

STUDENTS' ABILITIES IN ANALYZING DEIXIS IN COLDPLAY SONG "VIVA LA VIDA"

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the ability of second-grade students at SMAN 1 Kefamenanu to identify and analyze deixis in the lyrics of the popular song "Viva la Vida" by Coldplay. Deixis refers to words whose meanings depend on the context of the speaker, listener, or situation, and in this study, three types of deixis were examined: personal, spatial, and temporal. A quantitative descriptive design with a case study approach was used, focusing on 14 students from grade XI. Data collection methods included written tests, observations, interviews, and documentation of students' work. Students were tasked with identifying examples of personal, spatial, and temporal deixis in song lyrics. The results revealed that personal deixis was the most dominant, with an average score of 72.71%, indicating a strong understanding among students in this category. Temporal deixis followed with an average score of 55.71%, indicating that students were generally able to identify time-related references in the song. In contrast, spatial deixis received the lowest mean score of 41.71%, indicating that students faced difficulties in understanding or identifying spatial references, which may require higher contextual awareness. The findings suggest that although students are proficient in recognizing personal and temporal deixis, more emphasis should be placed on teaching spatial deixis. This study highlights the effectiveness of using popular music, such as "Viva la Vida," in improving students' understanding of the use of deixis and offers insights into how song lyrics and deixis can be integrated into language learning.

Keywords: *Deixis, Personal Deixis, Spatial Deixis, Temporal Deixis.*

Introduction

Deixis is a linguistic term that refers to words or phrases that require contextual information to be fully understood. Deixis, according to Yule (1996) are words such as here and there, this or that, now and then, yesterday, today or tomorrow, as well as pronouns such as you, me, she, he, it, and them. These words of deixis typically rely on the context of the conversation, including the location, time, and the identity of the

speaker and listener. Examples of deictic expressions especially for the three types of deixis include personal deixis like personal pronouns e.g “I,” “you,” “we,” “they” etc. Spatial deixis e.g. “this,” “that,” “here,” and “there.” And the temporal deixis e.g. “now” and “then.” Additionally, deixis is a word whose reference generally moves or changes depending upon the unique circumstance (Liawati et al, 2020; Sasmita, et al, 2018). It is a fundamental aspect of language that plays a crucial role in communication by referring to entities, times, and places within a specific context. It involves words or phrases whose meaning depends on the situational context in which they are used. To conclude, understanding deixis is essential for effective communication and language comprehension (Ainiyah et al, 2019).

Related to the use of deixis in song lyrics, it is a tool for expressing thoughts, feelings, and ideas through words (Fadilah & Resmini, 2021). As a global language, English plays a significant role worldwide and is commonly used in song lyrics, serving as a medium of entertainment and communication. The lyrics often convey meanings that invite listeners to appreciate and connect with the content. Language can express both implicit and explicit emotions and thoughts (Hidayah, 2019), whether directly in conversation or indirectly through various media such as the internet, newspapers, magazines, and others, and it can also be conveyed using entertainment media such as music. Meanwhile, in an educational context, students are not familiar with deixis, which makes students less understanding in identifying the use of deixis in music lyrics. This caused students to be less observant in interpreting things such as lyric and their meaning. For students, understanding English song lyrics is just translating each word into their first language, while lyrics are not only an arrangement of words into sentences but also a representation of the composer’s emotions to describe feelings such as falling in love, sadness, happiness, jealousy, and so on (Nasution, et al, 2018).

Thus, the ability to analyze deixis in song lyrics significantly helps the students to comprehend the meaning and function of words in song lyrics. The use of song lyrics in teaching deixis is relevant because students in this digital era are close and bound with music. Music is a basic human instinct and also a daily basis human activity that is universally inspired by love and experience (Fadilah & Resmini, 2021). Music in the era of globalization, like today, is very diverse and very close to the daily life of everyone wherever and whenever. Various genres are no longer foreign to society; even music is

also a means of communication used to connect through lyrics and rhythm of music and is an important thing in socializing with others. In pragmatics there are many things related to meaning and one of them is deixis which the author uses in this study. Pragmatics deals with the meaning derived from the use of language in certain situations (Purba et al, 2024). Pragmatic studies explain the meaning in which some parts refer to the original context, namely finding the meaning of a word or sentence. In this study, the researcher used the deixis given to students to identify the meaning of Coldplay's song "Viva la Vida".

According to Afiansyah (2023), people will achieve pleasure and experience mood changes by listening to music. Researchers analyze how deixis is used in the lyrics of songs and how its interpretation can vary depending on parts of deixis. Understanding deixis is crucial for effective communication, as it helps speakers and listeners navigate shared meaning within a conversation. Khoirot (2017) added that deixis is a thing or function that refers to something outside of language that has a deictic function. Apart from the objectives mentioned above in this research, it is also hoped that students can understand well how to identify deixis in songs. Music lyrics have been increasingly recognized as valuable resources for language learning due to their engaging and authentic nature. The interpretation of song lyrics is inherently subjective, depending on individual listeners' unique perspectives and experiences (Fadilah & Resmini, 2021; Hidayah, 2019). Using songs in language teaching has been shown to enhance vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, and overall language proficiency. Coldplay's "Viva la Vida" is a popular song that offers rich linguistic features, including deixis, making it suitable for this study.

The student's ability to analyze deixis in song lyrics can be observed through the use of pronouns, adverbs, and other linguistic markers that refer to specific entities or events within the song's narrative. According to Sitorus & Herman (2019), deixis in music can provide insights into how language is used to convey meaning and emotions through different contexts and perspectives. Understanding deixis in music can help us appreciate the artistic value of songs and their lyrics, as well as enhance our ability to interpret and analyze them. In line with this, studying deixis in music can offer valuable insights into how language reflects and shapes our cultural values and beliefs. Comprehension of language goes beyond grasping word meanings and grammatical structures; it entails

considering the contextual usage of the language, as suggested by linguistic comprehension cues (Misa, 2013). In this study, we will examine how deixis is used in the lyrics of "Viva la Vida" by Coldplay to enhance students' comprehension of deixis observations in song lyrics. Through an analysis of the characteristics of deixis within this song, we hope to improve students' ability to write parts containing deixis from the song while identifying corresponding lyrics that demonstrate observed deixis.

Thus, based on the phenomenon above the researcher wants to analyze students' deixis writing abilities using Coldplay's Viva la Vida. Bouk (2016) and Hasanah (2021) concluded that deixis plays a crucial role in understanding the context of utterances, as it links language to the situational context in which it is used". So, it can provide insights into how language is used to convey meaning and emotions in different contexts and perspectives. This study can help students to determine what are the deixis that can be found in music lyrics. Besides that, students can appreciate the artistic value of songs and their lyrics, as well as enhance their ability to interpret and analyze them. This study examines how deixis is used in the lyrics of Coldplay's song "Viva la Vida" and investigates students' ability to identify and understand deixis.

Methods

This study used a descriptive quantitative method to analyze students' performance in identifying various types of deixis, including personal deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis, in the lyrics of the song "Viva la Vida." This method is suitable for this research because the data was in numerical format (Creswell, 2014). Data were collected from students' responses to the identification task, and the results were presented in percentages to reflect students' understanding and proficiency in recognizing deixis. The sample in this research was purposive sampling by intentionally selecting the participant informed about the intent and purpose of the study, as well as their rights as research subjects. Ridwan (2013) stated that a sample is a portion of a population taken through a certain procedure so that it can be used as a representative of the population. The researcher conducted research at SMAN 1 Kefamenanu, and the class to be studied is class XI D, with a total of 14 students consisting of 2 males and 12 females.

The instrument used in this study is a form of test a set of lyrics from the song *Viva la Vida*. The instrument given to students is the text that will be identified before students

analyze deixis. Based on Viahapsari & Parmawati (2020), deixis is divided into 3 types which include person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. Students will be asked to determine three parts of deixis, namely personal deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis in the lyrics of the song being identified. Data analysis focuses on the use of deictic expressions—words or phrases whose meanings depend on the context of the speaker, listener, or the situation. The goal is to examine how these expressions create meaning in the lyrics, often pointing to personal, temporal, or spatial references. Collecting data for this type of analysis involves systematic techniques that are used in quantitative descriptive methods. The scoring rubric is found below.

Table 1. Scoring Rubric for Deixis Writing Analysis

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Satisfactory (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
Identification of Deixis	Accurately identifies and analyzes all types of deixis (person, time, place).	Identifies most types of deixis with minor errors.	Identifies some types of deixis, but with significant errors.	Fails to identify deixis or misunderstands the concept.
Clarity of Expression	Writing is clear, concise, and well-structured; ideas are easy to follow	Mostly clear with minor lapses in structure or clarity	Some unclear passages; organization needs improvement	Writing is confusing and poorly structured
Creativity	Shows exceptional creativity in the analysis; unique insights and perspectives	Demonstrates creativity with some original insights	Limited creativity; analysis is mostly standard	Lacks creativity; analysis is generic and unoriginal
Use of Evidence	Effectively uses textual evidence from "Viva La Vida" to support analysis	Uses evidence, but may not fully integrate it into the analysis	Limited use of evidence; some points unsupported	Little to no evidence used; analysis is weakly supported

Findings and Discussions

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the data and categorized it based on three types of deixis in the lyrics of Coldplay's song "Viva la Vida". The table below presents the results of the evaluation of the use of three types of deixis by 14 students, consisting of personal deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. The results of this evaluation include the scores obtained by each student in each type of deixis, the

percentage indicating their achievement, and the total score calculated based on the assessment of the three types of deixis. The results of the students' deixis analysis can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Students' analysis of Deixis in the Coldplay's "Viva la Vida"

No Students	Types of Deixis						TOTAL Score
	Personal		Spatial		Temporal		
	Score	(%)	Score	(%)	Score	(%)	
1	8	80	6	60	7	70	70
2	8	80	6	60	7	70	70
3	8	80	6	60	7	70	70
4	7	70	5	50	6	60	60
5	8	80	4	40	5	50	50
6	8	80	4	40	5	50	50
7	7	70	4	40	5	50	50
8	7	70	5	50	6	60	60
9	8	80	5	50	6	60	60
10	7	70	4	40	5	50	50
11	7	70	4	40	5	50	50
12	7	70	3	30	5	50	50
13	6	60	3	30	5	50	40
14	6	60	3	30	4	40	40
Total	102	1020	62	584	78	780	770
Average	7,30	72,71	4,42	41,71	5,57	55,71	55

From Table 2 above, it can be seen that the average scores obtained by students in each deixis category show different patterns. Firstly, it showed that most of the students had good performance in the use of personal deixis, with scores ranging from 6 to 8, resulting in an average that indicates the score is 7,30 (72,71%). Secondly, related to the spatial deixis, the results were more varied, with lower scores, ranging from 3 to 6. The average score of spatial deixis was 4,42 (41,71%), which revealed that many students still have difficulty in understanding the use of deixis related to place or location. Lastly, in the types of temporal deixis, most students scored quite well or medium, with scores ranging from 4 to 7, resulting in an average of score 5,57 (55,71%). Although it was not

as high as personal deixis, this result indicated that students are generally able to use words related to time. To conclude, Table 3 below shows the percentage of each of the three types of Deixis that are found in the students' analysis of the three deixis in Coldplay's "Viva la Vida".

Table. 3 Percentage of Students Deixis Analysis

No	Types of Deixis	Score	Percentage (%)
1	Personal Deixis	7,30	72,71
2	Spatial Deixis	4,42	41,71
3	Temporal Deixis	5,57	55,71

Table 3 shows the percentage of evaluation results for three types of deixis tested on 14 students. This table provided an overview of how well students understand and use each type of deixis, calculated based on the percentage of the maximum value that can be achieved. Based on the recorded percentage, personal deixis is the most dominant type of deixis or the one most understood by students, with an average score was 7,30 (72,71% of the total students). Personal deixis is the category that is most mastered by students. This could be because personal deixis is easier to understand in the lyrics of Coldplay's "Viva la Vida". The average score for spatial deixis was 4,42 (41,71% of the total students), which is the lowest value among the three types of deixis. Lower scores for spatial deixis indicate that students have difficulty understanding or using words that refer to space or location. This may be because the use of spatial deixis often requires a more specific contextual understanding of the space or place being discussed. The average score obtained for temporal deixis was 5,57 (55,71% of the total students), which showed better results compared to spatial deixis, but not as good as personal deixis. Although the results are not as high as personal deixis, temporal deixis is quite understood by students. This could be because the use of time is more often found in the lyrics of Coldplay's "Viva la Vida" so students are less helped in determining this temporal deixis.

In this discussion section, the researcher presents the results of the eleventh-grade students' deixis analysis regarding the analysis of three parts of deixis in Coldplay's song "Viva la Vida" to answer the formulation of the research problem, namely students' ability to analyze deixis in Coldplay's song "Viva la Vida". Similarly, a study Pratiwi (2018) found that person deixis, including personal pronouns and possessive adjectives, was the

most frequently used, as students often referenced themselves or others. Time deixis was used to indicate the timing of events, and place deixis appeared less frequently, generally to emphasize locations within their narratives. This study highlights the importance of deixis in helping students create contextually rich narratives. It also shows the students' tendency to rely more heavily on personal deixis.

1) Personal Deixis

Personal deixis is the most dominant type of deixis in this study, with a high score percentage of 7,30 (72,71%). This means that most students can recognize and use personal deixis well. These findings are consistent with a study by Purba et al. (2024) and Fuh (2024) that revealed the reason why personal deixis is most understood is because students were more familiar with personal deixis, commonly known as pronouns. Students' knowledge about pronouns helps them in identifying personal deixis in *Viva la Vida*. The lyrics in that song talk about personal experiences and emotions, so many personal deixis are clearly stated in the lyrics. For instance, when the singer says, "I used to rule the world," they are using first-person deixis to refer to themselves as the ruler of their world. Similarly, when they say, "One minute I held the key." they are using first-person deixis again to indicate that they once had control over something significant. However, person deixis goes beyond just identifying first-person references; it also encompasses second and third-person plural/singular references.

2) Spatial Deixis

Spatial deixis, which relates to words that indicate location or place (such as "here," "there," "above," "below"), has the lowest score percentage at 4,42 (41,71%). This is supported by Khoirot (2017) that found students were struggling more in analyzing spatial deixis. This indicates that students have greater difficulty in understanding and identifying spatial deixis. Spatial deixis is often more difficult to interpret because it requires a deeper understanding of the context or location in the song lyrics, the song's more abstract and symbolic use of space also contributed to the lower score. An example of place deixis can be found in the song "Viva la Vida," where lyrics like "the streets were paved with gold" and "Jerusalem bells a ringing" serve as clear markers of location. In the song "Viva La Vida", we can see an example of the place deixis through phrases such as "The Streets are freighted with Gold" and "Jerusalem Bells a Ringing". This reference

provides contextual information about the song's settings and contributes to the overall meaning of the song.

3) Temporal Deixis

The scoring percentage of temporal deixis was 5,57 (55,71%) which is considered as medium ability. This finding is relevant to Van Thao & Herman (2020) who focused on time deixis. Time deixis relates to temporal references within discourse, including past, present, and future time frames. Temporal deixis refers to words related to time, such as "now," "then," "yesterday," and "soon". The song uses time references, such as past events and changes over time, so temporal deixis is easier for students to recognize than spatial deixis. However, because the use of time in the song can be more complex or symbolic (with references to past glories or changes over time), it is not as immediately obvious to students as personal deixis. In *Viva la Vida*, time deixis is evident through lines such as "*It was a wicked and wild wind*" and "*For some reason I can't explain*". These phrases reflect on past events while also hinting at future possibilities. By identifying phrases like "*revolutions have begun*" or "*My missionaries in a foreign field*" which reference specific points in time, students can gain a deeper appreciation for the song's themes and messages.

Overall, the result of students' analysis of deixis in Coldplay's "*Viva la Vida*" revealed that personal deixis was the most dominant and easiest for students to understand. Spatial deixis posed the greatest challenge, likely due to its reliance on a specific contextual understanding of space, which may not be immediately apparent in the song. Temporal deixis fell somewhere in between, with students showing a fair understanding of the time references in the song. Nasution et al (2018) suggested that deixis in music can provide insights into how language is used to convey meaning and emotions through different contexts and perspectives. These results suggest that students found it easier to analyze personal pronouns and words related to time, but struggled with spatial terms that required more context or abstract thinking.

The analysis of deixis in Coldplay's "*Viva la Vida*" highlights the different ways in which students interact with language and its contextual markers. Van Thao & Herman (2020) explained that such references can provide contextual information about the setting of a text and help contribute to its overall meaning. The prominence of personal deixis suggests that students are more comfortable interpreting the experiences and

identities of characters, which are often more immediate and relevant. Temporal deixis also plays an important role but requires a deeper understanding of the song's narrative arc, which may explain the moderate performance in this area. Spatial deixis, which is less frequent and more abstract, presents the most significant challenge for students. The results reflect a broader trend in students' ability to interpret deixis in context, suggesting that they are more attuned to personal and temporal markers of meaning.

Aligned with a study by Indriastuti (2023), these findings can inform future instructional strategies, emphasizing the importance of spatial deixis in developing a more complete understanding of contextual markers in language. Teachers can also focus on helping students recognize the interplay between personal, temporal, and spatial deixis in song lyrics, literature, and other forms of discourse. It gives a perspective that music is a cultural tool used to construct society's thoughts, ideas, and opinions through song lyrics. Analyzing the deixis in Coldplay's "Viva la Vida", offers valuable insights into students' linguistic abilities and interpretative skills in identifying and interpreting contextual markers in texts. These findings suggest that while students are proficient in recognizing personal deixis, they face more challenges with spatial deixis and less understood temporal deixis. Future research could explore whether this trend is consistent across other texts or genres and examine how deixis can be taught and understood more effectively in different educational contexts.

Conclusion

This study found that students had better and more dominant abilities in analyzing and identifying personal deixis (72.71%) compared to spatial deixis (41.71%) and temporal deixis (55.71%). Students can better understand and apply the concept of deixis in their writing, which will improve their overall language skills. Songs that students know and like can make the learning process more fun and relevant, which can increase their motivation and interest in the lesson. Students also develop their analytical skills, which are useful not only in language studies but also in other subjects and everyday life. Using song lyrics as data to analyze deictic ability opens up opportunities for more creative and real-context-based research. The results of this study can contribute to the development of theory and practice in linguistic studies, especially in everyday language use.

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