

A deixis analysis of “Die with a Smile” by Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga

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ABSTRACT

Deixis, a fundamental linguistic concept, refers to expressions whose meanings depend on context, including personal pronouns, temporal markers, spatial indicators, and demonstratives. While deixis has been widely studied in conversational and literary discourse, its role in song lyrics remains underexplored, particularly in shaping emotional resonance and thematic depth. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the use of deixis in *Die with a Smile* by Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga, focusing on how deictic expressions contribute to narrative construction and listener engagement. Employing a qualitative approach, the study identifies and categorizes deictic expressions in the lyrics, revealing that personal deixis is the most dominant (64.20%), followed by spatial deixis (18.52%), temporal deixis (13.58%), and demonstrative deixis (3.70%). Personal deixis fosters intimacy and relatability, while spatial and temporal deixis situate the narrative within emotional and situational contexts. Demonstrative deixis reinforces shared references and directs the listener’s focus. These deictic elements effectively convey themes of love, longing, and transcendence, demonstrating the intricate relationship between language, meaning, and audience perception in contemporary music. This study contributes to linguistic and musical analysis by highlighting the interplay between deixis and emotional expression in song lyrics.

Keywords: Bruno Mars; deixis; lyric; pragmatics; song

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INTRODUCTION

Deixis is a core concept in linguistics that denotes terms or expressions whose meanings are inherently dependent on the context in which they are used. These deictic elements include personal pronouns, temporal markers, spatial indicators, demonstratives, and social deixis. The term “deixis” is derived from the Greek word signifying “to point out” or “to indicate” reflecting how these expressions function to “point” to specific contextual elements. In spoken language, deixis enables speakers and listeners to anchor communication in a shared understanding of time, space, and social relations (Levinson, 1983).

In the realm of song lyrics, deixis transcends its fundamental linguistic function to serve as a potent narrative and emotional device. By anchoring the lyrics to specific contexts—whether personal, spatial, temporal, or demonstrative—deictic expressions create a link between the narrative voice and the audience. This connection fosters deeper engagement with the song by situating the listener within

its emotional and contextual framework. Scholars in linguistics and music studies (e.g., Simpson, 2004; Moore, 2012) have emphasized that deixis enriches song lyrics by bridging the artist's intent and the audience's interpretation. Particularly in genres such as pop and ballads, which prioritize emotional resonance and personal connection, deixis often serves as a central compositional element.

Despite its significance, existing research on deixis has predominantly focused on its role in spoken language (e.g., Abdulameer, 2019; Alkhawaldeh, 2022; Jassim & Ali, 2024), literary texts (Ginting et al., 2022), journalistic texts (Miftah, 2016; Herman & Pardede, 2020), and cinematic dialogue (Artelu & Indah, 2023), with limited attention paid to its application in song lyrics. While some studies have examined the narrative and emotional functions of linguistic features in music, few have offered a comprehensive analysis of how deixis shapes the emotional resonance and thematic complexity of contemporary pop songs. Harahap (2024) explores deixis in collaborative song lyrics, highlighting how shifts in personal deixis (*I, you, we*) construct multi-perspective narratives. While this study provides insights into perspective shifts, it does not offer an in-depth analysis of how deixis influences emotional resonance or thematic complexity. Similarly, Herdiyanti (2020) examines spatial and temporal deixis in song lyrics, emphasizing their role in situating the listener within the song's narrative. Spatial deixis, such as *right here* and *next to you*, conveys intimacy, while temporal deixis, including *yesterday* and *forever*, reinforces nostalgia and urgency. However, this study primarily focuses on deixis as a functional tool rather than exploring its contribution to overarching themes and emotional depth. Meanwhile, Nuraini et al. (2024) analyze deixis as a storytelling device in pop ballads, demonstrating its role in reinforcing themes like love, longing, and separation. Their findings highlight the significance of demonstrative deixis (*this, that*) in directing attention to emotionally charged moments. While acknowledging deixis as a thematic tool, the study does not fully explore its role in shaping a song's emotional intensity across different deictic categories. These existing studies provide important groundwork, but they do not comprehensively address how deixis interacts with both emotional resonance and thematic structuring in contemporary pop songs. This study fills the existing gap by investigating the utilization of deixis in *Die with a Smile* by Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga. The song serves as a notable example of how deictic expressions—such as personal deixis (*I, you*), spatial deixis (*here, there*), temporal deixis (*now, forever*), and demonstrative deixis (*this, that*)—are utilized to create a narrative depth, emotional engagement, and thematic coherence that profoundly connects with the audience.

This study employs Levinson's (1983) theory of deixis as the primary theoretical framework. Levinson's work emphasizes the context-dependent nature of deictic expressions and their ability to anchor communication in shared situational contexts. Additionally, the study draws on Moore's (2012) exploration of deixis in music to understand how deictic expressions contribute to emotional engagement and storytelling in song lyrics. By applying these frameworks, the study analyzes the interplay between linguistic elements and thematic exploration in *Die with a Smile*. For example, the personal deixis *you* personalizes the song's emotional core, directing its themes of love and loss toward an intimate, specific individual. Spatial deixis, such as *here* and *there*, positions the listener within the evolving narrative space, while temporal deixis (*forever*) evokes enduring emotional commitments that transcend the immediacy of the present moment. Demonstrative deixis (*this, that*) further enhances emotional engagement by creating contrasts or emphasizing moments or objects within the narrative, intensifying the listener's focus on the song's thematic exploration. These deictic expressions collectively invite listeners into the song's emotional and thematic landscape.

The research questions driving this study aim to identify the various categories of deictic expressions found in *Die with a Smile*, examining their influence on the narrative structure and emotional impact of the song, and exploring their role in the thematic construction of love, loss, and transcendence. Additionally, the study aims to analyze and compare the use of deixis in this song with its application in other contemporary pop songs and ballads. This research contributes to addressing a notable gap in the existing literature, as the role of deixis in song lyrics remains underexplored despite its potential to enrich narrative and emotional dimensions.

The implications of this study extend to both linguistic and musicological fields. Linguistically, it provides insights into how deixis operates in artistic, non-conversational contexts, illustrating its versatility beyond spoken language. For musicology, the research highlights the importance of linguistic analysis in uncovering the narrative and emotional dimensions of song lyrics. Furthermore, this study offers practical implications for songwriters and lyricists, demonstrating how the strategic use of deictic expressions—personal, spatial, temporal, and demonstrative—can enhance emotional engagement and strengthen the connection between the narrative and the audience. By situating its findings within the broader framework of linguistic and musicological research, this study aims to advance the understanding of how linguistic features, such as deixis, contribute to the storytelling and emotional resonance of contemporary pop music.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Origins of deixis in classical rhetoric and grammar

The history of deixis as a linguistic concept can be traced through its development in traditional grammar and modern linguistic theory. The idea of words whose meanings depend on context dates to classical rhetoric and grammar. Ancient Greek and Roman scholars, such as Aristotle and Cicero, examined context-dependent aspects of language use, though they did not explicitly employ the term “deixis.” Early linguistic and philosophical discourse introduced terms like “indexicality,” referring to expressions that point to or indicate context-bound information.

Structuralist foundations and Bühler’s deictic field

The formalization of deixis as a linguistic concept emerged in the 20th century during the structuralist movement. [Saussure \(1916\)](#) emphasized the relational aspects of language, including the role of context in determining meaning. [Bühler \(1934\)](#) advanced the understanding of deixis in his seminal work, *Theory of Language*. Bühler introduced the concept of the “deictic field,” situating deixis within the speaker’s orientation in time and space. He categorized deixis into three main classifications: person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis.

Expansion in modern linguistic theory

Modern linguistic theory in the 1970s and 1980s further developed deixis as a central topic in semantics and pragmatics. [Lyons \(1977\)](#), in his work *Semantics*, expanded the categorization of deixis, identifying five key types: personal, temporal, spatial, discourse, and social deixis. [Levinson \(1983\)](#), in his book *Pragmatics*, integrated deixis into pragmatic theory and emphasized its role in linking language structure to usage. Levinson’s framework became a cornerstone for contemporary deixis studies. Similarly, [Fillmore \(1971, 1975\)](#) explored deixis within frame semantics, showing how the speaker’s perspective and contextual frames influence the interpretation of expressions like “this” and “that.”

Recent research has further broadened the scope of deixis studies, incorporating cross-linguistic perspectives, cognitive linguistics, and sociolinguistic applications. For instance, cognitive linguistics examines how deixis reflects mental representations of space and time, while sociolinguistic studies focus on how social deixis encodes politeness and formality. Advances in technology have also prompted investigations into deixis in digital communication, where expressions like “here” and “now” take on new meanings in virtual environments.

In line with these developments, [Wierzbicka \(1991\)](#) offered a crucial cross-cultural perspective in *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*. She argued that deictic expressions are not only context-bound but also culture-bound, shaped by the communicative norms and social values of different linguistic communities. Her work demonstrated that even seemingly universal deictic forms—such as personal pronouns or demonstratives—may carry different meanings across languages due to varying conceptions of self, other, and social distance. This culturally sensitive approach complements cognitive and sociolinguistic theories of deixis and is particularly relevant when analyzing deixis in multilingual or culturally nuanced texts, such as song lyrics and religious discourse.

Demonstrative deixis and its role in discourse

Demonstrative deixis, referring to expressions like “this,” “that,” “these,” and “those,” has also been extensively categorized by scholars. Lyons (1977) analyzed demonstratives as part of spatial and discourse deixis, emphasizing proximity distinctions, such as “this” for close objects and “that” for distant ones. Levinson (1983) explored how demonstratives function pragmatically, establishing relationships between speakers, listeners, and their physical or conversational environments. Fillmore (1971, 1975) linked demonstratives to frames of reference, showing how their interpretation depends on the speaker’s perspective. Other scholars, like Kuno (1972) and Diewald (2006), have examined the pragmatic and functional roles of demonstratives in discourse, particularly in emphasizing topics or shifting focus. Yule (1996) underscores the importance of demonstratives in guiding the listener’s attention and shaping shared reference in communication.

In conclusion, deixis has evolved from its origins in classical rhetoric to a cornerstone of modern linguistic theory. Scholars like Bühler, Lyons, Levinson, and Fillmore have significantly shaped our understanding of deictic expressions and their role in context, meaning, and communication. Contemporary research continues to expand deixis studies into new fields, such as digital communication and cross-linguistic analysis, underscoring its importance in understanding language and interaction.

Applications of deixis in various contexts

Several studies have applied these theoretical insights to specific contexts, providing valuable frameworks for analyzing deixis in diverse media. For instance, analyses on newspaper articles, such as those by Miftah (2016) and Herman and Pardede (2020), have highlighted the prominence of person deixis in reflecting interaction between the writer and audience while also incorporating spatial and temporal deixis. These findings provide a baseline for analyzing how deixis in song lyrics establishes connections between the artist and the listener, particularly in expressing universal emotions and shared experiences.

Similarly, deixis studies in religious discourse, as seen in Abdulameer (2019), Alkhawaldeh (2022), and Jassim and Ali (2024), demonstrate the dominant role of personal deixis in fostering engagement and relational closeness between speakers and their audiences. This insight can be applied to the lyrical deixis in *Die with a Smile*, where personal pronouns may reflect intimacy or universal appeal while potentially embedding spiritual or emotional depth, akin to religious sermons.

Studies on song lyrics, such as Harahap (2024), Herdiyanti (2020), and Nuraini et al. (2024), directly align with the current study. These works emphasize the centrality of person deixis in establishing an artist’s personal narrative, as well as temporal and spatial deixis for situating the emotional and physical context of a song. For instance, Harahap’s (2024) analysis of collaborative lyrics provides insights into how deixis functions in multi-perspective narratives, a relevant factor when analyzing a song like *Die with a Smile*, which may intertwine themes of mortality, individuality, and collective identity.

The deixis analysis of movie dialogues, such as Artelu and Indah (2023) on *Cruella*, demonstrates how deixis reflects character relationships, roles, and situational dynamics. This perspective is useful for analyzing songs with narrative elements, as deixis in *Die with a Smile* might similarly function to position the singer as both narrator and participant in the story conveyed.

Educational and correspondence texts, including Azizah et al. (2024) and Raputri (2020), show how deixis operates to clarify spatial, temporal, and referential elements in specific contexts. The structured deixis in these forms of communication contrasts with the poetic and potentially ambiguous deixis in song lyrics, highlighting the need for nuanced interpretation in analyzing *Die with a Smile*.

Finally, the study of social deixis in literature, such as Ginting et al.’s (2022) work on *Gadis Pesisir*, enriches the understanding of how language choices reflect social relationships and identities. In *Die with a Smile*, social deixis might be used to address the listener directly or reference broader societal themes, contributing to its interpretive layers.

Overall, these studies contribute essential frameworks for understanding how deixis functions across various media. Applying these perspectives to *Die with a Smile* enables a detailed exploration of how deixis encodes personal, emotional, and contextual meanings in the song, fostering a deeper appreciation of its lyrical artistry.

METHOD

This study aims to analyze the use of deixis in *Die with a Smile* by Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga, focusing on how personal, temporal, spatial, and demonstrative deixis contribute to the song’s emotional resonance, narrative structure, and thematic depth. A qualitative approach was employed to examine deictic expressions within the lyrics, drawing on semantic and pragmatic frameworks. The data were analyzed through textual interpretation, identifying patterns in deictic usage and their contextual significance. Additionally, references to previous studies on deixis in song lyrics, religious discourse, and other media were incorporated to contextualize the findings and enhance theoretical insights.

Research approach

The study employs a qualitative descriptive-analytic approach rooted in linguistic analysis and interpretive methods, which involves identifying, categorizing, and interpreting deictic expressions in the lyrics. This approach is appropriate for examining the contextual and functional aspects of deixis as a narrative and emotional device in song lyrics. The framework integrates Levinson’s (1983) deixis theory with insights from Moore (2012) and Wichmann (2000) on the role of linguistic elements in music.

Data collection

The data for this research is derived from the complete lyrics of *Die with a Smile* by Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga, a single released on August 16, 2024. The data collection process begins with obtaining the lyrics from AZLyrics to analyze them in their entirety and identify and interpret deictic expressions. The lyrics will be examined in their entirety to identify instances of deictic expressions. These expressions will then be categorized into four primary types: personal deixis (e.g., pronouns like we, me, our), temporal deixis (e.g., forever, yesterday), spatial deixis (e.g., around, there), and demonstrative deixis (e.g., this, that). The collected data will serve as the basis for a deeper exploration of how these deictic elements function within the song to enhance its narrative and emotional resonance. By analyzing the lyrics in full, the research will ensure a thorough understanding of how deixis contributes to the song’s overall impact.

Data analysis

The analysis is structured in four steps to ensure a comprehensive exploration of the data. Step 1 involves the identification of deictic expressions, where each deictic element is recognized and categorized as personal, temporal, spatial, or demonstrative. Additionally, the frequency and distribution of these elements are recorded. Step 2 focuses on the contextual and functional analysis, where the context surrounding each deictic expression is examined to understand its role within the song. This step involves analyzing personal deixis to explore how pronouns construct relationships between the narrator, listener, and implied audience; temporal deixis to examine the shifts in time and the emotional dynamics they evoke; spatial deixis to understand how these expressions create a narrative or emotional “space” for the listener; and demonstrative deixis to assess how these expressions emphasize specific themes, contrasts, or emotional moments. Step 3 consists of thematic and narrative analysis, where recurring themes such as love, loss, and resilience are explored. Particular attention is given to how deixis enhances these themes, fostering intimacy and engagement between the artist and the listener. The final step, Step 4, is interpretive analysis, where the findings are synthesized to interpret how deixis contributes to the song’s emotional and cognitive impact. This involves examining how deixis enhances the personal bond between the artist and the listener while shaping the emotional and narrative development of the song.

The analysis integrates key theoretical perspectives to interpret the role of deixis in the song. [Levinson's \(1983\)](#) framework on the linguistic theory of deixis is used to categorize and analyze deictic expressions. Theory by [Moore \(2012\)](#) is incorporated to examine how deixis fosters emotional intimacy in music. By employing these methods and frameworks, the study provides a nuanced understanding of how *Die with a Smile* uses deixis to intertwine its narrative, emotional, and thematic elements. The findings will contribute to a broader understanding of the linguistic and emotional dimensions of contemporary pop music.

FINDINGS

The results of this research center on identifying and analyzing deictic expressions in *Die with a Smile* by [Bruno Mars](#) and [Lady Gaga](#). As previously outlined, the study examines four primary types of deixis: personal, temporal, spatial, and demonstrative. The following table ([Table 1](#)) provides a comprehensive summary of the different classifications of deixis identified in the song's lyrics, categorizing each expression according to its specific type. This table serves as a foundation for understanding how these deictic elements are distributed throughout the song and their role in shaping the narrative, emotional depth, and thematic engagement of the piece.

Table 1

Type of deixis in "Die with a Smile" by Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga

No.	Type of Deixis	Frequency	Total	Percentage (%)
1.	Personal		52	64.20
	I	21		
	You	23		
	We	2		
	Me	2		
	Our	4		
2.	Temporal		11	13.58
	Tomorrow	2		
	Every night	2		
	Last night	4		
	When (implied temporal)	1		
	Since	1		
	A while	1		
3.	Spatial		15	18.52
	Wherever	2		
	That's (implied location)	2		
	Right next to	2		
	Next to	9		
4	Demonstrative		3	3.70
	That	2		
	This	1		
Total			81	100

The central goal of this study was to investigate how deictic expressions are utilized in the song *Die with a Smile* by [Bruno Mars](#) and [Lady Gaga](#). The findings reveal a predominance of personal deixis (64.20%), indicating that the song heavily relies on direct references to individuals, likely to establish an intimate and emotional connection with the audience. The high frequency of personal pronouns suggests that the lyrics emphasize relationships, personal experiences, or identity. Spatial deixis (18.52%) and temporal deixis (13.58%) play a secondary role, which implies that while location and time are referenced, they are not the primary focus of meaning-making in the song. The minimal presence of demonstrative deixis (3.70%) suggests that specific objects or entities are rarely emphasized, reinforcing the idea that the lyrics are more concerned with personal interactions and emotions rather than physical or external references. These results support the hypothesis that personal deixis plays a central role in establishing intimacy and emotional connections in song lyrics,

particularly in conveying the narrator's relationship with the listener. The findings also underscore the importance of spatial and temporal deixis in situating the emotional and physical context of the song's themes.

Building on these findings, a closer examination of the lyrics from *Die with a Smile* reveals how the deictic expressions contribute to the song's emotional resonance and narrative depth. Below is a detailed analysis of the four primary categories of deixis identified in the lyrics:

Personal deixis

Personal deixis is prominently used throughout the song, with the pronouns "I" and "you" creating a strong personal connection between the singer and the implied listener or loved one. For instance, the repeated use of "I" in "I just woke up from a dream" and "I realized" indicates the narrator's personal perspective and emotional state. The use of "you," especially in lines like "I'd wanna be next to you" and "what you mean to me," highlights the relationship between the narrator and the addressed individual, intensifying the sense of intimacy. This personal deixis builds a bond between the singer and the listener, making the song feel like a direct communication of emotions.

Temporal deixis

Temporal deixis is evident in phrases like "tomorrow," "every night like it is the last night," and "if the world was ending." These expressions introduce shifts in time, highlighting the urgency and fleeting nature of love and life. By using terms like "tomorrow" and "last night," the song emphasizes the temporality of the relationship and the singer's desire to live in the present moment. The existential contemplation in "if the world was ending" further underscores the finite nature of time, suggesting that the narrator wants to cherish every moment.

Spatial deixis

Spatial deixis appears in the phrases "Wherever you go, that's where I'll follow" and "I'd wanna be next to you." These expressions create a sense of physical closeness and proximity. The narrator's commitment to following the loved one regardless of location, as well as the repeated desire to be "next to you," suggests a longing for emotional and physical closeness, emphasizing the intimacy of the relationship. The spatial references also enhance the sense of devotion and the emotional grounding of the song.

Demonstrative deixis

Demonstrative deixis is subtly employed in the phrase "*this*" in "*our love's the only war worth fighting for*." Here, "*this*" serves to direct attention to the subject of "*love*," reinforcing its importance in the narrator's life. The use of "*this*" emphasizes the intensity and exclusivity of the love being described as something that is both unique and worthy of commitment. By focusing on the word "*this*," the lyric highlights the centrality of love in the song's emotional narrative, suggesting that it is the singular, defining force in the narrator's life. This reinforces the overarching theme of cherishing love, as seen in the entire song, particularly the repeated desire to "*Die with a Smile*" when in the presence of a loved one. The demonstrative "*this*" thus deepens the emotional resonance, guiding the listener to understand that the love described is not just any love but one of great significance.

The deictic expressions in the song work together to create a sense of immediacy, connection, and urgency. Personal deixis fosters intimacy between the narrator and the listener, while temporal deixis emphasizes the fleeting nature of love and life, encouraging the listener to live fully in the present. Spatial deixis reinforces the emotional closeness and physical proximity the narrator desires with their loved one, making the lyrics feel deeply personal and heartfelt. Lastly, the demonstrative deixis directs attention to the significance of love itself, underscoring its central role in the song's emotional narrative.

Overall, the use of deixis in *Die with a Smile* helps to establish an emotionally charged atmosphere that emphasizes love's urgency, the desire for closeness, and the contemplation of life's

impermanence. Through these deictic expressions, the song invites listeners to engage with the narrative on a deeply personal and emotional level.

DISCUSSION

The findings contribute to addressing a gap in the existing literature, as the role of deixis in song lyrics is still underexplored despite its potential to enrich both the narrative and emotional dimensions. The research questions guiding this research sought to classify the various types of deictic expressions in *Die with a Smile*, analyze their impact on the narrative structure and emotional resonance of the song, and explore their role in constructing themes of love, loss, and transcendence. This research also sought to compare the use of deixis in *Die with a Smile* with its application in other contemporary pop songs and ballads.

The prevalent utilization of personal deixis in *Die with a Smile* aligns with Bühler's (1934) deictic field theory and Levinson's (1983) pragmatic framework, both of which emphasize the role of deixis in structuring discourse and positioning the speaker within a communicative context. The frequent use of pronouns like "I," "you," "we," and "me" reinforces the personal and intimate nature of the song, anchoring the narrative within the speaker's subjective experience. This aligns with Moore's (2012) insights on musical storytelling, where personal deixis serves as a linguistic mechanism to enhance emotional engagement and foster a direct connection between the singer and the audience. Through this interplay of deixis and perspective, the song constructs a deeply immersive lyrical experience that reflects both individual expression and shared sentiment.

This finding supports previous research by Miftah (2016) and Herman and Pardede (2020), who identified the prominence of personal deixis in creating emotional connections between the writer and the audience. The use of personal pronouns in this context helps foster a sense of closeness and direct communication, allowing listeners to relate to the narrator's emotions.

The presence of spatial deixis—expressions like "wherever," "right next to," and "next to"—in the song suggests an emphasis on emotional proximity and physical closeness. This is consistent with the results of Herdiyanti (2020) and Harahap (2024), who observed that spatial deixis is often used in song lyrics to reinforce themes of intimacy and emotional attachment. The expression "right next to you," in particular, highlights the narrator's desire to be physically close to the loved one, emphasizing the song's overarching theme of togetherness in the face of life's uncertainties. By using spatial deixis, the song situates emotional experiences in a tangible, relatable context that listeners can easily envision and emotionally connect with.

Temporal deixis, represented by terms like "tomorrow," "last night," and "every night," situates the song's emotional expressions in time, reinforcing the fleeting nature of the experiences described. This ties into the song's theme of living in the present moment and cherishing time with a loved one, an idea that resonates with the broader pop culture narrative of embracing the now. The temporal expressions emphasize the song's urgency and the narrator's desire to savor every moment, even as time moves forward.

Demonstrative deixis plays a more subtle but equally important role in the song, particularly in the lyric "our love's the only war worth fighting for," where the word "this" directs attention to the concept of love. The application of demonstrative deixis in this context enhances the thematic focus on love as a central, valued experience. By highlighting love as the singular focus of the song, the demonstrative expressions strengthen the emotional intensity and commitment conveyed in the lyrics.

Emotional impact of deixis in Die with a Smile

The findings reveal that the deictic expressions in *Die with a Smile* significantly enhance its emotional resonance and narrative structure. The frequent use of personal pronouns (*I, you, we*) invites the listener to identify with the narrator's emotional journey. By addressing the listener directly, the song amplifies its emotional appeal, making the message universally relatable. This study is in accordance with current research on deixis, particularly the dominance of personal deixis in various forms of discourse. Similar to Miftah (2016), who found person deixis dominant in The Jakarta Post articles, this research

confirms the prevalence of personal pronouns in creating emotional intimacy and fostering audience engagement in song lyrics. However, while Miftah highlighted spatial and temporal deixis as supplementary, this study emphasizes their equal role in shaping the emotional narrative of *Die with a Smile*.

Temporal deixis, such as "*tomorrow*," "*every night*," and "*last night*," reinforce the emotional weight of the song's emphasis of urgency, fleeting time, and eternal love. These temporal markers allow the song to navigate between the present and the future, deepening the emotional connection by emphasizing the transience of life and the enduring commitment of love. This aligns with the findings of Nuraini et al. (2024) and Raputri (2020), who explored the role of time markers in songs and narrative texts. While Nuraini et al. emphasize temporal deixis in reinforcing messages of faith, this study shows how temporal markers in *Die with a Smile* create urgency and emphasize the fleeting yet meaningful nature of love.

In terms of spatial deixis, the results build on Herdiyanti (2020) and Azizah et al. (2024), who found that spatial expressions in songs and emails enhance clarity and emotional engagement. The emphasis on phrases like "right next to" and "wherever you go" in *Die with a Smile* demonstrates a more metaphorical use of spatial deixis to evoke emotional closeness, expanding on their observations.

Demonstrative deixis, notably "*this*" in "*our love's the only war worth fighting for*," serves to emphasize the significance of love as a central theme in the song. This use of "*this*" directs attention to love, emphasizing its uniqueness and the narrator's unwavering commitment. The demonstrative expression enriches the emotional impact of the song, underscoring love as a defining and transformative force in the narrative. This finding contrasts with other studies, such as those by Harahap (2024), where demonstrative deixis in songs is used to direct attention to key emotional elements, though not necessarily with the same emphasis on love as the central theme.

Narrative structuring through deixis

Spatial deixis, such as "*right next to*" and "*wherever you go, that's where I'll follow*," function as a tool for structuring the emotional journey of the song. The use of spatial deixis places the listener in the same emotional space as the narrator, allowing them to share in the narrator's vulnerability, longing, and emotional resolve. By using spatial markers to anchor the emotional climax in a shared space, the song invites the listener to be part of the emotional moment, deepening the narrative's impact. This study aligns with the research by Artelu and Indah (2023) and Herman and Pardede (2020), who analyzed multiple deixis types in movies and articles. While both studies identified personal deixis as dominant, this research highlights how deixis in songs goes beyond narrative clarity to construct a deeply emotional and relatable narrative.

Furthermore, the focus on temporal deixis, such as "*tomorrow*" and "*every night*," reinforces the findings of Nuraini et al. (2024) and Raputri (2020), who explored the role of time markers in songs and narrative texts. While Nuraini et al. emphasize temporal deixis in reinforcing messages of faith, this study shows how temporal markers in *Die with a Smile* create urgency and emphasize the fleeting yet meaningful nature of love.

Universal themes through deixis

Deictic expressions in *Die with a Smile* also play a significant role in transforming personal emotions into universally relatable themes. The use of personal pronouns (*you*) and references to shared experiences of time and space allow the song to transcend individual circumstances, making the message of love, loss, and transcendence universally accessible.

Moreover, spatial, and temporal deixis help bridge the personal and the universal. The use of "*wherever you go*" and "*every night*" serves to convey themes of devotion and eternal love while also capturing the ephemeral nature of human existence. By exploring these dual themes, *Die with a Smile* becomes more than a personal narrative—it becomes a universal expression of love that resonates across cultural and individual boundaries. The findings resonate with Abdulameer (2019) and Harahap (2024), who observed a high frequency of personal deixis in religious discourse and songs, respectively.

However, this study diverges from [Abdulameer's \(2019\)](#) context of divine and religious discourse and [Harahap's \(2024\)](#) focus on multiple categories of deixis in the song *Who I Am* by demonstrating how deixis contributes specifically to the universal themes of love and devotion in popular music.

The research contributes to the field by expanding the understanding of deixis beyond linguistic tools in narrative and religious contexts, as discussed by [Alkhawaldeh \(2022\)](#) and [Jassim and Ali \(2024\)](#). It demonstrates that deixis in popular music serves as a narrative mechanism that bridges personal emotions and universal themes, particularly in love songs.

Finally, while [Ginting et al. \(2022\)](#) explored the sociopragmatic role of deixis in differentiating social identities, this study offers insights into how deixis transcends individual and social boundaries to create shared emotional realities, making the song universally relatable.

By focusing on *Die with a Smile*, this study broadens the scope of deixis research to popular music, highlighting its role in evoking emotional intimacy, structuring narratives, and connecting personal experiences to universal themes. Moreover, spatial and temporal deixis help bridge the personal and the universal. The use of “wherever you go” and “every night” conveys themes of devotion and eternal love while also capturing the ephemeral nature of human existence. By exploring these dual themes, *Die with a Smile* becomes more than a personal narrative—it becomes a universal expression of love that resonates across cultural and individual boundaries.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the pivotal role of deixis in shaping the emotional depth and narrative structure of *Die with a Smile* by [Bruno Mars](#) and [Lady Gaga](#). The dominance of personal deixis (64.20%) underscores the song's intimate and direct engagement with the listener, reinforcing themes of love and emotional connection. Spatial deixis (18.52%) enhances the sense of closeness and shared presence, while temporal deixis (13.58%) emphasizes the fleeting nature of time, adding urgency and emotional weight to the lyrics. Though demonstrative deixis is the least frequent (3.70%), it serves a crucial function in thematically centering love as a defining and transformative experience. Collectively, these deictic elements construct a deeply immersive and emotionally resonant lyrical experience, illustrating how deixis functions not only as a linguistic tool but also as a vehicle for meaning-making in music.

These findings substantiate the hypothesis that personal deixis is pivotal in song lyrics, particularly in fostering an intimate and direct connection between the narrator and the listener. Spatial and temporal deixis further enrich the emotional and physical narrative context, creating vivid imagery and a dynamic sense of time that resonates deeply with the audience. Demonstrative deixis, though sparingly used, effectively underscores central themes, contributing to the song's overall impact.

The results carry theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, they reinforce the understanding of deixis as not merely a linguistic device but also a powerful narrative tool in music, bridging the gap between individual experience and universal emotions. Practically, these insights could inform lyricists, songwriters, and music educators on the strategic use of deictic expressions to create emotionally engaging and thematically rich compositions.

Nevertheless, this study has its limitations. The analysis was restricted to a single song, limiting the extent to which the findings can be applied to wider contexts or genres. Furthermore, the qualitative approach, while providing detailed insights, remains interpretive and could benefit from complementary quantitative methods. The study also did not explore cultural interpretations of deixis, which could uncover variations in its impact across different audiences. Addressing these limitations presents opportunities for further research.

Future studies could expand the scope by analyzing a larger corpus of songs across various genres and cultural contexts to identify broader patterns in deictic usage. Integrating quantitative methods, such as corpus-based analysis, would provide a more robust and systematic understanding of deixis in song lyrics. Further research could also investigate the interplay between deixis and other linguistic features, such as metaphor or imagery, to offer a more comprehensive perspective on how language shapes the narrative and emotional dimensions of music.

By examining the song *Die with a Smile*, this study highlights the significance of deictic expressions in constructing a narrative that resonates emotionally with listeners. The findings underscore the critical role of deixis in grounding personal experiences within universal themes of love and connection. While this study is limited in scope, it enhances the broader comprehension of deixis as both a linguistic and narrative device, providing meaningful insights for future studies and practical use in songwriting and music analysis.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT:

The authors of the manuscript affirm that they have no conflicting interests.

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