A Study of Deictic Shift Theory as a Stylistic Approach in the Analysis of Point of View Effects in Fictional Discourse

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Abstract

Traditionally, most approaches to stylistic analysis are not related to cognitive processes by which readers are engaged and conceptualized to a particular point of view while reading a text. Against this account , emerged through 1980s and 1990s, various stylistic models for identifying categories of point of view in fiction, and this brings a cognitive perspective in analysis of narrative stylistics.

Deictic shift theory is an act to demonstrate how readers are completely engaged in narratives, to a degree that they interpret events in narrative as if they were experiencing them from a position within the story world. According to Segal(1995,p15),deictic shift theory (henceforth DST) means that " the reader often takes a cognitive attitude within the world of narrative and interprets the text from that perspective' 'and this happens as a result of deictic shifts within the narratives that change the deictic center from which the sentences of the text are interpreted. It follows that such changes in the deictic center across the course of a text will result in changes in the point of view that readers will be exposed to(Mclntyre,2006,p92).

The present study aims to investigate the role of deictic shift theory as a cognitive perspective to point of view effects in the selected poem written by Seamus Heaney in his famous poem " Mossbawn" . The emphasis will be shifted away from narrative techniques towards theconceptual framework that tackles the cognitive processes of both reading and interpretation. However, the study will show how applying DST is an

indispensable in tackling stylistic analysis to point of view which develops our understanding of the construction of viewpoints in language.

The analysis has shown that the cognitive work of DST is used as a device in the poem in order to arrive at the comprehensive meaning of text. The poet uses different deictic shifts and projection of viewpoints of personal pronoun, locational, and temporal deixis and references which are interrelated between the fictional text world of the poem and the real central world of the reader. Also, it is seen that in cognitive terms there is a shift between the past and the present, a rapid back and forth shift of deictic center and field which is tackled by the reader's perspective.

Key words: deictic shift theory, deictic center, deictic field, cognitive perspective

1.Introduction

Deictic shift theory refers to "a framework of processes by which readers imaginatively project hypothetical deictic centers that are enhanced to communicative and experientiallocation within a narrative. Such cognitive framing forms a necessary part of the reader's participation in narrative, where the reader constructs a story world by interpreting deictic clues represented in the text"(Net 1).

In the present study, the notion of deixis and its relation to point of view will be discussed and how readers being involved in the world of the text. It is hypothesized that DST is a way of exposition of how readers of a text often take a cognitive attitude within the world of a narrative and interpret the text from that perspective. The procedures followed in this study are to explore the term deixis as a cognitive term leading to a model of point of view that helps people understand better how readers take up different positions in a story world. Furthermore, verses of poetry are analyzed in order to show how readers reacted to different viewpoints of the text.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, studies on cognitive perspective to the area of analysis of point of view are rare in stylistics. Therefore, this study is acontribution for the teachers of English language and also for the students since it introduces new and effective way in

dealing with point of view functions that enable us to tackle an appropriate process of reading and interpreting the text.

2. Perspectives of Point of View in Narrative

The management of view point has received a considerable attention within stylistics and with various classifications proposes to account for the complication of point of view in narrative texts. Many of these have classified narrators as a means of doing this. Among the most influential of these classifications is that submitted by Simpson (1993) which is an expansion of Fowler's (1986) work on viewpoint. Simpson differentiates between what he names group A narratives (those narrated by a first – person narrator who is participating in the story he/she is telling) and group B narratives (narrated by a third-person narrator either from inside or outside a particular character's consciousness). Simpson's taxonomy pays particular attention to the concept of modality with each of his categories of narration displaying different types and degrees of modality, accounting for specific viewpoint effects. Another taxonomy related to Chatman (1990) who distinguishes between perceptual and conceptual point of view. In general, this is the same as Fowler's(1986) spatio-temporal viewpoint and ideological viewpoint, which are essentially cover the difference between literal viewpoint and metaphorical viewpoint. Short's (1996)approach to the analysis of viewpoint is also category-based , but rather than categorizing narrators, Short, instead, focuses on those small-scale linguistic indicators of viewpoint that are to be found in the text. He explains that certain linguistic items can make the influence of the narrative a particular point of view, and these linguistic signs can allow us to recognize how these viewpoint effects are conducted (Lambrou and Stockwell,2007,p120).

From the discussion above, it is relevant to say that many stylistic approaches to the analysis of view point do not take account of the cognitive processes by which readers can infer particular points of view in the text. Therefore, in this study a cognitive model of text-processing analysis is applied in relation to the traditional stylistic approach to point of view to enhance people's understanding of the construction of viewpoint in language.

3. The Phenomenon of Deixis

The term deixis comes originally from Greek and means 'pointing' or 'indicating', concerns the use of certain linguistic expressions to locate entities in spatio- temporal, social and discoursal context. In English, such deictic expressions typically include first-and second –person pronouns, demonstratives, tense, certain place and time adverbials and some verbs such as 'come, go, bring, take and fetch'. Such deictic expressions encode specific aspects of speech event and cannot be interpreted unless contextual parameters are taken into account(Marmaridou,2000,p65).

Deixis is the encoding in an utterance of the spatio-temporal context and subjective experience of the encoder. It is primarily linked with the speech or discourse event. It is the phenomenon whereby the triple relationship between the language system, the encoder's subjectivity and various contextual factors is foregrounded grammatically or lexically (Green,1992,p121).

The words 'this' and 'that' are examples of place deictics.These are deictic terms that indicate the proximity of a particular referent relative to the speaker's position. They are examples of what Levinson (1983,p79) calls 'pure' deictic words. They are encoded by where the speaker is situated. Deictic terms often come in pairs such as the demonstratives 'these and those', the adverbs 'here and there' and the dynamic verbs 'come and go'. In addition, position in space can be proposed by locational deictic expressions. These expressions require knowledge of the position of other referents within the situational context .So, if I were to tell you that my computer is *next to my bookcase*, you would need to know where my bookcase in order to understand the location of my computer (Lambrou and Stockwell,2007,p124).

Levinson(1983) distinguishes four kinds of deixis ,p temporal deixis, person deixis ,social deixis and empathetic deixis.Temporaldeictics indicate metaphorical proximity and distance from the speaker in relation to the point in time at which the speaker makes their utterance. Some examples of these temporal deictic terms are ' now and then, yesterday, today and tomorrow. According to Norgaardetal.(2010,p78) person deixis shows the way of the participants(speakers/writers, listeners/readers) is

encoded in the actual speech event. Whereasthe first-person pronouns are generally used by speakers to refer to themselves and the second- person to the listener; the third person pronouns perform those entities fulfilling neither of these roles. In the case of literary texts, personal pronouns function as deictic is intricately linked to their potential as focalization and point of view markers .Social deixis encodes how close to someone we fell in terms of our relationship with them. It refers to terms of address such as vocatives(hey John), honorifics(Sir, Lady) or title markers(Dr, Professor, Mr,Mrs).These can project the type of relationship held between speaker and hearer, so the misuse of these forms could have significant social consequences. Finally, empathetic deixis is similar to social deixis and indicates psychological and emotional closeness or distance from whatever person ,place or object is being described. For example, 'Tell me about that new colleague of yours', seems to indicate a more negative view of the colleague in question than 'Tell me about this new colleague of yours', because 'this' and 'that' indicate proximity and distance respectively, and in these examples are used analogically (Ibid,p124).

  From the above discussion, it is significant to indicate the role of the concept of deixis as a facilitative in the understanding and functioning of the world of the text. The following deictic shift theory will be tackled as a useful explanation of how viewpoint effects are created in language.

4. Deictic Shift Theory

Deictic shift theory is illustrated by Segal (1995,p15) as "a way of accounting for how the reader of a text takes a cognitive stance within the world of a narrative and interprets the text from that perspective". That means reading a text will be resulted in postponing our self-content assumptions about deictic references and instead interpreting events in the text world from a different deictic center. This happens because of deictic shifts which are made and indicated by certain textual and sometimes nonlinguistic triggers, that change the deictic center from which the events in the narrative are to be interpreted. Galbraith(1995) illustrates that all fictional narration is made up of a number of deicticfields, defined by Stockwell(2002,p47) as "a set of deictic expressions all relating to the same deictic center". Galbraith(1995)

proposes that reading and responding to deictic cues in the text would lead to adopt a cognitive
stance in the fictional world within a particular deictic field. This might belong to the narrator or to a specific character. However, this is not necessary related to the whole text, and as a result of further linguistic or non-linguistic cues, our deictic position will be shifted and started interpreting events from a different deictic center again. The point to be clarified here is that after reading a text, the assumption that spatial ,temporal,social,person-related and empathetic deictic coordinates are not to be interpreted with reference to our own deictic center, but instead in relation to a deictic center somewhere within the fictional world. Accordingly, a deictic center will be projected which is different from our own deictic (Lambrou and Stockwell,2007,p124).

The progress in reading can show a large number of deictic shifts and accordingly a complex series of cognitive actions. For instance, taking a novel and start reading will make us in a shift into a deictic field within the fictional world. Simultaneously, being in this fictional world will lead to another deictic field shift which is shapedwithin a flashback in the narrative.Galbraith(1995) regards that our background knowledge about how stories work causes us to expect to return from any deictic fields that we have shifted into during the course of reading. So, if we shifted into a fictional world that is embedded within a larger fictional world, we expect to return from that embedded fictional world to the world that frames it(Ibid,p125).
  It is important here to adopt DST as a cognitive model in the analysis of point of view in fictional discourse because it is a trigger to retrieve our mental processes concerning deictic references that facilitate and activate understanding of the world of fictional texts.

5. The Concept of Deictic Center
According to McIntyre(2006,p92) "deictic center refers not just to a speaker or hearer's location in space and time, but also to their position in social hierarchy, and this deictic center is the position from which deictic

terms are interpreted. The deictic center frames speakers' reality and allows them to assess other deictic indicators from this central perspective. Speakers tend to assume that, by default, they occupy the deictic center, so any reference to other locations of time will be conceptualized in relation to their current here and now. The speaker and their circumstances form the deictic center from which shifts in deictic coordinates will take place" (Norgaard etal.,2010,p74).

The deictic center controls how deictic terms are interpreted , and how this done is indicative of our point of view, both literal and figurative. However, we are not restricted to interpret the world from our own point of view. According to Stockwell(2002,p46), the cognitive ability to shift dimensions indicates that speakers, in general, and readers, in particular, are capable of what he calls 'deictic projection'. For example, the idiomatic expression " putting yourself in someone's shoes" summarizes the notion of deictic projection, as speakers/hearers can modify their deictic indicators to accommodate the other party's deictic center instead. Let's explain this in another example,imagine that I am invigilating an examination ,I am standing at the front of the examination hall, facing the rows of students who are about to begin. When it is time for them to start, I might instruct them to 'turn over the paper on the left hand side of your desk'. You can notice that even though the papers I am referring to would be on the right hand side of the desk from my perspective, I tell the students that the papers are on the left. This is because I am interpreting the spatial location of the papers from the perspective of the students in order that my command be sensed by them. I am projecting my awareness of the deictic center from which they are interpreting the world (Mclntyre,2006,p93).

Segal(1995,p45) states that "Projecting a deictic center means that points of view other than own are taken into account. According to deictic shift theory, shifting deictic centers across the course of a text (and thereby projecting a series of different deictic centers) is what draws readers into the narrative in question by allowing them to experience events from various viewpoints" (Ibid,p94).

6. Deictic Fields and "PUSHes and POPes" Shifts

According to Stockwell(2002,p47), deictic field is defined as "a set of deictic expressions all relating to the same deictic center". In any novel

these can be linked to a character ,narrator or narratee. Readers in relation to deictic shift theory postulate the spatial, temporal and social coordinates of such deictic fields not to be related and self-centered to themselves as in everyday communication, but to the deictic center of specific character in the fictional world of the story. In reading narrative fiction , our normal self- concerned assumption about deictic terms of reference will be suspended and assuming that the deictic center is almost within the story world of the text (Mclntyre,2006,p99)

In the fictional world story, different deictic fields and positions concerning the characters and the actions of the text can be taken and considered. According to Galbraith(1995,p46) , shifts can be occurred in two ways, either by a PUSH or a POP (the terms are borrowed from computer science). Goliath (1995,p47) clarifies the term PUSH as a case by which one may immerse from a basic level to a less obtainable deictic level. This shift can be found in flashbacks when stories are imbedded within stories, or when the narrative embodies episodes of fantasy. For example, starting reading a novel will leave us instantaneously PUSH into another deictic field which is of fictional world. Moreover, readers can not only shift between deictic fields, but also between the real world and fictional world because both of them have possible various deictic fields(Norgaard etal.,2010,p75).

A POP , on the other hand, means as " a process of emerging back from a particular deictic field" .POPs are related with episodes in which a character wakes up from a dream or when the narrator makes a remark (the POPping move) when the story is pointing to a specific end. The narrator's interference will ultimately lead to a desire to the readers to an eventual return to the story world from which the narrator left, that means out of POP and PUSHing back into the story(Galbrith,1995,p47). Stockwell(2002.47) states that "picking up a novel and moving from being a real reader to perceiving into a textual implied reader also forms an instance of PUSHing ,while closing a novel indicates the final POPing out of the story world and into reality" (Ibid,p76).

It is necessary to indicate that these processes of shifts in viewpoint can be functioned as a cognitive frames that involved in the world of the text and the readers' mediation to anticipate the entire thematic meaning of the fictional discourse.

Schematically, the main triggers and connectors of DST can be illustrated in the following figure,p
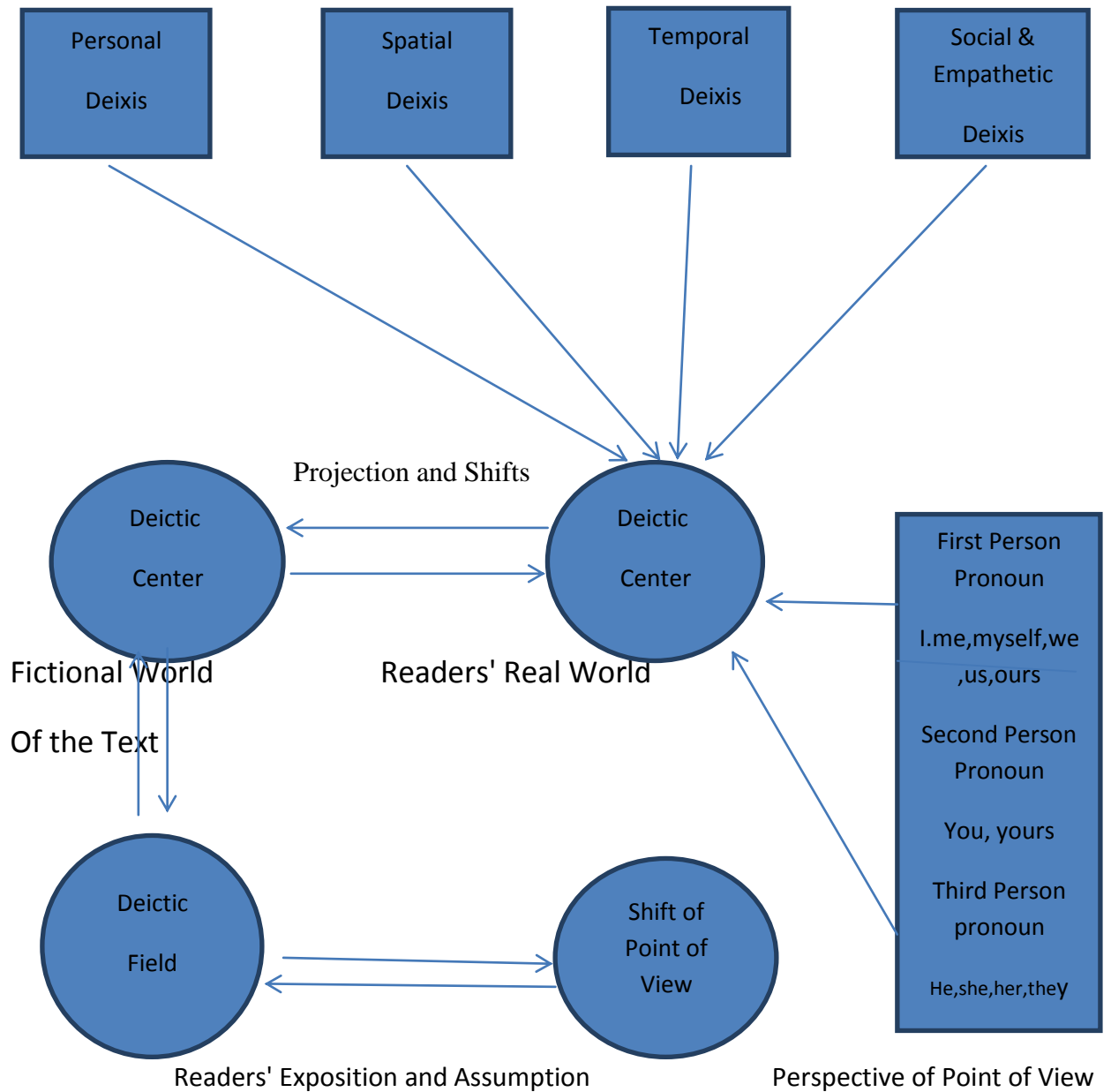
Figure(1) Scheme of the Main Connectors of Deictic Shift Theory

7.Application of Deictic Shift Theory in the Stylistic Analysis of Viewpoint in the Selected Poem

In the following poem written by Seamus Heaney entitled "Mossabaw",

the cognitive perspective of DST will be applied in order to be aware and concerned with the different effects of view point of the deictic referents.

Mossbawn,p Two poems in Dedication for Mary Heaney

1.Sunlight

There was a sunlit absence.
The helmeted pump in the yard.
Heated its iron,
Water honeyed

In the slung bucket
And the sun stood
Like a griddle cooling
Against the wall

Of each long afternoon.
So ,her hands scuffled
Over the bakeboard,
The reddening stove

Sent its plague of heat
Against her where she stood
In a floury apron
By the window.

Now she dusts the board
With a goose's wing,
Now sits, broad-lapped,
With whitened nails

And measling shines,p
Here is a space
Again, the scone rising
To the tick of two clocks.

And here is love
Like a tinsmith's scoop
Sunk past its gleam
In the meal bin. (Heanery,1990)

The beginning shows that "Mossbawn" is a locational reference to his aunt place where the poet reflects his memory and experience . Heaney uses the word sunlit to express his depth of feeling and love for his aunt. The poem continues to describe his previous enjoyable events with her. The deictic reference and triggers in the poem are essential in approaching meaning and applying cognitive perspectives of DST which is helpful and facilitative as we are engaging in reading the poem(Lambrou and Stockwell,2007,p124).

According to Stockwell(2002,p137) the text world theory is shown clearly in the first two stanza where a number of world building principles can be applied to constitute the background knowledge against which events of the text are happened. For example, the noun phrase 'the helmeted pump', 'water' ,the 'slung bucket' and the locational preposition phrase 'in the yard' and any other contextual knowledge from the discourse world will help us to construct the concept and image of the farmyard"Mossbawn" where Heaney lived. Another principle of text world is the missing of detailed description of time and mention of characters. The starting line refers to the presence of 'a sunlit absence' which is a kind of ambiguity and deviation. The indication of 'sunlit absence' is supposed to be a deictic reference to the absence of a person possibly Heaney's aunt. The reference to ' sunlit absence ' may consequently direct us to assume that the beginning of the poem is a remembrance to the farm ,but from perspective in the discourse world where Mary Heaney now is dead.

In the second stanza, there is a projection of view point concerning Heaney's than others when he uses the definite reference as in 'the helmeted pump', 'the yard'. This gives the impression that the speaker is supposed to know which pump and yard are represented because the definite reference is used in relation to information that is already known by the reader. According to DST concepts, the locative adverbial 'in the yard' specifies the deictic field from which events are interpreted in the text world. Nevertheless, the past tense verbs implying past time offer a degree of temporal distance from the described events(Ibid). The possessive pronoun 'her' is introduced in the third stanza to refer to the character of the women being described. The noun phrase 'her hands' are described as scuffling over the bakeboard and this implies a shift in our spatial viewpoint which is a projection of the narrator's viewpoint from outside in the farmyard to inside in the kitchen. The character of the woman is more specified by a reference to her 'floury apron' and the prepositional phrase 'by the window' which is an indication to her spatial deictic location. The fifth stanza shows the most impressive shift when the verb phrases are in the present simple time in contrast to the earlier past simple. The proximate deictic 'now' proposes a temporal a temporal shift

towards a time that is closer to the narrator's temporal deictic center than what is previously identified. It is possibly a kind of combination of the narrator's temporal deictic field in the discourse world and a dramatizing shift within the past-time range that has the effect of leading us closer to the past events that are being described. In cognitive framework, the shift will be transmitted back and forth between these two deictic fields. The lines of sixth stanza show another spatial deictic reference 'here'. As it is seen previously, DST states that reading a text will lead us to suspend our conception of deixis and instead interpret deictic references from a deictic center within the text world. The proximate spatial deictic' here' refers to the space in which the narrator is watching the women , and Heaney's use of 'here' supposes that readers are located in the similar position to the narrator within the text world. The same deictic connector is used in the final stanza to the love Heaney has to his aunt which is compared with " tinsmith's scoop sunk its gleam in the meal bin". The point here is that her love is shown not only by words but by everyday actions and activities which are done for our families and friends. The poem ended with a shift in deictic connectors to become closer spatially and temporally to the narrator's position within the text world in relation to the woman in the poem. The end shows a kind of correlation and intensification of spatial and temporal deictic shift to be in close to the poet position within the text world and with the description of the real love to the woman in the poem(Lambrou and Stockwell,2007,p129)

8.Conclusions and Recommendations
   In the light of the preceding explanation, the following findings can be drawn
● Deictic shift theory, by using its cognitive perspective, can be complementary to the conventional approach of analysis of point of view effects in fictional discourse. This is shown clearly in the poem discussed where the locational ,personal and temporal deictic references specify the deictic field from which events in the text world are interpreted. Also, the shift between the present simple and past simple is tackled by the reader's   perspective and assumption.
● Deictic center refers to a speaker's or hearer's location in space and time. It frames readers' reality and allows them to assess other deictic indicators from this central perspective. Projecting a deictic center means that points of view other than own taken into account .Shifting deictic centers across the course of a text is what draws readers into the narrative in question by allowing them to experience events from various   viewpoints.

●It is necessary for the readers especially of literary texts and to the teachers of literature to apply a cognitive frameworks such as DST with the world of a narrative and interpret the text from that perspective. This can be helpful and facilitative in intensifying comprehension and interpretation especially when doing stylistic analysis.

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دراسة لنظرية الانتقال الاشاري بوصفة منهجا اسلوبيا في تحليل تأثيرات وجهة النظر في الخطاب السردي

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الخلاصة

تقليديا، معظم طرق التحليل الاسلوبي لا ترتبط بالعمليات المعرفية التي يتفاعل بها القراء على وفق وجهة نظر معينة اثناء قراءة النص. ظهرت في مقابل ذلك في ثمانينات وتسعينات القرن العشرين نماذج أسلوبية متعددة ذات طابع منظور ادراكي لتحليل وجهة النظر في التحليل الاسلوبي السردي.

نظرية الانتقال الإشاري هي فعل لإظهار كيفية تفاعل القراء بشكل كامل في الروايات، لدرجة انهم يفسرون الاحداث في السرد كما لو كانوا متواجدين في موقع داخل عالم القصة. وفقا (Segal,1995,p15، DST) تعني ان" القارئ غالبا ما يتخذ موقفا معرفيا داخل عالم السرد ويفهم النص من هذا المنظور". وهذا يحدث نتيجة لانتقالات الاشارة داخل الرواية التي تغير مركز الإشارة وبخلالها تفسر الجمل في النص. ويترتب على ذلك، ان مثل هذه التغيرات في مركز الاشارة عبر النص سوف يودي الى تغيرات في وجهة النظر التي سيعرفها القراء Mclntyre,2006,p92).(

وقد تناولت الدراسة الحالية التقصي عن دور نظرية الانتقال الاشاري كمنظور ادراكي لتأثيرات وجه النظر في القصيدة المختارة التي كتبها سيموس هيني في قصيدته المشهورة "موسبون". ويتم تحويل التركيز من التقنيات السردية نحو إطار المفاهيم الذي يعالج العمليات المعرفية لكل من القراءة والتفسير. وتوضح الدراسة كيف ان تطبيق (DST) هو امر لا غنى عنه معالجة التحليل الاسلوبي لوجهة النظر التي تطور فهمنا لبناء وجهات النظر في اللغة.

وقد أظهر التحليل ان العمل المعرفي لـ(DST) يستخدم وسيلة في القصيدة من أجل الوصول إلى المعنى الشامل للنص، إذ استخدم الشاعر انتقالات مختلفة للإشارة واسقاطات لوجهة النظر الخاصة بالضمير الشخصي، والشعور المكاني والزماني والاشارات المترابطة بين عالم القصة الخيالي وعالم القارئ الحقيقي. وينظر ايضا الى انه من منظور ادراكي هناك انتقال بين الماضي والحاضر وهو انتقال سريع ذهابا وايابا لمركز وساحة الاشارة التي يتم تناوله من خلال منظور القارئ.