

**SOCIAL DEIXIS ANALYSIS ON *THE FINAL INTERVIEW WITH THE OBAMAS***Erfina Nuryusticia<sup>1</sup> and Dian Nurrachman<sup>2</sup>UIN Sunan Gunung Djati<sup>1</sup>, Bandung, erfinany@gmail.comUIN Sunan Gunung Djati<sup>2</sup>, Bandung, diannurachman@uinsgd.ac.id**ABSTRACT**

The final interview with Obama, as one of influential persons in the world, attracted many media to broadcast. His interview showed real-life interaction of a representative figure so that the way he used language is also representative. Specifically, this study aims at finding out the kinds of social deixis and to describe the function of social deixis in *The Final Interview with the Obamas*. The data are analyzed in a qualitative descriptive method to point out the phenomena of social deixis in the news as a part of daily life and since the collection of the data are mostly analyzed by using description and explanation form which focus on the characteristics, types, and the reason why the usage of social deixis is the main issues to be investigated. Based on the analysis of *The Final Interview with The Obamas* from the PeopleTV YouTube channel, it can be concluded that all types of social deixis according to Levinson's theory are found in the object of research. There are relational which manifested by the speaker and referent, the speaker and addressee, the speaker and bystander, and the speaker and setting. There is also absolute social deixis which is manifested by the authorized speaker, and the authorized recipient absolute social deixis. In addition, the three functions of social deixis are also found in the utterances in *The Final Interview with The Obamas*. Those are the social status differentiation function, politeness function, and social identity function.

**Keywords:** *Social Deixis; Interview; Pragmatics*

**INTRODUCTION**

The final interview with Obama, as one of influential persons in the world, attracted many media to broadcast. His interview showed real-life interaction of a representative figure so that the way he used language is also representative. The use of social deixis is being the main issue to be investigated in this study since social deixis is a language phenomenon that cannot be avoided in everyday life including for Obama. Social deixis has a close relationship with social status and familiarity, which consist of a special expression of respect in language. It shows manners related to social culture relationships. It can be said that social deixis is an accurate way to describe the relationship between language and its context in the language structure.

Social deixis is a particular expression of respect in language. Deixis itself is a word to point out a reference to a word that varies depending on who is the speaker and what it points out, something that refers to a place, time, and thing (Purwo, 1990, p. 1). Many people do not realize how important it is to use the term for respect, whether to someone we know or to a stranger. In social life, it is crucial to respect other people when we are in a speech event. We as social living need to

appreciate others in communicating to create a good relationship with the person. An honorific is a way to give an appreciation or respect to other people in communication. The way which is called social deixis is discussed in a branch of pragmatics, the honorific that is a part of deixis (Levinson, 1983, p. 89).

People who are not aware of social deixis may be confused and causes misunderstanding when interacting, especially with people who have different social backgrounds. Therefore, this research chooses the social deixis to make people aware of the existence of the social expression of respect.

This research focuses on the analyzes of social deixis included in pragmatics study about kind of social deixis and its function with "*The Final Interview With The Obamas (Full Interview)*" by People TV YouTube Channel as the object of research. This research chooses "The Final Interview with the Obamas (Full Interview)" as the object of research. This research chooses the interview as the object because it encompasses the real-life interaction included conversations, without any manipulations. This research aims to find out the kind of social deixis and to describe the function of social deixis found in The Final Interview with the Obamas.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Deixis is how to refer to something by using language which is only able to be interpreted according to the meaning referred to by the speaker and influenced by the situation of the conversation (Cahyono, 1995, p. 217). The term "deixis" comes from ancient Greek, which means pointing out, indicating, and showing something. According to Wijana, deixis is a reference from an inconsistent word to its references and changes (Wijana, 1996, p. 6). Deixis refers to the particular way in which certain linguistic expressions are interpreted depending on the context in which that particular linguistics expression is produced or interpreted. It refers to the need for contextual information on the phenomenon of how to understand the meaning of certain words and phrases in utterances.

Levinson stated that deixis is a reference through an expression whose interpretation is relative to the context of the utterance (Levinson, 1983, p. 54). A word can only be said as deixis when its meaning or reference depends on the accompanying context. In daily interactions, speakers cannot avoid using deixis in their utterances. Deixis is a way to point out a reference to a deictic expression that varies depending on who is the speaker and what it points out, such as the time and place, and thing referred, for example, the deictic expression "here," "there," "now." The use of these words has its own purpose and meaning for the speaker, who can only be interpreted based on the context in the utterance. It can be said that context is crucial so that communication between speakers and the addressee will be clear. Therefore, something that refers to particular cases, whether a place, time, and the thing, are called deixis (Purwo, 1990, p. 1).

Furthermore, Yule (Yule, 1996, p. 9) states, "They are among the first forms to be spoken by very young children and can be used to indicate people via person deixis ('me,' 'you'), or location via spatial deixis ('here' 'there') or time via temporal deixis ('now,' 'then')." All of the expressions depend on their interpretation and on the hearer and the speaker sharing the same context. Deixis, according to Levinson (Levinson, 1983, p. 62) is divided into five types; they are person deixis, place deixis, time deixis, discourse deixis, and social deixis. Person Deixis is the role of participants in the speech event in which utterance is delivered. It is divided into

three, the first person (*I*), the second person (*you*), and the third person (*She, He, It, and They*). Place deixis in English divided into the proximal terms (near from the speaker) are 'this,' 'here,' 'now', and the distal terms (away from the speaker) are 'that,' 'there,' 'then'.

Deixis temporal or time deixis is usually encoded by the terms 'now,' 'then,' 'yesterday,' 'tomorrow' (Cummings, 2016, p. 154). Discourse deixis is able to be indicated by the usage of 'that' and 'this'.

### ***Social Deixis***

Social deixis points out the social status gap between the speaker and the addressee. It concerns the utterance aspects as a reflection of certain reality about the social situation in a speech event. It encodes social relationships, whether direct or indirect references. Social deixis in pragmatics is a way to refer something concerning to a social situation, social identity, and social ranks influenced by the context in a speech event. According to Levinson, social deixis is related to the encoding of social differences relatives to a participant's role, especially social relationship aspects that occur between the speaker or addressee and several referents (Levinson, 1983, p. 63). Social deixis shows manners that relate to social culture. For this form of deixis, each selected morphemes would be associated with the social culture of the person participating in the speech event (Rachmanita, 2016, p. 22).

According to Levinson (Levinson, 1983, pp. 90-91) social deixis explains the relationship level between a person and the information with the two basic kinds of social deixis information, which are relational and absolute. Relational deixis refers to the deictic referent to some social referent characteristics apart from relative levels or deictic referent to the social relationship between speaker and addressee, for example, my wife, teacher, brother, father, etc. The relational deixis is manifested by these relationships:

1. Speaker and referent (referent honorific)  
Referent honorific concerns to point out the speaker's appreciation to the referent. It concerns giving honor to someone that is being talked about only by referring to the target of respect it can be expressed.
2. Speaker and addressee (addressee honorific)  
This form of social deixis is formed to be used to refer the differences towards the addressee by the speaker. It can be conveyed without any direct references. It is to give an honor or respect toward the addressee. It is directly conveyed without having to be referenced. For example, the use of *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Brother*, and *You* have also shown a sense of respect to the spokesperson despite the respect without referring to the name of the person (Levinson, 1983, p. 90).
3. Speaker and bystander (bystander or audience honorifics)  
The speaker and bystander form refer to the unaddressed participants. It is the form that is used by the speaker to show respect to the audience, including the participant who has a role as an audience and non-participant over hearers. It implies that although not involved directly in any speech event, someone or any certain group is greeted by the speaker. For instance, the usage of a certain language is called "father-in-law" or "sister-inlaw" found in the Australian Aboriginal language. It is a special 'avoidance' language register that is used in front of relatives.
4. Speaker and setting (formality levels or social activity) This kind of form is about a relation between the speaker and the speech event. In other words, the

speaker uses more formal language or adapts to the situation to create honorifics and respect for the addressee. The difference between social level and politeness in using language is the function of this form. Many European languages have distinct register informal occasions, for example, *eat* become *dine*, etc.

The other type of social deixis is absolute. Absolute social deixis describes the deixis reference, which is usually expressed in a certain form of address, which does not include any ranking comparison between the speaker and the addressee. Absolute deixis is a deixis form that is not related to the relationship but more absolute, such as "Your Majesty," "Mr. President," "Your Honor." This type of social deixis is divided into two forms, as follows:

1. Authorized Speaker

According to Levinson, this kind of absolute social deixis is a form of honorific which is limited to the authorized speaker (Levinson, 1983, p. 91). For example, as a form of honorifics, which is reserved for a particular speaker where we are able to speak as an authorized speaker.

2. Authorized Recipient

The authorized recipient is a form to give the honor to authorize the recipient by the speaker. Title or honorary degree is usually addressed to the authorized recipient to point out position, occupation, or profession. There are many languages reserved to the authorized recipient, such as *Your Majesty*, *Your Honor*, and so on.

Moreover, according to Levinson (Levinson, 1983, pp. 91-92) social deixis shows manners and social status, which relate social deixis to the social culture; it is used differently in a formal setting in most languages. Levinson adds that formality can best be seen when viewed as involving relations between the participant's roles and situations. In a language with honorifics, honorifics concord is not always able to be used formally without referring to socially deictic values of particular morphemes. For this form of deixis, each selected morphemes would be associated with the social culture of the person participating in the speech event. Therefore, the social deixis is the usage of language relevant to the politeness, cultural ethic, and the norms prevailing in the society. The type of language chosen is in accordance with some aspect of the participant's socio-cultural aspect involved in the speech event. Furthermore, based on the explanation above, the functions of social deixis are as follows:

1. Social status differentiation

Social deixis as a status differentiation is to distinguish the social status of a participant. Formal language is usually used to encode a social status differentiation between people with different social ranks in a speech event. For example, when a student calls the teacher by deictic expression *Prof*, it encodes that the teacher has higher education by knowing title *Prof* is usually used to people who have higher education.

2. Politeness

The politeness function is usually used to respect participants. For instance, the teacher in a school is called Mr. or Miss to show respect and manners as politeness.

### 3. Social identity

Social deixis, as a social identity, encodes the identification of the speaker or addressee. For example, when a speaker is addressing the phrase *young boy*, it indicates that the deictic expression refers to the younger person than the speaker.

### METHOD

The data are analyzed in a qualitative descriptive method. According to Dane, "Descriptive research involves attempting to estimate the strength or intensity of a behavior or the relation between two behaviors." (Dane, 1990). Descriptive research involves a collection of techniques used to specify, delineate, or describe a naturally occurring phenomenon without experimental manipulation. The qualitative research is used with the aim to point out the phenomena of social deixis in the news as a part of daily life and since the collection of the data are mostly analyzed by using description and explanation form which focus on the characteristics, types, and the reason why the usage of social deixis is the main issues to be investigated.

The utterances from the object of research which consists of social deixis are purposively selected to be used as the research data. The technique of collecting data are download the video from PeopleTV YouTube Channel titled "The Final Interview with the Obamas (Full Interview)", watch the video, transcribe the data into written form, read the data carefully, and highlight the utterances that occur in the video that contains social deixis, then classified the data and applying theory related to the research's purpose. The technique of analyzing data are identifying and classifying the types and the function of social deixis found in the object.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### *Relational Social Deixis*

The relational social deixis found in the object of research are analyzed as follow:

#### *1. Speaker and referent (referent honorific)*

Male interviewer : "This is it! the last time People magazine will sit down with President Barack Obama and First Lady **Michelle Obama** at the White House."

The male interviewer opens the session of the interview. He says that this interview will be the last time they sit down with Obama and Michelle at the White House as the President and First Lady. The video shows behind the scene of the interview while the interviewer talks to the audience.

The social deixis expression "Michelle Obama" occurs in the utterance, which the interviewer utters. It refers to the addressee, who is the speaker talked to. The speaker greets Michelle by using "Michelle Obama", the name Obama itself is the last name of her husband's name, Barack Obama. In society, the usage of the husband's last name replaces the wife's previous surname is called a family name or surname which a woman adopts after her marriage. In this case, Obama's last name replaces Michelle's last name from "Michelle LaVaughn Robinson" to "Michelle Obama" which encodes that Michelle is Barack Obama's wife. He uses

the social deixis expression to respect and honor the referent that is being discussed (Levinson, 1983). Thus, the social deixis expression is included in the speaker and referent social deixis.

2. *Speaker and addressee (addressee honorific)*

Male interviewer : “Here it is. People at the White House with the  
**Obamas**, the final interview.”

The utterance is uttered by the male interviewer to the audience as a sign that the interview has begun. He says that this interview will be the final interview with the Obamas in the White House.

The word “Obamas” is uttered by the interviewer that is targeted to the interviewee. It is a pronoun of a family name by adding “s” without an apostrophe at the end of the name is indicated as a social deixis expression. The deictic expression “the Obamas” refers to Barack Obama’s family or the interviewee of the interview. Therefore, it is included in speaker and addressee or addressee honorific relational social deixis because it points out respect from the speaker to the addressee. In line with Levinson who argues that speaker and addressee relational social deixis concerns to give honor toward the addressee without any direct references (Levinson, 1983).

3. *Speaker and bystander (bystander or audience honorifics)*

Michelle : “We survived, and **our kids**, we’re here.”

The utterance occurs in the first preview of the interview. It is the first utterance that Michelle uttered in the interview. Michelle and Barack Obama are sitting on a red couch.

The social deixis expression ‘our kids’ occurs in the utterance uttered by Michelle Obama. The phrase “our kids” refers to Michelle as the speaker and Obama’s daughters who are not in the speech event. Therefore, the social deixis expression is included in the speaker and bystander relational social deixis because the speaker intended to honor someone who is not a participant in the interview (Levinson, 1983).

4. *Speaker and setting (formality levels or social activity)*

Michelle : “Yeah, I mean, you know, there are so many surreal powerful moments, you know, watching my mother transition into this house, knowing where she comes from a **working-class**, even poorer working-class, upbringing to seeing her standing on the Truman balcony and representing this country as the first grandmother.”

The utterance occurred when Michelle Obama was talking about her mother. She told the audience how glad she was to see her mother, who does not come from the upper class, could be in the White House.

The phrase “working-class” refers to those engaged in waged or salaried labor. “Working class” is classified as Households with incomes between \$10,000 and \$20,000, and those with incomes under \$20,000 are “poor” (B.Hill, 1987). This utterance is uttered by Michelle Obama, which refers to her mother. The phrase “working-class” is a social deixis expression used to adapt to the formal situation to create honorifics and respect. In Levinson, speaker and setting social deixis implies the relation of the participant with the speech event to create honorifics to the addressee (Levinson, 1983). Hence, this social deixis expression is included in the speaker and setting relational social deixis.

### **Absolute Social Deixis**

The absolute social deixis found in the object of research are analyzed as follow:

#### 1. *Authorized Speaker*

Barack Obama : “I try to do my best as a **Dad** to have that intergenerational relationship for them to be with their grandma, the same way they were on 74th St. Euclid in the Southland South Shore neighborhood where her mom’s house and where Michelle grew up.”

In the second interview, the male interviewer asked Obama about his mother-in-law, and he tried his best as a dad to have an intergenerational relationship for his daughters the same way they were in their previous environment where Michelle and her mother grew up.

There is a social deixis expression uttered by Barack Obama as the speaker to interviewers as the addressee in the utterance. The social deixis “dad” is used as an intimate greeting given by children to their male parent to show their family relationship. The speaker uses the social deixis expression to target himself as a father of his daughters. Levinson states that an authorized speaker is a kind of social deixis that is absolute to limit to the authorized speaker (Levinson, 1983). Therefore, the social deixis expression is categorized as the authorized speaker absolute social deixis.

#### 2. *Authorized Recipient*

Male interviewer : “This is it! the last time People magazine will sit down with **President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama** at the White House.”

The male interviewer opens the session of the interview. He says that this interview will be the last time they sit down with Obama and Michelle at the White House as the President and First Lady. The video shows behind the scene of the interview while the interviewer talks to the audience.

The social deixis expressions “President Barack Obama” and “First Lady Michelle” occurs in the utterance, which is uttered by the interviewer. Those refer to the addressee, who is the speaker talked to. The term ‘President’ is an honorary degree to point out a position, occupation, or profession that is given to a person

who is the elected head of a republic. Meanwhile, the term ‘First Lady’ is an honorary degree in society that is given to the wife of the president. In this case, the title “President” refers to Barack Obama, and “First lady” refers to Barack Obama’s wife named Michelle. Thus, the social deixis expression is included in the authorized recipient absolute social deixis because it gives the honor to authorize the recipient by the speaker (Levinson, 1983).

### *Function of Social Deixis*

#### *1. Social status differentiation*

Seble : “Hi **President** Obama and Michelle, It’s Seble from Brooklyn. Are you going to have a big party before you leave the office? If so, could I come?”

In this session of interview, Michelle and Obama are asked to answer a question from a video that was sent by a kid. Michelle and Obama watch the video from a kid named Seble from Brooklyn. She asks them about a big party that they might hold before they leave the office, and she also asks them permission whether she could come or not.

The speaker, Seble greets Obama with his title “President Obama.” The social deixis expression “President Obama” has a function of social status differentiation. It refers to the addressee, who is the speaker talked to. Based on the context, even though Seble is just a little girl, she uses the title 'president' to Barack Obama because she wants to respect and encode a social status differentiation between them who has a different social rank as a citizen and a President (Levinson, 1983).

#### *2. Politeness*

Male interviewer : “**Mrs. Obama**, you famously said last summer...”

Michelle : “I wake up every morning in a house that was built by slaves.”

The conversation happens at the beginning of the interview. The male interviewer opens the interview session by showing Michelle Obama's video giving a speech in front of the American people. She talks to the audience about how they are in the White House and how she wakes up every morning in a house built by slaves.

The Male interviewer greets Michelle with the social deixis expression “Mrs. Obama”. He chooses the formal language to speak with the addressee by using the social deixis expression “Mrs. Obama” to respect the wife of Barack Obama named Michelle in the speech event. In society, the usage of the husband’s last name replaces the wife’s previous surname is called a family name or surname, which a woman adopts after her marriage. The expression shows respect and manners to greet a married woman. Thus, the social deixis expression has a function as politeness (Levinson, 1983).



### 3. Social identity

Female interviewer : “They talked to us about everything from watching their girls grow up in that fishbowl but also the relationship that the president developed with his **mother-in-law**.”

The interviewers are talking in turn about the summary of the interview and the guests, Barack Obama and Michelle, in the beginning session of the interview. The female interviewer herself talks to the audience that in the interview, Obama and Michelle talk about everything, especially their family, to the interviewers.

The social deixis expressions “their girls” and “his mother-in-law” occurs in the utterance, which has a function as social identity. The speaker uses the social deixis expression to identify the referent identity (Levinson, 1983). The word “girls” refers to Obama and Michelle's daughters, Sasha and Malia, and the word “mother-in-law” is a parent who has a legal affinity with another by being the parent of the other's spouse. In other words, the mother-in-law is the mother of someone's husband or wife. In this case, the "mother-in-law" refers to Michelle's mother named Marian Robinson.

### CONCLUSIONS

In this research, the data are categorized and described according to their respective kind of social deixis by using Levinson's theory, namely, relational and absolute social deixis. Based on the analysis of The Final Interview with The Obamas from the PeopleTV YouTube channel, it can be concluded that all types of social deixis according to Levinson's theory are found in the object of research. There are utterances that contain relational social deixis which manifested by the speaker and referent (referent honorifics), the speaker and addressee (addressee honorifics), the speaker and bystander (bystander honorifics), and the speaker and setting (formality levels or social activity). There are also found utterances that contain absolute social deixis which is manifested by the authorized speaker, and the authorized recipient absolute social deixis.

In addition, the three functions of social deixis are also found in the utterances in The Final Interview with The Obamas. Those are the social status differentiation function, politeness function, and social identity function.

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