa هذا	haaḍihi هذه	huna هنا
89	75	16

Table 3. The frequency of medial expressions

hunaka هناك	ḍaak ذاك
18	1

Table 4. The frequency of distal expressions

ḍalika ذلك	tilka تلك	hunalika هنالك
33	0	14

hunaka, *ðalika*, *tilka* and *hunalika* as found in the speeches of MPs.

The data obtained were presented in the form of Figures (1, 2 and 3) and Tables (5, 6, 7 and 8) for convenience of the analysis reference.

Analysis of Proximal Expressions

The main purpose here is to analyse the proximal expressions that were used in the Jordanian parliament (*haða*, *haaðihi* and *huna*).

By observing Figure 1 on the use of proximal expressions show that, out of 180 times (the total number of proximal expressions), the MPs have used the proximal *haða* 89 times, *haaðihi* 75 times and the least occurrence was for the proximal *huna* 16 times.

Analysis of Medial Expressions

The main purpose here is to analyse the medial expressions that were found in the speeches of MPs. (*hunaka* and *ðaak*).

Figure 2 indicates that the occurrence of medial expressions in the Jordanian parliament, the medial expression

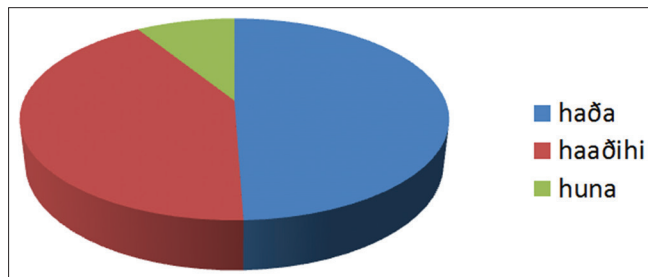


Figure 1. Uses of proximal expressions in the speeches of MPs

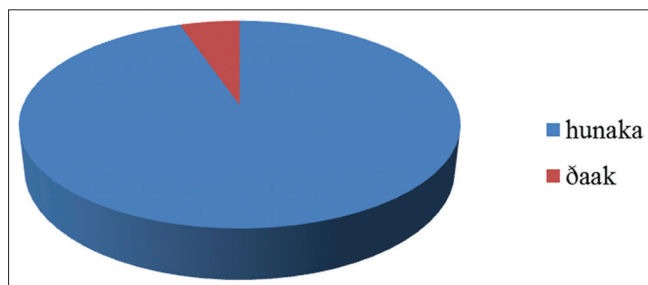


Figure 2. Uses of medial expressions in the speeches of MPs

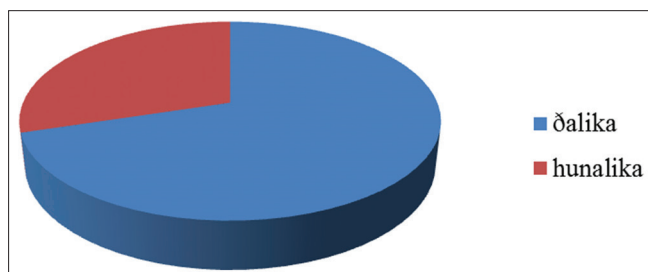


Figure 3. Uses of distal expressions in the speeches of MPs

hunaak 18 times whereas the other medial expression *ðaak* has occurred one time only.

Analysis of Distal Expressions

The main purpose here is to analyse the distal expressions as used during the general budget discussions in 2017 (*ðalika*, *tilka* and *hunalika*).

It can be concluded that as for as the use of distal expressions are concerned, the MPs used more distal expression *ðalika* than the other expression *hunalika*.

DISCUSSION

Deixis refers to the phenomenon wherein understanding the meaning of certain words and phrases in an utterance requires contextual information. Words or phrases that require contextual information to convey meaning are deictic (Levinson, 1983:54).The current study had analysed the utilization of spatial deixis during the discussions of general budget by the Jordanian MPs for the financial year 2017.

The study clarified that proximal terms are the most frequently used ones 180 times, followed by distal terms with 47 times and the least use was for medial terms with 19 times, In order to indicate to something that is near them or in the same location rather than away from them.

Based on data analysis, it is found that the most frequent proximal terms was *haða* 89 followed by *haaðihi* 75 times whereas the less frequently used proximal terms was *huna* 16 times. Therefore, they used more or less equal number of

Table 5. Overall the spatial deixis

Type	Total occurrences	Percentage
Proximal	180	73.1
Medial	19	7.7
Distal	47	19
Total	246	99.8

Table 6. Overall the proximal deixis

Type	haða	haaðihi	huna	Total
Frequency	89	75	16	180
Percentage	49.4%	41.6%	8.8%	99.8%

Table 7. Overall the medial deixis

Type	hunaka	ðaak	Total
Frequency	18	1	19
Percentage	94.7%	5.3%	100%

Table 8. Overall the distal deixis

Type	ðalika	hunalika	tilka	Total
Frequency	33	14	0	47
Percentage	70.2%	29.7%	0	99.9%

the proximal terms *haða* and *haaðihi* in their speeches, thus the reason is likely that MPs tried to refer to masculine and feminine gender more than the proximal term *huna* which is used to refer to place only.

Regarding the use of medial terms in the speeches, the most occurrences were for *hunak* followed by *ðaak* 18, 1 times respectively. The reason is that the medial term *ðaak* is used in Arabic very rarely and sometimes it is used to indicate to an unwanted person whereas the medial term *hunak* is used to indicate to people, places and things.

As for as the use of distal terms are concerned, MPs used more the deictic expression, *ðalika* in their speeches 33 times followed by the term *hunalika* 14 times, and 0 time for the distal term *tilka*. Firstly, this shows that the members of the parliament were referring to people and things as a distal masculine. Secondly, as regarding the distal term *hunalika* it can be used to signal a distal place only. Thirdly, as regarding *tilka* as a distal feminine term was not used by the MPs. Therefore, the reason behind that was dealing with politics related to crucial and burning issues of the country.

Accordingly, the MPs has used more *proximal expressions* in their speeches 180 times (73.1%) the reason is that the speeches of the MPs were delivered in a particular place which is the parliament to indicate to nouns and things that were near them, followed by *distal expressions* 47 times (19 %) to signal their futuristic issues and visions which were away from them, and the least use was for *medial expressions* 19 times (7.7%), this was due to the nature and the case of the speeches which did not require more of the medial expressions.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to analyse the spatial deixis as used by the Jordanian MPs for the financial year 2017 with reference to proximal, medial and distal deictic expressions. The research sample was extracted from ten different random You Tubes of MPs which were available in the website of the parliament.

In light of the data analysis, it has been found that proximal terms are noted as the most frequently used by MPs followed by distal terms whereas medial terms were the least occurred ones. However, the MPs used the proximal terms (73.1%) in their speeches than the other two types of spatial deixis medial and distal.

The MPs utilized spatial deixis 246 times as the total number of usages 180 times for proximal terms, 47 times for distal term and 19 times for medial terms with a remarkable difference between the frequency of proximal terms compared to distal and medial terms.

As regarding the three expressions of the proximal term the percentage was as follows: *haða* 49.4%, *haaðihi* 41.6% and *huna* 8.8%. Next to proximal were distal terms 47 times out of which 33 times for *ðalika* 70.2 % and 33 times for *hunalik* 29.7%, whereas the distal term *tilka* did not occur at all.

Medial terms were the least used spatial deixis occurred in the speeches of MPs 19%. Of the seven spatial deixis *haða*, *haaðihi*, *huna*, *ðaak*, *hunalik*, *ðalika*, and *hunaalik*

studied in this research, the most frequently used spatial deixis was *haða* 89 times (36.1%) and the least occurred spatial deixis was *ðaak* as one time only out of 246 the times of occurrences (0,4%).

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APPENDIX

Name of the excellency	Site	Duration
Mazen Alqadi	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTT55qHAJiA	12.09
Fawaz Alzoubi	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNPKFZFaAIA	13.47
Reem Abo Dalbough	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMLON2hQ_rc	10.18
Mohammad Noah Alqudah	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hmn4keT3WTY	10.02
Habis Alshabib	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrODlgMnxP0	14.03
Maram Alheesa	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysqmjnT5FVs	9.54
Soliman Alzabin	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oi218XJyFKM	9.40
Khamis Atiah	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mr9WRlSS07s&pbjreloa	9.33
Gazi Alhawamla	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32sALJNpPQQ	16.51
Saleh Alarmouti	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkhGGuEZn-o	12.02