

## DEIXIS IN MARK ZUCKERBERG'S HARVARD COMMENCEMENT SPEECH

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### **Abstract**

*This research deals with the analysis of deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech. Deixis is the study of pragmatics that concerns with the interpretation of utterances that relates to people, place, time, and the sign of the speaker or the area in the discourse. The objectives of this research were to find out the types of deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech and the references of deixis found in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech. This research was conducted by applying descriptive qualitative method. The data was analyzed by using Miles & Huberman's theory such as data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification. The result of this research shows that there were found five types of deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech such as person deixis, place deixis, time deixis, discourse deixis and social deixis. The results showed that each deixis has different references based on the context of their use in the speech. Based on the research finding, it is concluded that deixis is inseparable in human life because people always use deixis in daily communication. Deixis is imperative to learn because it help people to understand the meaning of every utterance conveyed by the speaker.*

**Key Words:** *Pragmatics; speech; context; deixis; types of deixis*

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini berfokus pada analisis deiksis dalam pidato pembukaan Mark Zuckerberg di Harvard. Deiksis adalah kajian pragmatik yang berhubungan dengan interpretasi ujaran yang mangacu pada orang, tempat, waktu yang terdapat di dalam sebuah wacana. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mencari jenis deixis dalam pidato pembukaan Mark Zuckerberg di Harvard dan rujukandari setiap deixis yang terdapat dalam pidato pembukaan Mark Zuckerberg di Harvard. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menerapkan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan teori Miles dan Huberman yaitu reduksi data, penyajian data, penarikan kesimpulan/verifikasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada lima jenis deixis yang terdapat dalam pidato pembukaan Mark Zuckerberg di Harvard yaitu deiksis persona, deiksis tempat, deiksis waktu, deiksis wacana dan deiksis sosial. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa setiap deiksis memiliki rujukan yang berbeda-beda sesuai dengan konteks penggunaannya di dalam pidato. Berdasarkan temuan, dapat disimpulkan bahwa deiksis tidak dapat

dipisahkan dalam hidup manusia karena orang selalu menggunakan deiksis dalam komunikasi sehari-hari. Deiksis sangat penting untuk dipelajari karena deiksis membantu orang untuk memahami makna dari setiap ujaran yang disampaikan oleh pembicara.

**Kata Kunci:** *Pragmatik; pidato; konteks; deiksis; jenis deiksis*

## A. Introduction

Language is inseparable from humans activity. It has an imperative role in human life because it serves as a tool for communication and interaction between people. Fromkin et al. (2003:3) remarks that in accordance with the philosophy expressed in the myths and religions of many people, language is the source of human life and power. It means that language is extremely important because human cannot survive in a group of society without it. People need to interact to others for survival.

Language is not only use for communication but also for speech. Speech is a form of communication that generally performed by someone who has an important role, such as a country leader, company leader, business leader, or someone who can inspire the listeners, for instance one of the speeches done by Mark Zuckerberg at Harvard. In giving speech, the most important point is actually that the hearer or audience can understand what the speaker intends to convey. Tauchid & Rukmini (2016:3) states that when people say something to someone, at the same time they also do something dealing with the arrangement of their utterances. It means that beside the message, a good arrangement of words, grammar and reference of the speaker's speech is also vitally important in delivered speech in order to make the

audience or hearer can interpret well the speaker's intended meaning.

However, in reality there were found some problems when people deliver the speech. Sometimes the audiences or listeners do not catch well the message or information conveyed by the speaker or in other words there is misunderstanding between the speaker and audience. That misunderstanding related to the reference or context used by the speaker. so, in order to understand or interpret the meaning of an utterance, the listener or audience should be able to identify the context or situation behind conversation or a speech.

Putri & Kurniawan (2015) claims that one of the examples, which reflects the relationship between the language and context is, through the phenomenon of deixis. In other words, deixis can solve the problem of communication. Deixis is the study of pragmatics that deals with the relationship of language and context. The word 'deixis' (pronounced like /dɪksɪs/ or /deɪksɪs/) derived from Greek language means pointing or indicating.

Richards & Schmidt (2010:160) clarify deixis as a term for a word or phrase which directly relates an utterance to a time, place, or person(s). Moreover, Levinson (1983:54) defines deixis as the encoding or interpretation of utterances depend on the analysis of that context of utterance. It can be concluded that deixis concerns with the

interpretation of utterances in relation to the particular people, time, place and other contextual aspect based on the speech situation or speech event.

As example, the researcher cited a sentence from Mark Zuckerberg's speech as follows: "We have all started lifelong friendships *here*, and some of *us* even families." In this utterance, the word *we*, *here*, and *us* are type of deixis which does not have a permanent reference. Sometimes those words do not always have its meaning lexically, such as the pronoun 'we' not only always refers to the speaker and one addressee, but sometimes it also refers to the speaker and two or more addressees depend on situation and where the speakers talk. And the word 'here' cannot either be interpreted as a place where the speaker stands and talks, but it can be signified as the country or territory where the speaker delivers the speech. Deixis has many variations and sometimes it can be confusing. The understanding of a deixis in English especially in speech sometimes really needs an extra effort to interpret because it depends on context which can be changed all the time based on situation. To know and interpret well the meaning of messages that conveyed by the speaker, the listener or audience needs to know about whom and what is a deixis refers to.

Levinson (1983:68) classifies deixis into five types, they are person deixis, time deixis, place deixis, discourse deixis and social deixis.

#### a. Person Deixis

Person deixis basically exemplifies people or it refers to pronouns. Levinson (1983:62) explains that person deixis concerns the encoding

of the role of participants in the speech event in which the utterance in question is delivered. Based on Levinson's theory, person deixis can be defined as an utterance that refers to the participants in the speech event. 'participants' here relates to speaker and also the audience or addressee. The following are three categories of person deixis according to Cruse (2000:320):

**Table 1. Category of Person Deixis**

| English                | Singular                             | Plural           |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> person | <i>I/me</i>                          | <i>we/us</i>     |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> person | <i>you</i>                           | <i>you</i>       |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> person | <i>he/him,</i><br><i>she/her, it</i> | <i>they/them</i> |

Source: Cruse (2000)

The three categories of person deixis are first person deixis that refers to the speaker or the speaker and addressee, second person deixis that refers to the addressee, and third person deixis that refers to the person not identified as the speaker or addressee. For example:

- a) Mark has a beautiful wife. *He* really loves *her*.
- b) *Zuckerberg* has lost his glove and *he* cannot find *it*.

#### b. Place Deixis

The second types of deixis is about place deixis or known as spatial deixis that refers the specification of location. Levinson (1983:62) defines place deixis as the encoding of spatial locations relative to the location of the participants in the speech event. In other words, place deixis is deictic expression which indicates the particular place relative to the speech event. Moreover, place deixis shows

itself principally in the form of locative expression *here* and *there*. *Here* refers to the place that close to the speaker meanwhile *there* refers to the place that farther away from speaker's location.

For examples:

- 1) Nias Raya University is my favorite campus. I am having a great time *here*.
- 2) Please wait for me in the canteen, I'll be *there*.

#### c. Time Deixis

Time deixis also known as temporal deixis that deals with the time at which an utterance is produced. Cruse (2006:179) points out that temporal deictics indicate the timing of an event relative to the time of speaking. Moreover, Levinson (1983:62) defines time deixis as the encoding of temporal points and spans relative to the time at which an utterance was spoken (or a written message inscribed).

The word like *today, now, yesterday, next week, this week, last month* and so on. These expressions are called as time deixis. For example:

- 1) I will meet you *tomorrow*.
- 2) I learn English *now*.

#### d. Discourse Deixis

Discourse deixis is also known as text deixis. Levinson (1983:62) defines discourse deixis as the encoding of reference to portions of the unfolding discourse in which the utterance (which includes the text referring expression) is located". From the statement above, discourse deixis can be interpreted as a phrase that used to refer to some words or an utterance in the discourse or text.

Discourse deixis generally exemplified by the demonstratives that, this, these and those. For example:

- 1) I bet you haven't heard *this* story.
- 2) I bet you haven't heard these stories.
- 3) *That* was the funniest story I've ever heard.
- 4) Those were the funniest stories I've ever heard.

#### e. Social Deixis

Cruse (2006:166) defines social deictics as expressions whose function is to indicate the position of the referent on the scales of social status and intimacy relative to the speaker. Based on the statements above, it can be concluded that social deixis includes the encoding of social relationship in linguistic expressions which refers to social aspect or social status of participants in the speech event. For example:

- a) Thank you, *my lord!*
- b) Pardon me, *sir*.

In this study, the researcher analyzed the deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's commencement speech at Harvard, not only because there are so many deixes found in that speech but also because Mark Zuckerberg is a famous person in the world, an inspiring man, who always encourages all people especially the teenagers or youngsters to be succes in life. In delivering speech, Mark Zuckerberg always shares a good experience and never stop to motivate and encourage others for making a good change into the world and being success. Therefore, it will be interesting to study

the speech of Mark Zuckerberg especially about deixis.

Therefore, deixis is useful in analyzing a speech because every utterance is related to pointing about people, things, time or place based on context. The meaning will be clear if the audience as the listener able to identify about who is speaking, when and where an utterance is uttered.

## B. Research Method

This research was designed in descriptive qualitative research. Lodico (2010:143) explains that qualitative research has few characteristics. Some of them are: studies in qualitative method are carried out in naturalistic settings, in qualitative the researcher ask broad research question designed to explore, interpret, or understand the social context, and the study data reports is in narrative form or using words rather than numbers.

This research investigated the deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech based on Levinson's theory. The data is in the form of video about Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech. To support in analyzing the data, the researcher used supporting data in the form of transcript of Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech.

In collecting the data, the researcher used documentation method, the steps are: (1) watching the video of Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech; (2) reading the transcript for many times; (3) selecting the utterance which contains deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech; (4) classifying the data into the types of deixis; (5) interpreting the

references of deixis found in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech. After collected the data, the researcher analyzed the data by using Miles & Huberman's theory such as data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification.

## C. Research Findings and Discussion

This research was aimed to find out the types of deixis and the references of deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech. As mentioned in the previous research, the researcher used the theory of Levinson in classifying deixis. The classification of types of deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech is summerized and presented in the following table.

**Table 2. Person Deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard Commencement Speech**

| Person Deixis          |          |           |
|------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Types of Person Deixis | Singular | Plural    |
| First Person Deixis    | I        | We        |
|                        | Me       | Us        |
|                        | My       | Our       |
|                        | Mine     | Ours      |
|                        | Myself   | Ourselves |
| Second Person Deixis   | You      | You       |
|                        | -        | Your      |
|                        | -        | Yourself  |
| Third Person Deixis    | He       | They      |
|                        | Him      | Them      |
|                        | His      | Their     |
|                        | Himself  | -         |
|                        | She      | -         |
|                        | Her      | -         |
|                        | It       | -         |
|                        | its      | -         |



Based on table 2, the three types of person deixis occurred in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech. The example of the reference of person deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech is as follows.

**Utterance:** "President Faust, Board of Overseers, faculty, alumni, friends, proud parents, members of the ad board, and graduates of the greatest university in the world, I'm honored to be with *you* today because, let's face it, *you* accomplished something I never could. If I get through this speech, *it*'ll be the first time I actually finish something at Harvard. Class of 2017, congratulations!"

**Analysis:** The utterance above contains person deixis such as the word *I*, *you* and *it*. The word 'I' refers to Mark Zuckerberg. Then, the word 'you' refers to people that mentioned previously by the speaker. they are President Faust, Board of Overseers, faculty, alumni, friends, proud parents, members of the ad board, and graduates. Lastly, the word 'it' refers to the word 'speech'.

**Table 3. Place Deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard Commencement Speech.**

| Place Deixis        |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Locative Expression | Demonstratives |
| Here                | This           |

Based on the table 3, place deixis occurred in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech. there were found

locative expression *here* and the demonstrative *this*. The example of the reference of place deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech is as follows.

**Utterance:** "I'm an unlikely speaker, not just because I dropped out, but because we're technically in the same generation. We walked *this* yard less than a decade apart, studied the same ideas and slept through the same Ec10 lectures. We may have taken different paths to get *here*, especially if you came all the way from the Quad, but today I want to share what I've learned about our generation and the world we're building together"

**Analysis:** The utterance contains place deixis such as *this* and *here*. The word 'this' and 'here' in this utterance refer to Harvard University.

**Table 4. Time Deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard Commencement Speech.**

| No. | Time Deixis             |
|-----|-------------------------|
| 1   | Today                   |
| 2   | Now                     |
| 3   | The last couple of days |
| 4   | Next year               |
| 5   | Last year               |
| 6   | A couple years in       |
| 7   | Before                  |
| 8   | Right now               |
| 9   | Every month             |

Based on table 4, time deixis occurred in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech such as the word *today*, *now*, *the last couple of days*, *next year*, *last year*, *a couple years in*, *before*, *right now*, and *every month*. The example of the reference of time deixis in Mark

Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech is as follows.

**Utterance:** "I'm honored to be with you *today* because, let's face it, you accomplished something I never could. If I get through this speech, it'll be the first time I actually finish something at Harvard. Class of 2017, congratulations!"

**Analysis:** In this utterance, the speaker used time deixes namely *today*. The word 'today' refers to the time of Mark Zuckerberg delivered his speech exactly on Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup> 2017.

**Table 5. Discourse Deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard Commencement Speech.**

| No. | Discourse Deixis | Examples in the Utterance of Mark Zuckerberg's speech  |
|-----|------------------|--|
| 1   | This             | this speech, this prank, this idea, this company.  |
| 2   | That             | that party, that line, that janitor, that class.   |
| 3   | These            | these big technology company, these people, these projects, these achievements, these folks. |
| 4   | Those            | those jobs, those kids, those gates.   |

Based on the table presented above, discourse deixis occurred in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard Commencement speech. In this study, the researcher found out demonstratives *this*, *that*, *these* and *those* as discourse deixis. the demonstratives *this* and *that* exemplify a particular utterance in the discourse that is singular, while the demonstratives *these* and *those* exemplify a particular utterance in the discourse that is plural. The example

of the reference of discourse deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech is as follows.

**Utterance:** "I'm honored to be with you today because, let's face it, you accomplished something I never could. If I get through *this* speech, it'll be the first time I actually finish something at Harvard. Class of 2017, congratulations!"

**Analysis:** The word 'this' in this utterance is demonstrative adjective that modifies the word 'speech'. Here, Mark Zuckerberg clarified that the speech conveyed by him at that time was the first thing he finished at Harvard.

**Table 6. Social Deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard Commencement Speech.**

| No. | Social Deixis       |
|-----|---------------------|
| 1   | Board of Overseers  |
| 2   | Faculty             |
| 3   | Alumni              |
| 4   | Friends             |
| 5   | Parents             |
| 6   | Ad board            |
| 7   | Graduates           |
| 8   | Greatest University |
| 9   | Mr. President       |

Based on the table presented above, social deixis occurred in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech. Social deixis is a word or phrase that indicates the social status of participants in the speech event. In this research, there were found ten deixes of social deixis that exemplified by word *board of overseers*, *faculty*, *alumni*, *friends*, *parents*, *ad board*, *graduates*, *greatest university*, and *Mr. president*. The example of reference of social deixis in

Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech is as follows.

**Utterance:** *"One of my favorite stories is when John F Kennedy visited the NASA space center, he saw a janitor carrying a broom and he walked over and asked what he was doing. The janitor responded: "Mr. President, I'm helping put a man on the moon".*

**Analysis:** The word 'Mr.President' in this utterance refers to John F Kennedy.

Furthermore, all deictic words not always categorized as type of deixis. For example the word there and here in Mark Zuckerberg not always categorized as place deixis. Here is the example:

- 1) Mark Zuckerberg: *We were just college kids. We didn't know anything about that. There were all these big technology companies with resources.*
- 2) Mark Zuckerberg: *I was blown away. Here's a young guy who has every reason to be cynical.*

The word 'there' and 'here' in the utterance above cannot be classified as place deixis because they have unspecified reference in other words they do not refer to a place. In this utterance, there and here tend to refer to introduce about something not a place.

#### D.Closing

Depend on the research findings and discussion presented in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes this research as follows:

1. After the researcher collected and analyzed deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech, the researcher found five types of deixis. They are person deixis, place deixis, time deixis, discourse deixis and

social deixis. Each type of deixis has various deictic words such as in person deixis the researcher found three types of person deixis such as first person deixis includes *I, me, my, mine, myself*, second person deixis includes *you, your, yourself* and third person deixis includes *he, him, his, himself, she, her, it, its, they, them, their*. Next, in place deixis, there were found place deixis that exemplified by the word *here*, and also the demonstrative *this*. Moreover, in time deixis there were found various deictic words such as *today, now, the last couple of days, next year, last year, a couple years in, before, right now, and every month*. Furthermore, researcher found demonstratives *this, that, these* and *those* which exemplified discourse deixis. The last is social deixis that exemplified by the word *Mr.President, faculty, alumni* and so on.

2. Not all deictic words can be classified as deixis. For example the word there and here in the certain utterance which do not have the specified reference. In other words, they do not refer to a place but they have another function in the sentence.
3. Deixis is imperative to learn in order to know the speaker's message and the reference of an utterance conveyed by the speaker. In this research, the researcher figured out that each deixis in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard commencement speech has different references. Knowing the references of deixis used by the speaker in a



speech is truly important because it help the listeners interpret well every utterance conveyed by the speaker. To be able to know the references of deixis in a speech, the ability to understand the context is very necessary.

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