

DEIXIS ANALYSIS OF THE LYRICS IN THE SONGS OF THE “KLANG” ALBUM BY ENGLISH BAND “THE RAKES”

Oleh:

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Abstrak

Language is a process that is only in humans which is not instinctive in sharing ideas. Music is considered a language, and music also contains meanings or messages encoded by the speaker. Deixis are expressions that require context from the discourse participants. Person deixis are deictic expressions that require context of people to understand the context. “Klang” is a music album by the British band “The Rakes” released in 2009. The researcher was interested in figuring out the deixis in three songs. These songs are “1989”, “Mullers Ratchet”, and “That’s the Reason”. Using the qualitative method, the researcher found that 119 person deixis were present.

Key words: the rakes, person deixis, music, klang album

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A. INTRODUCTION

Language, as defined by Herman (2015), is a method of sharing ideas, emotions, and desires through a symbol system considered voluntary. Humans, like many other animals-such as cows, grasshoppers, and woodpeckers-utilise sound to communicate. However, the system of human communication is considered to be the most versatile. Humans

are able to express thoughts through many mediums, like writing and signs, and discuss a wide amount of topics. (Aitchison, 1996). Communication in real life scenarios has language taking a crucial and significant role. Songs, or music, are considered to be a system of communication with other people by making use of sounds to express a feeling, sense, idea, emotion, or thought (Saputra and Apsari, 2021; Azizah and Arifin, 2024).

Music, as defined by the Cambridge Online Dictionary (2025), is a pattern of sounds created by musical instruments, voices, or computers (or a combination of all) with the intent to give pleasure to listeners. However, pleasure is not the sole purpose of music. Muqit et al. (2023) found that music tells listeners the characteristics of certain groups of people. “Tanduk Majang” is a song that reflects the attributes of the Madura people, a famous tribe in Indonesia. They found that “Tanduk Majang” conveys the message that Madurese people are able to overcome every obstacle, resourceful, and friendly. The song further explains that the Madurese are energetic, joyful, absolutely resilient, and optimistic.

The Rakes were an English band that was founded in London in 2003. In total, the band released three albums. The first album was titled “Capture/Release”, released in 2005. Their second album was released in 2007, named “Ten New Messages”. The third and final album was released in 2009 which bore the name “Klang” (The Rakes Official Website, n.d.). “Klang” contained 10 songs (You’re in it, That’s the Reason, The Loneliness of the Outdoor Smoker, Bitchin’ in the Kitchen, The Woes of the Working Woman, 1989, Shackleton, The Light From Your Mac, Mullers Ratchet, and The Final Hill) (BBC,

2009; MusicBrainz, n.d.)). The researcher listened to this album and formed an interest in certain utterances found in the songs.

Out of context, some sentences seem gibberish. An expression like “here” is known as a “deictic expression”. “Deictic” is derived from the Greek word *Deixis*, which contains the meaning “pointing” via language. These expressions are interpreted differently by each person. The meaning extracted from a deictic expression relies on what the person has in mind at that moment (Yule, 2020).

Saputra and Apsari (2020) was supported by Levinson (1983) in explaining three types of deixis. Stapleton (2017) adds another type of deixis, which produces 4 deixis categories in total:

1) Person Deixis

Levinson (1983) explains that the person deixis involves the coding of the role of participants in the speech program. This type of deictic expression is further divided into three parts in which it operates, noted by the pronouns for the first person, the second person, and the third person. Examples of the pronouns include I, my, mine, our, et cetera. Other expressions, such as this person, these men, those women, and others are also considered deictic. The only requirement is for the

listener to be able to make a referential relationship to understand the context. This leads the listener to require pragmatic information.

2) Spatial Deixis

Spatial deixis explains how language shows connection between the space and location where the participants' discourse occurs (Levinson, 1983). Furthermore, Fromkin et al. (2003) adds that the expression of place needs information to explain the context from statements such as there, here, this spot, that place, et cetera. There are demonstrative pronouns (that and his), adverbs (here and there), directional terms (before and after; left and right; front and back), or phrases (out there, under our place).

3) Temporal Deixis

Stapleton (2017) elaborates that temporal deixis is another category of deictic expressions. These expressions callback to an event of an utterance that takes place any time relative to the moment of discourse. Therefore, it is represented by tense, time adverbials, and spatial prepositions sometimes (such as in the morning, at midnight, on time).

4) Social Deixis

Social deixis differs from the other types of deixis. This deictic expression does not refer to the time, place, or person-rather, it refers to rankings and positions assigned socially between the speaker and the listener. It deals with the differences in social status between the participants.

It is further explained by Levinson that there are two central kinds of social deixis. The first kind is *Relational Social Deixis* which contains a reference for some degree of relationship between the participants (e.g. my wife, teacher, cousin, brother, et cetera). The second kind is *Absolute Social Deixis* which does not contain any degree of relationship between participants (e.g. your highness, your liege, Mr. President, et cetera).

From the four types of deixis mentioned above, the researcher is interested in finding person deixis that are present in songs from The Rakes' 2009 album "Klang".

This research is conducted in order to answer two questions with this research. First, how many person deixis appear in the songs chosen from the 2009 album "Klang"? Second, what are the most and least common person deixis to appear in the songs chosen from the 2009 album "Klang"? By researching the person deixis

present in the songs of the “Klang” album, the researcher contributes to the development of knowledge in deixis.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Method

Based on Strauss and Corbin (1998), this paper is considered to be in the category of qualitative research. This method of research involves findings that will be produced through developing concepts and collecting facts without experimentation of a hypothesis rather than quantifying findings through statistics or other means of similar nature. Data is gathered through observation of the song lyrics of three songs from the “Klang” album. External sources (Genius Lyrics, n.d.) will be utilized to ensure the validity of the data. The data will then be categorized by referencing Levinson (1983) and Stapleton (2017) to determine which person deixis the datum falls into.

Henceforth, this paper employs the qualitative method. The researcher gathers deixis from 3 songs in the “Klang” album and categorizes each person deixis into the first, second, or third person. The researcher then explains at least one datum from each category of person deixis.

2. Time and Place of the Research

This research was conducted from December 2024 through January 2025. Material and references used to aid this research was gathered through reading, analyzing, and summarizing literature contents over the course of 1 month. In the span of 1 month, the researcher collected data while finding journals relevant to the research. After enough data had been gathered and all research materials were obtained, the researcher dedicated time to determine all the person deixis in the song lyrics.

3. Data Source

Data was gathered from three songs in the “Klang” album. The three songs chosen, in no particular order, were 1989, Mullers Ratchet, and That’s The Reason. These songs were chosen at random.

The researcher first obtained transcriptions of the lyrics from Genius, a website which specializes in hosting song lyrics. The datum will be retrieved from individual verses that are in the song. After obtaining the aforementioned verses, the researcher proceeded to listen to the songs on the music streaming service Spotify in order to ensure that the lyrics were

accurate. The researcher listened to the songs while the lyrics were displayed.

4. Technique of Data Collection

The technique used in data collection is explained below:

1. The researcher first obtains lyrics from the Genius website and notes them down.
2. The researcher validates the accuracy by matching the lyrics with the song.
3. The researcher finds the person deixis contained in the songs and collects them.

To ensure the complete accuracy of the lyrics, multiple listens of each song was required. All data was finally acquired through this method.

5. Technique of Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the data as explained in the provided steps:

1. The researcher used the definition of deixis from Levinson (1983), the types of deixis Azar and Hagen (2017), and the person deixis from Stapleton (2017) to determine the person deixis category of each datum.

2. The researcher provides a description of the research.

3. The researcher categorizes and explains the research. The research is concluded in this process.

6. Instrument of Research

Through built-in tools in the Microsoft Word application which was part of a bundle in the Microsoft Office 365 License, the researcher made use of the “find” feature. Once the researcher finds one type of person deixis in the lyrics, the researcher proceeds to use the find feature to determine the amount it appears in the lyrics.

In order to ensure the validity of the data, the researcher used the highlight marker feature present in Mendeley. The verses were separated into groups of 5, and highlights were used to take note of deixis pertaining to the research. After checking for relevant deixis in the group, the researcher marks the group as finished and moves onto the next group.

C. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the three songs the researcher analyzed, the researcher found and noted

down the person deixis that appeared as below:

Tabel 1. Deixis Analysis of “1989”

No .	Person Deixis	Amount
1	First Person	I: 2 times My: 1 time We: 1 times Our: 2 times
2	Second Person	You: 3 times Your: 1 time
3	Third Person	It: 6 times He: 2 time She: 1 time His: 1 time Their: 2 times

“1989” hosted a total of 22 person deixis. The deixis that appeared the most was the third person deixis “It”, appearing 6 times throughout the song. The deixis that appeared the least were first person deixis “My” and “We”, second person deixis “Your”, and third person deixis “She” and “His”. Each of the deixis only appeared once. “1989” was the only song that had the only appearances of first person deixis “Our” and third person deixis “He”. “1989” is the only song where two unique person deixis from separate categories are present.

Tabel 2. Deixis Analysis of “Mullers Racht”

No .	Person Deixis	Amount
1	First Person	I: 5 times Me: 7 times We: 1 time
2	Second Person	You: 22 times Your: 3 times
3	Third Person	It: 3 times

“Mullers Racht” possessed a total of 41 person deixis. The deixis that was found the most was the second person deixis “You” which appeared 22 times in the song. The deixis that appeared the least is the first person deixis “We” which only appeared once. “Mullers Racht” was the only song where only one type of third person deixis appeared.

Tabel 3. Deixis Analysis of “That’s The Reason”

No .	Person Deixis	Amount
1	First Person	I: 15 times Me: 1 time

		My: 5 times			
		We: 1 time		3	Third Person
2	Second Person	You: 4 times			It: 19 times
		Your: 2 times			She: 5 times
3	Third Person	It: 10 times			He: 8 times
		She: 4 times			Her: 6 times
		Her: 6 times			His: 1 time
		Hers: 1 time			Hers: 1 time
		They: 1 time			They: 1 time
					Their: 2 times

“That’s the Reason” presented a total of 50 person deixis. The deixis that was present the most was the first person deixis “I” which appeared 15 times in the song. The deixis that appeared the least is the first person deixis “Me” and “We”, and third person deixis “Hers” and “They” which appeared once each.

Tabel 4. Deixis Total from the Songs

No	Person Deixis	Amount
1	First Person	I: 22 times Me: 8 times My: 6 times We: 3 times Our: 2 times
2	Second Person	You: 29 times Your: 6 times

Chart 1. Deixis Total from the Songs

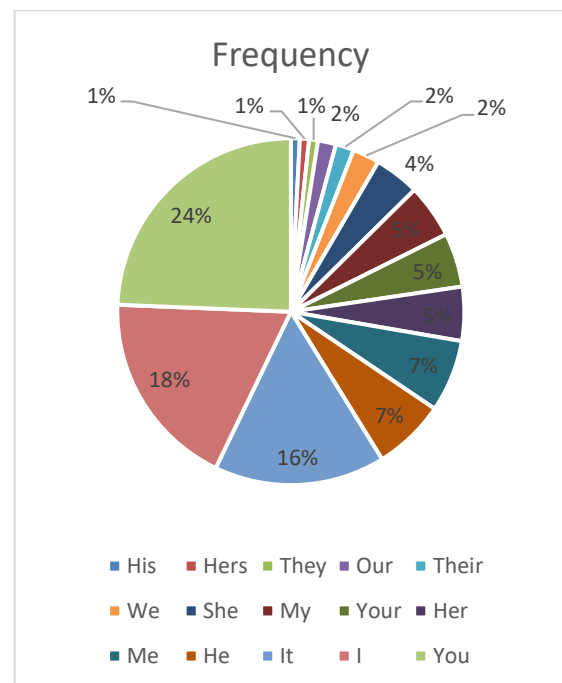
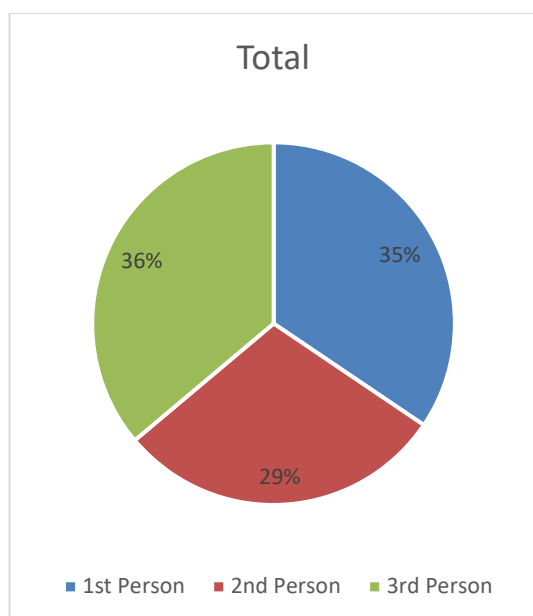


Chart 2. Person Deixis Total from the Songs



From table 4, chart 2, and chart 3, a total of 119 person deixis were found in the song lyrics. Out of the 3 categories of Person Deixis, the third person deixis appeared 43 times, occupying 36% of all the deixis. The first person deixis placed second with 41 appearances, making up 35% of the person deixis. The second person deixis were used the least, appearing 35 times which contributed to 29% of the total person deixis.

Out of the datum, “you”, a second person deixis, was the person deixis which made the most appearances. It was used 29 times which makes up 24% of the datum. The least deployed person deixis are “his”, “hers”, and “they”. These appeared only 1 time, each deixis making up 1% of all person deixis appearances.

Assessing the datum the researcher obtained will require supporting literatures.

The researcher will categorize the datum with the help of Levinson (1983) and Stapleton (2017). Azar and Hagen (2017) will also be utilised to ensure the accuracy of the datum categorization.

First Person Deixis

- Datum 1

“As the dawn rubs up against our aching head.”

This line appears in the song “1989”. “Our” is an example of a first person deixis. Azar and Hagen (2017) classifies “our” as a first person possessive pronoun. This song is the only one where this deixis appears, and it is seen two times.

- Datum 2

“And I don’t pay you to be smart.”

This line appears in the song “Mullers Ratchet”. “I” is a second person deixis. Azar and Hagen (2017) categorizes “I” as a first person personal pronoun. The “I” pronoun is used 5 times in the song. “You” is a second person deixis that also appears in this line.

- Datum 3

“I asked her for a light.”

This line appears in the song “That’s The Reason”. “I” is a second person deixis. “I” is categorized as a first person personal pronoun (Azar and Hagen, 2017). The “I” deixis appears 15 times throughout the song. The line is repeated 3 times in the song. The third person deixis “her” also appears in this line.

Second Person Deixis

- Datum 1

“It’s alright if it all goes wrong in this cold lone city no one knows where you’re from.”

This line appears in the song “1989”. “You” is part of the second person deixis because it is a second person personal pronoun (Azar and Hagen, 2017). This line repeats two times in the song. The “you” deixis appears three times in the song.

- Datum 2

“And roll your sleeves up like your mom and me.”

This line appears in the song “Mullers Rachel”. “Your” and “You” are second person deixis that appears in this line. “You” is a second person personal pronoun that appears 22 times. “Your” is a second person possessive pronoun that appears 3 times. (Azar and Hagen, 2017).

- Datum 3

“Yeah I have to use your toothbrush.”

This line appears in the song “That’s The Reason”. “Your” is a second person deixis. “Your” is considered a second person possessive pronoun by Azar and Hagen (2017). This deixis appears only 2 times in the song. In this line, the first person deixis “I” is present.

Third Person Deixis

- Datum 1

“Girls light up pull their hoods up tight.”

D. CONCLUSION

This line appears in the song "1989". "Their" is one example of a third person deixis. Azar and Hagen (2017) considers "their" to be a third person possessive pronoun. This pronoun only appears in this song, and it makes a total of 2 appearances.

- Datum 2

"And when it all falls through on you."

This line appears in the song "Mullers Ratchet". "It" is part of the third person deixis, This pronoun is a third person personal pronoun according to Azar and Hagen (2017). "It" is present 3 times in the song, and this deixis is the only third person deixis that appears in the song.

- Datum 3

"Could be knocked back and they would all see."

This line appears in the song "That's The Reason". "They" is a third person deixis. "They" is a third person personal pronoun (Azar and Hagen, 2017).

To conclude the research, the researcher will proceed to provide conclusions, explain the implications of this research.

1. Conclusion

From the findings of the researcher, many conclusions can be drawn from them. These conclusions are:

- 1) A total of 119 person deixis were found in the song lyrics. Out of the 3 categories of Person Deixis, the third derson deixis appeared 43 times, occupying 36% of all the deixis. The first person deixis placed second with 41 appearances, making up 35% of the person deixis. The second person deixis were used the least, appearing 35 times which contributed to 29% of the total person deixis.
- 2) "1989" had 22 person deixis. The person deixis that appeared the most in was the third person deixis "It" which was found 6 times throughout the song.
- 3) "Mullers Ratchet" had 41 person deixis. The person deixis that appeared the most was the second person deixis "You" which was used 22 times throughout the song.

- 4) “That’s The Reason” had 50 person deixis. The person deixis that appeared the most was the first person deixis “I” which appeared 15 times throughout the song.

2. Implication

The researcher concludes that the type of person deixis that appeared the most have a connection to the message that the song is trying to share. As Muqit et al. (2023) were able to find the “Tanduk Majang” song contained a message displaying the positivity of the Madurese, a message can also be found from the songs.

“1989” is the song with the most third person deixis appearances. The song tells a story of the singer and someone else spending time in a town named “Friedrichshain”. The reason the third person deixis appears the most in this song is due to singer describing other people and the person the singer spent time with.

“Mullers Racht” is the song which had the second person deixis appearing the most. It tells the story of a figure giving advice to someone younger. The second person deixis appears a lot because of the nature of the song about giving advice.

“That’s the Reason” is the song with the third person and first person deixis

making the most appearances. The message of the story is to muster courage to explore, supported by the storytelling. The third and first person deixis appear the most due to the storytelling.

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