

Personal, Spatial, and Temporal Deictic Expressions Used in David Cameron's Speech on EU Referendum 2016

Hussein H. Mayuuf* and Haider Mohammed Hameed
Department of English, College of Education for Human Sciences
University of Babylon, Iraq
*Corresponding Author: husm56@gmail.com

Abstract

This study deals with deixis. Deixis /daksis/ is a Greek word refers to 'pointing at'. Words are deictic if their semantic meaning is static but their denotational meaning is dependent on the time, place, and the speaker in certain situation, as in 'I'll put this here' or 'what's that?' These sentences are better understood when the context in which they are spoken is known because the references for this, here and that are unknown when out of context. The present study attempts to detect the use of the personal, temporal and spatial deictic expressions as used in David Cameron's Speech on the EU referendum on May 9 2016. The study attempts to find out what is meant by deixis? what is the main function of deictic expressions? what type of deixis does David Cameron use in his speech? Section one covers the introduction, the aims of the study, the hypotheses, the procedure and the limits. Section two encompasses a theoretical background and clarifying the concept of deixis, its types: personal deixis, spatial deixis and temporal deixis. Section Three covers data analysis. Section Four includes the arrived at conclusions. The study ends with a list of bibliography.

Keywords: deixis, spatial deixis, temporal, Cameron, speech

Introduction

Language is defined as means of communication used by human being to achieve specific goals. It is a highly developed system of communication, in which humans use different types of expressions to contact socially with others, make friendship, communicate feelings, write poetry, and release tension etc. Trudgill (1974).

One of these expressions that language shows is the deictic expressions. Its role is to express emotions and knowledge of life. For Frawley (2009: 274) deixis means the way an expression is anchored to some essential point in context. Interestingly, there are certain expressions of language that is noticed by linguistic researchers which have content meaning but their references cannot be figured out unless the speaker, place and time are known. Such expressions are the pronouns 'I, you, we, he, she, it ' or place expressions as 'there, here' or time expressions as ' today, tomorrow'... etc. These terms are called deixis.

According to Yule (2010: 130) deixis /daksis/ is a Greek word refers to 'pointing at'. Words are deictic if their semantic meaning is static but their denotational meaning is dependent on the time, place, and the speaker in certain situation, as in 'I'll put this here' or 'what's that?' These sentences are better understood when the context in which they are spoken is known because the references for this, here and that are unknown when out of context.

The present study attempts to detect the use of the personal, temporal and spatial deictic expressions as used in David Cameron's Speech on the EU referendum on May 9 2016.

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What is meant by deixis?
2. What is the main function of deictic expressions?
3. What type of deixis does David Cameron use in his speech?

Aims of the Study

The present study aims at:

1. Investigation the personal, temporal and spatial deictic expressions used in David Cameron's Speech?
2. Shedding the light on those deixis in question that are mostly and rarely used.
3. Giving those who are interested in speeches some insight about the personal, temporal and spatial deixis and how they work to make a speech interpretable.

Hypothesis

The present study hypothesizes:

1. It is hypothesized that deixis is mostly used in David Cameron's speeches.
2. It is hypothesized that the three deictic types are equally used in his speech.

Procedure

In order to answer the questions raised as well as the clarity of this study a literature review of deixis and its three types as well as example would be made besides the tables of each type that are used in David Cameron's speech.

Limit of the Study

The study is limited to the investigation of the personal, temporal and spatial deixis used in David Cameron's speech on the EU referendum that is published on May 9 2016.

Theoretical Background

The Concept of Deixis:

When language is spoken, it occurs in a specific location, at a specific time, is produced by a specific person and is (usually) addressed to some specific other person or persons. Only written language can ever be free of this kind of anchoring in the extralinguistic situation. A sentence on a slip of paper can move through space and time, 'speaker'-less, and addressee-less. All natural, spoken language have devices that link the utterance with its spatio-temporal and personal context. This linkage is called 'deixis' (Fromkin, 2003: 217). According to Crystal (2008: 133) who defines deixis as a term used in linguistic theory to subsume those features of language which refer directly to the personal, temporal or locational characteristics of the situation within which an utterance takes place, whose meaning is thus relative to that situation; e.g. now/then, here/there, I/you, this/that are deictics. For Yule (2010: 130) deixis is a technical term (from Greek) that means pointing via language. Furthermore, Reimer (2010: 98) adds certain types of expressions, called deictic or indexical expressions (or simply deictics or indexicals), are defined as those which make reference to some aspect of the context of utterance as an essential part of their meaning. Examples would be the English words here and there and their equivalents in other languages, such as Chinese *zhe* and *na*, or Hungarian *ez* and *az* ('this', 'that'). Deictic expressions have the peculiarity that their reference is relative to the situation in which they are used. They lack any independently paraphraseable sense: what they mean cannot be given any general description other than describing a procedure for isolating the intended referent. The meaning of this in (1), for example, cannot be described except by saying that it refers to some entity in the speaker's context of

utterance – probably a person, but also perhaps an electronic chess board, a computer, or an introductory book about chess:

(1) This is my old chess coach.

Types of Deixis

Personal Deixis

A deictic system grammaticalizes the roles of participants: the current speaker, addressee(s) and others. This information is grammaticalized by pronouns: typically a first person singular pronoun is used for the speaker, second person pronouns for addressee(s) and minimally, a third person category for a category ‘neither-speaker-nor-addressee(s)’ (John Saeed, 2009: 196). In the same respect, George Yule points out that we use deixis to point to things (it, this, these boxes) and people (him, them, those idiots), sometimes called person deixis. Similarly, Fromkin (2003: 218) says that the reference of many words and expressions including deictics relies primarily on the situational context of the utterance in which case you must know who the speaker and listener are in order to interpret them. Lyons (1977:276) mentions that the category of person is clearly definable with pronouns that refer to the notion of participant roles: the first person I, me, we, us, ourselves is used by the speaker to refer to himself as a focus of discourse; the second person you is used to refer to the hearer whether singular or plural, while third person he, him, she, her , it, they, them is used to refer to other person or things other than the speaker and hearer.

Spatial Deixis

Place deixis is deictic reference to a location relative to the location of a participant in the speech, typically the speaker. Place deixis can be seen from the use of demonstrative pronouns such as this (way), that (direction), and can be seen from demonstrative adverbs of place such as here, and there or verbs as in come or go (Levinsin,1983:62).

Frokmn et el. (2003 :217), furthermore, mention that expressions of place deixis requirre contextual information about the place of the utternace, such as here, there, this place, younder mountains and so forth.

In this respect, Hudson (2003: 316) states that there are the demonstrative pronouns such as this, that , these and those. This , for instance, in I'll take this, may mean a rose , a book or whatever depending on the context of its use. Here may indicate a place in Chicago when spoken in Chicago.

Temporal Deixis

Yule (2010, 130) says that deixis means ‘pointing’ via language, in this respect the deictic expressions that are used to point to a time (now, then, last week) are examples of temporal deixis. Hence ‘now’ means some span of time including the moment of utterance, ‘today’ means that diurnal spanin which the speaking event takes place, and is predicates a property that holds at the time of speaking.

Similarly we count backwards from coding time in calendrical units in such expressions as ‘yesterday’ or ‘three years ago’, or ‘forwards in tomorrow’ or ‘next Thursday’ (Horn and Ward: 2006: 114).

On the other hand, Akmajian et al (1997: 242) state that "some indexicals involve explicit descriptive information as well as indexicality such as yesterday and tomorrow. Yesterday, for instance, means something like the day before the day of this utterance of yesterday". It can be added that now is mentioned as a proximal form to indicate both the time coinciding with the speaker's utterance and the time of the speaker's voice being

heard, Whereas then refers to both past and future time relative to the speaker's present time.

Furthermore, Fromkin et al. (2003:317) add that deictic expressions of time are such as now, this time, last week, next April, and so many. To understand what specific times such expressions refer to, we need to know when the utterance was said. Clearly next week has a different reference when uttered today than a month from today. If you found an undated notice announcing a 'BIG SALE NEXT WEEK,' you would not know whether the sale had already taken place.

Data Analysis

The data of this research is a speech obtained from David Cameron's speech on the EU referendum on May 9, 2016. The present study deals only with three types of deixis: personal, spatial and temporal spoken by David Cameron on the EU referendum on May 9, 2016.

David Cameron's Speech on the EU Referendum:
Published: May 9, 2016

"In 45 days' time, the British people will go to polling stations across our islands and cast their ballots in the way we have done in this country for generations.

They will, as usual, weigh up the arguments, reflect on them quietly, discuss them with friends and family, and then, calmly and without fuss, take their decision.

But this time, their decision will not be for a Parliament, or even two.

They will decide the destiny of our country, not for 5 years or for 10, but in all probability for decades, perhaps a lifetime.

This is a decision that is bigger than any individual politician or government.

It will have real, permanent and direct consequences for this country and every person living in it.

Should we continue to forge our future as a proud, independent nation while remaining a member of the European Union, as we have been for the last 43 years? Or should we abandon it?

Let me say at the outset that I understand why many people are wrestling with this decision, and why some people's heads and hearts are torn.

And I understand and respect the views of those who think we should leave, even if I believe they are wrong and that leaving would inflict real damage on our country, its economy and its power in the world."

Where I stand

"I believe that, despite its faults and its frustrations, the United Kingdom is stronger, safer and better off by remaining a member of the European Union. Better off? Certainly.

We are part of a single market of 500 million people which Britain helped to create. Our goods and, crucially, our services – which account for almost 80% of our economy – can trade freely by right. We help decide the rules. The advantages of this far outweigh any disadvantages.

Our membership of the single market is one of the reasons why our economy is doing so well, why we have created almost 2.4 million jobs over the last 6 years, and why so many companies from overseas – from China or India, the United States, Australia and other Commonwealth countries invest so much in the UK.

It is one of the factors – together with our superb workforce, the low taxes set by the British Government, and our climate of enterprise – which makes Britain such an excellent place to do business.

All this is alongside – let us note – our attractive regulatory environment. According to the OECD, it is second only to the Netherlands, itself an EU member – giving the lie to those who claim that the British economy is being strangled by regulation from Brussels.

If we leave, the only certainty we will have is uncertainty.

The Treasury has calculated that the cost to every household in Britain would be as high as £4,300 by 2030 if we leave. £4,300.

The overwhelming weight of independent opinion – from the International Monetary Fund to the OECD, from the London School of Economics to the Institute for Fiscal Studies – also supports the fact that Britain will suffer an immediate economic shock, and then be permanently poorer for the long-term.

The evidence is clear: we will be better off in, and poorer if we leave.

As Charles Dunstone, the founder of Carphone Warehouse, an entrepreneur not averse to risk, has said: ‘In my experience there are calculated risks, there are clever risks, and there are unnecessary and dangerous risks. And from all I can conclude, Brexit sits firmly in the latter camp.’

So the onus is on those who advocate leaving to prove that Britain will be better off outside the EU. Those advocating Brexit have spent many years preparing for this moment. And yet they seem unable to set out a clear, comprehensive plan for our future outside the EU.

Some admit there would be a severe economic shock, but assert nonchalantly that it would be ‘a price worth paying’.

Others are in denial that there would be a shock at all. And they can’t agree what their plan for post-Brexit Britain would look like.

One minute we are urged to follow Norway, the next minute Canada. A few days later Switzerland offers the path forward, until it becomes clear that their arrangement doesn’t provide much access for services to the EU’s single market – and services, as I’ve said, are almost four fifths of the British economy.

Most recently, the Leavers have noticed that a number of European countries that sit outside of the EU have negotiated separate trade arrangements with the EU.

They called this collection of countries the “European free trade zone”.

But in fact, this doesn’t exist: it is a patchwork of different arrangements, all of them far inferior to what we have now.

They have gone on to suggest that Britain might join this non-existent zone, just like Albania.

Seriously? Even the Albanian Prime Minister thought that idea was a joke.

The Leave campaign are asking us to take a massive risk with the future of our economy and the future of our country.

And yet they can't even answer the most basic questions.

What would Britain's relationship be with the EU if we were to leave? Will we have a free trade agreement, or will we fall back on World Trade Organisation rules?

The man who headed the WTO for 8 years thinks this would be and I quote "a terrible replacement for access to the EU single market."

Some of them say we would keep full access to the EU single market.

If so, we would have to accept freedom of movement, a contribution to the EU budget, and accept all EU rules while surrendering any say over them.

In which case, we would have given up sovereignty rather than taken it back.

Others say we would definitely leave the single market – including, yesterday, the Vote Leave campaign – despite the critical importance of the single market to jobs and investment in our country.

I can only describe this as a reckless and irresponsible course. These are people's jobs and livelihoods that are being toyed with.

And the Leave campaign have no answers to the most basic questions.

What access would we try to secure back into the single market from the outside? How long would it take to negotiate a new relationship with the EU? What would happen to the 53 trade deals we have with other markets around the world through the EU?

The Leave campaign can't answer them because they don't know the answers. They have no plan.

And yet sceptical voters who politely ask for answers are denounced for their lack of faith in Britain, or met with sweeping assurances that the world will simply jump to our tune.

Personal Deixis

Some examples taken form the speech:

1. 'We are part of a single market of 500 million people'
2. 'They will decide the destiny of our country'
3. 'Some of them say we would keep full access to the EU single market'

Table 1

Personal deixis which are spoken by David Cameron.

Personal deixis	Frequency	Percentage %
Our	16	19.27 %
We	24	28%
They	9	10%
Them	5	6%
It	9	10%
Me	2	2.4%
I	8	9.6%

Their	4	4.8%
Its	2	2.4%
My	1	0.24%
These	1	0.24%
Us	1	0.24%
Itself	1	0.24%
Total	83	

Table 1 shows the number of personal deixis that are spoken by David Cameron on the EU referendum. The most dominant personal deictic expression used is ‘our’ (16) and the less personal deictic expressions are ‘my’, ‘these’, ‘us’ and ‘itself’ (1) for each.

Spatial Deixis

Some examples of spatial deixis taken from the speech:

1. ‘we have done in this country for generations’
2. ‘They have gone on to suggest that Britain might join this non-existent zone’
3. ‘It will have real, permanent and direct consequences for this country and every person living in it.’

Table 2

Spatial deixis which are spoken by David Cameron.

Spatial deixis	Frequency	Percentage%
This	10	41.66%
That	7	29.16%
There	5	20.83%
these (place)	2	8.33%
Total	24	

Table 2 shows the number of spatial deixis that are spoken by David Cameron on the EU referendum. The most dominant spatial deictic expression used is ‘this’ (10) and the less spatial deictic expression is ‘these’ (1).

Temporal Deixis

Some examples of temporal deixis are taken from the speech:

1. ‘Others say we would definitely leave the single market – including, yesterday’
2. ‘They will decide the destiny of our country, not for 5 years or for 10’
3. ‘Britain will suffer an immediate economic shock, and then be permanently poorer for the long-term.’

Table 3

Temporal deixis which are spoken by David Cameron.

Temporal deixis	Frequency	Percentage %
Yesterday	1	11.11%
Then	1	11.11%

Year	2	22.22%
Minute	1	11.11%
Days	2	22.22%
Time	2	22.22%
Total	9	

Table 3 shows the number of temporal deixis that are spoken by David Cameron on the EU referendum. The total number of temporal deictic expressions used is (9) and it ranges from 1 to 2. Table 3 shows that ‘yesterday’, ‘then’, and ‘minute’ are used once and ‘year’, ‘days’ and ‘time’ are used twice in David Cameron’s speech.

Table 4

Frequency and percentage of the three types of deixis used.

Type of deixis	Frequency	Percentage %
Personal	83	71.55
Special	24	20.68
Temporal	9	7.75
Total	116	

Table 4 shows that David Cameron uses the personal deixis (83) more than the special and the temporal which have been used (24) and (9) respectively.

Conclusion

This study concludes that humans use languages for diverse functions and one of these functions is how point to people, things, places and durations that surround them though the frequent use of deixis. The present study is only confined to the personal, spatial and temporal used in David Cameron’s speech on the EU Referendum which published on May 9, 2016. Out of context, interpretation of the meaning of these deictic expressions is vague. Hence, the context is crucial factor needed to arrive to the deliberate meaning of the sentences or utterances under discussion.

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