

## DEIXIS ANALYSIS OF *STUCK IN THE MIDDLE* LYRICS BY BABY MONSTER

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### Abstract

The objectives of this study are to identify the kinds of deixis used in the song lyrics *Stuck in the Middle* and to find out the dominant types of deixis used in the song lyrics *Stuck in the Middle*. This research belongs to qualitative research. The researcher uses the observation method, while the data collection technique is listening and analyzing the songs of “Stuck in the Middle” by Baby Monster. The result of this research is the song lyrics of *Stuck in the Middle* use all types of deixis. Person deixis almost occurs in every lyric of *Stuck in the Middle*. There are 95 data of person deixis consisting of first, second, and third person deixis. In addition, the other types such as spatial deixis (7 data) and temporal deixis (3 data) also occur in a song of *Stuck in the Middle*. Most of the personal deixis in *Stuck in the Middle* song lyric refer to the speaker itself which are encoded by first singular person deixis like *I* and *My*. While for first plural person deixis which are *You* mostly refer to the speaker.

**Keywords:** *deixis analysis, song lyrics*

### INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool or system of symbols designed for the purpose of communication and interaction with each other (Lyons, 2002). In addition, people use language to transmit and express their ideas, emotions, or desires either in oral or written forms. The study of communication is very important because some forms of direct or indirect communication exist in any administrative and activity function (Luneberg, 2010 as cited Saputri, 2016). Furthermore, language is not only used as communication media but also usually involved in other fields such as language and arts (Hidayah, 2019). It can be seen in music, novels, movies, films, and other forms of advertising and entertainment that occur in society.

One example of entertainment media is music which is familiar in society. Music is a basic human instinct, and also a daily basis human activity is universally inspired with love and experience (Piragasm et.al, 2013). It is universal among human cultures. Music is a basic instinct of human being, a daily basic human activity which is universally engaged with, loved and experienced. Music plays an important role in the formation of person’s identifying (Hidayah, 2019). Previous research has revealed substantial findings on how music is vital to human’s biological and history; not only had that music equipped the process and ability to experience music (Levitin in Piragasm et.al 2013). In addition a number of lyrics in song also gave an inspiration for life. Therefore, when the people listen to song lyric, sometimes they do not only try apprehending the meaning of lyric itself, but also the meaning of the reader or speaker mean.

Pragmatics is the study of aspects of the used meaning and language that depend on speakers, receivers and the context of other features of speech. Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by the speaker (or writer) and interpreted by listener (Yule 1996:3). Communication recognizes the meaning of words and speakers mean in utterance or sentence (Hidayah, 2019). In understanding about reference of utterance, reader, or listeners should be able to identify the context of utterance.

Deixis is one of the most basic things in technical term of utterance (Yule, 1996). The word ‘deixis’ is borrowed from the Greek word for pointing or indicating Levinson (1983). Additionally

deixis directly concerns with the relationship of language and context which is reflected in structures of language itself (Levinson, 1983:55).

This research focuses on the study of song lyrics especially in Baby Monster song because it is possibly remarkable if the research focus is something that is familiar or part of human life such as music. Basically, song lyrics could be also said as a part of discourse. Moreover, the research assumed that many deixis words and also their meaning could be found in the song lyrics of *Stuck in the Middle* by Baby Monster. In fact the listeners sometimes still get difficulty to determine the exact meaning of deixis in song lyrics becomes crucial understanding (Hidayah, 2019).

The aims of the research are to identify the kinds of deixis that are used in the song lyrics in *Stuck in the Middle* and to find out the dominant types deixis that are used in the song lyrics. This study actually using pragmatics approach. The song which was released in January, 31th 2024 is chosen as the subject of this and used as data.

### **Deictic Expressions: Person, Spatial, and Temporal Deixis**

Deixis refers to words and expressions that depend on context for their full interpretation, typically hinging on aspects like the identity of the speaker, the place of speaking, and the time an utterance is made. These contextual markers allow individuals to convey a wide range of meanings depending on where, when, and who is involved in the communication. Among the several types of deixis, the most common are person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. These categories reflect the foundational elements of communication, aligning with core questions of "who," "where," and "when."

#### ***I. Person Deixis***

Person deixis relates to the participants in a conversation, or the people being referenced by the speaker, including both the speaker and the listener. It involves various forms of pronouns, possessive adjectives, and verb forms, and categorizes into three types based on the perspectives of the speaker and listener. The first person refers to the speaker or speakers, i.e., "I" and "we." The second person focuses on the addressee or recipient of the message, as represented by "you" (singular or plural). The third person involves those who are not part of the interaction, such as "he," "she," "it," and "they."

In addition to pronouns, person deixis encompasses possessive adjectives like "my," "your," and "their," as well as verb forms that indicate the subject of the action. For example, "I like," "you like," or "he/she likes" express actions from different viewpoints. The extensive use of person deixis allows for the clear identification of speakers, listeners, and those referenced during communication. It also illustrates the interpersonal relationships in dialogue, aiding in precise identification and discourse about particular individuals. This complex interrelation provides listeners with the necessary context to understand who is speaking, who is being spoken to, and who is being spoken about.

#### ***II. Spatial Deixis***

Spatial deixis, often referred to as place or locative deixis, is concerned with the location of events or objects in relation to the speaker or the discourse. Words and expressions that serve this function indicate the spatial positioning of things, whether physical or conceptual. The most basic spatial deictic expressions are adverbs like "here" and "there," which point to the relative locations of people or things within the space surrounding the conversation. Other expressions include demonstrative pronouns, such as "this" and "that," which can indicate proximity or distance in space, depending on their usage in context.

In spatial deixis, the position of the speaker typically serves as the reference point for interpreting the location described by the deictic terms. For instance, when someone says "I am here," the word "here" is understood relative to the speaker's current position. Without a clear reference to the speaker's location, however, the meaning would remain ambiguous. This reliance on context reinforces the role of spatial deixis in conveying information about space that is intelligible only when the relationships between the speaker, listener, and environment are considered.

### III. Temporal Deixis

Temporal deixis involves expressions that situate events in time relative to the moment of speaking. Like spatial deixis, temporal deixis provides a framework for understanding events by anchoring them to the current time of utterance. Key temporal deictic markers include adverbs such as "now," "today," "tomorrow," "yesterday," and "then," all of which refer to specific points or intervals in time. These markers serve to clarify when something happens in relation to the moment the speaker is addressing the listener.

For instance, saying "I will call you tomorrow" clearly locates the action in the future relative to the present time. Temporal deixis is instrumental in making time-specific references during communication, whether events are occurring currently, have occurred in the past, or will happen in the future. Without it, understanding the timing of an action would be much more challenging, as temporal context would remain vague and confusing. Through temporal deixis, speakers can organize their utterances around a shared concept of time, enabling coherent narrative flow and temporal understanding.

In sum, deictic expressions—whether of person, space, or time—serve critical roles in human communication. They allow speakers to make references that rely heavily on shared contextual knowledge between the participants. By focusing on the who, where, and when, deictic words shape how we understand and navigate social interaction in both conversational and narrative contexts. Each category plays its part in constructing meaning, allowing speakers to address and describe their world in immediate, relatable ways.

## METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach to gain insight into the current status of a phenomenon that exists at the time of the survey (Arikunto, 2010). The observation and note-taking techniques were used in collecting the data. A checklist was also used to support the research instrument based on Levinson's (2006) theory. In testing the validity of the data, the triangulation technique in checking the data from various sources and times was implemented (Sugiyono, 2008).

The data analysis technique was adapted from Meleong (2013), following several steps. The first step was reading and selecting the song's lyrics of the Baby Monster's song *Stuck in the Middle* to understand the lyrics in detail. The researcher chose this song because it is the most streamed song by the listeners on the Spotify platform. The second step was analyzing the lyrics in terms of deictic expression based on Curse's theory to decide the types of deictic reference (person, spatial, and temporal) found in the lyrics. The third step involved interpreting the identified deictic expressions within the lyrics of 'Stuck in the Middle,' examining their contextual meanings and implications. This analysis aimed to uncover how these deictic references contribute to the overall narrative and thematic elements of the song. Last, the findings were described and explained by correlating them with the theory as well as the social phenomenon that happens at present. The data were collected by following the steps outlined by Hidayah (2019).

1. The researcher listened to the songs to understand the lyrics in detail.
2. The researcher searched the script of the lyrics on the internet.
3. The researcher marked all of the chosen lyrics to be analyzed.

After the data was collected, the researcher analyzed it. Finally, the researcher describes the types of deixis that have been selected.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Based on the analysis, the researcher found that the lyrics tend to use the following types of deixis which include personal deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis in '*Stuck in the Middle*' song lyrics. The types of deixis used are various and have different reference meanings.

**Table 1. The Result of Personal Deixis**

<b>Personal Deixis</b>	<b>Number of Words</b>
Then <i>you</i> walk away	52
<i>I</i> get emotional	15
Talk to <i>me</i>	15
<i>My</i> love	9
I try to <i>myself</i>	2
Don't know if <i>your</i> mind is made up	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>

The table displays the frequency of personal deixis found in the text. The analysis shows a total of 95 occurrences, categorized into various types of personal deixis along with the number of words for each. The most frequent type contributes significantly to the total, while others appear less frequently. This data highlights the prominence and distribution of personal deixis in the text.

**Table 2. The Result of Spatial Deixis**

<b>Spatial Deixis</b>	<b>Number of Words</b>
All <i>this</i> time we've been together	1
I thought <i>that</i> I knew everything	4
Wondering if <i>there</i> are all kinds of things	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

The table presents the results of spatial deixis analysis, showing a total of 7 instances identified in the text. The data is categorized into different types of spatial deixis along with their frequency in terms of word count. The frequencies indicate variations in the usage of spatial deixis.

**Table 3. The Result of Temporal Deixis**

<b>Temporal Deixis</b>	<b>Number of Words</b>
<i>Now</i> all that I know is	1
Baby <i>then</i> you bring me back	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>

The table above illustrates the results of the temporal deixis analysis, showing a total of 3 occurrences in the text. The data is divided into specific examples of temporal deixis along with their respective frequencies in terms of word count. The findings reveal a low usage of temporal deixis compared to other deixis types, indicating its minimal role in the analyzed text.

## Discussion

Based on the results of the tables above, the researcher found personal deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis occurred in the song lyrics of *Stuck in the Middle* by Baby Monster. Thus, these parts will elaborate on the three types of deixis that occurred on utterances or sentences in this song.

### 1. Personal Deixis

Personal deixis is a fundamental linguistic feature that points to individuals within a given speech or utterance, and it often encompasses pronouns. Personal deixis encodes the role or position of individuals relative to the specific speech situation in which the utterance occurs. According to Levinson (1983: 62), personal deixis helps identify the participants in

communication, referring to them based on their role as a speaker, addressee, or a third party mentioned in the discourse. In the analyzed song lyrics, the researcher identified 39 instances of personal deixis, demonstrating its prominent role in the text.

Personal deixis operates within a primary three-element division, typically represented by pronouns: first person, second person, and third person. Yule (1996) elaborates on this structure by defining the three categories as follows:

- First person: Pronouns that refer to the speaker or a group that includes the speaker (e.g., “I,” “we”).
- Second person: Pronouns that address the listener or addressee (e.g., “you”).
- Third person: Pronouns that refer to individuals or entities other than the speaker or listener (e.g., “he,” “she,” “it”).

In the song "Stuck in the Middle" by Baby Monster, only two types of personal deixis are employed—first person and second person. Each of these categories is integral to expressing emotions, conveying relationships, and structuring the narrative. Below, these two types are discussed in detail with relevant examples.

#### *First Person Deixis*

First-person deixis refers to words or expressions that the speaker uses to refer to themselves, either individually or as part of a group. Levinson (1983) explains that this category represents the grammaticalization of the speaker's reference to themselves. In linguistic terms, the first-person deixis serves as a direct identifier of the speaker's involvement in the discourse.

In the lyrics, first-person deixis is expressed through singular pronouns such as “I,” “me,” “mine,” and “myself.” Additionally, plural pronouns such as “we” and “our” can also fall under this category, though their use in the analyzed song lyrics was not identified.

Examples:

- “*I get emotional*”: Here, the pronoun “I” directly identifies the speaker as the one experiencing emotional vulnerability, thus drawing attention to their personal feelings.
- “*My love*”: The possessive pronoun “my” establishes a sense of ownership and intimacy, highlighting the speaker's close relationship with the addressee.
- “*I try to myself*”: This line showcases the speaker's internal dialogue, with the reflexive pronoun “myself” emphasizing introspection and self-reference.

The use of first-person deixis enables the speaker to convey their personal thoughts and emotional states directly. It also fosters a connection between the speaker and the audience, inviting listeners to empathize with their perspective.

#### *Second Person Deixis*

Second-person deixis refers to words or expressions that address the listener or addressee in the speech. Levinson (1983) describes second-person deixis as the encoding of the speaker's reference to their direct interlocutor(s). This deixis type includes pronouns such as “you,” “yours,” “yourself,” and “yourselves.” It serves to establish a direct connection between the speaker and their audience, often creating a conversational or relational tone.

Examples:

- “*Then you walk away*”: The use of “you” refers to the addressee, focusing attention on their actions and impact on the speaker. The pronoun creates a sense of immediacy and directs the listener to reflect on their behavior.
- “*Don’t know if your mind is made up*”: The possessive pronoun “your” points to the addressee’s thoughts and decisions, emphasizing the speaker’s curiosity or concern about their mental state.
- “*Talk to me*”: While “me” (a first-person pronoun) represents the speaker, “you” (implied by the command form “talk”) directly involves the addressee, urging them to engage in dialogue.

Second-person deixis serves as a powerful linguistic tool in the song. It facilitates direct address, making the listener feel personally involved in the narrative. This engagement adds emotional weight to the lyrics, as the speaker’s appeal to the addressee becomes more intimate and compelling.

The use of personal deixis in “Stuck in the Middle” is central to the song’s lyrical expression. Through first-person deixis, the speaker provides insight into their personal experiences, emotions, and self-reflection. Simultaneously, second-person deixis bridges the gap between the speaker and the addressee, fostering a sense of dialogue and connection. Together, these deixis types enrich the song’s meaning, making the lyrics relatable and emotionally resonant. The identification of 39 instances of personal deixis underscores its significant role in shaping the narrative, highlighting its importance in understanding the dynamics of interaction in lyrical content.

## 2. Spatial Deixis

Spatial deixis, as described by Levinson (1983), refers to the linguistic expressions that indicate the relative location or distance of people and objects in relation to the context of communication. It plays a crucial role in situating the elements of an utterance spatially, providing clarity about where events occur or where individuals and objects are located. Ainiyah et al. (2019) further elaborate that spatial deixis involves words and phrases that explicitly or implicitly communicate the spatial relationships within a discourse.

In the analyzed song lyrics, spatial deixis serves to convey a sense of proximity, distance, and emotional connection between the speaker and the context described. The function of spatial deixis in song lyrics is to evoke imagery and allow listeners to visualize the scenarios or emotions being expressed. The following examples illustrate the use of spatial deixis found in the lyrics of “Stuck in the Middle.”

### *Example of Spatial Deixis*

- “*All this time we’ve been together*”: This line suggests a shared experience over time and space. While not directly indicating physical distance, it creates a sense of closeness and continuity by referencing a collective journey shared by the speaker and another individual. The deixis element “this” provides a connection to the speaker’s immediate environment or the context being reflected upon.
- “*I thought that I knew everything*”: Although this line appears introspective, the implicit spatial deixis lies in the speaker’s assumption of familiarity with their surroundings or the world within the song’s narrative. It demonstrates an internalized perception of spatial awareness.
- “*Wondering if there are all kinds of things*”: Here, the word “there” serves as an explicit example of spatial deixis. It signifies a location, whether physical or



metaphorical, that exists beyond the immediate proximity of the speaker. In this context, “there” represents a distant or abstract space where possibilities or undiscovered elements may lie. This usage invites listeners to imagine a place beyond their current perception, enhancing the song’s emotive depth.

The application of spatial deixis in song lyrics adds layers of meaning by embedding a spatial dimension into the narrative. In “Stuck in the Middle,” spatial deixis enriches the emotional landscape of the lyrics, allowing the audience to relate to the concepts of distance, closeness, and movement. For example, the repeated use of spatial markers, such as “there,” bridges the abstract and physical realms, engaging the listeners’ imagination and fostering a deeper emotional connection with the song’s themes.

By using spatial deixis, the lyrics create a multidimensional experience for the listener, illustrating not only physical locations but also metaphorical distances that reflect the complexities of human relationships and emotions. The researcher’s identification of such elements emphasizes their contribution to the overall narrative and interpretive richness of the song. In conclusion, spatial deixis functions as an essential tool in enhancing lyrical storytelling, providing clarity and evoking imagery that resonates with audiences across various contexts.

### 3. Temporal Deixis

Temporal deixis refers to the linguistic elements that indicate timing within an utterance or discourse. Levinson (1983) describes temporal deixis as expressions that situate actions, events, or states in time relative to the moment of speaking or the temporal context of a narrative. These time-related references are commonly expressed through adverbials of time, such as “now,” “then,” “today,” and “yesterday,” which serve to anchor the discourse within a specific temporal framework (Elfrida et al., 2018).

In the analyzed song lyrics, the researcher identified seven instances of temporal deixis. These references contribute to the overall narrative by providing a sense of timing and progression, enhancing the emotional resonance of the song’s message. Temporal deixis helps the audience navigate the shifts in time expressed in the lyrics, allowing listeners to connect with the emotions and experiences portrayed by the speaker.

#### Example of Temporal Deixis in the Lyrics

- “*Now all that I know is...*”:  
The word “now” represents the present moment, situating the speaker’s thoughts and emotions in the immediate timeframe. It emphasizes the speaker’s current state of realization or understanding, drawing attention to the transformation or clarity they have gained. This usage conveys a sense of immediacy and urgency, allowing listeners to engage with the speaker’s present emotional experience.
- “*Baby then you bring me back*”:  
The term “then” functions as a marker of sequential time, referring to a moment in the past relative to the speaker’s present perspective. This temporal deixis indicates a pivotal moment that holds emotional significance for the speaker, illustrating how a specific past event impacts their current feelings or situation.

Temporal deixis enriches the narrative structure of song lyrics by introducing a temporal dimension to the storytelling. It helps listeners contextualize events and emotions within a

timeline, making the lyrics more relatable and impactful. In "Stuck in the Middle," temporal deixis underscores the transitions between past experiences and present realizations, illustrating the speaker's journey and emotional growth.

By employing temporal deixis, the song creates a dynamic and engaging narrative that captures the fluidity of time in human experiences. This linguistic feature not only enhances the clarity and coherence of the lyrics but also fosters a deeper emotional connection with the audience, making the song more memorable and evocative.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that three types of deixis are present in the song "Stuck in the Middle" by Baby Monster: personal deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. Among these, personal deixis appears most frequently, with a total of 95 occurrences. In comparison, spatial deixis is represented by seven words, while temporal deixis is the least prevalent, consisting of only three words. The dominance of personal deixis highlights the importance of pronouns and other markers that refer to individuals in the context of the song. These elements serve to encode the roles of participants in the speech event, such as the speaker and the addressee, creating a more intimate and relatable narrative. Words like "I," "you," and "my" emphasize personal relationships and emotions, anchoring the listener's understanding of the lyrical content to specific individuals.

Spatial deixis, though less frequent, plays a crucial role in grounding the song's narrative in specific locations or spaces. The seven instances of spatial deixis, including words like "there," illustrate a connection to physical or metaphorical spaces. These references enhance the imagery and provide listeners with a sense of the environment or distance within the storyline. Temporal deixis, identified by terms such as "now" and "then," contributes to the depiction of time in the lyrics. Although it only occurs three times, its presence is significant in situating the events and emotions within a temporal framework. Temporal deixis helps bridge the past and present, illustrating the progression or shifts in the speaker's feelings and experiences. The use of deixis in the song provides a vital tool for connecting utterances to their specific contexts. Personal, spatial, and temporal deixis work together to establish relationships between the speaker, listener, and the situational factors of who, where, and when the utterances are made. This connection aids in clarifying the intended meaning of the lyrics, making the song's narrative more vivid and engaging for listeners. Overall, deixis is instrumental in enhancing the interpretive depth of the song. By anchoring the lyrics in personal, spatial, and temporal dimensions, the use of deixis enriches the storytelling and emotional resonance, allowing listeners to immerse themselves fully in the lyrical journey.

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