

Research Article

Received: 18/02/2021; Accepted: 03/03/2021; Published: 28/05/2021

Deixis Analysis in “a Night at the Opera” Album Amalia

Vincent Cahya Buana*, Wiwiek Sundari*

**English Literature Undergraduate Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University,
Semarang, Indonesia*

Abstract

This research discussed types of deixis found in Queen’s album entitled “A Night At The Opera”. It is aimed at revealing the deixis in the song lyrics and explaining the deictic words used by all members of Queen by utilizing the theory of deixis as the analysing tool. The deixis was collected from 11 (eleven) songs’ lyrics on the album by using observation and audio-visual material techniques. The lyrics were copied into.docx format so that the researchers can matched the lyrics while listening to the songs before finally analyse the deixis in it. The result shows that this album contains the whole types of the deixis listed in Levinson’s theory of deixis. The most dominant deixis was person and time deixis, while the least dominant one is discourse. The result also exposes the mostly used type of deixis by all members of Queen, that is, first person deictic words since the whole 11 songs in the album mostly told their fans or song listeners about their own story or experience.

Key words: feudalism, abuse of power, lord, vassal

1. Introduction

Language has been used throughout the world as a means of communication, both written or spoken, and even as a sign. People use language as a communication media to express their opinions, feelings, or deliver information through direct or indirect conversation. To catch the language meaning along with the communication purpose, speaker and receiver should understand well the language they use in their communication to avoid misinterpretation and/or misunderstanding.

They must also be familiar to the topics of their conversation that covers many fields, such as educations, economics, politics, and arts so that the communication runs well.

Otherwise, communication might only run one sided or creating misinterpretation and/or misunderstanding that might leads into conflict.

One of the examples of arts is music. It has been an important part of people's lives that influence their mood and behavior as it accompanied them while studying, working, doing daily activities or even during sleep. Music can also be a medium to express people's feelings or opinions that can be delivered through the lyrics of a song. To enjoy the music, listeners must apprehend not only the meaning of the lyrics but also what song writer or singer means. Therefore, context plays an important role for listeners to understand that meaning. Hence, pragmatic can be applied to do so.

Pragmatic is the study of a contextual meaning [1] which is important in studying language and communication since listener or the speaker must understand the meaning of the available references and identify the context of the utterance in order to prevent misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Pragmatics exposes several main aspects to interpret utterances and expressions, that are deixis, presupposition, speech act, reference, implicature, and so on. This research chooses deixis as the aspect of interpreting the meaning of song lyrics.

The word deixis came from a Greek word 'deixis' meaning as indicating or pointing [2]. Deixis is used to analyze conversations, utterances, sentences and even song lyrics because they are suitable to point out people, things, places or times. Listener or the reader should consider the subjects, the places, and the times to analyze song lyrics so that the meaning will be clear and easier to be understood.

In this research, the researchers analyze the deixis in 11 (eleven) songs' lyrics of Queen's album's *A Night at The Opera* [3]. The lyrics were taken from the internet and changed into .docx form so that it is easier to be matched with the whole songs when the researchers listen to it before finally analyze and categorize the deixis types based on Levinson's theory of deixis [4].

2. Methods

On this qualitative research [5], the researchers used purposive sampling method [6] to collect 11 (eleven) out of 12 (twelve) songs from the album as the research population because one of the songs is an instrumental one so that it does not contain any lyrics. Those 11 (eleven) songs' titles are: *Death on Two Legs*, *Lazing on A Sunday Afternoon*, *I'm in Love with My Car*, *You're My Best Friend*, *'39*, *Sweet Lady*, *Seaside Rendezvous*, *The Prophet's Song*, *Love of My Life*, *Good Company*, and *Bohemian Rhapsody* [3]. Meanwhile, the research sample were the clauses in each song's lyrics containing deixis in which the repeated lyrics uncounted.

To collect the research data, the researcher used observation and audio-visual material techniques [5] by taking the songs' lyrics from the internet and copying it into Microsoft Word as .docx format. The researchers were then match the written lyrics while listening

to the songs from the music player on a laptop. The analysing data will be the deixis along with the context of the sentence on the songs' lyrics.

To analyse the data, the researchers use *agih* method [7] by firstly classifying the songs' lyrics into 5 (five) types of deixis based on Levinson's theory of deixis [4]. The amount of each deixis types (person, place, time, social, and discourse deixis) found in each song will be noted in a table and then discussed afterward.

3. Results

Levinson [4] categorized deixis into five, they are person deixis, place deixis, time deixis, social deixis, and discourse deixis. From the data classification, the researchers found out that the whole 11 (eleven) songs' lyrics in *A Night at The Opera* album [1] contains the whole 5 (five) types of deixis.

Table 1. Deixis Types Found on "A Night at The Opera" Album's Songs' Lyrics

No	Title of the Song	Person deixis	Place deixis	Time deixis	Social deixis	Discourse deixis
1	Death on Two Legs	37	3	1	27	4
2	Lazing on A Sunday Afternoon	10	5	8	-	-
3	I'm in Love with My Car	17	-	1	4	3
4	You're My Best Friend	33	3	3	7	1
5	'39	19	10	4	8	5
6	Sweet Lady	31	2	1	14	1
7	Seaside Rendezvous	23	3	3	8	-
8	The Prophet's Song	30	4	1	12	1
9	Love of My Life	27	1	2	12	2
10	Good Company	37	2	3	7	4
11	Bohemian Rhapsody	33	2	4	8	1
Total		297	35	31	107	22

4. Discussion

From Table 1 above we can see that of all songs, person and time deixis become the most dominant deixis on this album as they were found on every song of the album. The whole songs contain person and time deixis because the songs' lyrics mostly tell the listeners about the story and/or the experience of the songs' writers or the singers. Since the songs also tell the listeners about the time where the story and/or experience occurred, the researchers found place and social deixis in 10 songs. In the meantime, discourse deixis appears in 9 songs as it is used to describe the story and/or experience. The detailed explanation of person, time, place, social and discourse deixis can be obtained as follows.

There are three-person deixis were found on 11 (eleven) songs' lyrics, that are first person, second person, and third person. The mostly appeared one is the first-person deictic words, particularly, the singular first-person deictic words *I*, *Me* and *My to point the subject of songs' lyrics*. Meanwhile, place deixis is shown on 10 (ten) songs' lyrics to mostly mention a more specific places than words Here or There which belongs to proximal and distal terms. Thus, the songs' lyrics means will be more precise as it states the place where the story and/or experience happened.

Just like person deixis, time deixis also revealed from 11 (eleven) songs' lyrics to mostly mention a more specific time than yesterday, today, or tomorrow, which belongs to temporal terms. Related to social deixis, two social deictic words appeared on 10 (ten) songs' lyrics, that are, you and your. However, there are also other social deictic words indicating an intimate relation of the songs' writers or the singers. Last but not least, discourse deixis is shown on 9 (nine) songs' lyrics, particularly on *Death on Two Legs* and '39 songs.

Related to the songs' writers or the singers, Freddie Mercury writes the song lyric of *Death on Two Legs*, *Lazing on A Sunday Afternoon*, *Seaside Rendezvous*, *Love of My Life*, and *Bohemian Rhapsody* [8]. Nevertheless, he does not use all types of deixis in all of those songs since he mostly uses person and social deixis because the songs mostly tell the listeners about himself and the relationship with people around him.

Brian May writes the song lyric of '39, *Sweet Lady*, *The Prophet's Song* and *Good Company* using all types of deixis with different frequency. He mostly uses personal and social deixis and rarely uses time, discourse, and place deixis since he mostly wants to show the relationship between people -not only with him- in his songs.

A unique fact revealed when the researchers figure out that Queen's drummer, Roger Taylor, share his contribution in writing *I'm in Love with My Car* song lyric. This song comprises four types of deixis, that are person, time, social, and discourse deixis, to show what happened with him in this story of his experience loving the car.

Queen's bass guitar player, John Deacon, also write *You're My Best Friend* song lyric using the whole types of deixis with person deixis. The researchers found a unique finding

where person deictic words appeared 33 (thirty-three) times, where it never appeared more than 10 times on other song lyrics.

5. Conclusions

After classifying and analysing the research data, the researchers conclude that *A Night at The Opera* album, released in 1975, containing 12 (twelve) songs with 11 (eleven) of it containing lyrics, shows all 5 (five) types of deixis based on Levinson's theory of deixis [4] spreading in the whole songs with different frequency of each deixis. There are 3 (three) songs that do not contain all types of deixis in its lyrics, they are, *Lazing on A Sunday Afternoon*, *I'm In Love with My Car*, and *Seaside Rendezvous* as it only contains some of those types of deixis.

Person and time deixis become the most dominant deixis because they are found on all songs' lyrics of the album to show people and time involved in the songs' stories. Meanwhile, place and social deixis are found only on 10 (ten) songs' lyrics of the album to expose location and relation with people. Last but not least, discourse deixis appeared only on 9 (nine) songs' lyrics of the album to show the discourse items in the lyrics.

Related to songs' writers, Freddie Mercury and Roger Taylor who are the main song writer of Queen do not completely use all types of deixis since Freddie Mercury rarely uses discourse deixis and Roger Taylor does not include place deixis on the lyrics. Meanwhile, Brian May the guitarist and John Deacon the bassist who also write songs' lyrics use all types of deixis in limited songs' lyrics they write. In this album, 11 (eleven) songs' lyrics mostly tell the listeners about the story or the experience of the songs' lyrics' writers or the singers which also tell them about the place where and the time when the story or the experience happened.

The researchers suggest that for further research, a more detail analysis about one particular type of deixis should be conducted because this research only focused on categorizing and analyzing all types of deixis. As this research only focuses on one album, further research can compare one or more albums of the same singer to see how they use deixis in their music journey throughout the time. Further research can also be done by discussing different topics related to linguistics such as the semiotics interpretation of the albums' cover to provide more context of analyzing the meaning of the songs' lyrics.

References

- [1] Ratna, N. K. (2012). *Teori, Metode dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- [2] Kennedy, X. D., & Gioia, D. (1995). *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry and Drama*. New York: HarperCollins.
- [3] Le Guin, U. K. (1975). *The Wind's Twelve Quarters*. New York: Harper & Row.
- [4] Bloch, M. (2002). *Feudal Society: Vol 2: Social Classes and Political Organization*. London: Routledge.
- [5] Ganshof, F. L. (1952). *Feudalism*. (P. Grierson, Trans.) London, New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co.