

Deixis Analysis on Joe Biden's Speech "Remarks on Afghanistan"

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ABSTRACT

In communication, a speaker sometime uses language features which to point or indicate objects, places, persons, times, and text passages in a specific context. This language features are called deixis or deictic expression. The aim of this study is to find out and describe what kind of deixis and reference used by Joe Biden in his speech. In conducting the study, the researcher conducts the descriptive qualitative method because the result and discussion of this study is presented in a word and descriptive form and focused on quality of the researcher's interpretation. This study applied the classification of deixis by Stephen C. Levinson (1983). There are 203 words of person deixis, 54 data of place deixis, 45 data of time deixis, 12 data of social deixis, and 31 data of discourse deixis. The result show that person deixis is mostly use by Joe Biden in his speech. This implies that the speech is considered as important so that the speaker express himself as the president as the center of the speech. The result show that the speech by Joe Biden is not only contains of deixis, but it also contains of reference. The result show that there are two types of reference in Joe Biden's speech, namely Personal reference and demonstrative reference. This study also applied the theory of reference by Halliday and Hasan (1976). This implies that the speech is not only attract people to understand of what, who, when, and where the speaker means, but the speech is also considered as a text and meaningful.

Keywords: deixis, reference, speech

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1. INTRODUCTION

There are many different perspectives from which to study the complex phenomenon of language (Shaumyan in Kanaza, 2020: 54). A society's members communicate with one another primarily through language (Sirbu, 2015: 405). Both speaking and listening are two parties that participate in the language and communication. When the speaker is expected to be able to speak in a specific context and to differentiate the objects, places, persons, times, and text passages, this term is called deictic references.

Deictic is an expression from one of the pragmatics branches and a writing element that students must be aware of to convey meaning in writing, also known as deixis (Astria et al., 2019: 517). Deixis is a component of language that is typically used in written or spoken discourse as well as everyday communication. Speech includes deixis in discourse (Retnowaty, 2019: 110). According to Levinson, the term "deixis" is concerned with the relationship between the language structure and the context in which they are used (Levinson, 1983: 54). It can be concluded that deixis is the term for gaining information from an utterance by looking at the encoded language features, which are deictic references to indicate something that is used in a specific context.

By doing this, the speaker and the hearer can steer clear of one of the most common communication issues: misunderstandings or misperceptions between two parties. While it is assumed that the listener will be able to comprehend the speaker's background to comprehend the topic and meaning, People need to understand the importance of deictic language and unique context in communication. Deixis can be found in many types of communication, from the straightforward daily necessities to the formal, in-depth forms like interviews, talk programs, and even one-way speaking events. Recognizing whether the text is a text or merely a collection of unrelated sentences is important. The text's cohesive devices can be used to determine if it is cohesive or not. They were divided into five categories by Halliday and Hasan: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesiveness. To determine if the text is coherent, the researcher choose one of those reference devices that was associated with deixis. Specific language expressions known as references identify the material as having come from another source (Halliday & Hasan, 1976: 5-6).

This study uses American President Joe Biden made a speech on statements on August 17, 2021, in Afghanistan. Since Joe Biden uses a variety of deixis to make his points obvious and connect them to all of the parties and constituencies he aims to reach, the researcher decided to focus on his speech as the study's subject. Additionally, the speaker's message and topic included a serious and delicate subject. As the speaker and President of the United States, Joe Biden explained his choice to the audience before outlining the benefits of doing so.

2. METHOD

Because the results and discussion of this study are presented in a written and descriptive form and are concentrated on the accuracy of the researcher's interpretation, the researcher employs a descriptive qualitative technique. The researcher also used Halliday and Hasan's and Levinson's theories of reference and deixis, respectively. As the focus of this study, the researcher made an effort to analyze Joe Biden's speech on his comments on Afghanistan. The researcher made an effort to determine the type of deixis and references Joe Biden employed as well as whether the speech is regarded as a meaningful text by Halliday and Hasan's theory of cohesiveness.

The transcript of Joe Biden's speech, "Remarks on Afghanistan," served as the study's data source. The transcript was then divided into 124 sentences by the researcher. The content is then chosen for the deixis and references in the sentences. The White House, the official YouTube account for the American government's broadcaster, posted Joe Biden's speech on August 17, 2021. This study's data were gathered using coding or highlighting techniques. The video lasts 18:25 minutes in total. By using coding techniques, the researcher examined the deixis expression and reference inside the sentence. The deixis words are categorized in this study using Levinson's theory, while the reference words are categorized using Halliday and Hasan's theory. There are five categories in the deixis: person, location, time, social, and discourse. Additionally, the reference includes both direct and indirect personal references. To determine whether the sentences are related to one another and have the same meaning, or what is commonly referred to as the text's cohesion, the researcher employed Halliday and Hasan's theory.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the data collected by researcher, the result revealed that there are 124 sentences in Joe Biden's speech that contain deictic expression and reference. These deictic expressions will be analysed based on the theory of deixis by Levinson and reference theory by Halliday and Hasan. There are namely five types of deixis that found in the utterances above; person deixis, place deixis, time deixis, social deixis, and discourse deixis. From the sentences, it was found out there are 203 data of

personal deixis, 54 data of spatial deixis, 45 data of temporal deixis, 12 data of social deixis, and 31 data of discourse deixis. The data were analysed in order to answer the research question that have been mentioned in the previous chapter. The first question in this research is conducted to discover the types of deixis applied by Joe Biden as the speaker in the speech.

The next result revealed there are two types of reference found in Joe Biden's speech, Personal reference and Demonstrative reference. These references will be analysed based on theory of reference by Halliday and Hasan. The data were analysed in order to answer the second research question proposed by researcher. The second question in this study is conducted to discover the categories of reference used by Joe Biden in the speech.

Table 1 The number of deixis used by Joe Biden

| Type of Deixis | Number of Words |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Person Deixis | 207 |
| Place Deixis | 54 |
| Time Deixis | 45 |
| Social Deixis | 12 |
| Discourse Deixis | 31 |
| Total | 345 |

The table above shows the number of deixis used by Joe Biden. The table revealed that Joe Biden mostly used person deixis in the speech with 203 deictic expressions. This is indicated that Joe Biden is the centre of the speech and has important role within the speech he delivered. The next deixis used by Joe Biden is place deixis with 54 frequencies of deictic expression. It shows that Joe Biden mentioned a lot about a location where the topic of the speech is happening. The next deixis used by Joe Biden is time deixis with 45 deictic expression, social deixis with 12 deictic expression, and discourse deixis with 31 deictic expression.

3.1 Person Deixis Used by Joe Biden's Speech

Theoretically, person deixis is a reference that focused on the participant's role in the speech or utterances. The participants who appeared in the speech was Joe Biden as the speaker or first person, American people as addressee or second person, American forces and Afghan people as other role or third person. Person deixis is related to the grammatical category of personal pronoun such as, first person *I* and *we*, second person *you*, and third person *she*, *he*, *it*, and *they*. From the collected data, the researcher found 204 data of person deixis.

The word *I* usually included the speaker who is talking. It means that the word *I* refers to the speaker himself, Joe Biden. This deictic expression gives an information to the audience that the speaker put himself as the centre of the speech. From the collected data, it was found out there are 55 data of person deixis *I* which uttered by Joe Biden.

The word *me* uttered by Joe Biden to refers to himself as the President of America. From the collected data, it was found out there are 4 data of person deixis *me*.

The word *my* uttered by Joe Biden to indicate a possessive adjective from the speaker's perspective. It refers to the speaker's belonging as the president. From the collected data, it was found out there are 7 data of person deixis *my*.

The word *we* considered as the first plural person category. It means that the word *we* refer to a bunch of groups which also included the speaker. From the collected data, it shows that the word *we*

usually point to the first person or speaker and the second person or addressee. The second person in this speech is American people and American forces. There are 59 data of deictic expression we found in the sentence of Joe Biden's speech.

The deictic expression *we* in the sentence is indicating three groups of participants including the speaker. First, the speaker is indicating himself and the American forces, then the speaker indicate himself and the American people, then the speaker indicate himself and the Afghan's leader.

The word *us* is an object pronoun of first-person plural *we*. This word uttered by Joe Biden to indicate himself and the second participant, the American forces and American people. There are 6 data of deictic expression *us* found in the sentence.

The word *they* is a third person plural. It means that the person deixis *they* is refers to the group of third person which participate in the speech. In this case, the third person is The Afghanistan people. So, the word *they* refer to Afghanistan people. There are 7 data of person deixis *they*.

*"We gave **them** every tool they could need."*

The word *them* in the sentence is indicated the third person or participant of the speech. There are some third participant mentioned by the speaker, such as Afghanistan people, Afghanistan leaders, al-Qaeda, Taliban or another terrorist. The word *them* in the sentence refers to Afghanistan people.

*"But I always promised the American people that I will be straight with **you**."*

*"How many more generations of America's daughters and sons would **you** have me send to fight Afghans..."*

The word *you* appeared twice in Joe Biden Speech. It uttered by Joe Biden when he directly addresses the speech to his people. So, both person deixis *you* refers to the American people.

*"Mr. Ghani insisted the Afghan forces would fight, but obviously **he** was wrong"*

*"We never gave up the hunt for Osama bin Laden, and we got **him**."*

The word *he* and *him* is a subject and object pronouns of third person singular. The word *he* in the first sentence refers to the third participant, Mr. Ghani. And the word *him* in the second sentence refers to the third participant, Osama bin Laden.

3.2 Place Deixis Used by Joe Biden's Speech

Theoretically, place deixis is related to the relative location where the speech was uttered. The linguistic form to express this deixis is the word "*here*", "*there*", "*this*", and "*that*". *Here* and *there* are linguistic features that show something in a matter of distance. *Here* means that something is near from the speaker and far from the hearer, and *there* means that something is far from both speaker and hearer.

*"I'll speak more in a moment about the specific steps we're taking, but I want to remind everyone how we got **here** and what America's interests are in Afghanistan."*

The word *here* in the sentence refers to the place where Joe Biden and his people are in. The word *here* in the first sentence is indicated by identity in the next portion of sentence which means it refers to Afghanistan.

*“I’ve travelled **there** on four different occasions.”*

While the word *there* in the sentence refers to the specific places in Afghanistan that have been mentioned in the previous sentence; Kabul, Kandahar, and Kunar Valley. The third sentence also consist of another deictic expression of place.

The table also revealed that Joe Biden frequently mentioned Afghanistan in the speech. It is because Afghanistan is the location where the main topic of the speech happened. Joe Biden is not merely mentioned a particular country, but he mentioned the location where all the chaos happened, the terrorism threat, the civil war, and importantly his mission there to prevent any counter-terrorism threat and to immediately evacuate his people and allies. That is why Afghanistan is appeared a lot in the speech.

3.3 Time Deixis Used by Joe Biden’s Speech

Theoretically, Time deixis is the term that related to point of time or moments where the utterances produced. The most basic linguistic form used to express this deixis are “now” and “then”. Moreover, time deixis can be based on the general system of day and night, month, year, and season. In the following is the kind of time deixis used by Joe Biden in his speech.

Joe Biden mostly mentions a period of time in a form of date, month, or year. It can be said that there are a lot of important event and period of time uttered by Joe Biden in his speech.

*“We went to Afghanistan almost **20 years ago** with clear goals: get those who attacked us on **September 11th, 2001**, and make sure al Qaeda could not use Afghanistan as a base from which to attack us again.”*

The word *20 years ago* and *September 11th 2001* is a very important date for America. It refers to a period of time of something which happened and become the beginning of the American arrival in Afghanistan. From the context of the utterance, it can be informed that the time deixis *20 years ago* indicates the time where America went to Afghanistan for the first time to invade and to help them politically, economically, and something else. Another intention of America’s arrival is to get the leader of Al-Qaeda which related to the terrorism accident in *September 11th 2001*. Joe Biden pointed out an exact period of time by mentioning *September 11th, 2001*. The time deixis indicates the tragic incident caused by Al-Qaeda who kill themselves by hijacking planes against some important buildings in the United State.

3.4 Social Deixis Used by Joe Biden’s Speech

Theoretically, social deixis is the term that related to linguistic form which reflected the social identities and relation among the participant, the speaker, the addressee, and the third participant. Social deixis is a linguistic features to state the social relation between the participant of the speech. It can also use to show some respect towards another participant within their relationship. From the example above, it is clearly pointed that the status of the speaker in social or among American people is a leader or a President. The social deixis *president* is used the most by Joe Biden with total 9 data. Meanwhile, the word *president* which uttered by Joe Biden is not only indicating his social class, but it also indicating the social class of another participant such as Trump who was the previous president before Biden, President Ghani and Chairman Abdullah as the leaders of Afghanistan.

3.5 Discourse deixis Used by Joe Biden's Speech

Theoretically, discourse deixis concerns with the expression that refers to the particular part of the discourse in the utterance and reflected their relation to the whole utterance. Generally, the linguistic form of discourse deixis are the demonstrative word "this" and "that".

*"The truth is: **This** did unfold more quickly than we had anticipated."*

The word *this* in the sentence is considered as exophoric reference because there is no identity or information in previous or next sentence to satisfied the deictic expression. In order to interpret the deixis word *this*, we need to acknowledge the context of the sentence. Thus, based on the context the word *this* in the sentence refers to the chaos situation or terrorism thread which happened in Afghanistan.

*"We did **that**."*

The word *that* in the data in the sentence refers to the events that described in the preceding text. The event stated the real purpose of American in Afghanistan, that is to get those who attacked America on September 11th, 2001, and make sure that Al-Qaeda couldn't use Afghanistan as a base to attack American again.

4. CONCLUSION

According to the findings and analysis, Joe Biden used five different types of deixis in his speech, including person, place, time, social, and discourse deixis. The findings show that Joe Biden uses person deixis the most frequently. There are 207 data on people, 54 about places, 45 about times, 12 about social interactions, and 31 about discourses. The subsequent findings demonstrate that Joe Biden's speech had references in addition to some linguistic elements known as deixis. People can better comprehend what, who, where, and when the speaker is saying by using these linguistic traits. Additionally, it aids in avoiding ambiguity, which frequently arises in communication. Additionally, rather than merely being a collection of unrelated lines, Joe Biden's statement is taken into account as a text. According to the Halliday and Hasan reference theory, the researcher identified three different sorts of references in Joe Biden's speech. In Joe Biden's speech, there are two different types of references: personal and demonstrative.

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