

**AN ANALYSIS OF DEIXIS IN SELECTED SONGS BY TAYLOR SWIFT: A
DESCRIPTIVE QUALITATIVE STUDY**

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Abstract

This research focuses on analyzing deixis in Taylor swift songs, including these three songs: “I Can Do It With Broken Heart,” ‘All Too Well,’ and ‘Mr. Perfectly Fine’. It has a background of deixis preventions in lyrics and conveys meaning and emotion. The main purpose is to analyze and classify the types of deixis in the lyrics and explore the meaning of the pragmatic context. The research method used focuses on descriptive qualitative on personal, special, temporal, social, and discourse deixis. This research is subjected to the content of Taylor Swift's song lyrics that have been mentioned. Data collection includes searching for Taylor Swift's song, collecting song lyrics then analyzing each deixis that appears and categorizing each deixis into the five types. Finally, interpreting the meaning of the song in its contextual form. This research shows the dominance of personal deixis with 106 first-person pronouns, 69 second-person pronouns, and 27 third-person pronouns. Furthermore, social deixis appears 38 times, spatial deixis appears 14 times, temporal deixis 9 times, and discourse deixis 3 times. This research found Taylor Swift's song tendency to use personal pronouns to express emotions in her song lyrics. The results of this study have implications for understanding the linguistic strategies used in popular songs to capture listeners' attention and convey complex emotional narratives. This research also contributes to the broader field of pragmatics by demonstrating the applicability of deixis analysis in song lyrics, potentially informing future research in linguistic analysis of song lyrics and discourse.

Keywords: *deixis; linguistics; lyric; popular; pragmatic; song*

INTRODUCTION

Language is the most important tool or means to communicate with someone. People use language to carry out their daily activities such as conveying opinions or information. Along with the passage of time language began to develop so that a literary work emerged. Meanwhile, literary works are a collection of beautiful writings that come from the fruit of imagination and creativity that are poured into writing or word (Luvira et al., 2023).

One type of literary work that is very popular in all circles of society is a song, a song is one of the literary works that looks like a poem except that the song has an instrument or music that accompanies it. For some humans, songs are a way of communication to express feelings or heart content through the lyrics. Not only for the songwriter, the audience or listeners also use songs as a tool to express their feelings. In a song, the lyrics become an object of linguistic research, especially from the pragmatic side.

According to Kurniati and Haryudun (2021), pragmatic is an analysis of the meaning of the words conveyed by the speaker and then captured or construed by the listener. Meanwhile, pragmatic is the science of language which has a main focus on its use and how a language can affect the course of communication (Nurdiana, 2019). In the context of understanding the meaning the words of the speaker, a listener have to understand the content of what is conveyed. One of

the parts in pragmatic science that studies the meaning of the conversation words would be deixis (Wulandari, 2022) .

Deixis is the most fundamental thing in a technical term of the speech. The word of deixis itself is taken from Greek which means appoint or showing (Levinson, 1983). Yanti et al (2021) also states that deixis is directly related to the language and context or concept included in the language structure itself (Yanti et al., 2021).

According to Lestari & Rustipa (2022), deixis means one aspect that is different for different people, it can be interpreted that the indication of each utterance has an interpretation or meaning that depends on the context analysis. It can be seen the deixis refers to the phenomenon of comprehend the meaning and specific phrases of an utterance requires information and the context of the utterance itself, because every utterance is related to references to people, places, times, social, and discourse.

It means that deixis is used to situate parts of the text in relation to other parts, and also to point out social relations, the social relations of individuals in relation to others.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Person Deixis

Person deixis is a personal pronoun that refers to a person. person deixis is classified into three, which are first person deixis, second persona deixis, and third person deixis (Damayanti, 2022).

- a) Person deixis is a personal pronoun that refers to a person. Based on Cruse, persona deixis is classified into three, which are first persona deixis, second persona deixis, and third persona deixis. First-person deixis (I, mine, myself) refers to singular and plural (we, ourselves, and ours).
- b) Second-person deixis (you, your), deixis to a person or persons who is identified as the recipient, such as you, you, you.
- c) Third-person deixis (He), included in deictics identified as speakers or receivers, usually implying the gender corresponding to the utterance, e.g. he, she, they.

2. Place Deixis

Usually also is represented as a spatial deixis, it indicates the location of people and objects. This deixis is usually expressed in the words, this, there, here, that. Place or space deixis is related to the location specifications that exist in speech events and usually speakers have two basic ways to refer to objects by describing them (Putri & Halawa, 2023).

3. Temporal Deixis

Usually also referred to as temporal deixis. Time deixis makes primary reference to the attendee role, so it is important to recognize the difference when pronouncing and the time of the reception. Each sentence refers to the time of the event, and time is only specified in relation to pronunciation time..

4. Social Deixis

Social deixis is a concept that serves to express a position or position such as social status, the role of the person or the intimacy between speakers (Puspita & Syafar, 2022).

5. Discourse deixis

Discourse deixis is a concept that refers to or relates to a discourse by leading to the reference of the discourse (Saputra & Apsari, 2021). The words this and that belong to this class of discourse deixis (Yule, 1996).

Similar research on this topic such as research conducted by Khoirun Nisaa' Arnoi & Ashadi with the title The Analyses of Deixis on Arditho Pranomo's Songs published in 2021. This

study found 33% deixis person, 38% deixis temporal, 8% deixis social, 6% deixis place, and 15% deixis discourse (Nisaa & Ashadi, 2021).

The second study with the title *Deixis in Justin Bieber's Song Lyrics* written by Nopika Adelina Br Ginting, Chaidir Syahri and published in 2019. In this study, three deixis are found, which are persona deixis, place deixis, and time deixis and the dominant deixis used is persona deixis (Ginting & Syahri, 2021).

Furthermore, the third research by Novita Puspahaty and Siti Musta'innah which was applied in 2023 with the title "Analysis of deixis in song lyrics in Olivia Rodrigo's "Sour" album." the results of this research written by Puspahaty and Siti Musta'innah found 477 data grouped in deixis (Puspahaty & Musta'innah, 2023).

The research in this article is different from previous studies, the result of this study is to identify deixis and clear the meaning deixis used in the lyric of songs. Researchers used song lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs as data and finds deixis based on pragmatic meaning.

METHOD

The data in this study comes from three Taylor Swift songs, entitled "I Can Do It With Broken Heart", "All Too Well", and "Mr. Perfectly Fine". This data was chosen because the three songs are among the most popular songs on Taylor Swift's album, and contain many deixis in each lyric.

Data collection was carried out using the observation method, by observing the lyrics of the song, thus allowing researchers to collect research data. Another step used was to record and write down the data contained in the song lyrics.

The classification of deixis categories aims to better know and understand the meaning contained in the song lyrics. This research is studied qualitatively, qualitative method is a method of research used for interpreting phenomena that occur, and the relationship between one phenomenon and another (Nasution Abdul Fattah, 2023), through content analysis contained in the song lyrics. Finally, this research is presented descriptively to recognize the types of deixis in the song lyrics.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research is about deixis with the data of Taylor Swift song lyrics with the title *I Can Do It With Broken Heart*, *All Too Well*, and *Mr. Perfectly fine*. the difference between this research and the previous research is that this research uses Taylor Swift song lyrics (which have been mentioned before) which have never been studied by other researchers to analyze deixis. This research aims to analyze the meaning of deixis in Taylor Swift's song lyrics using a pragmatic approach. The following is a more detailed explanation:

Data 1– I Can Do It With Broken Heart

This is one of Taylor Swift's songs on the album *The Tortured Poets Department* released on April 19, 2024. This song has been played 18 million times on YouTube and is increasingly being used as a back track video content creator on social media such as Tiktok, Instagram and others.

This song was written by the singer herself, Taylor Swift, which tells about her life, namely the heartbreak phase. Where in the music video it is shown that Taylor Swift successfully held her world tour concert when she was heartbroken. In the song titled *Can Do It with Broken Heart* Taylor Swift expresses honestly about her feelings that at that time were broken and not okay but she realized that the world was going on and she convinced herself to remain resilient, responsible, and productive in what she was doing. So that gradually she will get used to it and the pain of heartbreak itself will disappear even though at first it requires a compulsion.

Taylor Swift's fans or Swifties believe that this song is a story from Taylor Swift's relationship with Joe Alwyn. At that time their relationship had been going on for six years and then they split up when Taylor Swift was doing the World Tour.

The results of the author's research on the lyrics of the song I Can Do It With Broken Heart - Taylor Swift found several types of Deixis, namely as follows:

1. Personal Deixis

Table 1. The Result of Personal Deixis

Types of Personal Deixis	Number of Word
I	36
Me	7
My	8
You	17
Your	1
She	1
Her	3
He	8
His	2
Him	2
They	2

- (1) I can read your mind
- (6) 'Cause I'm a real tough kid, I can handle **my** shit
- (9) He said he'd love **me** all his life
- (18) **You** know you're good when you can even do it
- (1) I can read **your** mind
- (2) **She's** having the time of your life
- (9) **He** said he'd love me all his life
- (7) **They** said you "babe, you gotta fake it 'til you make it" and I did

There are first-person deixis in this song such as **me**, **my**, and **I**. The word **I** itself refers directly to the songwriter as in the lyrics (stanza 1) *I can read your mind*, the word **I** here shows that the songwriter can read the person's mind. the word **I** functions as a first person pointer and provides information on who the person is talking to. in the lyrics (stanza 6) there is the pronoun **my** which represents the ownership of the first person pronoun or I. then in the lyrics (stanza 9) there is the pronoun **me**. The pronoun me is a pronoun that refers to the object affected by an action from the first person or subject.

Second person deixis as in the lyrics (stanza 18) there is the pronoun you. in the stanza the word **you** to the second person from the songwriter's side to provide encouragement and strength. While in the lyrics (stanza 1) *I can read your mind* there is the pronoun **your** which shows the belonging of the pronoun you or the second person.

Finally, the third person deixis in this song is **She**, **her**, **he**, **his**, **him**, and **they**. in the lyrics (stanza 2) *She's having the time of your life* refers to the third person in the first person point of view. Furthermore, in the lyrics (stanza 9) there is a third person pronoun **he** whose role is to refer to the third person, namely the songwriter's former lover. Finally, the word they in the lyrics (stanza 7) which refers to the people around the author.

2. Spatial Deixis

Table 2. The result of Spatial Deixis

Types of Spatial Deixis	The Number of Word
There	1

- (3) **There** in her glittering prime
 (22) I keep finding his things **in drawers**

Spatial deixis in the song are related to the location or place where the songwriter mentions it in the lyrics. as in the lyrics (stanza 3) There in her glittering prime, there is the word there. the word there in the lyrics is used by the writer to show a place but it is not specifically explained which place the writer wants to go to. then in the lyrics (stanza 22) there is the word “in drawer” the word shows a place that the writer is going to, meaning that the writer finds his ex-lover's belongings in the drawer.

3. Temporal Deixis

Table 3. The result of Temporal Deixis

Types of Temporal Deixis	The Number of Word
Every night	1
Every day	1

- (4) The lights refract sequined stars off her silhouette **every night**
 (15) I'm so depressed, I act like it's my birthday **every day**

In the text of the lyrics of the song I Can Do it With Broken Heart by Taylor Swift found two temporal deixis. first in the lyrics (stanza 4) found the word Every night which represents the time referred to by the songwriter. In the lyrics, the meaning of the word every night is a parable word used by the author in the lyrics of the song. the second discovery is the word every day in the lyrics (stanza 15) in the lyrics the word every day is included to represent the time that the songwriter is depressed every day but tries to stay okay.

4. Social Deixis

Table 4. The result of Social Deixis

Types of Social Deixis	The Number of Word
Babe	2

- (7) They said, "**Babe**, you gotta fake it 'til you make it" and I did

In the lyrics of the this song, there is one type of social deixis that repeats two times, namely, the word babe. the word babe itself is a nickname for the closest person such as a lover or loved ones who are around. in the lyrics, the word babe is spoken by the closest people around him who are shown to the author to encourage or encourage.

5. Discourse Deixis

Table 5. The result of Discourse Deixis

Types of Discourse Deixis	The Number of Word
That	1
This	1

- (10) But **that** life was too short
 (24) I'm sure I can pass **this** test (one, two, three, four)

In the lyrics of the song, there are two words included in the discourse deixis, namely That and this. in the lyrics (stanza 10) But that life was too short, the meaning of the word that is to

explain the situation of the author's past relationship with his ex-lover. Then the meaning of the word **this** in the lyrics (stanza 24) explains how the situation or condition of the author now after breaking up with his girlfriend.

Data 2 – All Too Well

In the research of song lyrics in Taylor Swift's song entitled “All Too Well”, the researcher argues that there are three types of deixis that have been identified, namely persona deixis, spatial deixis, and time deixis.

The song entitled “All Too Well” itself is included in the Red album, which contains 30 re-recorded albums and 10 additional Taylor Swift songs. All Too Well is the song that attracts the most public attention of all the songs on the album. The song was released in 2012, and managed to rank 80 on the Billboard Hot 100.

The song tells the story of Taylor Swift's past with her ex. Remembering the beautiful and sweet moments and bitter moments in her past relationships. This song tells that, if a relationship is winding and too complicated between partners, it will eventually end in bitterness. The song takes the listener into a time travel where the past relationship is full of happy memories and finally ends painfully.

The results of the research on the lyrics of the song “All Too Well” found three types of deixis, as follows:

1. Person Deixis

Table 6. The result of Personal Deixis

Types of Personal Deixis	The Number of Word
I	16
You	9
I'm	2
My	5
Me	3
Your	4

- (1) **I** walked through the door with you
- (12) **You** almost ran the red cause you were looking over to me
- (10) And I might be okay, but **I'm** not, fine at all
- (3) Left **my** scarf there at your sister's house
- (26) And you call me up again just to break **me** like a promise
- (5) **Your** sweet disposition, and my wide eyed gaze

The research on this song contains persona deixis, it refers to the first person or person who experiences the story in the song, or the songwriter himself. In the lyrics (1) in the first stanza, I walked through the door with you, the word **I** here refers to the first person, namely to the songwriter, which means that he has gone through everything together with his ex-girlfriend. The word door here has meanings such as moments, things, etc. Then, in the lyrics to (12) stanza four, You almost ran the red because you were looking over to me, the word **You** here refers to the second person, namely to the writer's ex, here it means that while still in a relationship the ex often ran red lights while traveling with him because he was too concerned about the songwriter.

In lyric (10) stanza three, it refers to the first person because it uses the word I'm. The word **I'm** itself here refers to the lyricist, and in this sentence it means that he feels fine, but he doesn't seem to feel that he is really fine. In the lyrics (3) in the first stanza is Left my scarf there at your sister's house, the use of **my** in this lyric refers to the first person, namely the songwriter or who has a story like the one in this song. Then, in the lyrics (26) of the second stanza, and you call me up again just to break me like a promise, the word **me** here refers to the first person which means the writer. This sentence itself means that the ex meets her again and then breaks her again like

he broke his promise. And the last one in the lyrics (5) in the second stanza, namely your sweet disposition, and my wide eyed gaze, the word **your** here refers to the second person, namely the writer's ex-boyfriend, in this lyric it means that the ex-lover's sweet disposition and the writer's eyes are wide open.

2. Spatial Deixis

Table 7. The result of Spatial Deixis

Types of Spatial Deixis	The Number of Word
There	7
Here	3

(9) And I know it's long gone and that magic's not here no more

(13) Wind in my hair, I was there

In the research of this song not only persona deixis was found, but researchers also found spatial deixis or place deixis, which in the lyrics (9) in the fourth stanza, namely and I know it's long gone and that magic's not here no more, the word here refers to the position of the writer, in the lyrics it means, the writer knows that those times have long passed, and the magic of love is no longer here, in the position where the writer is. Then in the lyrics (13) of the fifth stanza, wind in my hair, I was there, the word there here refers to the position of the writer as well, which in the lyrics means the wind rustled my hair, I was there, where the position of the writer was with his ex boyfriend.

3. Temporal Deixis

Table 8. The result of Temporal Deixis

Types of Personal Deixis	The Number of Word
Now	1
These Days	1
Middle Night	1

(4) And you still got it in your drawer, even now

(8) And I can picture it after all these days

(19) Cause here we are again in the middle night

In the lyrics of the song "All Too Well" there is also a time deixis, where this deixis refers to time. As in the lyrics (4) in the first stanza, and you still got it in your drawer, even now, the word now here refers to time. In this lyric, it means that the ex still keeps the writer's scarf in his drawer which was left at the ex's sister's house. Then, in the lyrics (8) of the second stanza, and I can picture it after all these days, the word these days here itself refers to time, where until now, today the writer can still describe the beautiful moments when the autumn leaves fall. In the lyrics (19) of the eighth stanza, cause here we are again in the middle night, the word middle night here refers to the word time, where in the lyrics it has a meaning, namely, when in the middle of the night the ex-lover tells about his past and thinks that his future is me (the writer).

Data 2 – Mr. Perfectly Fine

Mr. Perfectly Fine was released on April 9, 2021. This song is one of the songs from the latest version of Taylor Swift's album Fearless (Taylor Version). This song has been played seventy-eight million (78 M) times on the YouTube platform.

Mr. Perfectly Fine was written by Taylor Swift herself based on her personal experience. This song is the latest song included in the Fearless album. The Fearless album itself is an album that was released in 2008 but in 2021 Taylor Swift released an updated version with several additional songs including Mr. Perfectly Fine. This song tells the story of Taylor Swift and her

former lover, Joe Jonas. Through the lyrics, a former lover is told who doesn't care at all even though he himself left and hurt. Since this song was released in 2021, it did not coincide with other songs on the Fearless album. This song is interpreted as nostalgia from a Taylor Swift to her former lover.

1. Person Deixis

Table 9. The result of Personal Deixis

Types of Personal Deixis	Number of Word
I	14
Me	11
My	3
Mine	1
You	20
your	8
Her	1
He	6
His	2

(24) **I** guess you're all the same

(18) Mr. "Never told **me** why"

(5) Mr. "I've been waiting for you all **my** life"

(12) How's your heart after breaking **mine**?

(58) **You** said you'd never go away

(6) Mr. "Every single day until the end, I will be by **your** side"

(26) I've been pickin' up my heart, he's been pickin' up **her**

(40) Oh, **he**'s so smug, Mr. "Always wins"

(21) 'Cause I hear he's got **his** arm 'round a brand-new girl

In this song, we find first person deixis in the form of I, my, me, and mine. In the lyrics (stanza 24) the word I refers to the writer who thinks that her ex-lover is still the same as before. The word me in the lyrics (stanza 18) represents to the writer that her ex-lover never explained anything. Finally, the word mine refers to ownership, namely, the writer's feelings that have been destroyed by her ex-lover.

The second person deixis in this song is you and your. The word you in this lyric (stanza 58) refers to her ex-boyfriend who once said he would never leave but apparently he left. Meanwhile, the word your (stanza) is an expression spoken by her former lover to the writer.

The third person deixis in this song are her, he, and his. The word her (stanza 26) refers to the ex-lover who picks up her new lover. Furthermore, the word he (stanza 40) represents the writer's view of his lover. Finally, the word his (stanza 21) refers to ownership, namely the hand of his ex-lover who is around his new woman.

2. Spatial Deixis

Table 10. The result of Spatial Deixis

Types of Spatial Deixis	The Number of Word
Here	1
in the best room	1

(45) 'Cause I was Miss "**Here** to stay"

(39) It's the best seat, **in the best room**

In this song there are two spatial deixis words, namely here and in the best room. The word here in the lyrics shows the place that has been occupied by the writer. The word here itself represents a short distance to reach. Finally, the word in the best room refers to a place where her ex-boyfriend is inside and sitting.

3. Temporal Deixis

Table 11. The result of Temporal Deixis

Types of Temporal Deixis	The Number of Word
Each day	1
Now	1
Someday	2

(9) It takes everything in me just to get up **each day**

(46) **Now** I'm Miss "Gonna be alright **someday**"

In the lyrics of this song, three temporal deixis were found, namely each day, now and someday. The word each day shows the time when the writer experienced heartbreak abandoned by his former lover, the writer was depressed so it was very hard to wake up to go through his day. Furthermore, the word now represents the present time that the writer will be fine after being abandoned. Finally, in the word someday, the writer emphasizes that one day he will be fine after being abandoned.

4. Social Deixis

Table 12. The result of Social Deixis

Types of Social Deixis	The Number of Word
Mr	28
Baby	3
Miss	5

(1) **Mr.** "Always at the right place at the right time, " **baby**

(16) I've been **Miss** "Misery" since your goodbye

In the lyrics of this song, there are three words included in the social deixis, namely Mr., baby, and miss. The word Mr. itself is a polite greeting used to address men who are considered to have a higher position or to address a foreign man who is not too familiar or close. The author uses the greeting Mr., which is repeated twenty-eight times to express that the relationship between the author and her ex-boyfriend is unfamiliar and not as close as it used to be. Furthermore, the word baby, which is used by the author, expresses her close relationship with her former lover as the word baby is used to greet the closest person such as a lover. Finally, the word miss used by the author is the same as the word Mr. However, the word Miss is used as a greeting for women.

5. Discourse Deixis

Table 13. The result of Discourse Deixis

Types of Discourse Deixis	The Number of Word
That	1

(7) But **that** was when I got to know Mr. "Change of heart"

The discourse deixis in the song lyrics is found in one word, that. The word that alone in the lyrics refers to the moment when the writer found out that her lover changed and left her. Finally, results of the research:

1. Persona Deixis

Table 14. The Final Result of Personal Deixis

Song title	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
I Can do It With Broken Heart	51	18	18
All Too Well	26	13	-
Mr. Perfect Fine	29	38	9
Total	106	69	27

2. Spacial Deixis

Table 15. The Final Result of Spatial Deixis

Song title	Spatial deixis
I Can do It With Broken Heart	2
All Too Well	10
Mr. Perfect Fine	2
Total	14

3. Temporal Deixis

Table 16. The Final Result of Temporal Deixis

Song title	Temporal deixis
I Can do It With Broken Heart	2
All Too Well	3
Mr. Perfect Fine	4
Total	9

4. sosial deixis

Table 17. The Overall Result of Social Deixis

Song title	Social deixis
I Can do It With Broken Heart	2
All Too Well	-
Mr. Perfect Fine	36
Total	38

5. Discourse deixis

Table 18. The Overall Result of Discourse Deixis

Song title	Discourse deixis
I Can do It With Broken Heart	2
All Too Well	-
Mr. Perfect Fine	1
Total	3

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research that has been done, the meanings in Taylor Swift's songs that have been studied have almost the same references but still vary with the context contained in the song lyrics. This can be seen, the fact that the songwriter always tells her past with her ex-lover. Deixis

helps define space, time and social relationships in the song lyrics, inviting the listener to join the story she is experiencing. It tells the listener about who is being told in the song, so that the listener can feel the feelings of happiness, sadness, jealousy, heartache. Deixis contained in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs that have been studied, that there are five types of deixis, namely persona deixis, spatial deixis, time deixis, social deixis, and discourse deixis.

Person deixis used in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs are *I, me, my, mine, you, your, her, he, his*. Meanwhile, there are temporal deixis such as *now, these days, every day, someday, middle night, every night, and every day*. Social deixis includes *babe, mr, baby, miss. Then, spatial deixis namely, here, in the best room, there, in drawer*. And the last, in this study which includes discourse deixis, namely, *that and this*.

The most dominant type of deixis in this research is person deixis, because the word “I” is more dominant used in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs. Because, the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs that have been studied tell about her past love story experiences.

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