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## Social Deixis and Power Relations in Batacan's Smaller and Smaller Circles

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### ABSTRACT

*This descriptive study aimed to identify social deixis found in the novel, *Smaller and Smaller Circles*, written by F.H. Batacan, and to discuss how power relations are reflected in the identified social deixis. Data were computed using mean and percentages while content analysis was utilized in interpreting the social deixis found. Moreover, Brown and Levinson's (1983) honorific axes namely addressee, bystander, referent, and setting were used as a model in classifying the social deixes, which were then classified into religious titles, formal honorifics, occupational titles, kinship terms, and other social address forms. Li's (2015) concept of rhetorical authority and the sources of legitimacy such as bureaucratic authority, charismatic authority, professional authority, and traditional moral authority were used as models in discussing how power relations are reflected in the social deixis identified. The researchers selected an award-winning Philippine novel which was read closely to identify, analyze, and interpret the social deixis found in it. Results of the study show twenty-nine social deixis used by the characters in the novel. The most dominant among them are a father (religious title), Sir (formal honorifics), director (occupational title), mama/ma (kinship term), and manang (other relational address). Further, these social deixes are used as addressee, bystander, referent, and setting honorifics. Moreover, they reflect power relations. These results show that the use of appropriate social deixis may be influenced not only by the social status of the participants in a communication act but by the situation or context of communication.*

**Keywords:** Honorific axes, power relations, rhetorical authority, social deixis

### INTRODUCTION

The use of social address terms, whether written or spoken, is a hallmark of relational language. It facilitates recognizing and understanding human relations and *hierarchical orders*. People who understand the gestures recognize the connection between them, or the connection between each of them and a third party. Appropriate use of these address terms may help establish or maintain good social relationships and status. Social relations among speakers and addressees are also reflected in the way they talk to each other. Such social relations reflected during interactions include power and solidarity.

In linguistics, social deixis refers to the use of words and grammar that can reflect the communicators' social face and relative social status (Hu, 2000). Levinson (1983) defined social deixis as the encoding of social distinctions relative to participant roles, with focus on aspects of social relationships between the speaker and the addressee(s) or speaker and some referents.

According to the same author, two types of social dimensions can be conveyed through language: relational and absolute. The former includes relationships between the speaker and (a) the referent, (b) the addressee, (c) the bystander, and (d) the setting. The latter includes forms reserved for two types of speech act participants: authorized speakers and authorized recipients.

Levinson defined social deictic forms using four axes. Referent honorifics convey the status of the person being discussed. The referent (the person being spoken about) and the target (the person whose status is being expressed) of honorific expression are both the same in this case. It is the most common type of honorific and is exemplified by the T/V distinction found in many Indo-European languages, where different second person pronouns (such as *tu* or *vous* in French) are chosen based on the speaker's and hearer's relative social status. Referent honorifics, which are generally encoded in titles and pronouns, are also used to show deference to third-person referents. Regardless of what is being discussed, addressee honorifics express the social status of the person being addressed. The type of addressee honorific to use is determined by the person being addressed. When a speaker wishes to show respect to the addressee, he or she will use honorifics. Bystander honorifics describe someone nearby but not involved in the conversation (overhearer). Setting honorifics is concerned with the circumstances and environment in which the conversation takes place rather than the status of any participant or bystander. A classic example of this diglossia is when an elevated or 'high form' of a language is used in more formal situations and when a vernacular or 'low form' of a language is used in more casual situations.

Social deixis, as an important symbol in public discourse, reflects certain power, or what Li (2015) refers to as rhetorical authority embodied in a linguistic signal. Power or rhetorical authority pervades the communication process at all times. It varies, however, depending on the context. If the speaker's rhetorical authority is too strong, the addressees or audience will reject it. As a result, smooth communication is not achieved, and if the rhetorical authority is weak, the audience will not be influenced by the speaker. As a result, the positive communicative effect will be elusive.

Hwang (1990) claims that appropriate speech levels and honorific address terms and deference terms encode deference rather than politeness. The same author argues that it is possible to be (1) deferential and polite, (2) deferential and impolite, (3) non-deferential and polite, and (4) non-deferential and impolite because the two dimensions are encoded by different linguistics or pragma linguistic features.

The power of age, fortune, seniority, and social position is usually reflected in the rhetorical authority carried by social deixis or honorifics (humble expressions). Power relations are common in father-son, superior-subordinate, teacher-student, and employer-employee relationships (Li, 2015). According to the same author, humble expressions elevate the addressee's social position while simultaneously lowering the addressee's position. As a result, humble expressions carry some moral authority. The notion of hierarchy originally came from Confucian ideals. Confucian ideals assume that at the foundation of an ideal society, there are five basic human relations: the ruled must show

loyalty to the ruler, children must show filial piety to their parents, a wife must obey her husband, the younger must show respect to the elder, and friends must show mutual trust.

Literature as a reflection of society is a widely acknowledged fact (Benjamin, 2010). Literature, as an imitation of human action, frequently depicts what people think, say, or do in a society. Stories are designed to depict human life and action through characters' words, actions, and reactions, which convey specific messages for education, information, and entertainment.

According to Chatterjee (2015), different societies have different norms of behavior, which are reflected in their respective literature. This reflection demonstrates the reciprocal relationship that exists between literature and society. Chatterjee argued that literature, as an integral part of society analyzes society and shows how men and women experience society as feelings. Thus, as the major literary genre of industrial society, the novel can be viewed as a faithful attempt to recreate the social world of man's relationship with his family, politics, and the state.

Social deixis has been studied within characters' dialogues in novels. These studies identified the deictic encodings found and their classifications based on prescribed models. For example, Fillmore's theory of social deixis was used by Dewanti (2014) in analyzing social deixis expressions found in Dee's *Perahu Kertas* novel. Another study focused on two linguistic concepts, namely taboo words and social deixis honorifics (Al-Bahar, 2013). The researcher attempted to make a logical and linguistic connection between them and pointed out how taboo words used in the dialogues of the play he studied violate the honorifics as social deixis. The same researcher discovered a violation of addressee honorifics, setting honorifics, and referent honorifics and argued that the four axes of honorifics (addressee, referent, setting, and bystander honorifics) are violated by taboo words in literary discourse, just as they do in everyday language. Similarly, Jamjuri (2015) used Levinson's theory to describe the social deixis in the *Elizabeth the Golden Age* film script. The outcome demonstrates three types of social deixis: (1) the speaker and referent of relational social deixis in five forms of expressions indicated as social deixis (Sir, Mr., Ma'am, Madame, and with respect); (2) the speaker and setting of relational social deixis in two expressions such as *dine* and *lodge*; and (3) authorized recipient of absolute social deixis namely *My Lade*, *Majesty*, *Ambassador*, *Your Highness*, *Queen*, and *Dr.* Expressions under the speaker and referent of relational social deixis refer to people of all social classes and social statuses and are used by people depending on the situation and the speakers. In the movie script, expressions under the speaker and setting refer to the formal context situation while those under the authorized recipient of absolute social deixis refer to people with a high or special status, such as a royal person. Jamie based his references and interpretation of each type of social deixis on the movie script or text's context, utterances, and usage of social deixis.

Most researches on linguistic encodings of social relations focuses on speaker-addressee relationships. The use of address terms in various cultures has been extensively researched within this category. Khidhir and Majeed (2019), for example, identified social deictic expressions in the play *A Night in Khanzad's Life* and related each type of identified social deictic expression to the characters' social identity, relative power, and social relation.

In contrast, Zulyanputri et al. (2021) investigated Nobel Prize winners' use of social deixis and their social class. The social deixis identified in this study provides readers with insights into people's social class. The researchers discovered that only the relational type of social deixis can determine the speaker's social class.

Heriyadi and Diana (2020) investigated the role and function of social deixis in the *Dressmaker* film by collecting data from the characters' conversations. The researchers discovered two types of social deixis: (a) absolute social deixis and (b) relational social deixis, as well as three (3) functions: (a) kinship markers, (b) social status, and (c) empathy. The types and social functions depicted in the film describe the characters' interactions and socialization. In a similar study, Noerofi'a and Bahri (2019) described the types of social deixis and their goals in the film *Beauty and the Beast*. Putra et al. (2020) studied the social deixis found in the film *The Madness of King George* and explained the social stratification factors in each type of social deixis.

According to the findings, the dominant social deixis, whether relational or absolute, referred to male characters more than female characters. The author claimed that this finding is related to the fact that in the nineteenth century, men held more power to lead society and were more dominant in public relations than women.

Ayuningtyas (2019) analyzed the social relationship factor between the characters in the story and three other factors of social relationship, namely title, clan, and friendship, in addition to identifying the types of social deixis in *Great Expectations Short Story* (2001).

These studies focused on the types, functions, and roles of social deixis in communication and the establishment of social relationships. None of these studies, however, explored how social encodings or honorific terms reflect who holds power between interlocutors. This study then sought not only to identify social deixis in a literary piece but also to analyze these deixes vis-a-vis power relations.

A Filipino writer who is acclaimed for exploring how power is reflected in the use of social deixis is F. H. Batacan. Having worked in the Philippine intelligence community and later became a broadcast journalist, she has keen eyes for what happens behind an event or prompts a person to maintain a social face or value. Her novel, *Smaller and Smaller Circles*, illustrates how power is reflected by using social deixis. The novel has a movie adaptation but was banned for quite some time. Despite the novel's controversies, it received widespread acclaim and awards, including the Don Marcos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature, the Manila Critics' Circle National Book Award, and the Madrigal-Gonzales Best First Book Award. The novel is regarded as one of the first works of Filipino crime fiction. Batacan decided to rewrite and expand the novel by half in order to round out the characters and make the narrative more understandable to a non-Filipino audience. But most importantly, the researchers chose the novel as the source of data because it is replete with social deixis and can be analyzed with power.

The researchers hope that this study enables readers to deepen their awareness of and develop an appreciation for the use of social address terms as part of Philippine culture. Furthermore, this study enhances people's perception and understanding of humble expressions and other honorific terms linguistically termed as social deixis.

## METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive research involving content analysis useful for examining trends and patterns in documents. The researchers used the novel, *Smaller and Smaller Circles* by Batacan as the source of a corpus of social deixis classified according to axes or honorific forms and grouped into religious, formal, occupational, kinship, and other social address forms. Frequency and percentages were used in identifying and classifying the data. Further, the researcher analyzed how power is reflected in the identified social deixis based on context, utterances, and usage of these honorifics

Levinson's (1983) types of honorifics in the form of axes were used as models in classifying the social deixis. On the other hand, the discussion on how power is reflected in the social deixis identified was inspired by Li's (2015) concept of power or rhetorical authority.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Social Deixis and Power Relations Found in the Novel

**Table 1**

*Social deixis along religious titles identified in the novel*

Social Deixis	Addressee		Bystander		Referent		Setting		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
A. Religious Titles										
1. Father	128	90.14	10	100	16	57.14	8	100	162	<b>86.17</b>
2. Your Eminence	11	7.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	<b>5.85</b>
3. Monsignor	-	-	-	-	7	25	-	-	7	<b>3.72</b>
4. Sister	-	-	-	-	4	14.29	-	-	4	<b>2.13</b>
5. Cardinal	2	1.41	-	-	1	3.57	-	-	3	<b>1.59</b>
6. Your Highness	1	0.70	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	<b>0.53</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.42</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>28</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>75.53</b>		<b>5.32</b>		<b>14.89</b>		<b>4.26</b>		<b>100</b>	

The use of appropriate speech level and honorific address and reference terms encode deference and indirect speech for various pragmatic purposes may signal polite levels (Hwang, 1990). Moreover, Brown (1988) explains that honorific address terms and reference terms are shaped by power and solidarity. In the novel, *Smaller and Smaller Circles* reflect a total of 29 deixis as shown in the succeeding tables.

One of the oldest yet strongest social norms in the Filipino culture is showing deference and politeness to religious leaders. Among the six religious titles identified, *Father* occurs most frequently compared to the rest of the social deixis found in the novel. *Monsignor* is an alternative honorific term used to address a priest. *Your Eminence*, *Your Highness*, and *Cardinal* are other honorifics used in the novel. This result is not surprising

since the novel's main characters are priests, commonly addressed using this social deixis. Regardless of the social status and economic standing of a person – child, man, woman, adult, elderly, professional, or non-professional, this person is compelled to acknowledge a priest using the religious title, *Father*. Social deixis can be rooted in the charismatic and traditional power (Li, 2015) affixed to a servant of God. The priest is expected to exude holiness, peace, and order impelling individuals to trust and respect his authority. This honorific title shows the proper relations between priest-parishioners (the priest being put in a higher position) and other related power relations.

The following excerpts from the novel show the use of the religious title, *Father*, in different contexts with different interlocutors:

(1) Addressee

The man's eyes narrow, but his expression is quizzical. "May we go for a walk, *Father*? It is a nice day for a walk (p.32).

(2) Referent

"*Father* Gus isn't in his office, and he's not at the lab. So, I thought I'd come and see you, instead..." (p.187)

(3) Bystander

"Make sure you give *Father* Saenz and *Father* Lucero a copy of everything you've got, Ben. Their view of what's useful might be different from yours." (p. 247)

(4) Setting

"My name is *Father* Jerome. *Father* Emil sent me to see you." (p. 141)

The excerpts show that the speakers always refer to a priest as *Father* regardless of their status and those of other participants. In the first excerpt, the speaker is an authority addressing a priest. Based on the context of the communication, the speaker shows his authority over the addressee while maintaining deference (he calls him *father*) and politeness for the latter. The same observation is given in the second excerpt, where a speaker is a layperson addressing a priest and referring to another priest. In the third excerpt, a superior address a subordinate and refers to priests. However, the speaker maintains authority with deference and politeness for the bystanders (priests). In the fourth excerpt, the speaker is a priest addressing a layperson and referring to another priest not physically present in the communication act. By formalities, the speaker referred to a fellow, or *father*, whereas in a casual conversation, they would call each other on a first-name basis.

Given how priests serve the community, it seems natural and even holy development to him as a symbolic father. When one thinks of good parents, one thinks of kindness, nurturing, and unconditional love. They bring to mind strength, protection, care, and attentiveness.

The speakers (children) in the following excerpts manifest trust toward the addressee. By calling the latter (a priest) *Father*, they imply protection from him because a *father* is with them to protect them. Confucius emphasized respect and obedience to parents and though the characters in this excerpt disobey the priest, their action implies deep respect, trust, and acknowledgment of the priest's presence and social position.

"No, *Father* Emil," they say, first one voice, then many voices.

“We will stay with you,” and in their faces, there is a kind of quiet determination and sympathy so grown-up it startles him. (p.5)

In this context, the social deixis *father* used as an addressee may reflect power (charisma) to his son. The priest is not the biological father of the children but a figure who represents a *father* image bound to care for and protect his children. The speakers display an act of stubbornness common to children getting attention from an authority (a father) yet deference for him is manifested through the use of the honorific *father*. A speaker may be deferential and impolite (Hwang, 1990). While the speakers used the honorific *father* appropriate for a priest, disobeying him who is older and in authority (Confucius’s ideal) is also a sign of impoliteness.

The following excerpts further illustrate the symbolic *fatherly* image maintained by a priest as portrayed by the characters of Gus Saenz in the novel:

“You really think they will let you help me, *Father*? That’s not how this world works. I tried to tell people, but nobody listened, nobody wanted to know. They wanted me to keep quiet. I didn’t matter. None of us mattered to anyone.”

“You matter. Here and now, I am telling you; what happened to you still matters.” (pp.335-336)

The speakers in the excerpt are Alex, suspected of serial killing, and Saenz (a priest). The latter discovers the identity of the former and volunteers to face him despite warnings from the police and the NBI. In the scene, Saenz stimulates Alex to talk. In the same way, as a father listens to his son, the former listens to the latter, his spiritual son providing him counsel and consolation. In the same spirit as the father with his prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), Saenz reconciles the sinner Alex who has gone astray and is now treading his pathway back to God as reflected in the utterance, “You really think they will let you help me, *Father*?” Saenz’s sacrifice compares to the sacrifices borne by a biological father to his children. Just as a father instructs; challenges; corrects; forgives; listens, and sustains his children, so does Saenz to his spiritual son, Alex. This may further be reflected in the statement, “You matter. Here and now, I am telling you, what happened to you still matters.” Further, it is evident that between the two, Saenz is at a higher level which follows Confucius’ law for the father-son relationship and which can be based on traditional power.

On the other hand, power is effective only when the target of powerful actions agrees (implicitly or explicitly) to the relevant power dynamic like in the case of Alex (the target) and Saenz (the one who displays power).

In another chapter of the novel, Lucero (another priest), tries to persuade Mrs. Carlos, a mother, to talk. The latter, however, doubts the intention of the former thus, she hesitates to talk at first. This hesitation is hinted in the following: “I want to know, are you really trying to help him?”. The speaker maintains social distance and does not use the appropriate honorific term *father* in addressing a priest. However, the priest wins her trust.

Mrs. Carlos reaches out to touch his arms. “*Father*, if there’s any way you can bring him home to us...We are not bad people. And whatever he has done, Alex is not a bad person” (p. 286).

Based on the excerpt, Mrs. Carlos listens to Lucero and addresses him appropriately.

This suggests deference and politeness to the priest but she fails to pay him at the start of their conversation. This observation also implies the realization of a greater power that her addressee possesses. The power that emanates from the addressee is not only based on the power of tradition but also charismatic power – the aura possessed by a few individuals characterized by cleverness, amiability, and heartened charm.

Another character, who at first resists the presence of Saenz, is Ben Arcinas, a lawyer working at the NBI and eyeing a higher position in the agency. The arrival of the Saenz threatens Arcinas and hurts his ego thus his resistance to the former. Arcinas is aware of the social position of Saenz but ignores and rejects his ideas whenever he has the chance to.

“Oh well. That eliminates the ten to twelve percent of the population that’s left-handed and makes things so much easier for us, *Father.*”

“Hmmm... this is very interesting, *Father Saenz... all very interesting...*”  
(p.107)

In the excerpt, though Arcinas exhibits deference for the priest by using the appropriate honorific, *Father*, he also shows impoliteness through his sarcasm. On all occasions when the lawyer shows such behavior, Saenz always chooses to respond more patiently and gentlemanly. The priest’s charisma changed the perspectives of the lawyer in a way a kind father would soften the heart of a stubborn child.

“Look, I don’t want you to think that I...” I honestly thought and that I...”

“...Ben, I understand...”

“No, *Father,*” Arcinas says, shaking his head. When I found out about the last boy, I just ... It’s not ... acceptable.” He looks at Jerome. “Both of you.” He picks up his umbrella and quickly folds it up. “Well, good night” (p. 208).

Arcinas has always doubted the two priests’ judgment. In the excerpt above, however, he acknowledges that he, too, has limitations. Arcenas understands their social positions and addresses Saenz, *Father*, to show politeness and deference for the priest putting himself at a lower ground while recognizing the power (tradition and charisma) exuded by the priest.

Director Lastimosa holds the highest position in the NBI. His legitimate power (bureaucratic authority) earns him not only deference and respect from his subordinates but also the trust and confidence he consistently manifests as may be expected of his position. He uses this power to persuade Saenz to work for and with him in the NBI. This power, however, is sometimes predominated by the charisma and traditional power. Noting the symbolic *father* image of priests taking care of his children/parishioners, Saenz has affected him in a way a successful man humbles himself before his Creator. The director approaches Saenz like an authority heeding advice from a greater authority. In this sense, traditional moral power predominates bureaucratic power. In the novel, Saenz is at a higher level while Lastimosa adjusts to maintain the required social position.

“Forgive me, *Father.*” He clears his throat, fishes a handkerchief out of a pocket of his trousers, and wipes his now damp forehead with it.

“I’ll be honest with you. I’m shaken by this. I know you are too- aren’t



you?" He searches Saenz's face for an answer (p.37).

In the excerpt, the superior lower himself before the priest and assumes the position of a *father* comforting a son. The act implies acknowledgment of greater authority or power. The honorific *father*, both deferential and polite (traditional), indicates awe and reverence as manifested by his trust and confidence in his addressee.

Other religious titles reflected in the novel include *Your Eminence*, *Monsignor*, *Sister*, *Cardinal*, and *Your Highness*. One of the most important aspects of Filipino culture is Filipinos' high regard for religious leaders. When laypersons are interacting with religious leaders, they are expected to address them appropriately through religious titles such as those previously mentioned. Otherwise, these laypersons would be regarded as impolite and lacking respect for Church authorities.

These representations of priests and the traditional power that they embody are inherent in Filipino culture and society. Even if Filipinos are affiliated with different religious sects, the same deference, respect, or politeness is accorded to other church leaders like pastors and ministers.

**Table 2**

*Formal honorifics (social deixis) found in the novel*

Social Deixis	Addressee		Bystander		Referent		Setting		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
B. Formal										
Honorifics										
1. Sir	47	85.45	-	-	-	-	-	-	47	54.02
2. Mrs.	4	7.27	-	-	10	62.5	9	56.25	23	26.44
3. Mr.	3	5.45	-	-	6	37.5	-	-	9	10.34
4. Ma'am	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	25.00	4	4.60
5. Gentleman	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	18.75	3	3.45
6. Miss	1	1.82	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.15
Total	55		-		16		16		87	100
Percentage	<b>63.22</b>		<b>0.00</b>		<b>18.39</b>		<b>18.39</b>		<b>100</b>	

The novel is also replete with formal honorifics. Such honorifics are usually used by speakers when they are in a formal setting or communication environment. One who is in a position is vested with legitimate power to make demands and expect compliance from others. However, if one loses position, he also loses power (French & Raven, 1959). Using formal honorifics is observed in exchanges between superiors and subordinates and between individuals on formal occasions or settings. Based on the table, formal honorifics are used by the characters in the novel as addressee honorifics (55 or 63.22%), referent (26 Or 18%), and setting honorifics (16 Or 18.39%). Formal honorifics identified from the novel include *Sir*, *Mrs.*, *Mr.*, *Ma'am*, *Gentlemen*, and *Miss*. Among these formal honorifics, *Sir* (47 times or 54.02%) is used most frequently compared to the rest of the identified formal honorifics. The addressee is a superior who expects his subordinates to report to him. It is

shown that the majority of the characters communicate with the addressee (also addressed by the occupational title, *Director*).

The following excerpts from the novel illustrate how the formal honorific *Sir* is used:

Now Saenz recognizes him: the *director* of the NBI, Francisco

Lastimosa.

"Of course, *Sir*. Give me a moment." (p. 32)

Even though Saenz responds to the visitor's greeting, he remains seated in his working area. When he recognized the NBI director, however, Saenz stood and walked toward him. The phrase, *of course*, implies obedience and the formal address term, *Sir*, shows deference.

In the following excerpt, tension is felt because of Arcinas' antipathy, Valdes' indifference, and Saenz's silence.

"Can't stay long," he says tilting his head toward the newspaper.

"Have my hands full..."

Saenz doesn't say a word, though merely watches with growing interest the dynamic between the two men. Valdes, he notices, has gone from friendly to distant, not even sparing Arcinas' newspaper a glance.

"Regardless of what you have on your plate today, you'll have to wait for *Director* Lastimosa." (p.46)

The excerpt above illustrates a communication setting that includes speakers (Arcinas & Valdes), the addressee (Arcinas & Valdes), bystander (Saenz), and referent (Lastimosa). The phrase "have to wait" and the honorific *Director* are strong words that signal authority not by the speaker but by the referent. Reference to the *director* prompts the addressee (Arcinas) to act appropriately to maintain the desired communication act.

The appointment of Lastimosa as the head director of NBI is a surprise for many and a disappointment for some, including Arcinas. In one of their meetings, Arcinas tries to overpower Lastimosa but the latter did not give in.

Arcinas stands. "I don't know about you, but I don't have time to dig through blotters."

"Sit down, Ben."

"What he's asking to do is—"

**"Sit down."**

Arcinas, in the excerpt, did not use the honorific, *Sir* or *Director*, appropriate for a superior- an act that shows non-deference and impoliteness. Lastimosa, on the other hand, calls him by his first name, *Ben* to show that the speaker is in authority. The imperative sentence, *Sit down*, repeatedly uttered commands respect and obedience.

**Table 3***Occupational titles reflected in the novel*

Social Deixis	Addressee		Bystander		Referent		Setting		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
C. Occupational Titles										
1. Director	9	39.13	-	-	24	63.16	2	50.00	35	<b>53.03</b>
2. Attorney	6	26.00	-	-	3	7.89	1	25.00	10	<b>15.15</b>
3. Dr./Dra.	4	17.39	-	-	10	25.32	-	-	14	<b>21.21</b>
4. Councilor	4	17.39	1	100	1	2.63	1	25.00	7	<b>10.61</b>
Total	<b>23</b>		<b>1</b>				<b>4</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>
Percentage	<b>34.84</b>		<b>1.52</b>				<b>6.06</b>		<b>100</b>	

Later in the novel, bureaucratic power (Li, 2015) prevails and Arcinas is subdued.

“*Sir*, I-I’ll do whatever you tell me to.”

“Does that include providing the necessary assistance...”

He’s surprised by how quickly, how easily he can say it.

“Absolutely, *Sir*.” (p.175)

The utterance, *I’ll do whatever you tell me to*, the word *absolutely*, and the phrase *I will* imply obedience while the formal address term, *Sir*, shows deference and politeness accorded to superiors.

This interpretation conforms with Li’s (2015) discussion of the superordinate’s *right* to command and the subordinate’s *duty* to obey.

People are usually titled with certain address forms carrying professional authority in particular fields. Such address forms are also reflected in the table. The occupational titles identified are used as referent, addressee, setting, and bystander honorifics, respectively. Such honorifics include *Director*, *Attorney*, *Dra/Dr.*, and *Councilor*. Among the occupational titles mentioned, *Director* is most frequently used by the characters as required in the context of the novel. A crime fiction, the *Smaller and Smaller Circles* revolves around characters involved in a thorough investigation. Investigators are expected to communicate to their superior (the *Director*) any lead or developments. This role is given to Lastimosa, who occupies the highest position in the NBI. Lastimosa’s position gives him the legitimate power to influence others. He has the power to mobilize others and to dissolve resistance even from those in authority.

The following are excerpts from the novel which reflect the use of the occupational title *Director* in various honorific axes:

(1) Saenz’s brow is creased with concern. “Director Valdez is right. You don’t look well.” (p. 51)

(2) “We’re just waiting for Director Lastimosa and Attorney Ben Arcinas. (p. 45)

(3) Saenz bows to the director and begins to take his leave. “Director....” (p. 203)

(4) "Director, always a pleasure." (p. 85)

(5) "Regardless of what you have on your plate today, you'll have to wait for Director Lastimosa." (p. 46)

(6) "Because the Director wants to see you." (p. 169)

These findings indicate that successful communication also entails observance or acknowledgment of the profession or the academic preparation of the participants in the communication process through the use of occupational titles. Li (2015) explained that these titles reveal a hierarchical relationship between communicators. The same author claims that an occupational title is a critical ingredient in an academic field. Respect is accorded to those in authority by referring to them according to their jobs.

Different kinship terms are used among siblings depending on who is older or younger. When a speaker refers to his father, it is obligatory to show deference. Among family members, the speaker in a lower family rank should always address one in a higher rank with proper kinship terms. The study also identifies several kinship terms from the novel. The table reveals that *Mama/Ma* is used by the characters more frequently compared to the other kinship terms listed. This social deixis is an addressee honorific for a mother or an endearment to a wife in a way that *Papa/Dad* is used by a child to address his father or a wife to her husband.

**Table 4**

*Kinship terms reflected in the novel*

Social Deixis	Addressee		Bystander		Referent		Setting		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
D. Kinship Terms										
1. Mama/Ma	11	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	44.00
2. Papa/Dad	9	40.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	36.00
3. Lola	-	-	-	-	2	66.67	-	-	2	8.00
4. Hija	1	4.55	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4.00
5. Ninang	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	4.00
6. Son	1	4.55	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4.00
Total	22	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	25	100
Percentage	88.00	-	-	-	12.00	-	-	-	100	-

**Table 5***Other Social Address Forms Reflected in the Novel*

Social deixis	Addressee		Bystander		Referent		Setting		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
E. Other social address forms										
1. Manang	4	36.36	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	25.00
2. Ate	3	27.27	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	18.75
3. Aling	-	-	-	-	2	40.00	-	-	2	12.50
4. Boss	2	18.18	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	12.50
5. Mang	-	-	-	-	2	40.00	-	-	2	12.50
6. Pare	2	18.18	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	12.50
7. Manong	-	-	-	-	1	20.00	-	-	1	6.25
Total	11		-	-	5		-	-	16	100
Percentage	68.75		-	-	32.15		-	-	100	

Following are excerpts that contain the kinship terms mentioned above:

- (1) "Mama would kill me if you had another episode on my watch. Look, he said he'd call back in half an hour..." (p. 124)
- (2) "Mama," her husband says, stroking her back gently. (p. 283)
- (3) "Papa, don't you want to help him?" (Chapter 42, 283)
- (4) "Pa," he begs. Please. You're going to kill yourself." (p.124)

In excerpt 1, a son addresses his father who is confined to a hospital, while in extract 2, a husband tries to calm his wife who becomes emotional thinking about their son. Extract 3 illustrates a wife addressing her husband, while extract 4 shows a son addressing his father.

These findings prove another unique Filipino trait that is close family ties. Further, it shows Filipinos' high observance of respect and politeness for their elders.

Apart from those honorific terms mentioned in the previous pages, there are other social address terms identified in the novel. These address terms are usually used by interlocutors who may not know each other or who may not be relatives but desire to establish better interactions. Table 5 contains these address terms to wit: *Manang*, *Ate*, *Boss*, *Aling*, *Mang*, *Pare*, and *Manong*. It is noticed that their frequency of use is not as significant as the other classifications of social deixis in as much as the characters for these address forms are used are just flat characters accidentally met by the major characters. Such social deixes are illustrated in the following excerpts:

- (1) "*Manang* Cion. How are you doing today?" (p. 26)
- (2) "No, no, *Ate*. It was nothing. It was no trouble at al. (p. 262)
- (3) "*Boss*, you can park in the visitor's parking area behind Studio Two. You remember where that is, right?" (p.234)
- (4) "I got mad. I told him, "Look, *pare*, I don't want any trouble; you just leave us in peace now, or else we'll have you arrested." (p.294)

The use of social deixis such as religious titles, occupational titles, kinship terms, formal honorifics, and other forms of address reveal the status of the participants in a conversation such as a speaker, the addressee, or the one being spoken to, the referent or the one being talked about, and the bystander or an overhearer.

## CONCLUSIONS

Social deixis mirrors social interaction. Communicators choose proper honorifics according to the communication object and situation to reflect their social relationship and status. To establish smooth communication between interlocutors, participants not only adjust their speech acts but also use the appropriate social deixis accorded to either. Novels and other literary genres replete with characters' use of social deixis can be a source of analyses and interpretations of such honorifics.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it is recommended for language and literature teachers to explore more literary genres that may help discuss grammatical encodings such as the use and functions of social deixis and how participants in communication adjust their speech acts to achieve the goals of such communication.

## ETHICAL STATEMENT

This study was reviewed and approved by the University of Northern Philippines Ethics Review Committee. Ethical principles observed in the study include the conflict of interest, of informed consent, of privacy and confidentiality, of vulnerability, recruitment, benefits, compensation, and community considerations.

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