

Deixis Used in Miley Cyrus's Song Lyrics "Angels Like You"

Tiara Nurwanti¹⁾, Endang Susilowati²⁾

ABSTRACT

Deixis is an important part of linguistics and pragmatics, functioning to interpret utterances in context. This study aims to examine the types of deixis used in the lyrics of Miley Cyrus's most famous song at the time, "Angles like you". This study employs a descriptive qualitative method. The data are derived from the lyrics of the song. The data are based on the taxonomy of deixis types by Yule (1996). The results reveal that there are four categories of deixis found in this study, namely person deixis, time deixis, and place deixis. Meanwhile, none of the discourse deixis is used. Person deixis is the most commonly used deixis, followed by temporal deixis, spatial deixis, and social deixis. Finally, it is expected that this study may facilitate readers to more easily understand the use of deixis in communication.

Keywords: pragmatics, deixis, song lyrics

Correspondent Authors;

- 1) Student of Universitas An Nuur, tiaragarvita05@gmail.com
- 2) Lecturer of Universitas An Nuur, endangsusilowati@unan.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

People around the world communicate in a variety of methods, including spoken language, written language, and signs. Everyone has the ability to express themselves via music, poetry, or theater. Songs are frequently perceived as a reflection of composers' or singers' feelings or expressions.

People like employing music in their daily lives and activities for a variety of reasons, depending on the kind of music, songs may both elevate your spirits and shift your mood. Song writers frequently create songs based on thoughts, feelings, or sometimes true experiences which are then modified into short phrases that listeners can understand. That is how a writer connects with listeners, notably through the songs

he/she creates. The writer wishes to immerse listeners in circumstances or contexts depicting pleasure, grief, jealousy, love, and peace, which are formed from a song lyric as a medium for indirectly connecting with many people. As an example, expressing the feeling through the song "Angels Like You".

This research focuses on the song lyrics, especially in Miley Cyrus's album, since it will be more intriguing to analyze something that has grown too near to human existence, such as music. Song lyrics might be used as part of the discourse. In simple terms, Deixis is a branch of pragmatics that studies the expression or context in a sentence (Yule, 1996). There are five types of deixis, namely person deixis, spatial deixis, temporal deixis, social deixis, and discourse deixis. These five types of deixis depend on

the interpretation of the communication participants who are in the same context. Therefore, this study focuses on the types of deixis proposed by Yule (1996).

Studies on Deixis

Many studies have been undertaken by researchers related to the use of deixis in song lyrics. Some are cited in the report such as Hidayah (2019), Sitorus (2019), Wulandari (2022), Manalu et al. (2022), and Aryawan (2022).

Hidayah (2013) examined the songs lyric of *Back to You* and found that person deixis was dominantly used, followed by time deixis (2 data) and place deixis (1 data). Meanwhile, none of the discourse deixis and social deixis is used.

By the same token Sitorus (2019) examined the song's lyric of *You Are the Reason* and found that person deixis was dominantly used, followed by place deixis (13 data) and time deixis (8 data). Meanwhile, none of the discourse deixis and social deixis is used.

Equivalently, Wulandari (2022) investigated the song's lyric *To the Bone* and discovered that person deixis was dominantly utilized, followed by spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. Meanwhile, neither discourse deixis nor social deixis were employed.

Similarly, Manalu et al (2022) examined the songs lyric of *song lyrics of Justin Bieber* and found that person deixis

was commonly used, followed by time deixis and place deixis. Meanwhile, neither discourse deixis nor social deixis were used.

Likewise, Aryawan et al (2022) investigated three song lyrics of BTS and found that personal deixis was dominantly used in song lyrics *Butter*, followed by *Permission to Dance and Dynamite*.

Based on some of the findings above, it can be concluded that the dominating form of deixis used in song lyrics is person deixis, while discourse deixis and social deixis are frequently not employed.

Definitions of Deixis

Deixis is derived from the ancient Greek word *deixis* ("pointing, indicating, reference") and *deikumi* ("I show") which is an essential aspect of linguistics and pragmatics, functioning to understand utterances in context. According to Levinson (1983) in Hanks (2017), deixis is concerned with how language stores or grammaticalizes characteristics of context of utterance or speech event, and hence with how utterance interpretation depends on the context analysis. Likewise, Yule (1996) defines deixis as a form of referring that is tied to the speaker's context, with the most basic distinction between deictic expressions being 'near speaker' versus 'away from speaker'.

Based on those definitions, it can be stated that deixis is a clear reference to persons, places, and times where the relationship between language and context is

represented in the structure of the language itself. It refers to the components that have meaning from the situation, such as the speaker, the pronoun, the time, and the location where it is used.

Types of Deixis

Deixis plays a significant role in pragmatics. It helps people to interpret the meaning of certain sentences based on the context. This research focuses on studying deixis in the lyrics of the song *Angles like you*. In this study, we found many song lyrics with deictic words and referent meanings in them. Therefore, research on the meaning of deixis in song lyrics becomes more interesting to study.

Yule (1996) proposes five types of deixis, namely, spatial deixis, persona deixis, time deixis and social deixis, and discourse deixis, as follows Description:

1) Person Deixis

Person deixis is divided into three main sections, which are represented by the first person (I), second person (you), and third person (he, she, that). Person deixis concerns people who are directly involved in an utterance, for example, the speaker and the addressee, persons who are not directly engaged, such as those who hear the utterances but do not directly say the utterances, and those referenced in the utterances. Person deixis is generally expressed by the following constituents:

a) First-person (I/We).

The first-person deixis is a reference that refers to the speaker or both speaker and referent grouped with the speaker, expressed in singular pronouns (I, me, myself, mine) and plural pronouns (we, us, ourselves, our, ours).

b) Second person (You).

The second person deixis is a deictic reference to the addressee, such as 'you', 'yourself', 'yourselves', 'your', and 'yours'.

c) Third person (He, She, It, They).

Third-person deixis is a deictic reference to a referent(s) that are not identified as the speaker or addressee and generally indicate the gender that the utterance refers to, such as 'he', 'she', 'they', 'him', 'himself', 'her', and 'herself'.

2) Spatial Deixis

Yule, (1996) describes spatial deixis as the aspect of deixis that refers to the locations in space of the communication act participants; it is that part of spatial semantics which takes the bodies of the communication act participants as significant reference objects for spatial specification.

According to Cruse (2000, as cited in Los (2014), spatial or place deixis is commonly expressed through adverbs of location such as 'here' and 'there' and indicators or determinants such as 'this' and 'that'. English has a spatial deictic system, with two terms, usually labeled proximal and distal. The term proximal here is used to

imply the area relatively close to the speaker, while *distal* is employed to imply the area relatively far from the speaker. Adverbs of indicating location or place are ‘*here*’ and ‘*there*’, while indicator pronouns are ‘*this*’ and ‘*that*’. The words ‘*that*’ and ‘*there*’ indicate individuals or objects far from the recipients.

This and *here* (visible).

That and *there* (invisible).

For example:

1. The cinema in *this* mall is on the 3rd floor, so we have to go *there*.

There refers to the 3rd floor.

2. Today was going to be a concert at the stadium, so they were lining up *here* since early morning.

Here refers to the stadium.

3) Temporal Deixis

Temporal deixis is also known as time deixis. Temporal deixis used the moments of speech as a reference point to pinpoint points or intervals on the time deixis. Temporal deixis refers to the speaker’s point of view on the past, present, and future. This sort of deixis is used linguistically in temporal adverbs (now, tomorrow, then) and in verb forms.

For example:

A: "Are you going to Bali *today*?"

B: "No, I can't go today. *Now* I have to finish my work"

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yesterday?"

B: "Yes. You know that".

4) Social Deixis

Social deixis relates to how sentences reflect, produce, or are impacted by the social environment in which they are spoken. Relational social deixis has deixis of pronouns, family, nicknames, and intimate names or address terms (for example *my dear*, *my love*) whereas absolute social deixis has one type of deixis word called title, but titles are divided into two types, namely high absolute social deixis (for example *my King*, *your Honor*) and low absolute social deixis (for example *your slaves*).

5) Discourse Deixis

Discourse deixis is about using words in a way that relates to something in the discourse. In English, some deictic expressions include in discourse deixis, such as: ‘*but*’, ‘*therefore*’, ‘*in conclusion*’, ‘*to the contrary*’, ‘*still*’, ‘*however*’, ‘*anyway*’, ‘*well*’, ‘*besides*’, ‘*actually*’, ‘*all in all*’, ‘*so*’, ‘*after all*’, etc.

For example:

1. I bet you haven’t heard *this* story.

2. He is not the owner of *this* book.

3. Anne had an appointment with Morgan at this cafe, *therefore* she came to see him.

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research method. A descriptive qualitative design is ideal as it is fundamentally Interpretive Creswell (2016). The data of this study were taken from the lyrics of Miley Cyrus' song entitled "Angles Like You". Researchers used two steps in data collection. First, the listening technique by listening to the song several times, then the researcher used the note-taking technique to find out the types of deixis using data cards that had been prepared beforehand. In analyzing the data, the taxonomy of deixis types proposed by Yule (1996) was used by following several steps. First, transcribing the lyrics of the song. Secondly, examining the lyrics containing the deictic expression. And finally, classifying and tabulating the deixis into person deixis, spatial deixis, temporal deixis, and social deixis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher found that the lyrics tend to use types of deixis such as person deixis, temporal deixis, spatial deixis, and social deixis in the lyrics of the song *Angles like you*. This study corroborates to the previous studies that person deixis is commonly used and discourse deixis is not frequently employed in song lyrics. The types of deixis used in this study vary and have different references and meanings, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Deixis used in the song lyrics “Angles like you”

No	Deixis Types	Quantity	Percentage
1	Person deixis	67	77,90%
2	Spatial deixis	1	1,16%
3	Temporal deixis	10	11,62%
4	Social deixis	8	9,30%
	Total	86	99,98%

Table 1 reveals that the types of deixis found in the lyrics of the song "Angles like You" are the most frequently used deixis is the personal deixis with the number of occurrences of 67 data (77.90%), followed by time deixis (10 times or 11.62%), followed by place deixis (1 times or 1.16%), and followed by social deixis (8 times or 9.30%). In this study, the most dominant is personal deixis with a total of 67 data (77.90%). The realization of deixis in song lyrics “Angles like you”:

1) Person Deixis

In Table 1, it can be seen that the number of person deixis is 67. It is expressed in the following lyrics.

“I know that you're wrong for me”
“Gonna wish we never met on the day I
leave”

“I brought you down to your knees”
“cause they say that misery loves company”

Person deixis is utilized by lyricists as ‘I’ within the to begin-with person singular (subjective), ‘me’ as the first person (objective), and ‘you’ as the moment person

singular. From the lyrics over it can be seen that the songwriter employs the deictic expression 'I' for the songwriter and 'you' for the listener. 'Your' is a deictic expression as a possessive pronoun. The Author's Song moreover employs the first-person plural pronoun 'we' which compares the speaker with the listener.

2) Spatial Deixis

From the data, it was found that 1 song lyric contained a type of deixis, namely spatial deixis.

"Flowers in hand, waiting for me"

(Source: Angels like you lyrics)

The type of deixis used by songwriters is spatial deixis. From the tabulated data above, the writer uses the spatial deixis 'in hand' including whereabouts or position.

3) Temporal Deixis

Overall, the temporal deixis found amounted to 10 data on the lyrics of the song "Angels like you". Based on these data the temporal deixis can be taken from several samples as follows:

"Before you let go, just one more time"

(Source: Angels like you lyrics)

The word 'before' refers to the speaker's time in the second person. Therefore, the meaning of the word 'before' is shown when the speech takes place.

"Gonna wish we never met on the day I leave"

(Source: Angels like you lyrics)

In the lyrics of the song, the word 'the day' relates to the day the singer said that. But the lyrics do not explain clearly when the story takes place (on what day). The meaning of that piece of lyrics is that the speaker is feeling sad today and does not know how to express it.

4) Social Deixis

Overall, the time deixis found is 8 times in the lyrics of the song "Angels like you". Based on these data social deixis can be described as follows:

"Won't call me by name, only 'baby'"

(Source: Angels like you lyrics)

The songwriter uses the social deixis 'baby' to indicate intimate names or address terms.

To sum up, the dominant type of deixis in the lyrics of the song Angel Like You is person deixis because it involves person deixis, the writer wants listeners to bring it into a specific situation or context that describes joy, sadness, envy, love, and peace created from song lyrics as a medium for communicating directly. indirectly with many people using hints from Deixis.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Miley Cyrus's song "Angels Like You" has four forms of deixis: person deixis (77.90%), spatial deixis (1.16%), temporal deixis (11.62%), and social deixis (9.30%). Person

deixis accounts for the majority of the song, implying that the predominate form of deixis is person deixis. Meanwhile, none of discourse deixis is implied. Eventually, the findings of this study may facilitate readers to more easily understand the use of deixis in communication.

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