



## An Analytical Approach to Teaching Arabic Literature through Deixis and Forensic Linguistics

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### Abstrak

Deixis plays a central role in establishing reference and meaning in narrative discourse, particularly in literary texts that rely on dialogue and shifting perspectives. Despite its analytical potential, deixis has received limited attention within forensic linguistics-oriented literary studies, especially in Arabic short fiction. This study addresses this gap by applying deixis analysis to uncover referential and symbolic clues in the short story *Qatilu Qadim* by Naguib Mahfouz, with the aim of identifying the murderer of the character Qahiri. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study uses observation and systematic note-taking based on Stephen C. Levinson's theory of deixis, integrated with principles of forensic linguistics. Deictic expressions related to person, time, space, and social relations are analyzed to trace patterns of proximity, access, and control within the narrative. Legal interpretation of the crime is discussed in relation to the sociocultural and legal context relevant to the author. The findings reveal that Qahiri's murderer is Abduh Mawahib, his servant, who maintained continuous physical and social proximity to the victim during a period of isolation from relatives and colleagues. This study demonstrates the effectiveness of deixis analysis as a forensic linguistic tool in literary investigation and highlights its pedagogical value in Arabic language education by fostering critical reading and analytical reasoning.

**Keywords:** Deixis; Forensic Linguistics; Arabic Short Story; Literary Analysis

### مستخلص البحث

تؤدي الديكسيس (*Deixis*) دوراً محورياً في بناء الإحالة وإنتاج المعنى في الخطاب السردي، ولا سيما في النصوص الأدبية التي تعتمد على الحوار وتعدّد وجهات النظر. وعلى الرغم من إمكاناتها التحليلية، لم تحظ الديكسيس باهتمام كافٍ في الدراسات الأدبية ذات التوجّه اللساني الجنائي، خاصة في القصة القصيرة العربية. وتسعى هذه الدراسة إلى سدّ هذه الفجوة من خلال توظيف تحليل الديكسيس للكشف عن الإشارات المرجعية والرمزية في القصة القصيرة «قاتل» قديم» لنجيب محفوظ، بهدف تحديد هوية قاتل الشخصية قاهري. تعتمد الدراسة المنهج الوصفي النوعي، مستندة إلى الملاحظة وتدوين الملاحظات بصورة منهجية وفق نظرية الديكسيس لدى ستيفن سي. ليفنسون، مع دمج مبادئ اللسانيات الجنائية. ويجري تحليل التعابير الديكسية المرتبطة بالشخص والزمان والمكان والعلاقات الاجتماعية لتتبع أنماط القرب وإمكان الوصول والسيطرة داخل السرد، كما تُناقش الجريمة في ضوء السياقين الاجتماعي والقانوني المرتبطين ببيئة المؤلف. وتُظهر النتائج أن قاتل قاهري هو عبده مواهب، خادمه، الذي حافظ على قرب جسدي واجتماعي

مستمر من الضحية خلال فترة عزله عن أقاربه وزملائه. وتبرز الدراسة فاعلية تحليل الديكسيس بوصفه أداةً لسانية جنائية في التحقيق الأدبي، وقيمتها التربوية في تعليم اللغة العربية من خلال تنمية مهارات القراءة النقدية والتفكير التحليلي. كلمات أساسية: الديكسيس، اللسانيات الجنائية، القصة القصيرة العربية، التحليل الأدبي.

## Introduction

The teaching of deixis as applied in short stories can help learners develop greater sensitivity in identifying accurate deictic references. Short stories are considered an appropriate choice because they have the potential to help learners improve several skills, such as listening comprehension (Pardede, 2011). Thus, learners can more easily understand the contextual use of deixis. Forensic linguistics is employed as a referential framework and as a tool for teaching investigative analysis identified through the language of the short story. Short stories with an Arab cultural background and the application of legal principles consistent with the narrative setting offer new insights for learners of Arabic language and literature, particularly in understanding legal contexts in the Arab world, such as Egypt.

Themes that address criminal issues without explicitly revealing the identity of the murderer are frequently found in literary works such as short stories. In line with this, authors often implicitly provide clues through narrative and/or character dialogue. To uncover these clues, the literary plot can be analyzed using deixis theory. According to Levinson, deixis can function as a linguistic method for encoding or grammaticalizing features of the speech context and speech events, as the interpretation of utterances is highly dependent on contextual analysis (Levinson, 2011). Furthermore, Fillmore states that deixis refers to the formal aspects of utterances whose interpretation depends on knowledge of elements of the speech act, such as the identity of the speaker, the location, and the time of the utterance (Cornillon, 2022). Yule further defines deixis as a technical term for one of the most fundamental functions performed through utterances, namely pointing via language (Barker, 2018).

In the short story *Qatilu Qadim* by Naguib Mahfouz, there is a murder case involving Professor Alaa ad-Din al-Qahiri whose perpetrator is not explicitly identified. The story is narrated from the perspective of an investigator examining the circumstances surrounding Qahiri's death. The investigator initially suspects Abduh Mawahib in the case, due to his role as Qahiri's servant who accompanied him almost twenty-four hours a day after his retirement, a period during which Qahiri also limited contact with others. However, in the absence of concrete evidence, this suspicion is challenged by Abduh's demonstrated devotion to God and loyalty to his master (Latjuba, 2022). After a quarter of a century following Qahiri's death, his diary was published, providing clues to the identity of his murderer after the case had been officially closed. These clues can be analyzed through deixis

theory, as deixis functions as a linguistic pointer that leaves traces which can be examined through literary language.

Previous studies on deixis include research conducted by Aisyah et al., which examines the forms and meanings of personal, spatial, and temporal deixis in the Bapukung oral literature of the Banjar community. The study employs a descriptive qualitative method with an inductive approach. The findings reveal three main types of deixis that function to indicate social relationships between speakers and interlocutors, mark spatial and temporal references, and reflect the cultural context of the Banjar community (Aisah 2021). Another study focuses on the functions of deixis in constructing meaning, social relations, and ideological messages in literary texts. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method with a pragmatic approach. The findings reveal the significant role of pragmatic deixis in understanding literary messages and narrative structure. (Avida, 2025). Another study identifies and classifies types of deixis using a descriptive qualitative method. The results reveal 67 data instances related to the functions of deixis in marking social relationships, time, and place, which serve to emphasize human values such as loyalty, love, empathy, and others in the novel *The Kite Runner* (Panggabean, 2022). Thus, previous studies have not addressed deixis in Arabic short stories using a forensic linguistics approach, nor have they examined the role of deixis in uncovering murder cases.

After reading the short story *Qatilu Qadim* by Naguib Mahfouz, the researcher identified several characters who become central figures in the investigation of Qahiri's murder. Qahiri is portrayed as a professor at a prestigious university and the author of books considered a major source of propaganda for Western civilization. He is also a harsh critic of his own culture, which resulted in many adversaries who opposed his ideas during his lifetime. After retirement, Qahiri limited his social interactions and met only with a few individuals who shared his views. Among the characters interrogated by the investigator are Abduh, Qahiri's servant; four students seeking academic guidance and intellectual ideas from Qahiri; and a middle-aged woman who frequently met with him. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the forms and functions of deixis used in the short story *Qatilu Qadim* as linguistic clues in identifying Qahiri's murderer. This research also seeks to explain the relationship between the use of deixis and the social context of the characters' utterances through a forensic linguistics approach.

## Method

This study adopts a qualitative research design with a forensic linguistics approach. The forensic linguistics approach is employed to examine legal decisions related to the murder case presented in the short story *Qatilu Qadim* by Naguib Mahfouz. Deixis theory is applied to identify the referents within the narrative and dialogue used by Mahfouz in the short story. The method utilized in this research is

the observational method with note-taking techniques, focusing on specific textual data that contain investigative elements related to the death of Professor Alaa al-Din al-Qahiri.

The stages of analysis in this study include: first, the researcher reads the short story *Qatilu Qadim* by Naguib Mahfouz and observes the investigative and criminal elements within the text. Second, narrative and dialogue containing investigative and criminal elements are identified and aligned. Third, deixis in the selected narrative and dialogue is analyzed. Finally, forensic linguistics analysis is conducted by identifying the legal actions and sanctions that should be imposed on the perpetrator, based on the language and setting of the short story. Forensic linguistics is employed in this study to provide legal knowledge to learners regarding crimes against humanity. The legal framework applied in this research is Egyptian law, in accordance with the author's sociocultural and geographical context.

## Results And Discussion

Before analyzing the use of deixis in the short story *Qatilu Qadim*, this study first discusses deixis as a reference framework for identifying the revelation of the murderer's identity in Naguib Mahfouz's work. An initial discussion of deixis is essential because this linguistic element functions as a marker of the relationship between language, the speaker, and the situational context underlying an utterance. Without an adequate understanding of deixis, the meaning of utterances in literary texts may be interpreted incompletely, potentially detaching them from the social and psychological contexts of the characters.

In an educational context, understanding deixis has strategic value because it trains learners to read language in a contextual and critical manner (Fitriani, 2019). Deixis demonstrates that meaning is not located solely in linguistic forms, but also in who is speaking, to whom the utterance is addressed, and under what social and temporal conditions it is produced. Therefore, the study of deixis and forensic linguistics plays an important role in the development of critical literacy in language and literary studies. The following section presents an explanation of deixis and forensic linguistics in the short story *Qatilu Qadim*, which serves as the analytical foundation of this research.

### Levinson's Deixis

This study employs Stephen C. Levinson's theory of deixis. The term *deixis* originates from Greek, meaning "to point" or "to indicate." Deixis is used to examine the relationship between language and context as reflected in linguistic structures themselves. The importance of deictic information in interpreting utterances can best be illustrated through situations in which such information is unavailable. For example, when someone encounters a notice on an office door that reads:

*I will be back in one hour*

Because we do not know when the notice was written, we also cannot determine when the writer will return.

The various aspects of deixis are extensive in natural languages and are highly grammaticalized, making it difficult to view them as anything other than an essential part of semantics. If semantics is understood to encompass all conventional aspects of meaning, then most deictic phenomena may be regarded as semantic in nature. However, deixis also falls within the domain of pragmatics, as it is directly related to the relationship between linguistic structure and the context of its use. According to Levinson, if pragmatics deals with aspects of meaning and linguistic structure that cannot be explained through truth-conditional semantics, then the grammatical category of deixis may lie at the boundary between semantics and pragmatics. Consequently, utterances in natural language are directly “anchored” to aspects of their context (Levinson & Syntax, 1983).

According to Stephen C. Levinson (1983), deixis is classified into five main types: a) Person deixis refers to participants in an utterance, such as the speaker, the addressee, and other individuals involved in the speech event “*I*”, “*you*”, “*he/she*”; b) Place (spatial) deixis refers to locations relative to the participants in the speech event, such as “*here*”, “*there*”, “*this place*” dan “*that place*” (Sasmita, 2018); c) Time (temporal) deixis refers to time relative to the moment of the utterance, such as “*now*”, “*then*”, “*yesterday*”, “*tomorrow*” (Sebastian, 2019); d) Discourse deixis refers to parts of the utterance or the text itself, such as the use of “*this*” and “*that*” within a discourse context, for example in expressions like “*this point*” and “*that idea*” (Stapleton, 2017); e) Social deixis refers to social distinctions between the speaker, the addressee, or the referent, such as the use of titles, levels of familiarity, or degrees of politeness (Dengah, 2014).

**Deixis in *Qatilu Qadim***

The short story *Qatilu Qadim* by Naguib Mahfouz employs a non-linear narrative structure, combining forward and backward plot movements. The story is narrated from the perspective of the head investigator who investigates the death of Professor Alaa ad-Din al-Qahiri. After retiring from his position as an investigator, he discovers “the sign of Qahiri’s murderer” through a diary that Qahiri had bequeathed to be published a quarter of a century after his death. The first-person narrator, who assumes the role of the investigator, reads the diary and uncovers clues to Qahiri’s murderer that remained undisclosed when the case was officially closed. Upon reading Qahiri’s diary, the narrator recalls the period surrounding Qahiri’s death as well as his own failure as an investigator. After obtaining the crucial clues, the narrator confronts the perpetrator and reveals the truth directly to him.

This study aims to analyze the forms and functions of deixis in the characters’ utterances in the short story *Qatilu Qadim* by Naguib Mahfouz, including:

To explain the investigator's emotional realization in the short story, this study focuses on the linguistic elements used in his utterance. The investigator's awareness does not appear suddenly without context, but is expressed through specific language choices that reflect his position, space, and time of realization. By examining these elements, the meaning of the utterance can be understood more clearly in relation to the narrative development of the story. Therefore, the following table presents an analysis of the deictic expressions found in the investigator's statement that reveals his emotional response after realizing the identity of Qahiri's murderer.

Tabel 1 : The investigator's emotional expressions

كان القاتل بين يدي طوال الوقت	
All this time, the murderer had been right beside me	
Deixis of person	The form <i>lafal يدي</i> (ya mutakalim) represents possession meaning "my," which refers to a singular subject. The function of this deixis indicates the speaker as the agent of the utterance, namely that the speaker realizes the killer is near himself.
Deixis of place	The form <i>lafal بين يدي</i> (around me) indicates a location that is relative to the speaker, namely a place that is physically very close to him.
Deixis of time	The form <i>lafal طوال الوقت</i> (all this time/throughout the time) indicates a duration of time that has already passed but has only now been realized by him.

Table 1 above represents a form of shock reflection experienced by the investigator in the Qahiri case. The sentence expresses the investigator's emotional state of disappointment with himself, as he was not sensitive enough in handling the investigation and had placed trust in the belief that Mawahib could not have committed a crime against Qahiri. This situation led the investigator to go through a period of failure as an investigator, as he was unable to discover indications of the cause of death or identify Qahiri's killer.

The utterance above contains three main types of deixis, namely person, place, and time. These three types of deixis function to direct the short story's readers toward the sudden realization experienced by the speaker that the

perpetrator of Professor Qahiri's murder case, which had already been closed, had in fact been close to him all along. The social context present in the utterance refers to a social situation involving power dynamics that influence the character's speech.

To further examine the investigative process in the short story, the analysis shifts to the dialogue between the investigator and Abduh Mahawib. This dialogue is important because Abduh is the first person questioned due to his close and constant presence in Qahiri's daily life. The exchange reflects how suspicion is linguistically constructed and denied through specific expressions. By analyzing the deictic forms in this conversation, the table below explains how the investigator directs suspicion and how Abduh responds to it within the context of the investigation.

Table 2: Investigative dialogue

: هل تشك في أحد الزوار الأربعة؟	
: أبدا (ثم بتوكيد) أبدا أبدا	
: "Do you suspect any of the four students who visited?"	
: "No, I do not suspect them at all."	
Deixis of person	In the utterance تشك, there is person deixis indicated by the present-tense prefix (ḥarf muḍāra'ah) ت, which refers to the pronoun (ḍamīr) of the addressee (mukhāṭab), namely the person being spoken to (Abduh). Thus, the word تشك is an utterance spoken by the investigator to the suspect. Furthermore, the form أحد الزوار الأربعة serves as a symbol referring to one of the four final-year students who frequently visited the house to discuss and exchange ideas with Qahiri.
Deixis of discourse	The form lafal أبدا The repetition, which occurs three times, constitutes discourse deixis that refers back to the previous utterance. In this sense, the deixis indicates that Abduh does not suspect the four students who frequently visited Qahiri's house. This is stated because Abduh knows that they were close to him; in fact, Qahiri had already regarded them as part of his family.

Table 2 contains a dialogue emphasizing the investigation between the investigator and Abduh Mawahib. There are two types of deixis present in the conversation above, namely two instances of person deixis and one instance of

discourse deixis. The meaning of the conversation is that the suspect does not suspect the four students who usually met Qahiri during his retirement for the purpose of discussion and exchanging ideas. Thus, the suspect is portrayed as an honest person, in accordance with the social role attributed to him by Qahiri's colleagues when they met him. Moreover, the suspect uses short and clear sentences in order to convince the investigator not to suspect the four students.

To deepen the analysis of the investigator's perspective, this section focuses on the narrative assumptions directed toward Abduh Mawahib. The investigator's judgment is shaped by Abduh's attitude, behavior, and personal background, which lead him to view Abduh as someone unlikely to be involved in Qahiri's death. These assumptions are expressed through descriptive statements that reflect the investigator's trust and emotional bias. Therefore, the following table presents an analysis of person deixis and discourse deixis used in the investigator's narrative to show how Abduh is constructed as a morally good and non-suspicious character.

Table 3 : The investigator's assumptions regarding Mawahib's attitude

<p>أنه رجل ورع طيب مستقيم، و بعيد أن يكون حزنه على الأستاذ تمثيلا أو زانفا، و بعيد أيضا أن يوحى وجهه بالجريمة أو الشر</p>	
<p>He was a devout, kind man who did not engage in improper behavior; it was impossible that his grief over the professor's death was merely an act. His face also showed no "signs" of crime or of concealing something.</p>	
Deixis of person	In the sentence <i>أنه رجل</i> , there is person deixis in the form of the letter <i>هـ</i> , which refers to the word <i>رجل</i> ; however, what is actually meant is a single individual, namely the suspect (Abduh). The sentence indicates that Abduh is presumed to possess good qualities, as further explained in the sentences that follow. Furthermore, the same referential return ( <i>rujū'</i> ) is found in the expressions <i>أن يوحى وجهه</i> and <i>أن يكون حزنه</i> , both of which refer back to Abduh.
Deixis of discourse	In the form <i>بعيد</i> here is discourse deixis that refers to the previous sentence and is connected to the clause above. This is because <i>بعيد</i> functions as the "central word" used by Abduh to indicate that it was impossible for him to have killed Qahiri..

Table 3 above represents the investigator's assumptions about Mawahib's attitude. These assumptions are what allow Mawahib to escape suspicion as Qahiri's murderer. There are two types of deixis present in the sentences above, namely three instances of person deixis and one instance of discourse deixis. After identifying the deixis in the sentences, it can be analyzed that the passage represents the "inner fragment" of the character "I," namely the investigator of Qahiri's death, who dismisses the suspicion of the "suspect (Abduh)" as Qahiri's killer. This is due to Abduh's pious and morally upright way of life, leading the investigator to label Abduh as a loyal servant to his master, Qahiri, and thus someone who would be incapable of killing him.

To continue the analysis of the investigation, this section examines the investigator's questions concerning Qahiri's personal life, particularly his relationship with women. Since Qahiri never married, the investigator considers the possibility that women who were close to him may have been involved in his life during his retirement. This dialogue reflects a common investigative approach that explores personal and social aspects of the victim's life. Therefore, the following table analyzes the use of person and time deixis in the investigator's dialogue with Abduh Mawahib.

Table 4 : The investigator's investigative dialogue with Mawahib

حَدَّثَنِي عَنْ سُلُوكِ الْمَرْحُومِ كَرِجَلٍ لَمْ يَتَزَوَّجْ قَطٍ فَأَجَابَ مَتَّجِهُمَا لَا أَعْرِفُ شَيْئًا
: "Tell me about the late professor's behavior as an unmarried man." He replied with a gloomy expression : "I don't know anything."

Deixis of person	In the expression حَدَّثَنِي, there is person deixis directed toward the character "I" through the first-person singular pronoun (ḍamīr mutakallim waḥdah). Then, the phrase كَرِجَلٍ لَمْ يَتَزَوَّجْ represents explicit (zāhir) deixis in the form of the noun كَرِجَلٍ and the verb لَمْ يَتَزَوَّجْ, where the imperfect verb marked by the prefix ي contains the implicit pronoun هُوَ, which refers back to the word رَجُلٍ. Furthermore, the past-tense verb أَجَابَ contains the implicit pronoun هُوَ, which refers to the addressee (mukhāṭab) in the dialogue, namely Abduh. Finally, there is person deixis in لَا أَعْرِفُ, which contains the
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	first-person pronoun أنا, implied by the hamzah in the verb أعرف.
Deixis of time	In the <i>لم يتزوج قط</i> implicitly contains temporal deixis, namely the time span of never having been married throughout his life, from his retirement as a university lecturer until the time of his death. Furthermore, the sentence <i>لا أعرف شيئاً</i> also implicitly contains temporal deixis. This temporal deixis refers to the moment when Abduh is being interrogated by the investigator regarding women who were close to Qahiri during his retirement period.

Table 4 above presents an investigative dialogue in the form of intensified questioning directed at the character Mawahib. In this dialogue, there are two types of deixis, namely four instances of person deixis and two instances of temporal deixis. This dialogue, together with the preceding one, forms a continuous sequence of the investigator's examination of Abduh as the suspect, aimed at obtaining more detailed information regarding Qahiri's meetings with colleagues or visitors. However, Abduh does not provide any information that could harm the individuals suspected by the investigator through his questions. Abduh carefully safeguards Qahiri's secrets and does not give answers or information that would cause the investigator to become suspicious of Qahiri's colleagues or guests whom he met during his retirement.

To conclude the investigative analysis, this section focuses on a confirmatory question addressed by the investigator to Abduh Mawahib. During the investigation, the investigator does not find any statements or behaviors that raise suspicion regarding Qahiri's death. As a result, the question functions not to accuse, but to confirm earlier information given by Abduh. Therefore, the following table presents the linguistic features used in this confirmatory exchange.

Table 5 : Investigative questions from the investigator

	الا تريد أن تبرأ نفسك
	Do you not want to clear yourself?
Deixis of person	The form <i>نفسك</i> contains a second-person singular pronoun ("you" / <i>anta</i> ), which refers to the interlocutor (Abduh). In the context of the conversation, this pronoun is directed at the suspect or the person involved in the case.

Deixis of time	In that sentence, there is an implicit temporal deixis referring to "now," namely the moment when the utterance is being made.
Deixis of social	The form <i>أن تبرأ</i> (so that you may be cleared) indicates a social relationship between the speaker and the addressee. This can be seen in the use of speaker deixis with an authoritative utterance, reflecting the speaker's role as an investigator, while the addressee occupies the position of the accused.

Table 5 above shows the investigator's sense of resignation toward the answers provided by Mawahib throughout the investigation. The investigator does not find any responses that would direct suspicion toward other characters. However, the investigator also does not harbor negative suspicions toward Mawahib as Qahiri's servant.

The utterance above contains three instances of deixis: two are expressed explicitly, while one is implicit. The structure of the sentence indicates psychological pressure exerted on the addressee and contains an implicit invitation to confess information related to Qahiri during his lifetime, including whom he last met. This utterance serves as an important indicator in the investigative interaction between the investigator and the accused or the person concerned. Thus, the sentence contains deixis that reflects the social hierarchy and the emotional stance of the speaker in demanding clarification from the addressee.

To complete the sequence of investigative dialogues, this section presents Abduh's final response to the investigator. In this dialogue, Abduh does not accuse or suspect anyone in relation to Qahiri's death. Instead, he strengthens his statement by invoking the name of God to affirm the innocence of those previously considered suspects. This response marks the end of the questioning process and leads to the closure of the Qahiri case without the identification of the actual perpetrator. Therefore, the following table presents the linguistic features found in Abduh's concluding answer.

Table 6 : Mawahib's response in the investigation

<p>لي الله، لن يأخذني بجريمة غيري</p> <p>I have a God, He will not hold me accountable for the crimes of others.</p>
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Deixis of person	<p>The forms لي(I have) and يأخذني(will hold me accountable) both contain first-person singular pronouns, namely “I.” Thus, these instances of deixis emphasize the speaker as the mutakallim, who denies involvement and asserts his own innocence</p> <p>The form اللهcontains a reference to a third-person singular agent, namely a transcendental entity (God). The deictic function of the expression اللهindicates a shift of authority from humans (the investigator) to God, with the speaker’s self-defense taking a religious rather than a logical form.</p>
Deixis of social	<p>The form غيري(other than me) indicates the presence of social and moral distance between the speaker and the “other people” who may also be investigated by the investigator in the Qahiri case. The deictic function of this expression signifies a difference in moral status within Abduh’s utterance, positioning himself as a servant, in contrast to the woman protected by Qahiri during his lifetime, who would become the subject of the investigator’s inquiry</p>
Deixis of discourse	<p>The sentence above is uttered by Abduh as a response to the investigator’s accusations toward others associated with Qahiri during his lifetime. Therefore, this sentence functions to connect with the previous conversational context as an act of self-affirmation within the discourse, rather than as a new, stand alone statement.</p>

Table 6 above constitutes Abduh’s final answer after he is questioned about the possible assumptions made by the investigator regarding the murderer or the party responsible for the criminal act in Qahiri’s death case.

In the utterance above, there are psychological and religious dimensions of Abduh, who is under pressure, accused, and seeking to prevent others who may be investigated by the investigator from being considered guilty or having any motive as the murderer of Professor Qahiri. Thus, the utterance functions as a linguistic assertion of Abduh’s identity in affirming the innocence of others, as well as indicating Abduh’s moral distance from those suspected by the investigator. This utterance becomes an important part of revealing the human dimension (such as belief in God, a sense of innocence, and the desire to be exonerated) as well as the

dimension of truth (the effort to justify that others who may be investigated are innocent and lack any motive as perpetrators) within the forensic narrative.

To present the final stage of the narrative, this section focuses on the dialogue between the retired investigator and Abduh Mawahib. At this point, both characters are no longer young, and the investigation has formally ended. The investigator gains new insight into the motive behind Qahiri's murder after reading Qahiri's diary, which is published many years after the incident. Although the case has already expired under the statute of limitations, the investigator seeks Abduh not to reopen the case, but to confirm the truth that had remained hidden for a long time. Therefore, the following table presents the dialogue that reveals this final confirmation.

Table 7 : The investigator's statement to Mawahib

أخيراً، انكشفت الحقيقة و ثبت أنك قاتله !	
At last, the truth was revealed, and you were the murderer	
Deixis of time	The form <b>أخيراً</b> indicates a specific time, namely "the end of the process of searching for the Qahiri murder case." In addition, this expression also signifies a temporal shift from ignorance and doubt to certainty. The word thus represents the outcome of the process through which the murderer is finally revealed.
Deixis of discourse	The expression <b>انكشفت الحقيقة</b> (the truth was revealed) indicates an event that has only just come to light, after the case of Qahiri's death had been closed. The deictic function of this expression refers back to a context of previously unproven accusations. Then, when the investigator, after retiring, reveals the truth in front of the perpetrator, Abduh displays an expressive reaction indicating that what the investigator says is indeed true
Deixis of person	The expression <b>أنتك قاتله</b> contains two pronouns, namely "you" and "him" (Qahiri). This form indicates a shift in the social relationship from interrogation to the attribution of guilt, emphasizing that Abduh is the perpetrator who killed Qahiri.
Deixis of social	The expression <b>أنتك</b> functions as a form of emphasis and finality, indicating the speaker's higher social position (the investigator). Meanwhile, the addressee occupies the position of the accused, who is unable to deny the accusation. This expression reflects the social hierarchy and power

relations within the conversation, where the speaker holds authoritative power as the investigator.

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Table 7 above represents the investigator's emotional state, characterized by a sense of relief intertwined with disappointment. This is because the investigator learns the truth about Qahiri's death only after retiring from his profession, after having gone through a period of failure in which he was unable to uncover the case, and after the case had already been closed. Nevertheless, despite this disappointment, the investigator feels relieved that the long-concealed truth has finally been revealed.

The utterance above signifies the clarification of Qahiri's murder case and the completion of the investigation by the investigator responsible for the case. Although the investigator has retired and the Qahiri case has already been closed, he experiences a sense of personal satisfaction for having succeeded in uncovering a crime that had long remained unresolved.

#### **FORENSIC**

Forensic linguistics in this study refers to the legal identification of a criminal perpetrator through language as presented in the short story *Qatīlu Qadīm*. The law is applied according to the location or domicile of the accused. The legal framework applied in *Qatīlu Qadīm* corresponds to the legal context of the place where Naguib Mahfouz lived. Mahfouz was an Egyptian writer whose works are highly monumental and earned him the Nobel Prize in Literature (Karimah, 2024). Mahfouz's works often depict a wide range of social issues (Albanjari, 2025), especially in socio-cultural aspects and the context of modernity within Egyptian society (Laskar, 2025). Literary texts written by Mahfouz possess a naturalistic character, as the objectivity of the surrounding social and cultural context becomes the main idea in his writing (Wulandari, 2024).

In the short story *Qatīlu Qadīm*, the death of Professor Qahiri is a murder whose perpetrator is not identified until the case is officially closed. According to Egyptian legal decisions under the positive law of the Egyptian Penal Code (Criminal Code No. 58 of 1937), premeditated murder is classified as a crime that may be punishable by the death penalty (Arafa, 2017). Furthermore, there is an Egyptian

appellate decision numbered 46452 of Judicial Year 59, which states that “intentional murder possesses the elements of a criminal offense.” However, if the determination of investigative evidence is carried out independently, without involving other parties, then legally such evidence is not permitted to be used as the sole basis for a judicial ruling, whether on one’s own initiative or on the basis of another person’s claim (Kasasi, 1990). As for the statute of limitations under Egyptian law, it is limited to a period of 20 to 30 years for certain offenses (Kontributor, 2024).

As for the murder case of Qahiri that had already been known to the investigator in the short story *Qātilu Qadīm* by Naguib Mahfouz, it was still within the time limit during which punishment could be imposed. This is because the retired investigator confirmed the perpetrator a quarter of a century after Qahiri’s death. However, the investigator of Qahiri’s death confirmed that the perpetrator acted alone, without involving anyone else. In the short story, the perpetrator (Abduh) was shocked after being accused as “the murderer” by the investigator and subsequently suffered a stroke. Thus, the murder of Qahiri can be uncovered once again through the testimony of the investigator who met Abduh as Qahiri’s killer.

## CONCLUSION

Every utterance has a particular intention that is related to its social context. Therefore, deixis is necessary to understand the intended meaning of an utterance in accordance with the conversational context. As classified by Levinson, deixis includes personal, temporal, spatial, discourse, and social deixis. In the short story *Qātilu Qadīm* by Naguib Mahfouz, there are indicators that reveal the murderer of Professor al-Qahiri through the narration and the investigator’s utterances addressed to Abduh..

Moreover, the use of deixis in *Qātilu Qadīm* by Naguib Mahfouz does not merely function as a linguistic element, but also provides learning value for students regarding the appropriate use of reference in accordance with context. The analysis of personal, temporal, spatial, discourse, and social deixis shows that the meaning of utterances is highly dependent on the speaker’s context, the social situation, and the underlying power relations. Thus, Arabic language learning, particularly in the

field of pragmatics, can be directed toward training students' sensitivity to the relationship between linguistic forms and their contexts of use.

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