

A DEICTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SONG LYRICS “ALWAYS” BY DANIEL CAESAR

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Abstrak

Bahasa merupakan salah satu aspek paling penting dalam kehidupan manusia karena digunakan untuk menyampaikan pikiran, perasaan, ide, dan maksud. Bahasa tidak hanya ditemukan dalam percakapan sehari-hari atau teks tertulis, tetapi juga hadir dalam lagu. Lirik lagu sering kali mengandung ekspresi emosional dan pesan yang dapat dianalisis melalui kajian linguistik, khususnya pragmatik. Salah satu cabang pragmatik adalah deiksis, yaitu kata atau ungkapan yang maknanya bergantung pada konteks. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis deiksis yang digunakan dalam lirik lagu “*Always*” karya Daniel Caesar serta menentukan jenis deiksis yang paling dominan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data penelitian ini adalah lirik lagu “*Always*” karya Daniel Caesar. Data dikumpulkan melalui teknik menyimak lagu, membaca lirik, mengidentifikasi ungkapan deiksis, mengelompokkannya ke dalam deiksis persona, deiksis tempat, dan deiksis waktu, serta menafsirkan hasil temuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat tiga jenis deiksis dalam lirik lagu tersebut, yaitu deiksis persona, deiksis tempat, dan deiksis waktu. Deiksis persona merupakan jenis yang paling dominan karena lirik lagu lebih banyak mengekspresikan perasaan pribadi dan komunikasi emosional antara penutur dan mitra tutur. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa deiksis membantu pendengar memahami makna yang dimaksud dalam lirik lagu secara lebih jelas karena penafsiran makna sangat bergantung pada konteks. Kata kunci: Deiksis, Semantik, Lirik Lagu, Daniel Caesar

Abstract

Language is one of the most important aspects of human life because it is used to communicate thoughts, feelings, ideas, and intentions. Language is not only found in daily conversations or written texts, but also appears in songs. Song lyrics often contain emotional expressions and messages that can be analyzed through linguistic studies, especially pragmatics. One branch of pragmatics is deixis, which refers to words or expressions whose meanings depend on context. This study aims to identify the types of deixis used in the song lyrics *Always* by Daniel Caesar and to determine the dominant type of deixis found in the song. This research applied descriptive qualitative method. The data source was the lyrics of the song *Always* by Daniel Caesar. The researcher collected the data by listening to the song, reading the lyrics, identifying deictic expressions, classifying them into person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis, and interpreting the findings. The results show that three kinds of deixis are found in the song lyrics,

namely person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. Person deixis is the most dominant type because the lyrics mainly express personal feelings and emotional communication between the speaker and the addressee. This study concludes that deixis helps listeners understand the intended meaning of song lyrics more clearly because interpretation depends on contextual references.

Keywords: Deixis, Semantics, Song Lyrics, Daniel Caesar

INTRODUCTION

Language has an essential role in human communication. People use language to express ideas, feelings, requests, opinions, and social relationships. Through language, individuals are able to interact and understand one another. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener. This definition emphasizes that meaning is not only derived from words themselves but also from the context in which they are used.

Language can be found in many forms such as spoken interaction, written texts, literature, films, advertisements, and songs. Among those forms, songs are one of the most popular media in society because they combine melody and lyrics to convey emotions and messages. Lyrics are meaningful words arranged artistically to represent the songwriter's thoughts, experiences, and feelings. Many people listen to songs not only for entertainment but also to understand the messages behind the lyrics.

In linguistic study, song lyrics can be analyzed using pragmatics because lyrics often contain implied meanings and contextual expressions. One important topic in pragmatics is deixis. Levinson (1983), as cited in Lailiyah et al. (2026), explains that deixis refers to linguistic expressions whose meanings depend on the context of utterance. In other words, the interpretation of deictic words changes according to who speaks, where the utterance happens, and when it is spoken.

Deixis is commonly divided into several types. However, this study focuses on three major types: person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. Person deixis refers to participants involved in communication, such as *I, you, we, and they*. Spatial deixis refers to location or place, such as *here, there, back, and where*. Temporal deixis refers to time references, such as *now, then, today, always, and when*.

Many previous researchers have analyzed deixis in songs. Yusuf (2026) found that person deixis was dominant in Wiz Khalifa's songs because the lyrics focused on emotional communication. Nazula et al. (2026) also found similar results in Sabrina Carpenter's song

Espresso, where person deixis appeared most frequently. These studies indicate that song lyrics often use person deixis because songs usually express relationships, feelings, and personal experiences.

The researcher chooses the song *Always* by Daniel Caesar because it is widely known and contains emotional lyrics related to love, memory, separation, and hope. The song presents many contextual expressions that are suitable for deictic analysis. Therefore, this research is entitled **A Deictic Analysis of the Song Lyrics “Always” by Daniel Caesar**.

The objectives of this research are:

1. To identify the types of deixis used in the song lyrics *Always* by Daniel Caesar.
2. To determine the dominant type of deixis found in the lyrics.
3. To explain how deixis contributes to the meaning of the song lyrics.

This study is expected to provide benefits for students, especially those studying semantics and pragmatics, by helping them understand how deixis works in song lyrics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Semantics

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies meaning in language. According to Saeed (2003), semantics is the study of meaning communicated through words, phrases, and sentences. It focuses on how language conveys ideas and concepts.

Cruse (2006), as cited in Nufus et al. (2026), states that semantics examines the meaning of linguistic units and the relationships among meanings. Therefore, semantics is necessary for understanding how language functions in communication.

2. Ambiguity in Language

a. Person Deixis

Person deixis refers to participants in communication. Examples include first person (*I, me, we*), second person (*you*), and third person (*he, she, they*).

b. Spatial Deixis

Spatial deixis refers to location relative to the speaker. Examples include *here, there, back, where*.

c. Temporal Deixis

Temporal deixis refers to time relative to the moment of speaking. Examples include *now, then, always, when*.

According to Nazula et al. (2026), deixis is important in song lyrics because it helps listeners connect emotionally with the message of the song.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used descriptive qualitative method. Creswell (2013), as cited in Lailiyah et al. (2026), states that qualitative research is used to describe and interpret phenomena through words rather than numbers. This method is suitable because the researcher analyzed words and expressions in song lyrics.

1. Data Source

The primary data source of this research was the lyrics of the song Always by Daniel Caesar.

2. Techniques of Data Collection

The researcher conducted several steps:

- a) Listening to the song repeatedly.
- b) Reading the lyrics carefully.
- c) Marking words containing deixis.
- d) Classifying data into person, spatial, and temporal deixis.
- e) Counting the frequency of each type.
- f) Interpreting the meaning of the findings.

3. Data Analysis

The researcher used three steps adapted from Sugiyono, as cited in Yusuf (2026):

- a) **Data Reduction** – selecting relevant deictic words.
- b) **Data Display** – presenting data in tables.
- c) **Conclusion Drawing** – interpreting results and making conclusions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

After analyzing the lyrics of *Always* by Daniel Caesar, the researcher found three types of deixis.

Table 1. Types of Deixis in the Song Lyrics “Always”

Song Lyrics	Person Deixis	Spatial Deixis	Temporal Deixis
Baby, baby, there will always be a space for you and me	you, me	there, space	always
Right where you left it	you	where	-
And maybe enough time will pass	-	-	time
We'll look back and laugh	we	back	-
Just don't forget about me	me	-	-
When I'm gone	I	-	when
I will always love you	I, you	-	always
If you change your mind	you	-	-
I'll be waiting	I	-	-

Table 2. Frequency of Deixis in the Song

Types of Deixis	Frequency	Percentage
Person Deixis	14	67%
Spatial Deixis	4	19%
Temporal Deixis	3	14%
Total	21	100%

Discussion

Based on the findings, person deixis is the dominant type in the song lyrics *Always*. This result is similar to previous studies conducted by Lailiyah et al. (2026) and Yusuf

(2026), which found that person deixis commonly dominates song lyrics because songs usually discuss relationships and personal emotions.

The use of **I** refers to the speaker or singer. The repeated use of **you** indicates the person addressed by the speaker. This creates direct emotional communication between two participants.

For example:

- *I will always love you*
- *Just don't forget about me*
- *If you change your mind*

These expressions show affection, longing, and hope.

Spatial deixis appears in words such as *there, where, and back*. These words refer to location, but in this song they also symbolize emotional distance and memories.

Temporal deixis appears in *always, time, and when*. The word *always* is especially significant because it expresses endless love and continuity.

According to Nazula et al. (2026), temporal deixis in songs often strengthens emotional themes because time references indicate permanence, memory, or waiting. Thus, deixis in this song helps listeners understand the emotional meaning behind the lyrics.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, the researcher concludes that the song lyrics *Always* by Daniel Caesar contain three kinds of deixis: person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. Person deixis is the dominant type with 14 data (67%), followed by spatial deixis with 4 data (19%), and temporal deixis with 3 data (14%). The dominance of person deixis shows that the song mainly focuses on personal feelings, emotional relationships, and communication between the speaker and the addressee. Deixis is important because it helps listeners interpret the intended meaning of the lyrics based on contextual references.

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