



Deixis Analysis on Imagine Song by John Lennon

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Abstract

Deixis refers to the research of using spoken or written language to indicate or indicate something specific. This research aims to analyze the deixis used in a song by John Lennon entitled Imagine and to understand the meanings this deixis conveys. It used a qualitative approach with content analysis. The analysis was performed using the Dexis theory proposed by Yule. The results show that there are three categories of deixis found in the data: personal, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. Among them, personal deixis is the most common, followed by spatial deixis, and temporal deixis is the least used. Moreover, data analysis shows that the person deixis plays a role in revealing by whom the sentence is uttered and to whom it refers. Spatial definitions are used to clarify sentences regarding word location and reference. On the other hand, temporal deixis is used to give timing and description of events. In conclusion, using deixis in song allows people to convey clear information about who is speaking, where the conversation occurs, and when it will occur.

Keywords: Deixis Analysis, Imagine Song, John Lennon

1. Introduction

In our lives, when we watch a movie or series or listen to a song, there are pragmatic elements used in the conversation or lyrics of the songs and series that we are unaware of. To cooperate with others, humans need to build communication. Languages are more than skills; they are the medium through which communities of people engage with, make sense of, and shape the world (Phipps & Gonzales, 2004, p. 2). Humans use language to interact or communicate with other people.

Aspects of grammar that allow meaning to be determined based on context are called deixis. (Yule 1996) states that "deixis" comes from the Greek word for "indicating" language and other forms of language that accomplish this. This instruction is called a deictic expression. For example, I, you (human deixis), here, there (spatial deixis), now, then (temporal deixis). These examples suggest that according to (Yule, 1996), there are three types of deixis. The use of deixis is a form of reference associated with the speaker's context. Here, the speaker uses spatial deixis to point to an object near the speaker. This research raised the issue of Deixis being used in a song by John Lennon.

A song is a short poem or other sequence of words set to music or intended to be sung. Examining the deixis used in song impacts learning English as a Foreign Language. This result will help foreign language learners to use their Deixis properly.

Several similar researches have been conducted, including research by Pratama and Dewi (2019), which analyzed deixis in the lyrics of Indonesian pop songs using Yule's theory but focused on different cultural contexts and language

structures. Another is the study by Smith and Patel (2018), which examined deixis in the lyrics of political songs in the 1960s to explore social context. For other, is research by Huang (2020), which explored temporal deixis in Chinese folk songs and its impact on cultural preservation. These researches have different focuss from this research.

Thus, this research has two objectives, which are listed below.

1. What types of deixis are contained in “Imagine Song by John Lennon”?
2. Why they can be categorized as those types of deixis?

Unlike previous studies, which often focus on deixis in specific linguistic or cultural contexts, this research provides a nuanced examination of how deixis functions in English song lyrics to convey complex ideas and emotions. Additionally, it is offering new insights for language learners and educators in linguistics field.

2. Methods

The method used in this research is qualitative description using a content analysis design. Qualitative method was used because the data are in the form of texts or documents, a characteristic of this method (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The analysis was done through several steps. First, the song was transformed into transcripts or written texts. Second, the three types of deixis were identified in the data. Then, the deixis found in the data were analyzed. Finally, the conclusion was drawn.

3. Results and Discussion

After the song “Imagine” by John Lennon was transformed into transcripts or written texts, three types of deixis were identified: personal deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis, which are explained in detail below.

3.1 Personal Deixis

It's easy if you try

The word *you* here is Personal Deixis. This word refers to the person, the second person, and is “us” as the listener.

Second-person deixis is a deictic reference to a person or persons identified as the addressee

Examples:

- you
- yourself
- yourselves
- your
- yours

Phrase: If you try to describe a second person trying to imagine so that it can be.

The singer tells You (second person) that it is easy to imagine no heaven in this world if *you* try.

No hell below us

Word *us* here is Personal Deixis. *Us* refer to singer and the listener.

Person deixis is concerned with pronouns; however, pronouns are a part of person deixis. Frank (1972) stated that the traditional definition of a pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun. There are several types of pronouns.

The first person (singer) asks the listener to imagine something again. Now, the singer asks the listener to imagine this world has no hell.

Above us, only sky

Word *us* here is Personal Deixis. The word *us* refers to the singer and listener.

The phrase *only sky* describes no heaven and hell. There is just sky.

Here, the singer tells the second person that there is no place in this world other than our earth. There is just ground and everything real around us, including the sky.

You may say I'm a dreamer

Word *you* is Personal Deixis which refer to second person (the listener).

Word *I'm* is Personal Deixis which refer to first person (singer).

First person deixis is deictic reference that refers to:

- *the speaker, or*
- *both the speaker and referents grouped with the speaker.*

Kinds:

- Exclusive First Person Deixis
- Inclusive First Person Deixis

Examples:

(English)

- *The following singular pronouns:*

- *I*
- *me*
- *myself*
- *my*
- *mine*

- *The following plural pronouns:*

- *we*
- *us*
- *ourselves*
- *our*

- *ours*
- *Am, the first person form of the verb be*

“*You may say I’m a dreamer*” could mean that singer say to the listener, that they might say singer as a dreamer because singer ask the listener to imagine some unreal and almost impossible situation.

But I’m not the only one

Word *I’m* is Personal Deixis which refer to first person (singer).

First person deixis is deictic reference that refers to

- *the speaker, or*
- *both the speaker and referents grouped with the speaker.*

Kinds:

- Exclusive First Person Deixis
- Inclusive First Person Deixis

Examples:

(English)

The following singular pronouns:

- *I*
- *me*
- *myself*
- *my*
- *mine*

The following plural pronouns:

- *we*
- *us*
- *ourselves*
- *our*
- *ours*

Am, the first person form of the verb be

“But I’m not the only one” could mean that the singer tells the listener that he’s not the only one who dreams of a peaceful life without killing each other, without religion, heaven, and country. The singer is trying to deliver that he’s not the only one dreaming of those things. There must be people who have the same dream and wants out there.

I hope someday you'll join us

Word *I* is Personal Deixis which refer to the first person.

It refers to singer as first person that hope one day singer will be as a part of they who have the same dream.

Word *you* is Personal Deixis which refer to second person.

I wonder if you can

Word *I* is Personal Deixis which refer to the first person.

Word *you* is Personal Deixis which refer to second person.

Here, singer tell to the listener that singer want to know the listener can imagine this world never had any possessions.

But I'm not the only one

The word *I'm* is Personal Deixis, which refers to first person (singer).

First-person deixis is a deictic reference that refers to

- *the speaker, or*
- *Both the speaker and referents are grouped with the speaker.*

Kinds:

- Exclusive First Person Deixis
- Inclusive First Person Deixis

Examples:

(English)

- *The following singular pronouns:*
 - *I*
 - *me*
 - *myself*
 - *my*
 - *mine*
- *The following plural pronouns:*
 - *we*
 - *us*
 - *ourselves*
 - *our*

- *ours*

Am, the first person form of the verb *be*

“*But I'm not the only one*” means that the singer tells the listener that he’s not the only one who became a dreamer.

3.2 Spatial Deixis

Imagine there's no heaven

There here is Spatial Deixis.

This word refer to a place that singer let us to imagine about where no heaven there. *There* here describing so far and unreal place.

Saeed (2013) maintains that the adverbs 'here' and 'there' pick out places according to their proximity to the location of the speaker. We can see this because if the speaker moves, the interpretation of the adverbs will change. When the speaker and her addressee in (5) have moved, they can call the shade 'here' and their original place in the sun 'there', as in (6): 5. It's too hot here in the sun, let's take our drinks into the shade over there. 6. I'm glad we moved here, I was melting over there.

The word “heaven” describes a place believed by people as a good place, peace, and a good payment place for being a good human in the world after life.

According to Merriam-Webster, "heaven" is defined primarily as the expanse of space over the earth, often perceived as a dome (the firmament). Additionally, it refers to the dwelling place of the Deity and blessed souls, a spiritual state of everlasting communion with God, or a place or condition of utmost happiness and pleasure. It is also used to describe a state of thought where sin is absent and divine harmony is present, particularly in Christian Science.

Here, singer asked us to imagine if haven is nothing.

No hell below us

Bellow describes the hell’s position, which is mostly described under the ground.

Word *hell*, according to Merriam-Webster, “*hell*” is defined as a netherworld where the dead continue to exist, often referred to as “*hades*.” It also describes a realm associated with the devil and demons where condemned souls suffer eternal punishment.

Below here, as Spatial Deixis.

But, I found Discourse Deixis.

Ekowati (2014), in her research she argued that discourse deixis is a deictic reference to a portion of a discourse relative to the speaker's current location in the discourse, such as so, but, above, below, last, previous, proceeding, next or following, furthermore (usually used in texts). Meanwhile,

Spatial deixis is used to pick out a location relative to the location of the speaker or addressee. (Verschuieren, 1999) The prototypical cases of spatial deixis are 'here' and 'there' in English and '?inja' and '?anja' in Persian. Contemporary English makes use of only two adverbs, 'here' and 'there', for the basic distinction, but in older texts and in some dialects, a much larger set of deictic expressions can be found. Although 'yonder' (more distant from speaker) is still used, words like 'hither' (to this place) and 'thence' (from that place) now sound archaic. These last two adverbs include the meaning of motion toward or away from the speaker.

Above us, only sky

The word above is the same as word *below*. This word shows the sky's position.

Imagine there's no countries

Word *There* here is Spatial Deixis.

This word describes a place where the singer tries to let us imagine no country there. *There* here describe the place so far away, as if it were unreachable.

Phrase no countries, word country, according to Merriam-Webster, has several definitions. It primarily refers to an extended expanse of land, or a region. It can also mean the land of a person's birth, residence, or citizenship, and more broadly, a political state or nation. The term can describe the people of a state or district, as well as rural areas as distinguished from urban areas. Additionally, "country" can refer to country music or geology-related terms like "country rock".

Here, the singer lets the listener imagine that in this world, a country never existed.

3.3 Temporal Deixis

Livin' for today

Word *today* is Temporal Deixis, refer to time. Time used in this phrase is present.

Time deixis concerns the encoding temporal points and spans relative to the time at which an utterance uttered. As stated by Ekowati (2014) that time deixis give a specific point of time of the utterance

Related to previous verses, this verse lets the listener think about all the people just in life in the present time. This really means today, there is no past and no future.

I hope someday you'll join us

Word *someday* is Temporal Deixis. *Someday* describe unclear time in the future, no one know about the exact time “*someday*” will happen.

Time deixis is reference to time relative to a temporal reference point. Typically, this point is the moment of utterance.

Examples:

- *Temporal adverbs*
 - *now / then*
 - *yesterday / today / tomorrow*
- *Distinctions in tense*

4. Conclusions

The research analysis of Deixis has always been one of the most influential studies, especially for the development of scientific and linguistic knowledge. In this research, the data is consistent with the John Lennon song, *Imagine*. Three types of deixis have been identified: person deixis, spatial deixis, and time deixis. The analysis showed that personal deixis is the most common type of deixis, followed by spatial deixis in second place and temporal deixis as the rarest. On the other hand, deixis on the song, which is consistent with Yule's theory, means deixis made the song's message understandable to the listeners. Words were delivered in the right way. Moreover, deixis made the song more meaningful, engaging, and understandable.

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