

## A Cognitive Analysis of Persona in Atwood's *You Fit into Me*: The Reader's Shift from Love to Disgust

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### Abstract

Poetry evokes a myriad of feelings as readers embark on their journey within a text. This is evident in the immersion of readers when they engage with the text. This is aided by deixis, which constructs parameters of person, time, and space within a speech act and relates it to the context in which it is uttered. In Deictic Shift Theory (DST) terms, invested readers project or shift themselves into a fictional world. Thus, readers experience the plot as if they are companions to fictitious characters. Cognitively, readers shift into the story world and within it, they make sense of the narrative. They also experience containment (In Image schema's terms). This makes DST useful to examine the viewpoint(s) used to tell a narrative. *You*

*Fit into Me* is a quatrain that requires heavy work from readers in terms of deictic shifts. Margaret Atwood subjects her readers to shock waves; in four lines she depicts four stages in a relationship between a female narrator and her male addressee, starting with lovemaking and ending with impalement. This study aims to explore the persona's feelings and by extension the readers', as they shift their deictic center to be cognitively immersed in the persona's hostile origo. As per DST, this study argues that readers' shift and therefore immersion and involvement in this short poem are increased due to the dense emotional content of the poem.

**Keywords:** deictic shift theory, deixis, image schema, readers' immersion, poetic persona, Margaret Atwood, *You Fit into Me*, quatrains

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### Introduction

Cognitive poetics utilizes cognitive sciences and theories to understand the connection between literature and its effects on readers. This field uses different branches of cognitive sciences, which explore many areas from human intelligence and processing to artificial intelligence. The importance of this approach to examining literature is evident, as they examine the mind's ability to process and organize knowledge (Tsur, 2008). This amalgamation of literature, linguistics, and cognition yields a greater understanding of literary texts.

In cognitive poetics, immersion is a central phenomenon. Immersion is an experience that readers undergo as they engage in literary reading. An encounter that requires a fictitious setting inhabited by characters (Ryan, 2015, p. 9). This experience requires the body to be engaged in the story, to be invested and projected into a pretend world. Immersion takes place in relation to both time and space, and it occurs when the reader shifts to a space in the literary text in which the characters and the readers are intricately linked. Deixis aids the phenomenon of immersion.

Deixis is fundamental in human discourse. The term deixis originates from the Greek word *pointing*. Deixis is used "to refer to the function of personal and demonstrative pronouns, of tense and of a variety of other grammatical and lexical features which relate utterances to the spatiotemporal coordinates of the act of utterance" (Lyons, 1977, p. 636). DST argues that a reader's deictic center can be shifted into the story world, and s/he get transported within a text during the process of reading.

The *I*, *here*, and *now* of readers and characters become inseparable and entangled. According to DST, a deictic shift does not happen only to readers but to authors as well. They move "their deictic center from the real-world situation to an image of themselves at a location within the story world" (Segal, 1995a, p. 15). Furthermore, the shift can take readers back to their original origo, this back-and-forth movement is called *push* and *pop*. In DST terms, reading literature includes a deeply involved reader who forgets about his/her position and can interpret events from within the story world due to these deictic shifts. Thus, the study aims to examine the persona (her body, her eye, and her sexuality) by applying DST to Atwood's quatrain *You Fit into Me*. I argue that shifting between the reader and the persona's origo in the poem increases immersion and intensifies the feelings of readers, as well as their feelings of hostile containment (as per image schema).

### Deixis and Deictic Shift Theory

Deixis is paramount to language, as it helps us connect language to its context, it also enables us to *point* at entities and place them spatiotemporally using just words. Hence, the linguistic relation to context is best understood through a phenomenon like deixis or *indexicals* (Levinson, 1983). Moreover, deixis is "the location and identification of persons, objects, events, processes, and activities being talked about, or referred to, about the spatiotemporal context created and sustained by the act of utterance and the participation in it" (Lyons, 1977, p. 637). This interaction must at least take place between one speaker and one receiver. An utterance is naturally *egocentric*. It is related and recounted by a person who

sees himself/herself as the center or *ego* and views the situation from his/her *viewpoint*, and this specific space and time is determined by the speaker's *zero-point* at the moment of the utterance (Lyons, 1977). Hence, deixis helps in understanding the context of discourse.

The word *person* can be traced back to its Latin origin *persona*, literally translated to a mask. This compels us to look at a communicative event as a *drama* and the distribution of roles based on importance is granted to the first person, the second person then the third person respectively. The inferior status of the third person is thus emphasized, as they are removable and can be replaced with demonstrative pronouns (Lyons, 1977). A clear division between the different uses of pronouns exists. First person pronouns are used by speakers and second person pronouns are used in relation to addressees while third-person pronouns indicate the absence or inability to be either the speaker or the addressee (Levinson, 1983). As the discourse alternates between one person to another, so does the deictic center. Deixis is a subjective distinction between what is perceived as proximal and distal to the deictic center, so it is context-dependent. Hence, a shift in speakers means a shift in origo, "on which the rest of the deictic system hangs" (Levinson, 1983, p. 68). Thus, pronouns act as replacements for nouns, but they do not possess the same syntactic and semantic qualities; "pronouns are referring expressions, and they are syntactically equivalent to nominals, not nouns" (Lyons, 1977, p. 637). Pronouns are an important component of the personal deictic system.

Space deixis is a linguistic feature used to point at places in relation to participants' environment in the communicative act. Space deixis considers the speaker and the addressee as a point of reference to space and also objects within that

space. Spatial deixis is primarily pronouns and demonstrative adjectives like *this* and *that*. Some demonstrative adverbs can be deictic as well, like *here* and *there*. Hence, they have are examined in relation to they spatial context of participants (Lyons, 1977). The spatial deictic system allows language users to distinguish between proximity and distal objects with spaces.

Temporal deixis consists of deictic expressions about the time of day, month, or year. Like spatial deixis, these points in time are tied to a speaker's origo. Time deixis like *now* is related to the time of utterance. Accordingly, *coding time* (the time of speech) versus *receiving time* are also important components of time deixis. Time deixis can include tense as well as temporal adverbs like *now*, *then*, *soon*, and *recently*. Hence, the past includes events taking place before the coding time while the present encompasses events happening during the coding time. Furthermore, the future relates to an event expected to unfold after the coding time (Levinson, 1983). Hence, deixis is crucial in discourse because it ties speakers and addressees to a certain spatiotemporal point. It causes *anchorage* and helps make the discourse connected and coherent, with deictic expressions connecting speech to context (Cairns, 1991).

While engaging in a story world, many fascinating mental and cognitive processes ensue. An intriguing aspect is that a story world is constructed to invite readers to shift their deictic center and experience a deictic *reanchoring*. The act of visualizing oneself in an imagined world has consequences for the reader. This causes them to be immersed within the text. "When reading fictional text, most readers feel they are in the middle of the story, and they eagerly or hesitantly wait to see what will happen next" (Segal, 1995a, p. 14). Story worlds are built with the help of deictic expressions that allow readers to shift their

origo to align with the *perspectivizer's* deictic center (Martínez, 2015, p. 146). This closeness to the *perspectivizer* increases reader's immersion and engagement.

DST posits that readers mentally cross into a story world, and they use their prior knowledge of the actual world to fill in gaps that might be missing from the story world (Stockwell, 2002). DST asserts that "the metaphor of the reader getting inside of a story is cognitively valid" (Segal, 1995a, p. 16). Readers take a cognitive stance when they engage in a narrative. They also anchor themselves both in the time and place of the narrative. Most importantly, context limits many deictic references to place and time, as well as characters. When the origo of the character has been set, readers can accurately fathom narrative cues. Furthermore, the origo in the story constantly changes as the plot progresses. DST investigates the rules that govern the shift between the reader's origo and the characters' origo in the story world.

DST states that the deictic center moves from the immediate surroundings of the reader to a mental construction that happens during the engagement with the text. Both readers and authors shift their origo into the story world, using representations of themselves. They shift into a space cognitively built in the story world or a smaller world "within the subjective space of a fictional character." (Segal, 1995a, p. 15). DST takes interest in "the cognitive processes involved in creating, telling, interpreting, and understanding narrative" (Segal, 1995b, p. 61). Hence, even a narrative as unreliable as first-person narratives is of interest to DST, which often offers an unclear, simulated account of the story, as they are tainted with the feelings and attitudes of the narrating first person. However, this unreliable account is very true in the mind of the narrating character or persona.

DST provides a framework in which the story world includes incidents of a plot unfolding. Within the story world, spatiotemporal *coordinates* propel the plot. As part of the story world construction, *participants* and *objects* exist. Furthermore, readers take an active part in the construction of the story world, this construction is cued by the author. "Stories are made possible because readers can impart knowledge of the everyday world and other possible worlds into the current story world; this provides the listener/reader with the illusion of mentally inhabiting a fully specified and coherent world" (Zubin & Hewitt, 1995, p. 130). This emphasizes the importance of prior knowledge and experience to the appreciation of and immersion in the story world, especially within a story world with a high emotional density like the selected poem.

### Margaret Atwood's *You Fit into Me*

Margaret Atwood is one of the most celebrated female writers in her native Canada and around the world. She has a strong, feminist approach that can be brutal. Atwood's poetry can show a form of *disgust*, and this emotional response is realized in the poem under examination (Draper, 1999). *You Fit into Me* is a short epigraph poem by Margaret Atwood from *Power Politics*:

you fit into me

like a hook into an eye

a fish hook

an open eye (Atwood, 1971, p. 1).

The poem is a quatrain, which is a type of poetry that takes the form of four rhymed lines, and it is usually used with epigrams (*Quatrain | Definition & Examples | Britannica*, n.d.). Crucial to the building of a story world is the existence of characters, space, and time, and this story world is created by harmful people in a hostile place

in a continuous manner (Cooley, 1994, p. 68). The story world displays a barbaric and cold relationship between two unnamed characters. The poetic persona is held captive, and the characters of this text world are an unfriendly *me* and a penetrative *you*. The actions in the poem are executed in a defensive-aggressive fashion, the narrating persona is agonizing. Atwood depicts a relation empty from prospect yet filled with anguish. This is a relationship between a male approaching despite the female's cryptic rejection. The poem starts with a simile depicting a relation between two lovers who *fit* together. It then moves to a domestic image of sewing, which is rather submissive and feminine. The quatrain then moves with deceiving ease to the masculine image of fishing. Finally, it concludes with a bloody, violent scene of impalement. Moreover, the title of the quatrain is deictic, as it uses many deictic expressions, and can give readers a hint to what they are about to read.

### **DST and containment in *You fit into me***

In *You Fit into Me*, the narrating persona *is* the deictic center. This poem makes use of the unmarked case, which is the speaker's location in the time of the utterance in relation to her origo. The poem is built on a simile that offers indexical insights into the story world in which the characters exist. The poem starts with the deictic expression *you*; a second person pronoun. Naturally, this *you* is addressed by an I (*me*), this allows for the building of a story world that reveals clues about the narrating persona and her addressee. Both deictic expressions are person pronouns indicating proximity, unlike other pronouns like *s/he*, *it*, and *they*. The use of the first person is crucial; "Unlike everyday interaction, then, where the first person pronoun *I* typically refers to the person speaking, the use of a first person in a

narrative both identifies the narrator and also provides a perspective for the reader to enter the text world" (Jeffries, 2008, p. 71). Hence, the use of the first person in this poem allows the reader to make a shift from the discourse world more easily, as it is "possible that reading a poem (rather than other genres) increases the likelihood of readers reading from the same point of view as a first person narrator" (Jeffries, 2008, p.73). First-person narration offers a subjective representation of a person who colors the story with her view of the current situation and her attitudes and beliefs in general. Furthermore, using the pronoun *I* further dramatizes the emotional situation, causing its effects to be heightened. The speaking persona builds a world made of direct speech; this world is also occupied by a quiet addressee.

Using first-person narration can heighten readers' involvement with the text. This compels the reader to make a deictic shift into the origo of the narrator, in case the narrator is a character within the plot or is the voice of the author (Jeffries, 2008). Hence, first person narrative is entirely regulated and manipulated by the narrator, and they imitate camera movements as controlled by one character (Zubin & Hewitt, 1995, p. 133). Thus, this manipulation of the first person narrator still causes the reader to identify more with the first person rather than other types of narration (Jeffries, 2008). When a person describes him or herself in a narrative, the hearer finds it more intuitive to *project awareness* to the narrator's deictic center and appreciate and make sense of the text from their point of view (McIntyre, 2006). Since readers connect with images drawn from direct speech more than indirect speech, DS causes readers to shift their origo and engage more in the story world (Yao et al., 2011). Atwood utilizes direct speech to compel readers to delve more into the persona's struggles and channel them as their own. Hence, deixis here do their job as to direct the

audience's attention from their place and time to make them align with the persona's. In this poem, the use of the object pronoun *me* establishes a situation of direct address that does the speaking and a silent *you* that does not contribute to the conversation but still does the action of the fitting because it is used as the subject pronoun. Atwood makes use of the generalized second-person pronoun, which "superficially hints at an addressee, whose referent could be the reader" (Jeffries, 2008, p. 78). Her use of *you* is clearly focusing on one addressee within the story world, but it can also address men in general.

Readers shift their origo into the poem using another deictic element that is temporal in nature. The single temporal deictic expression in the poem, the simple present in *fit*, expresses a proximal relation. This relation is a continuous or a timeless one, indicating that *you* (the silent addressee) always does this action of fitting into the narrating persona. The space and time indicate continuity, which reveals that this is the norm with using the present simple that indicates an action taking place now and happening regularly and with repetition. This solely proximal use of temporal deixis indicates an absolute emphasis on the direct environment. It suggests that the persona in this poem is completely absorbed and haunted by this experience. The use of the present emphasizes a repeated action and consequently feeling, which intensifies the feeling of entrapment. As in the case of this poem, Atwood uses the historical present to highlight that this story world is a constant (Allan, 2018). Atwood's use of the verb *fit* and the preposition *into* indicates that the speaker is a female speaking to a male addressee, which could be inferred as part of the general understanding of female and male anatomy. Female readers can easily shift their origo into that of the narrating persona's. This could reflect women's condition in

society as a whole; although this is a private matter between a female and her intimate partner, still this could be reflected on or could reflect the whole society. It could be seen that women include or envelope men and that females offer males a comfortable place to be accepted and to fit in. This reading can differ from the response of the male audience. While women have shifted into an environment characterized by "invasion, displacement, evolution and reversion" (Foster, 1988, p. 5-6), men have perceived the poem differently, and shifted into "a tight and secure" place. Male readers have indicated that the simile of mating is successful and not intrusive in this poem (Simmons, 1993, p. 259). This different deictic shift between the two sexes results in different interpretation and experience.

The verb *fit* has a deictic nature, as it moves from the direction of the addressee to the direction of the speaker in this poem. The choice of the verb *fit* is exceptional because it suits the romantic beginning so well. The verb *fit* is defined as something that is the *right size*. Thus, the reader shifts his or her origo into what seems to be an affectionate place, in which someone *fits* perfectly into someone. This could be a fetal fitting into a mother's womb, or a lover fitting into his partner. This loving scene might make the reader welcome a shift or an involvement into this story world, as it seems affectionate and comfortable. This could evoke familiar meanings, feelings, and scenes within readers, scenes like intimacy and lovemaking. Times in which a man and a woman become one, with the woman's body accommodating the man's body perfectly, which in turn fits entirely. This conjures feelings of responsiveness and causes a welcome shift of the reader's origo into that scene of fitting that takes place because of a unison between these two people. The shift transports the reader from the first character *you* (contained) to the second character *me*

(container), through a path or an act (fitting). The act of fitting is the anchoring point here, this anchor is the phallus. This invokes the schema of containment, which depicts the female as a container that contains the male as indicated using the preposition *into*. She contains him or his body because he is *located within* her (Johnson, 1990, p. 21). The containment starts in this first line and continues to the coming lines as well albeit differently. Viewpoint-related factors (like using *into*) are also used deictically, as they relate the act of fitting to the point of view of the narrating persona. This adds directional information of an action that moves towards the narrator's deictic center, and by extension to the reader's *origo* as a result of a deictic shift into this story world.

The speaker's here and now are the unmarked deictic center, it is normal that he always fits into her. This helps in building this story world's location, it is the inside of a woman. This also shows that the verb *fits into* denotes a direct, close relation, in which the woman is the direction or the target of the verb (Cairns, 1991). Deixis attracts and shifts the attention to the speaker or narrator's *origo* (Talmy, 2000). This shift in perspective does not only describe that of the persona alone, but also describes the shift in the readers' perspective. This causes an immersion, which includes a *recentering* including a deictic center that shifts from an outsider perspective into the inside of a scene or a story. This leads to the deictic shift of both the *narrator* and the *narratee*. The reader can then experience the plot as it happens to the characters in the story world as an engaged watcher. This causes a merge between the time and place in which the reader exists with those of the characters. The narrating persona positions herself as the one who does all the thinking, the one who is mentally and emotionally in charge, even if she is passive in the physical world. She defines the male addressee intellectually.

The second line in the quatrain includes containment as well, but instead of a person fitting into another in what seems to be an act of love, the simile shifts the reader from the intimate scene into a domestic space. This image is feminine, as it tackles the activity of sewing. This seems like a very simple and easy image to reconcile with, moving effortlessly from the act of lovemaking to the act of fastening clothing items. Here, Atwood uses clasps or hooks that can be also used for security, both physical and emotional security that an article of clothing can provide (Macpherson, 2010). Since this image comes from domestic chores, clothing, and sewing, it reinforces the idea that this world belongs to a female rather than a male character. The female audience relate better to the objects *hook* and *eye*, "being clothing fasteners that they employ every day, such as the hook and eye of bras that close in the back or the delicate fasteners around the neck of some dresses and blouses" (Simmons, 1993, p. 259). However, not all men can conclude this (Simmons, 1993). Hence, the immersion of men on the one hand, and women on the other is bound to be different. Women readers will instantly shift into this familiar world based on their prior knowledge of clothing. However, the male audience might not be shifted to the same place. This might cause less immersion if they do not understand the concept itself and lack prior knowledge of it. Thus, the hook is a differently emotionally charged object, it evokes a tight fastening, but different feeling for female readers from their male peers. The repetition of the preposition *into* is also indicative of an intrusive act that starts the poem and continues in the second line and the new simile it presents. This emphasizes the persona's character as a recipient, yet it still underscores that she is the recipient of a loving, secure act, so far.

The third line of the poem takes the simile into a different stage. It presents the

image of fishing, which is more of male activity. This masculine interest foretells a graphically violent image, suggesting death and destruction (Macpherson, 2010). Therefore, by specifying the type of hook, a kind of foreshadowing takes place. This line invites readers to revisit their initial idea of love and fitting in comfortably and intimately and prepare for a shift to a different place, in a world where the objects are related to fishing rather than a room and a bed (in the first line) and a clothing article (hooks for clothing in the second line). This mentioning of a fishhook involves the theme of fishing and implicitly suggests a sea. The sea is a vast, mysterious, and unpredictable space, this can foreshadow a coming troubling incident. For the first time, the audience may sense trouble. This foregrounding invites readers to shift their deictic center into the unknown; they are asked to *reconstruct* spatiotemporal relations that constitute a troubling foregrounding. This helps readers, using their prior knowledge, to assemble an idea about the new story world (Miall & Kuiken, 2000), this new space seems ominous and disruptive.

Quatrains are distinguished for their shocking ending, and this quatrain by Atwood adheres to the same rule. The last line of the poem creates a violent, almost sickening surprise. Atwood coats objects in this line of the poem with unfamiliarity. The familiar notion of an eye and a hook is a usual entity in clothing, they are two small objects useful in keeping clothes in place. Both the eye and the hook are metal (they fit; they belong together). The unfamiliar aspect here is the introduction of the two words: fish and human. An analysis of the components of these words makes the image very scary and gruesome. A fish hook is a tool to catch fish that can either *impale* the fish or *snag* its body (*What Does Fish Hook Mean?*, n.d.). Here, Atwood creates a world of bizarre objects and locations. This is similar to Atwood's usual

menacing spaces, like “reflective surfaces — mirrors, eyes, glass, photographs” (Foster, 1988, p. 13). It is clearly disturbing to use the eye as the designated space/location for this story world. This world made of a woman's eye is exposed to an imminent strike (Grace & Weir, 1983). Hence, in this story world an object is a location, as Atwood uses exceptional places to locate her characters, in this poem she uses the *human body* (Foster, 1988), which heightens the intensity of this line and shifts readers into a place of fatal hostility.

Readers thus face the impossible task of shifting their center into that of the persona's, in which she is receiving a fishhook into her open eye, which is both a gruesome task and a scenario they would not want to shift to even if they are invested. The sudden change from a hook related to clothing to a fishhook leaves the reader in shock. Moreover, when the eye changes from a metal one into a real, human eye that belongs to a woman being attacked with a fishhook, the readers' schema is challenged. They now must revisit their prior inferences they made based on the world building elements offered to them before. This also puts the reader into a rather final permanent (not temporary) shift, it does not feel that there is a point of return when the eye is poked by a fishhook moving and settling (as the verb fit into suggests) into her open eye. This also evokes the notion of containment as image schema suggests, in which a hook goes into an eye and is contained by it. This containment image schema based on *bodily experience* invites readers to activate their prior *sensorimotor experience* (Johnson, 1990), which makes the reader engage and shift into this impossibly gruesome situation. This evokes a feeling of pain; an image and a memory of a severe bleeding needs to be evoked to understand or shift into the persona's new deictic center.



Thus, this ends the poem with an image that compares an intimate relationship between a man and a woman with a battleground. It invites the reader to make sense of “sexual intercourse as a painful experience” (Howells, 2006, p. 49). The beginning of the quatrain is now contested, and its positive effects have vanished. Atwood invited her female readers to shift into a place of hostility and dread, to see the action of fitting as an intolerable act. The poem’s objects are a phallus in the shape of a hook and a vagina in the shape of an eye (Simmons, 1993) shifts the reader to see a hostile environment created by belligerent objects. This is clearly an invitation to revisit the shifts previously made by readers to differently understand the poem and as a result their immersion.

## Conclusion

In only four lines and sixteen words, Atwood transfers her readers into a story world consisting of a complex relationship between a female narrating persona and a male silent addressee. Hence, this quatrain offers the perspective of a female persona to deliver her view of the relationship. The characters in this story world alternate between being equals, fitting into each other, and being victims of one another. Atwood negotiates the power dynamics between the two lovers, shifting between an intimate love scene, clothing items, fishing gears, and finally a gruesome scene of impalement. DST postulates that readers assume the spatial, temporal, social coordinates of the deictic fields unrelated to themselves in the real world to be reanchored within the story world in which the characters exist. Making this deictic shift from the real world to a story world results in increased involvement in narrative, in which readers experience a relation between the couple vicariously. While deixis anchor discourse in time and place, readers of this poem do not have this

anchoring, I argue. Readers find themselves moving with high speed from one line to the next, which creates many different worlds with different objects and locations. These sudden changes in images does not contribute to anchoring, it calls for quick shifts and reanchoring.

The reader is effectively shifted between a simile in the first two lines to a shocking metaphor unfolding in the last two. This, this poem is a journey that starts with love making and ending with the horrific act of eye poking. The identical phonological manifestation of the pronoun *I* and the word *eye* results in homonymy, yet the connotation is entirely unrelated. This homonymy causes a confusion in the woman’s stance; it may propose that she is welcoming this violence, thus turning the poem into a sadistic depiction of the relationship. The reader is transferred or shifted between a vulnerable scene of love making to a brutal scene of a fishhook penetrating an eye. Making love and poking an eye create a juxtaposition. This juxtaposition clarifies that while the agony exists, the relationship is still going on. While the speaking persona can see the damage inflicted on her, she still keeps her eyes wide open. With this poem, Atwood examines her role as a woman as well as scrutinizing the roles men force women in general to occupy. These distinct roles laid out by men for women to play might allow for a difference in reception.

As previously mentioned, the reaction to this poem differs between men and women. However, this gruesome scene may cause both to avoid identification with the characters as one of them is severely punishing and the other suffers immensely. Readers here are conflicted between loving and hating the characters and the spaces they occupy. For women, the poem is soaked in daily experiences. It is related to their clothes, knitting, sex life, abuse they may face in relations with their significant others, etc. It

is normal for women to feel trapped by men and so the shift can be especially intense for them. However, men will shift differently because their lives and experiences do not include these acts or their implications. They must change their perspective to shift successfully into the persona's origo. Hence, the aim of this paper has been to discuss how a female reader's deictic shift can differ from that of a male's, and how it can reflect the society as a whole. Atwood requires female readers to be immersed with her in this world of oppression caused by men. On the other hand, she requires a sense of alienation from her male readers, the use of deictic *me* to represent herself and by extension women, and the use of *you* to depict the persona's oppressing male partner and all males by extension is indicative of that. While the narrating persona uses pronouns that express proximity like *me* and *you*, still she puts a distance in terms of context. She puts her addressee in a position in which he is scolded. Her addressee might be doing the action, yet intellectually she is superior because she is the one expressing her thoughts and narrating their love story, and he is kept in silence.

It can be argued that this poem changes readers' sense of self by forcing a shift into the center of the action, of making love, and then shift to the eye impaling. The reader responds differently from one shift to the next, and as argued before the response can differ from female to male audience,

thus, causing a shift in self-perception. This is a result of readers' shift from their origo to intimately experience fitting as well as impaling. Their experience of sex and impaling is based on their prior knowledge of the world. This shift is suitable for the transportation metaphor, which shows that deictic shifts made by readers are equivalent to traveling into a text. The images provided by the poem, whether images of sex or impaling, facilitate the deictic shift as well as readers' immersion. This anchoring via deixis causes a connection to an extralinguistic reality, to an intense, dense, emotionally charged atmosphere. It also causes far-reaching poetic consequences and increases the immersion. This helps in making the text experiential and realistic, enhancing the experience of reading and interpreting the text. Atwood crafts this poem to deictically thrust her readers into an experiential paradox. The poem challenges and can change what readers hold to be true about the real world. This schema refreshment challenges the real-world assumption about an intimate relation between a man and a woman. The woman lacks agency, and this triggers the readers' empathy with the persona, who is a containment of pain. In conclusion, this poem can leave the audience quite distressed, as Atwood offers enough information and world-building element to cause the reader to shift into the origo of the persona and identify with her and feel her pain.

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