



DEIXIS ANALYSIS IN A FOX NEWS INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan deiksis dalam wawancara politik yang disiarkan di Fox News dengan Presiden Amerika Serikat, Donald Trump. Deiksis memiliki peran penting dalam wacana politik karena menghubungkan bahasa dengan konteks serta membantu penutur memposisikan diri, orang lain, dan peristiwa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis ungkapan deiktik yang muncul dalam wawancara tersebut serta menjelaskan fungsi pragmatisnya berdasarkan teori Levinson (1983). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan data berupa transkrip wawancara yang dianalisis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa deiksis persona merupakan jenis yang paling dominan, terutama penggunaan “I” dan “we” yang menandakan otoritas, tanggung jawab, dan solidaritas, sedangkan rujukan persona ketiga “they” dan “them” digunakan untuk menciptakan jarak dan menandai oposisi. Selain itu, deiksis waktu, tempat, wacana, dan sosial turut mendukung pembingkaiannya narasi, penyusunan argumen, serta penampilan relasi kekuasaan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa deiksis tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai unsur kebahasaan, tetapi juga sebagai strategi linguistik dalam membangun makna politik dan posisi ideologis dalam wacana media.

Kata Kunci: Deiksis, Wacana Politik, Pragmatik.

Abstract

This study investigates the use of deixis in a political interview broadcast on Fox News featuring U.S. President Donald Trump. Deixis is central to political discourse because it links language to context and helps speakers position themselves, others, and events. The objective of this research is to identify the types of deictic expressions used in the interview and to explain their pragmatic functions based on Levinson's (1983) theory. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected from the interview transcript and analyzed. The findings indicate that person deixis is the most dominant type, especially “I” and “we” which express authority, responsibility, and solidarity, while third-person forms “they” and “them” create distance and opposition. Time, place, discourse, and social deixis support narrative



framing, argument organization, and the expression of power relations. This study shows that deixis functions as a strategic linguistic resource in constructing political meaning and ideological positioning in media discourse.

Keywords: Deixis, Political Discourse, Pragmatic.

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a crucial role in political communication because it enables speakers to construct meaning, shape public perception, and position themselves in relation to others. In media discourse, linguistic choices become strategic tools used not only to deliver information but also to perform identity, authority, and ideology. One important pragmatic feature that connects language with context is deixis, which refers to linguistic expressions whose interpretation depends on the situational context of the utterance. Through deictic forms, speakers point to participants, time, place, and elements of discourse, thereby organizing how events and roles are understood. Because of this context-dependent nature, deixis is essential for examining how meaning is constructed in spoken political interactions.

The study of deixis belongs to pragmatics, which focuses on the relationship between language and context. Levinson (1983) explains that deixis encodes features of the context of utterance and requires contextual information for interpretation. He classifies deixis into five types: person deixis, time deixis, place deixis, discourse deixis, and social deixis. Person deixis concerns participant roles, time deixis locates events temporally, and place deixis indicates spatial relations. Discourse and social deixis refer to parts of the unfolding text and social relationships or status between participants, making Levinson's framework comprehensive for discourse analysis.

Previous studies demonstrate that deixis plays an important role across various discourse types. Research on speeches shows that deictic expressions strengthen the relationship between speakers and audiences by anchoring messages to shared contexts (Nisa, Rohbiah, & Asari, 2024). Literary studies reveal that deixis guides readers in interpreting perspective, social relations, and discourse flow within narratives (Nasir, Putri, & Aziz, 2023). Studies on social media discourse also indicate that deixis reflects social relations and contextual references in digital interaction (Hanifa et al., 2023). These findings confirm that deixis consistently functions as a key pragmatic device for contextual meaning-making.

In political discourse, deixis becomes closely linked to power, solidarity, and ideological positioning. Political speakers frequently use first-person forms to claim authority and responsibility, while third-person forms may construct distance and opposition. Temporal expressions often contrast past, present, and future conditions, and spatial expressions emphasize national territory or institutional settings. However, most previous research focuses on speeches, literary texts, or online discourse rather than spontaneous political interviews. This creates a gap in understanding how deixis operates in real-time political interaction broadcast through mass media.

A televised political interview featuring Donald Trump provides a dynamic context in which deixis functions in spontaneous interaction between the interviewer and the political figure. The research corpus of this study consists of a YouTube video transcript discussing military operations, border control, national security, and international relations. The data contain numerous deictic expressions that connect the speaker to institutions, territories, time frames, and prior discourse segments. This context highlights key issues regarding how



political actors position themselves, their actions, and others through context-bound language. Therefore, the interview serves as a rich source for pragmatic analysis.

Based on this background, this study addresses two research questions: (1) What types of deixis are used in the political interview? and (2) How do these deictic expressions function in constructing political meaning, authority, and ideological positioning? The scope of the research is limited to identifying and interpreting deictic expressions based on Levinson's (1983) classification without extending to other linguistic levels. The objective of this study is to explain how deixis operates as a contextual and strategic linguistic resource in political media discourse. This study argues that deictic expressions function not only as grammatical elements but also as pragmatic tools for constructing identity, legitimizing actions, and guiding audience interpretation..

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach because the aim is to interpret contextual meaning rather than measure numerical data. Based on Creswell (2007), a qualitative descriptive approach is used to describe and interpret texts by focusing on meanings within their context. A qualitative approach is appropriate for pragmatic studies that examine how language operates within naturally occurring discourse situations. The data source of this research is a transcript of a televised political interview broadcast on Fox News YouTube channel featuring President Donald Trump titled "*JUST IN: President Trump reveals plans for governorship of Venezuelan*". The interview was selected as the research corpus because it contains spontaneous spoken interaction rich in context-dependent linguistic expressions. Such data allow the researcher to investigate how deictic elements function within authentic political communication.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Levinson's (1983) theory of deixis, which defines deixis as linguistic expressions whose interpretation depends on the context of utterance. Levinson classifies deixis into person, time, place, discourse, and social deixis, and these categories serve as the analytical model in this research. The researcher acted as the main instrument in identifying and interpreting the data.

The data were collected using a documentation technique by carefully reading the interview transcript and selecting utterances that contain deictic forms. The form of the data consists of words, phrases, and clauses that function as deictic expressions within the discourse.

The analysis was conducted in three stages. First, deictic expressions were identified from the transcript. Second, the identified forms were classified according to Levinson's categories of deixis. Third, each expression was interpreted to explain its pragmatic function within political discourse. This methodological procedure enables the study to explain how deixis operates as a contextual and strategic linguistic resource in media-based political communication.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the deixis analysis conducted on the Fox News interview with President Donald Trump. The findings are based on frequency tables that show the occurrence of different types of deixis, including person, place, time, social, and discourse deixis. The results are presented to illustrate the distribution and dominant use of deictic expressions in the interview. In addition to frequency, this section also examines the functions



of each deictic category as used in the interview, focusing on how deictic expressions serve communicative purposes such as referring to participants, indicating time and place, organizing discourse, and establishing social relationships. The discussion interprets these findings in relation to the interview context and relevant pragmatic theories.

1. Types of Deixis Used by President Donald Trump in the Fox News interview

After collecting data, it was found that all types of deixis were used by President Donald Trump in the Fox News Interview. The data are shown in Table 1

Table 1. Types of Deixis

No	Types of Deixis	Frequency
1	First Person Deixis	138
2	Second Person Deixis	62
3	Third Person Deixis	105
4	Place Deixis	15
5	Time Deixis	24
6	Social Deixis	1
7	Discourse Deixis	84
Total		429

First Person Deixis

Two categories of first-person deixis were identified in the context of the interview: singular and plural. This data is presented in the table below.

Table 2. First Person Deixis

First Person Deixis		Deictic Expression	Frequency
Singular	1st Person	I	60
		Me	4
		My	3
Plural	1st Person	We	52
		Us	6
		Our	13
Total			138

Table 2 presents the distribution of first-person deixis found in the Fox News interview with President Donald Trump, which is categorized into singular and plural forms. Based on the data, first-person singular deixis appears more frequently than plural forms. The deictic expression “I” is the most dominant, occurring 60 times, followed by “we” with 52 occurrences. Other expressions such as “me” (4), “my” (3), “us” (6), and “our” (13) appear less frequently.

The high frequency of the singular first-person deixis, particularly “I”, indicates that the speaker frequently refers to himself when expressing opinions, experiences, and personal actions. This suggests a strong emphasis on individual agency and



personal involvement during the interview. In contrast, the use of plural first-person deixis such as “we,” “us,” and “our” functions to create a sense of collective identity, often including the government, administration, or the American people.

Second Person Deixis

Second Person deixis in this study refers to linguistic forms used to address the interlocutor in the speech situation, as classified by Levinson (1983). In the fox News interview transcript, these forms appear in the interaction between the host and President Donald Trump, particularly when they directly refer to each other during question, statements, and responses.

From the data, second person reference is realized through the pronoun “you” and “your.” These expressions function to indicate the addressee within the immediate conversational context.

Table 3. Second Person Deixis

Second Person Deixis		Deictic Expression	Frequenc
			y
Singular	2nd Person	You	58
		Your	4
		Total	62

Table 3 shows that second-person deixis occurs 62 times in the data. The pronoun “you” is the most frequently occurring form, while “your” appears less often. The dominance of “you” indicates that direct address is a prominent feature of the interaction. Functionally, these expressions serve to maintain the dialogic structure of the discourse, allowing speakers to manage turn-taking, emphasize involvement, and sustain interpersonal connection within the interview setting.

Third Person Deixis

This section summarizes the Fox News interview with President Donald Trump third-person deixis grammatical categories. According to Levinson (1983), third-person deixis refers to linguistic expressions used to indicate entities other than the speaker and the addressee, and it functions to point to people or groups being talked about in a discourse. In this data, third-person deixis is categorized into singular and plural forms, and the results are presented in the frequency table below to show the distribution of each deictic expression.

Table 4. Third Person Deixis

Third Person Deixis		Deictic Expression	Frequenc
			y
Singular	3rd Person	He	6
		She	8
		Him	6



Plural 3rd Person	Her	4
	His	4
	They	63
	Them	10
	Their	4
	Total	105

Table 4 shows the distribution of third-person deictic expressions identified in the interview. The data indicate that plural third-person deixis occurs more frequently than singular forms. Among the plural expressions, “they” is the most dominant, appearing 63 times, followed by “them” with 10 occurrences and “their” with 4 occurrences. In contrast, singular third-person deixis appears less frequently, with “she” occurring 8 times, “he” and “him” each appearing 6 times, and “her” and “his” occurring 4 times respectively.

The frequent use of plural third-person deixis, particularly “they”, suggests that the speaker often refers to groups rather than individuals. Functionally, these expressions are used to point to external parties such as political opponents, institutions, or other collective entities discussed during the interview. This aligns with Levinson’s (1983) explanation that third-person deixis helps establish reference to entities outside the immediate speaker–addressee relationship. Meanwhile, the limited use of singular third-person deixis indicates that individual figures are mentioned less often and usually in specific contexts.

Place Deixis

According to Levinson (1983), place deixis refers to expressions that indicate spatial locations relative to the position of the speaker or the context of the utterance. The data collection are shown in the table below.

Table 5. Place Deixis

Type of Deixis	Deictic Expression	Frequency
Place Deixis	There	4
	Here	6
	Out	5
	Total	15

Table 5 presents the frequency of place deictic expressions identified in the interview. The data show that the deictic expression “here” appears most frequently with 6 occurrences, followed by “out” with 5 occurrences and “there” with 4 occurrences, resulting in a total of 15 instances of place deixis.

The frequent use of “here” indicates that the speaker often refers to the immediate location or current situation of the interview. This reflects Levinson’s (1983) notion that place deixis is anchored to the speaker’s spatial perspective. Meanwhile, the use of “there” and “out” functions to refer to locations or situations outside the speaker’s



immediate position, such as external places, events, or abstract spaces discussed during the interview.

Time Deixis

Time deixis refers to expressions that locate events in time relative to the moment of speaking (Levinson, 1983). These expressions function to indicate temporal reference such as the present, past, or future within a discourse. In this study, time deixis is analyzed to show how temporal expressions are used in the interview, and the results are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Time Deixis

Type of Deixis	Deictic Expression	Frequency
Time Deixis	Every once in a while	1
	Now	12
	Every single year	1
	Every day	1
	Every hour	1
	Today	2
	Years	5
	Next week	1
Total		24

Table 6 shows the frequency of time deictic expressions identified in the interview. The data indicate that “now” is the most frequently used time deictic expression, occurring 12 times. This is followed by “years” with 5 occurrences and “today” with 2 occurrences. Other expressions such as “every once in a while,” “every single year,” “every day,” “every hour,” and “next week” appear once each. In total, 24 instances of time deixis were identified.

The dominant use of “now” suggests that the speaker frequently emphasizes the present moment or current situation during the interview. This aligns with Levinson’s (1983) view that time deixis is anchored to the time of utterance. The use of expressions such as “years” and “every single year” functions to refer to extended periods in the past or habitual time frames, while “next week” indicates future reference.

Social Deixis

According to Levinson (1983), social deixis refers to expressions that indicate social relationships, social status, or levels of formality between participants in a speech event. In this study, social deixis is analyzed to identify how social relations are linguistically marked in the interview, and the results are presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Social Deixis

Type of Deixis	Deictic Expression	Frequency
Social Deixis	Sir	1
	Total	1



Table 7 shows the occurrence of social deictic expressions identified in the interview. The data indicate that only one instance of social deixis was found, represented by the expression “sir,” with a total frequency of 1.

The use of “sir” serves as a marker of respect and formality toward the addressee. In line with Levinson’s (1983) explanation, social deixis reflects the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer, including differences in status or role. The limited occurrence of social deixis in the interview suggests that explicit markers of social hierarchy are not frequently emphasized, possibly due to the conversational and institutional nature of the interview setting, where roles are already implicitly understood.

Discourse Deixis

Discourse deixis refers to linguistic expressions that point to parts of the discourse itself, such as statements, ideas, or pieces of information that have been mentioned previously or are being discussed at the moment of speaking. As explained by Levinson’s (1983), discourse deixis doesn’t refer to participants, time, or place, but instead to segments of the ongoing text or talk. In this study, discourse deixis is examined to understand how speakers in the Fox News interaction refer back to their own utterances or to earlier parts of the conversation. The distribution of discourse deictic expressions is presented in Table 8.

Table 8.

Deixis

Deixis	Type of Deixis	Discourse	
		Deictic Expression	Frequency
Discourse Deixis	It	54	
	That	22	
	This	8	
	Total	84	

Table 8 indicates that “it” is the most dominant discourse deictic form, occurring 54 times. This is followed by “that” with 22 occurrences and “this” with 8 occurrences. The predominance of “it” suggests that speakers frequently refer back to previously mentioned propositions, situations, or events without repeating the complete information. Rather than restating details, the speakers depend on shared discourse context, enabling “it” to function as an economical reference to earlier parts of the conversation.

The use of “this” and “that” reflects a slightly different discourse function. Both forms are used to direct the listener’s attention to particular parts of the ongoing talk. The expression “this” generally refers to a topic that is currently being emphasized, while “that” tends to point to information that has already been mentioned or is treated as relatively more distant in the discourse. From a pragmatic perspective, these expressions help manage the flow of the conversation, maintain coherence, and clarify how one utterance is connected to another. This is in line with Levinson’s (1983) explanation of discourse deixis, which highlights its role in linking utterances to the



internal organization of discourse rather than to the physical context of the speech event.

2. Function of Deixis Used by President Donald Trump in the Fox News interview

This section discusses the functions of deixis used by President Donald Trump in a Fox News interview. Based on Levinson's (1983) theory, deixis is understood as context-dependent expressions anchored to the speaker's perspective, and this analysis examines how different types of deixis function to convey meaning within the interview discourse. The selected examples aim to provide readers with a detailed explanation. The analysis is based on Levinson's (1983) deixis theory.

Function of First Person Deixis

First-person deixis functions to express the speaker's personal involvement and stance, as President Trump frequently uses first-person pronouns to emphasize individual responsibility and assert his perspective within the interview context.

Data 1

President Trump : “*I* rebuilt the entire military during *my* first term.”

In the utterance above, the first-person deixis “I” and “my” function to anchor the statement to the speaker. According to Levinson (1983), first-person deixis refers to expressions that identify the speaker as the deictic center of the utterance. The use of “I” positions President Trump as the main agent of the action, while “my” functions to mark personal ownership of the time period referred to as “first term.” Functionally, these deictic expressions emphasize personal responsibility and authority, reinforcing the speaker's self-representation within the political interview discourse.

Function of Second Person Deixis

Based on Levinson's (1983) theory, second-person deixis refers to expressions that identify the addressee within the speech event.

Data 2

President Trump : “I mean some of the crimes are so bad *you* would not believe it.”

From this data, it functions to directly address the addressee. As mentioned by Levinson (1983), second-person deixis refers to expressions used to identify the hearer within the speech event. The use of “you” in this utterance does not necessarily point to a specific individual but rather functions as a generalized reference to the audience. Functionally, this deictic expression serves to engage listeners and invite them to share the speaker's perspective, thereby strengthening the persuasive effect of the statement within the interview discourse.

Function of Third Person Deixis



According to Levinson (1983), third-person deixis refers to expressions used to indicate entities other than the speaker and the addressee, and its use in the interview functions to refer to individuals or groups being discussed and to position them outside the immediate speaker–hearer relationship.

Data 3

President Trump : “We had millions of people pouring through the border, now we have nobody coming in unless *they* come in legally.”

In this data, the third-person deixis “they” functions to refer to individuals who are not part of the speaker–addressee group. Third-person deixis is used to indicate entities external to the immediate discourse participants (Levinson, 1983). The use of “they” in this utterance serves to distance the speaker from the group being referred to, positioning them as outsiders. Functionally, this deictic expression contributes to the construction of an in-group (“we”) versus out-group (“they”) distinction, which is commonly employed in political discourse to frame social and policy-related issues.

Function of Place Deixis

Place deixis functions to express the speaker’s spatial perspective, as speakers use locative expressions such as *here*, *there*, and *out* to position events and participants within a physical or situational context during interaction.

Data 4

President Trump : “Now all of a sudden when I came I was hearing stories about the kind of crime that they had *here*.”

In this data, the place deixis “here” refers to a specific location understood within the context of the discourse. According to Levinson (1983), place deixis indicates spatial reference relative to the speaker’s perspective. In the utterance “the kind of crime that they had *here*,” “here” anchors the discussion to a particular place being talked about, making the issue more concrete and situational. Functionally, it helps situate the described events within a relevant spatial context in the conversation.

Function of Time Deixis

Time deixis functions to locate events or actions in relation to the moment of speaking as the deictic center, as explained by Stephen Levinson (1983). In this interview, temporal expressions help indicate whether a situation is happening at the present time, relates to past experience, or refers to future plans.

Data 5

President Trump : “we are going to start *now* hitting land with regard to the cartels.”

From this data, the expression “now” functions as time deixis because it refers to the present time of the speech. It shows that the action being discussed is connected to the current moment. According to Levinson (1983), time deixis is interpreted based on the time of utterance, making the speaker’s “now” the temporal center. The use of



“now” emphasizes immediacy and signals that the action being described is relevant to the current situation. Functionally, this expression highlights urgency and frames the statement as part of an ongoing or imminent action within the interview context.

Function of Social Deixis

Social deixis functions to signal social relationships, levels of respect, and relative status between participants in a speech situation. In pragmatic analysis, social deictic expressions encode aspects of formality and role relations between speaker and addressee, as explained by Levinson (1983).

Data 6

Host : “You have done quite a bit of decorating since I’ve been here last, great to see you, *sir*.”

In this utterance, the word “sir” functions as social deixis. The host uses this expression to address President Donald Trump in a respectful and formal manner. The term does not refer to time, place, or participant identity, but instead indexes the social status and institutional role of the addressee. According to Levinson (1983), social deixis encodes the social relationship between speaker and hearer, including distinctions of rank and role. Pragmatically, the use of “sir” signals politeness and acknowledges the president’s authority, reinforcing the formal interview setting and the hierarchical relationship between the host and the president.

Function of Discourse Deixis

Based on Levinson’s (1983) theory, discourse deixis refers to expressions that point to parts of the discourse itself, such as previous statements or ongoing segments of talk. In the interview, discourse deixis functions to organize the speaker’s message and draw attention to specific parts of the discourse being emphasized.

Data 7

President Trump : “A couple of very brave helicopter pilots were wounded pretty badly but they are good, they are in good shape. *It* was an amazing attack.”

The discourse deictic expression “it” functions to refer back to the previously mentioned event in the discourse. Discourse deixis is used to point to parts of the discourse itself rather than to concrete entities in the external context. In this utterance, “it” summarizes the preceding description of the attack involving the helicopter pilots and allows the speaker to evaluate the event as a whole. Functionally, this use of discourse deixis helps maintain coherence in the discourse and enables the speaker to express an evaluative stance toward the event being discussed.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that deixis functions as a deliberate linguistic tool in political interviews, fulfilling referential and pragmatic roles. Personal deixis dominates the



conversation, where first-person pronouns convey power, responsibility, and shared group identity, while third-person pronouns create separation while forming distinctions between insiders and outsiders. Place and time deixis situate events within spatial and temporal frameworks, increasing the specificity and urgency of statements. Discourse deixis structures the narrative flow, maintains logical coherence, and directs the listener's focus to important events, while social deixis conveys respect and power dynamics, although it appears sporadically in these interviews. In summary, the results of this study show that deictic terms are far from being mere grammatical features; rather, they function as tools for constructing political meaning, reinforcing ideological positions, and managing personal and official relationships in media-facilitated discussions.

Suggestion

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that future researchers continue to conduct research on deixis in political discourse in various media and contexts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of its pragmatic role. Linguistics and pragmatics educators are encouraged to integrate deixis analysis into educational programs and learning activities to increase students' sensitivity to context-dependent language. In addition, media experts and political observers can utilize deixis analysis to critically examine how politicians build authority, self-image, and ideological positions through speeches, thereby sharpening their understanding of broadcast interviews and other forms of political dialogue.

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