DEIXIS ON THE SONG LYRICS OF FOLKLORE ALBUM BY TAYLOR SWIFT: A PRAGMATIC STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with English Deixis on the song lyrics of *Folklore* album by Taylor Swift. Four folklore songs in the album are discussed: *Cardigan, Exile, August and Betty*. The objectives are two-folds: (1) describing the types of deixis applied in the song lyrics of folklore album and (2) analyzing pragmatically the reference meanings of deictic words in these selected songs of *Folklore*. This study is qualitatively descriptive in its method. Three steps are taken in the data collection: (a) listening to the selected songs, (b) quoting the detailed information word by word, and (c) coding the deictic expressions into types of deixis. The collected data are then analyzed into Levinson's five types of deixis and reference meanings of deictic words in pragmatic contexts. The result shows that only two types of deixis (person and discourse) out of five in Levinson's have distributed well and the person deixis is the most used in the songs. In contrast, three types of deixis have been unequally dispersed (time, place and social). It is clear, the use of deixis allows contexts to play a part in comprehending the content of the songs and contributes to the aesthetic side of literary form. It also improves some unusual values on how song writer portrays the story lines and the literary devices. Pragmatically, the four selected songs of *Folklore* have led to a description of reference meanings of deictic words as well.

Keywords: deixis, reference, context, pragmatics

INTRODUCTION

Crystal (1994:212) defines a language as "the systematic, conventional use of sounds, signs, or written symbols in a human society for communication and self expression." The existence of language is unavoidable for human needs across the world. As a means of communication, the message of the language should be understandable when

communication process takes place.

Communication is considered successful when the involved participants obtain the same or shared information as the way it is intended. The way of information being encoded can be distinguished into two types of communication: (a) direct and (b) indirect ones. The first tends to be the message in the obvious way, while the second is likely to utter its message implicitly. The example of the indirect communication in the field of art, literary work such as song lyrics. It conveys its substance through the written lyrics to be understood by the listeners.

The song lyrics vary in its textual meanings. Listeners are stimulated to gain different interpretations due to the existing context through the lyrics. It is therefore, the listeners must learn to know the two contexts of comprehension: (a) the meaning of lyrics in literal term, and (b) the intended meaning of the song writer in the contextual term. Pragmatics, the study to obtain informationof what speakers' mean, serves this (Levinson 1983; Yule 1996). In this pragmatic context, deixis is an area of importance for analysis.

According to Crystal (1994:96), "deixes is a grammatical category involving direct reference to the characteristics of the situation where an utterance takes place. The meaning of a deictic utterance is thus relative to the situation in which it is used." He exemplifies that the interpretation of the pronouns *I* and *you* varies, depending on who is doing the talking and who is being addressed. Further Yule (1996) adds that deixes is related to the contexts of utterance. It can be achieved by interpreting location, identifying person, objects, events or topics in relation to certain space and times. The meaning of utterance can be seen obviously when the listener or audience perceives the information of who, where, and when the utterance is being informed (see also Crystal 1994).

Research on deixis has achieved a wide attention across the world. Some of them are Ali, Y (2012), Wati, R.D (2014), Suciani (2016) and Sutarman & Hanafi (2020). In his study on *A Person Deixes Analysis of Song Lyrics in Maher Zain's Album*, Ali (2012) pragmatically examines person deixes on the bases of Alan Cruse's theory. He also describes the reference meanings of person deixes on the song lyric in the same album *Thank You*. On the other hand, Wati (2014) who is semantically interested in types of deixis by John L Saeed's theory, only discovers three types of deixes in *Taylor Swift's Red Album:* person, spatial and temporal deixis.

Suciani (2016) concerns with *A Deictic System in Rean Dialect Spoken in Boyotan Sub-Village of North Lombok.* Using Fillmore's theory (1971), she investigates deixes on person, spatial, temporal, discourse and social. She employs the theories of Diessel (1999), Ingram (1971), Gundel, Heiberg & Zacharski (1993) and Mahyuni (2006). Her research method is qualitatively descriptive. The research elaborates the semantic features and pragmatic functions of each utterance with deixes. She concludes that learning deixes can provide better comprehension of pragmatic knowledge and will assist people to discover appropriate interpretation from each utterance.

The Syntactic-Semantic Analyses of Sasak Demonstrative in Lombok was conducted by Sutarman & Hanafi (2020). The focus is on demonstratives of six dialectal classifications of Sasak language. The result indicates that Sasak and English demonstratives are almost identical in syntactic categories. In contrast, they are completely different in their semantic distinctions.

This paper reports on *English Deixis on the song lyrics of Folklore album by Taylor Swift.* Four selected songs in the *Folklore* album are discussed: *Cardigan, Exile, August* and *Betty.*

Two research questions are presented:

(1) What types of deixes are applied in the song lyrics of *Folklore* album by

Taylor Swift?

(2) What are the reference meanings of deixes used in *Folklore* album by Taylor Swift?

The objectives of the study are as follows:

(1) Describing the types of deixis applied in the song lyrics of *Folklore* album and

(2) Analyzing pragmatically the reference meanings of deictic words in these selected songs of *Folklore.*

RESEARCH METHODS

This study applies descriptive qualitative method (Creswell 1998:21). A descriptive method is chosen for describing the data based on classification of selected deictic words in song lyrics from Levinson's theory is followed by its interpretation of pragmatic function. This research is classified as descriptive qualitative research which can be shown as the way of generalizing data in selected song lyrics of *Folklore* album by Taylor Swift. The method to collect the data is documentation analysis from the written words in song lyrics of Taylor swift's album *Folklore* to be the main data. There are four songs from this album chosen as the subject of this research, for instance *Cardigan, Exile, August,* and *Betty.* Song lyrics are used by the researcher to find types of deixis and their reference meaning of deixis in the selected songs of *Folklore* album.

This study is qualitatively descriptive in its method. Three steps are taken in the data collection: (a) listening to the selected songs, (b) quoting the detailed information word by word, and (c) coding the deictic expressions into types of deixis based on Levinson's theory. The collected data are then analyzed into Levinson's five types of deixis such as Person Deixis, Place Deixis, Time Deixis, Discourse Deixis and Social Deixis, followed by the reference meanings of deictic words in pragmatic contexts.

The result of pragmatic analysis will be descriptively presented in five tables based on the deixis analysis. Based on the selected songs, each lyric is selected to discover words in song lyrics consisted of deixis. The words are classified according to deixis category based on Levinson's theory. This study uses five tables based on the five types of deixis. Moreover, the data is described to provide description and interpretation of reference meaning in deictic expressions determined according to Levinson's theory. The elaboration of data from this study can be seen further in the finding and discussion. The last step is to conclude the results from this study so the research questions are expected to be answered.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Referring to the research questions (see Research Methods), the finding of the study is described in five Tables (Tables 1 - 5) and then it is followed by the description of discussion concerning five types of deixis: person, place, time, social and discourse deixis.

a. Person Deixis

Person deixis in the selected songs of *Folklore* album is categorized into three types, namely first person deixis, second person deixis, and third person deixis. Based on the observation of deictic words in the selected song lyrics of *Folklore* album, it shows that the most frequent types of deixis that appear is person deixis. It is related to its role in every song to present the point of view of lyrical characters that depict the story line. In the selected songs, first person deixis mostly appears to be the center view of story.

Furthermore, the story of lyrics also relates to other people involved. There are

several deictic words show an addressee, presented by the second person deixis. On the other hand, there are words signify someone outside the story by the expression of third person deixis. The different perspective of characters can be shown by the context traced through classifying deictic words. Person deixis is formulated into three types such as first person deixis (singular and plural), second person deixis (singular and plural), third person deixis (singular and plural). Thus, the distribution of deictic words that are classified into person deixis can be seen through the Table 1 below:

Table 1: Pronoun System in *Folklore* album

No Title	Song	First Person Deixis		Second Person Deixis		Third Person	
		Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1.	*Cardigan*	I, me, my	We	You, your,	-	It	They
2.	*Exile*	I, me, my	we, us	You, your,	-	His, he it	-
3.	*August*	I, me, my, mine	we, us	You, Your	-	It	-
4.	Betty	I, me, my		You, Your,	-	She, him, It	Her,

b. **Place Deixis**

Place deixis in *Folklore* album are found in the form of demonstrative system and adverb of place. The deictic words of place appeared in three selected songs of *Folklore* Album. The words are aimed to provide information about setting of the utterance. It is classified into two types of place deixis which are proximal and distal. Both are classified based on the location of speaker as the center. Proximal deictic word refers to something located near to the speaker, the one who sing a song. Meanwhile, Distal deictic word refers to something located far away from the speaker. Place deixis does not appear in every song lyrics in the four selected songs of *Folklore* album, especially in the song *August.* On the other hand, place deixis appears in the lyrics of other selected songs, entitled *Cardigan, Exile,* and *Betty.* It can be seen further in the Table 2 below:

Table 2: Place deixis in selected songs of *Folklore* album

No	Song Title	Place Deixis
1.	*Cardigan*	This
2.	*Exile*	Here, this
3.	*August*	-
4.	*Betty*	Nowhere, here, this

c. **Time Deixis**

Time deixis are found in all of the selected songs except *Cardigan.* On the other hand, the other songs, namely *Exile, August,* and *Betty* have more than one word that refers to information about time when the utterance uttered. The presence of time deixis is aimed to provide the information of time at the utterance either spoken or written. There are certain deictic words that are provided, not only in once but also more than twice in another song. According to the data that has been gathered from song lyrics, there are certain deictic

words represent similar information of time. It can be seen from three mostly shown words such as "*Summer, August,* and *Now*" which are in three different songs, entitled *Exile, August* and *Betty*. The previous words indicate similar situation happened on the different songs based on the information of time. This phenomenon happened presents the link of context in the certain selected songs. It emphasizes the correlation of similar context between songs according to presence of time deixis used in song lyrics. The time deixis used in selected songs is served in the table below:

Table 3: Time deixis in *Folklore* album

No	Song Title	Time Deixis
1.	*Cardigan*	-
2.	*Exile*	Now, before
3.	*August*	August, summer, then
4.	*Betty*	Summer, now, last, right now, nights

d. **Discourse Deixis**

In *Folklore* album, especially the selected songs interlink the characters made up for the concept. It is stated that discourse deixis is used for rhetorical usage that link one part of songs to another part of song. The reciprocal relationship between utterance and the previous discourse is linked through discourse deixis. The four selected songs require discourse deixis and its function which fits to each song's context. Based on the table of discourse deixis below, there are some classes of demonstrative such as "*this*" and "*those.*" The two demonstrative expressions refer to the portion discourse or the previous portion of discourse. To provide the illustration, it is reflected in the use of discourse deixis below:

Table 4: Discourse Deixis in *Folklore* album

No	Song Title	Discourse Deixis
1.	*Cardigan*	This
2.	*Exile*	Those, this
3.	*August*	Those
4.	*Betty*	Those

e. **Social Deixis**

Based on Levinson's theory, social deixis is distinguished into two types which are relational social deixis and absolute social deixis. Social deixis appear in the four selected songs of *Folklore* Album is provided by preferences of songwriter to tell the status of relationship between participants through deictic words or storyline. It is inferred to the song *August* and *Betty*. Both songs do not have social deixis appearance on their song lyrics. The songwriter is able to present the relationship of characters through deixis, storyline or not to show it at all. Based on the data gathered in *Folklore* Album, the appearance of social deixis can be seen in several words of the selected songs that exist to show the relationship between speaker and addressee. *Cardigan* and *Exile* provide status of social between the participants of speech in the lyrics through words like "*honey, baby* and *father*". The use of social deixis can be seen in the Table 5 below:

Table 5: Social Deixis in *Folklore* album

No	Song Title	Social Deixis
1.	*Cardigan*	Baby, father
2.	*Exile*	Honey
3.	*August*	-
4.	*Betty*	-

f.   Reference meaning from song lyrics of *Folklore* album by Taylor Swift

According to the previous table shown below, the classification of deixis based on the words used also evokes the correlation of meaning due to the existence of character involved in the songs. Reference meaning of deictic words that has been classified in previous is presented   relating to the context of each song as the answer for the second research question. The reference meaning that can be traced in deictic words in this album is exophoric reference (Griffith 2006). From *Folklore* album, it can be seen that the basic knowledge which need to be traced is the perspective of character. So, the context of the song can be built.

The major theme in this album is a teenage love story that filled by common problem in young couple such as a triangle love. There are certain songs held in the same setting but the other linguistic environments build a context that distinguishes the perspective of the song:

Table 6: The Example for Different References Due To Context

A	B
"She said 'James, get in, let's drive'/Those days turned into nights/Slept next to her, but/I dreamt of you all summer long, "	*"Remember when I pulled up and said 'Get in the car'/And then canceled my plans just in case you'd call?"*

There is the same context built in certain songs which specifically provide information of reference. From the Table A, it is stated that there is a perspective of a man who has affair with another girl but he regrets what he has done due to his love to his partner. Meanwhile, lyrics in the Table B shows the same occasion happened from the other's character perspective. It is focused on a girl who has love affair with a guy whose name is James. The deictic word *I* can have different reference due to the context. The Table A refers to the guy as a nominative singular person whereas the right lyrics refers to the girl that used toreferred as she in the left right.

In addition, there is a song entitled *Betty* which shows the confession of guy who has previous love affair with other girl. The whole lyrics in this song is aimed to be delivered to a deictic word *You*. From this written lyrics, the word *you* is dedicated to a girl whose name is being the title of the song itself. The confession of love is sent from a guy to to a girl named Betty. It can be seen from the lyrics "*I dreamt of you all summer long*" in the song Betty which can be inferred that the deictic word *you* is dedicated to the song title itself, Betty. Based on the song lyrics, the new character is revealed and then it serves new perspectives. It is found that there are three characters in the major concept mentioned by the song writer, which are a guy named James, a girl named Betty and the unknown mistress. Each song's context affects the reference meaning and it can be traced more detail in form of further elaboration based on the description each song individually.

The album *Folklore* shows the role of context made by songwriter to distinguish and provide the information of reference meaning between one deictic word in a song to another deictic word in other songs. The context built in each song help the reader to signify the centre of speaker which is correlated to the characters that are created by songwriter so the reference meaning is pragmatically shown from each song.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion can be obtained by the major finding from the data to answer the research questions about types of deixis found in the selected song lyrics of *Folklore* album. Based on the five types of deixis from Levinson theory in this study, the classification of deixis is not appeared in every song. There are several songs which do not have certain types of deixis. For example, place deixis (*August*), time deixis (*Cardigan*), social deixis (*August*).

Furthermore, in the most frequently appeared type of deixis, person deixis which is used to represent characters involved communication through written lyrics. The characters which are referred by each type of person deixis also havereciprocal relationship with context. The characters are built by the context whereas the context is acknowledged by the related highlight from each character. On the other hand, types of deixis such as time deixis, place deixis, discourse deixis can be found in the song lyrics since all of those types also contributes to the comprehension of song lyrics' content.

The reference meaning of each word can be different due to the context occurred in the song. The concept of teenage love triangle emphasizes the context occurred in medium of song. Meanwhile, it is related to the study of deixis which is focused on the clarity of reference by using its concept to point to via language. The different point of view from each character is proven contributing on the context built in which emphasize the phenomenon of deixis exists in written communication, especially song lyrics. Furthermore, it is foundthat the comprehension of song content can be traced with the study of deixis.

SUGGESTION

This study demonstrates the types of deixis based on Levinson's theory inthe selected song lyrics of *Folklore* album. The study on deixis of other languages are also encouraged to open up wider perspectives.

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