

## Deixis Analysis in the Movie *It Ends With Us*: A Pragmatic Study

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the types of deixis and their functions in the dialogue of *It Ends With Us* from a pragmatic perspective. This movie was chosen because it is an adaptation of a popular novel that displays emotional communication in audiovisual form. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with the data source in the form of transcripts of the dialog of the main characters in the film. Data collection techniques were conducted through documentation and discourse analysis. The result shows that there are five types of deixis used in the dialog, namely persona, place, time, discourse, and social deixis. Persona deixis is the most dominant type, showing the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor. Meanwhile, time and place deixis show the context of the situation underlying the conversation. Discourse and social deixis serve to strengthen the narrative structure and social relationships between characters. The use of deixis in this movie plays an important role in building meaning in accordance with the context of the scene and the emotions of the characters. This research contributes to the understanding of language use in film media as a means of contextual communication. The findings can also be a reference in the study of pragmatics, especially in the analysis of deixis in audiovisual texts.

**Keywords:** *Contextual meaning; Deixis; Movie dialogue; Pragmatic analysis.*

### INTRODUCTION

Language is the main communication tool used to express intentions, goals, ideas, or thoughts to individuals and groups (Ilham & Maulani, 2024). Conversation is the basic form of language use that humans often use. Everyone must be involved in conversation, as this interaction is very important in social life (Liddicoat, 2021). To be able to understand language in a communication process, one not only needs to understand the form of language but also must understand the context of the situation that accompanies it. The context in question includes where the conversation took place, who was involved in the conversation, what was discussed, and when the conversation took place. Through pragmatic studies, the relationship between the structure of language and the context of the situation can be seen directly and more deeply (Narayuki, 2020)..

The existence of pragmatics as a branch of linguistics has an important role in understanding and analyzing language based on the real context of its use (Nasarudin et al., 2024). In line with this, (Yule, 2010) states that pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies various aspects of the meaning of speech by focusing on the intent or purpose that the speaker wants to convey. In pragmatics,

the context of the situation is very important because it determines how a speech is understood. One of the main aspects of the said situation is the existence of the participants, namely who greets and who is greeted. The term speaker and speaker suggests that pragmatic studies generally focus on spoken language, as interaction occurs directly through conversation. Pragmatics is a study that covers various linguistic aspects such as decisions, implications, presuppositions, speech actions, and structure in discourse (Retnaningsih, 2014).

One of the important elements of pragmatic studies is deixis. Deixis is often used in speech to refer to a specific person, place, or time (Retnaningsih, 2014). The use of deixis shows that many speeches or expressions have different meanings, depending on the context in which the speech is delivered (E. C. Simatupang, 2021). Deixis is divided into several types, including persona deixis, place deixis, time deixis, and pointer deixis, each of which refers to a different aspect in the context of speech (Levinson, 1983).

Deixis is not only found in everyday conversations but also appears in dialogues between characters in a film (Viahapsari & Parmawati, 2020). In film dialogue, deixis plays a crucial role in establishing context and guiding audience interpretation. As a form of communication media, the film not only provides entertainment but also conveys certain messages to the audience through depictions of various aspects of life (Fairuzal et al., 2023). As a pragmatic feature, deixis allows characters to refer to people, places, time, and discourse elements that are only meaningful within the context of the film. One of the films that contains various forms of deixis is a film titled *It Ends With Us*. *It Ends With Us* is a film adapted from the bestselling novel of the same name by Colleen Hoover. The film will be released in 2024 and carries the romantic drama genre that raises emotional themes such as love, trauma, and the search for identity. The film is directed by Justin Baldoni and stars Blake Lively as the main character, Lily Bloom. The story in the film focuses on Lily's life journey in dealing with complicated relationships and deep personal experiences. The dialogues in this film contain various forms of deixis that are interesting to analyze pragmatically, especially through the speech of the main character.

Research on deixis analysis has been conducted by many researchers before, both in the context of written and audiovisual texts. One of them is research by (Ayudia et al., 2021) who analyzed the use of deixis in the Indonesian film *Guru-Guru Gokil* with a qualitative descriptive approach. The results show that there are five types of deixis, namely persona, place, time, discourse, and social, with persona deixis as the most dominant type used, reflecting the role of participants and social relationships between characters. A similar study was conducted by (E. C. M. Simatupang et al., 2021) who examined Rainbow Rowell's novel *Fangirl*. This study

identifies the types of deixis, the pragmatic function of each type, and the factors that influence their use. It is found that the choice of deixis form is influenced by the participants' roles, social status, level of familiarity, and formality situation. In contrast to the two previous studies that examine all types of deixis, the research by (Heriyadi & Diana, 2020) specifically focuses on the social deixis aspect in the English-language film *The Dressmaker*. They identified two main types, namely relational social deixis which shows the relationship between participants based on social roles, and absolute social deixis which reflects a fixed social hierarchy or status.

While extant literature has explored deixis, this study addresses several significant research gaps, establishing its necessity and novelty. Previous analyses often utilized Indonesian-language objects, whereas this research focuses on English dialogue transcripts, allowing for an examination of distinct linguistic structures and cultural usage patterns. Furthermore, the study contributes to applied linguistics by investigating the complex transition of deixis from a textual narrative to cinematic dialogue, using the adaptation of Colleen Hoover's *It Ends With Us* as its corpus. Crucially, this research adopts a comprehensive analytical framework, examining all five categories of deixis (person, place, time, discourse, and social), in contrast to prior limited-scope studies (e.g., focusing only on social deixis). Finally, the use of modern American film dialogue provides a valuable perspective on the characteristics of contemporary deixic usage, differentiating it from analyses based on classic literature or short stories.

Therefore, this research aims to analyze the use of deixis in *It Ends With Us* (2024) with a pragmatic approach. The focus of the study includes five types of deixis, namely persona, place, time, discourse, and social that appear in the dialog between characters. Specifically, the research investigates what are the types of deixis found in the movie *It Ends With Us* and how each type of deixis functions in the context of a conversation between characters. The purpose of this research is to identify the types of deixis that appear in the dialogue, as well as to analyze the function of the use of deixis in building the meaning and context of communication between characters in the film.

This research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research can add insight into the use of deixis in pragmatic studies, especially in film media as a form of audiovisual communication. Meanwhile, practically, the results of this study can be a reference for students, researchers, and practitioners of language education in understanding the application of contextual linguistic elements, especially the use of deixis, in audiovisual texts such as films.

## **METHODS**

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design using the content analysis method. A qualitative descriptive approach allows researchers to investigate phenomena in a natural setting and focuses on the participants’ interpretation and meaning-making process (Lam et al., 2019). Content analysis, as defined by (Krippendorff, 2018), is a research technique used to make replicable and valid inferences from texts to the contexts of their use. In the context of pragmatics, qualitative content analysis serves as an effective tool to interpret the meaning of language use, especially in uncovering the function of deictic expressions in specific conversational contexts (Nørby et al., 2025).

### **Subjects of Research**

The dialogue between the major characters in the 2024 movie *It Ends With Us* is the focus of this study. The dialogues were picked because they include a variety of deictic expressions that show the connections, feelings, and settings of the characters in the narrative. These statements are the main source of information for a pragmatic analysis of the many kinds and purposes of deixis.

### **Instruments and Interview Questions**

The researcher acts as the main instrument in this study, performing all steps of data collection and analysis. The data consists of dialogue transcripts from the 2024 film *It Ends With Us*, which include utterances containing various types of deixis. The researcher transcribed the entire film dialogue, resulting in 2,274 utterances, and selected those relevant to deictic expressions for further analysis.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques, combining both audiovisual and written materials. The researcher first selected *It Ends With Us* film as the object of study, then watched the film thoroughly to understand its plot, character interactions, and context. To assist the transcription process, subtitles were downloaded from the Open Subtitles website and were cross-checked with the film’s original audio for accuracy. Subsequently, the utterances containing deixis elements were identified, coded, and categorized into five types: person, time, place, discourse, and social deixis, based on pragmatic theory. Each deixis expression was analyzed according to its contextual function, leading to a comprehensive interpretation of its pragmatic role in character interaction and narrative development.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In analyzing the types of deixis used in the film *It Ends With Us* by Justin Baldoni, there are several types of deixis, including deixis persona, place, time, discourse, and social. Each type of deixis has a different function in building the meaning and

context of the dialogue between the characters. The results of these identifications are tabulated in the following table to show the frequency of occurrence of each type of deixis.

**Table 1.** Tabulation of Data on the Use of Deixis in the Movie “*It Ends With Us*”

Type of Deixis	Deixis Expression	Dialogue Quotation	F
Persona Deixis	I, you, her, your, we, him, us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I don’t really want to talk about it.”</li> <li>• “You make me feel safe.”</li> <li>• “They never understood me.”</li> </ul>	1.285
Place Deixis	Here, there, this, that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I’m out of here.”</li> <li>• “Wait, what is this?”</li> <li>• “There we go”</li> </ul>	72
Time Deixis	Tonight, Monday, tomorrow, now, then	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Cause my dad died on Monday, so, um...”</li> <li>• “Am I gonna see you tonight?”</li> <li>• “What? -No, you--you have to go right now.”</li> </ul>	27
Discourse Deixis	Is, That, This,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “You can't have any of that.”</li> <li>• “Whoa. My god, look at this.”</li> <li>• “--It's probably for the best.”</li> </ul>	179
Social Deixis	Honey, sweetheart, my love, darling, mom, mama, sir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Uh, Ryle Kincaid. Nice to meet you, ma'am.”</li> <li>• “Okay, honey. Yeah.”</li> <li>• “Yes, my love.”</li> </ul>	45

### Person Deixis

Person deixis, which encodes the roles of conversational participants (speaker, listener, and others), was the most dominant type found in the film *It Ends With Us*, accounting for a total of 1,285 instances. This high frequency clearly highlights the narrative's intense focus on interpersonal relationships and relational dynamics within the dialogue. First-person deictics (“I,” “we”) are frequently used by the protagonist, Lily, to express personal feelings, recount past trauma, and convey direct involvement in her complex experiences. Second-person pronouns (“you,” “your”) are central to reflecting the interpersonal closeness, conflict, or tension in her interactions with key characters like Ryle and Atlas. Third-person deictics (“he,” “they”) primarily function when Lily refers to individuals not currently engaged in the conversation, such as recounting events related to her father, thereby establishing narrative context beyond the immediate exchange.

### Place Deixis

A total of 72 instances of place deixis were identified, which function to encode the location of participants relative to the conversational origo (the speaker's location). The use of these deictic adverbs and demonstratives (e.g., “here,” “this,” “there”) is crucial for positioning the narrative in both physical and psychological spaces. For example, “here” often reflects Lily's urgent desire for escape from a distressing situation, conveying inner conflict. Conversely, “this” or “there” denotes an attempt to engage with or acknowledge immediate reality or

progress toward emotional development and acceptance. The presence of place deixis effectively conveys the tension between the desire to escape and the necessity of confronting reality, aligning location with emotional state, as suggested by theories of deictic centering (Levinson, 1983).

### **Time Deixis**

Time deixis, which anchors points or ranges relative to the moment of utterance, occurred 27 times. These temporal references (e.g., "now," "tonight," "Monday") are tightly interwoven with the film's emotional content, helping to establish the atmosphere and narrative flow. Since each temporal marker is linked to situations filled with conflict, intimacy, or loss—such as references to "Monday" establishing the recency of a traumatic event—temporal deictics serve as an important tool for enhancing the emotional nuances and developmental dynamics of Lily's relationships.

### **Discourse Deixis**

The analysis revealed 179 examples of discourse deixis, where terms like "this," "that," and "it" refer to preceding or succeeding portions of the discourse, or to relevant objects, situations, and decisions within the narrative context. Distinguished from anaphora, discourse deixis functions to enhance textual and interactional cohesion. Markers are heavily dependent on the immediate conversational context, smoothing interaction and reinforcing the thematic development of Lily's character and relationships by connecting dialogue segments to overarching plot points and choices.

### **Social Deixis**

Social deixis, which indexes aspects of the social relationship between participants, was observed 45 times. The usage clearly illustrates the dynamic shifts in Lily's interactions and her relationship growth. Formal address terms, such as "ma'am," mark initial social distance or respect (e.g., in an introductory setting). In contrast, familiar terms of endearment, like "honey" or "my love," explicitly convey emotional closeness, intimacy, and warmth, indicating a progression in the relationship—particularly between Lily and Ryle—and serving as important indicators of the changing emotional tone in their exchanges.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the analysis of *It Ends With Us* Movie, all five types of deixis persona, place, time, discourse, and social are present in the character's dialogues. Persona deixis is the most dominant with 1,285 occurrences, showing that interpersonal relationships are central to the narrative, especially through Lily's interactions. Place 72 and time deixis 27 support spatial and temporal framing of emotions and conflicts. Discourse deixis 179 enhances coherence and links events in the plot,

while social deixis 45 illustrates the range of formal and intimate relationships among characters. Each deixis type serves a specific pragmatic function and reflects the characters' emotions and relationships. Persona deixis highlights Lily's personal involvement, trauma, and affection. Place deixis expresses movement and psychological states, while time deixis signals key events and emotional moments. Discourse deixis ensures conversational cohesion and focuses on critical topics, and social deixis shows levels of intimacy, respect, and closeness that shape character interactions.

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