



## Analysis of Person Deixis in Michael Learns to Rock's "Out of the Blue" Song Lyrics

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### Abstract

This study examines person deixis in Michael Learns to Rock's 1999 soft rock ballad *Out of the Blue*. While prior research has explored deixis in speeches, religious discourse, and talk shows, its role in song lyrics particularly emotional ballads remains underexplored. The song's official lyrics served as the data source. Using Levinson's (1983) typology for classification and Halliday and Hasan's (1985) context of situation for interpretation, the research employed a qualitative approach involving careful listening, close reading, and systematic note-taking. The analysis revealed 38 instances of person deixis, primarily singular first- and second-person pronouns, with no plural or third-person forms. This distribution reflects the song's intimate, direct communication and emphasis on personal emotions. Findings indicate that in lyrical contexts, person deixis enhances emotional closeness, fosters a direct connection between singer and listener, and shapes narrative perspective. The study demonstrates that deixis functions not only grammatically but also artistically, contributing to emotional impact and audience engagement. These insights expand understanding of deixis in non-traditional discourse and suggest its potential value in linguistic, literary, and musicological studies, as well as in language teaching using authentic song materials.

**Keywords:** *pragmatics, deixis, person deixis, song lyrics, context of situation*

### Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti deiksis persona dalam balada soft rock tahun 1999 karya Michael Learns to Rock, *Out of the Blue*. Sementara penelitian sebelumnya telah mengeksplorasi deiksis dalam pidato, wacana keagamaan, dan acara bincang-bincang, perannya dalam lirik lagu, khususnya balada emosional, masih kurang dieksplorasi. Lirik resmi lagu tersebut berfungsi sebagai sumber data. Dengan menggunakan tipologi Levinson (1983) untuk klasifikasi dan konteks situasi Halliday dan Hasan (1985) untuk interpretasi, penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif yang melibatkan mendengarkan dengan saksama, membaca dengan saksama, dan mencatat secara sistematis. Analisis ini mengungkapkan 38 contoh deiksis persona, terutama kata ganti orang pertama dan kedua tunggal, tanpa bentuk jamak atau orang ketiga. Distribusi ini mencerminkan komunikasi lagu yang intim dan langsung serta penekanan pada emosi pribadi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa dalam konteks lirik, deiksis persona meningkatkan kedekatan emosional, menumbuhkan hubungan langsung antara penyanyi dan pendengar, dan membentuk perspektif naratif. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa deiksis tidak hanya berfungsi secara gramatikal tetapi juga artistik, berkontribusi pada dampak emosional dan keterlibatan audiens. Wawasan ini memperluas pemahaman deiksis dalam wacana non-tradisional dan menunjukkan potensi nilainya dalam studi linguistik, sastra, dan musikologi, serta dalam pengajaran bahasa menggunakan materi lagu autentik.

**Kata kunci:** *pragmatik, deixis, deixis persona, lirik lagu, kontek situasi*

## Introduction

Pragmatics focuses on how language is used in relation to its context. Within this area, deixis refers to expressions whose meanings rely on the surrounding context. It is considered a part of pragmatics because it highlights the connection between linguistic elements and the specific situations in which they are interpreted (Setiawati, 2023). Deixis refers to linguistic elements whose meanings rely on the context in which they appear. These expressions require supplementary details, such as the speaker, time, location, or circumstances, to be clearly interpreted. According to (Yule, 1996) describes deixis as a technical term derived from Greek, referring to the act of "pointing" within linguistic expressions used by interlocutors during communication. (Levinson, 1983) does not dispute Yule's concept of deixis and explains that a linguistic expression can be evaluated as deictic or not based on its truth or falsehood, without considering the speaker, listener, time, or place of the utterance. In linguistics, the term *deixis* serves as a comprehensive label for linguistic forms that situate elements of discourse such as utterances, texts, or conversations within their communicative context (Jensen, 2019). This study concentrates on the analysis of person deixis in the lyrics of Michael Learns to Rock (MLTR), a Danish soft rock band widely recognized for their emotive ballads and significant popularity in Asia. The investigation focuses on the 1999 album *Strange Foreign Beauty*, with particular emphasis on the song *Out of the Blue*. The primary objective is to identify and categorize the types of person deixis employed in the lyrics and to examine how contextual factors influence their usage. Furthermore, this study seeks to elucidate the role of person deictic expressions in shaping meaning, evoking emotional resonance, and enhancing the narrative structure within MLTR's song writing.

Based on several previous studies, previous studies examined the use of person deixis in various types of discourse, focusing primarily on religious texts, political speeches, and talk shows. (Nurchaerani et al., n.d.), in her study titled "*A Pragmatics Analysis Of Person Deixis In A Malcolm Turnbolls Speech At Parliament House*," employed a qualitative method to analyze deictic expressions. In previous study, The researcher discovered 283 instances of deixis and emphasized their important role in helping the audience understand the meaning the speaker intended to convey. His analysis showed that deictic expressions functioned as key linguistic markers that linked utterances to specific contexts such as time, place, or identity which were essential for clear and effective communication between the speaker and the listener. Another study by (Ritonga, 2023), "*Person Deixis in Joko Widodo's Speech: A Pragmatic Analysis*," investigated the use of personal pronouns to indicate roles such as speaker, listener, and others. The study revealed that although personal pronouns often appeared straightforward, their interpretation was highly context-dependent. Understanding the speaker's intended meaning required careful attention to the situational context in which the pronouns were used, as even simple pronouns could have multiple interpretations. Similarly, (I Dewa Ayu Gita Wardaning Putri, 2022), in their study "*Person Deixis Used by James Corden in The Late Late Show*," analyzed

how the host used personal pronouns to refer to himself, his group, the audience, and others. They supported each category with specific examples from the show and concluded that pronoun usage was influenced by several factors, including the conversation's topic, the atmosphere of the talk show, the host's role, his relationship with the audience, and his communicative intentions. The study also suggested further research across different genres of talk shows for a deeper understanding of pronoun usage.

Although these studies provided valuable insights into person deixis across various communicative settings, they did not address its use in song lyrics, particularly in the context of popular music. Deixis is commonly found in song lyrics, as they often include numerous deictic expressions (Putu et al., 2023). People use songs in their lives and activities for many different reasons. Some rely on music to support their business or other projects, or to enhance their talents. Others simply use songs as a way to express emotions, thoughts, ideas, desires, messages, or to communicate freely in various situations (Sutrisno Saputra<sup>1</sup>, 2021). According to (Kurniati & Haryudin, 2021) also said music is a universal and complex form of social behavior that embodies human expressions, thoughts, opinions, and more. Song lyrics differ significantly from speeches, religious texts, or talk shows due to their unique combination of narrative, emotional expression, and poetic style. These artistic elements could influence the use and interpretation of deictic expressions in distinctive ways. In addition, no previous research appeared to have focused specifically on the lyrics of Michael Learns to Rock (MLTR) a Danish band known for its emotionally driven ballads and wide popularity in Asia. Despite the band's significant cultural and emotional impact, their lyrical use of deixis remained unexplored in academic research.

To address this gap, the present study was undertaken to address the limited scholarly attention given to deixis in song lyrics, particularly within the soft rock genre. It explores the use of person deixis in the works of Michael Learns to Rock, with a particular focus on the song *Out of the Blue* from their 1999 album *Strange Foreign Beauty*. As Levinson (2004) notes, deixis introduces subjective, attentional, intentional, and context-dependent qualities into natural language. It is also closely linked to language acquisition, a process long associated by philosophers with ostensive definition. Although deixis has been widely studied in contexts such as political discourse, religious communication, and everyday conversation, its presence and function in music especially in emotionally expressive ballads remain underexplored. This research seeks to identify the forms of person deixis present in the lyrics, examine how they contribute to meaning, emotional resonance, and narrative perspective, and consider the influence of both lyrical structure and situational context on their interpretation. By situating the analysis within an established linguistic framework, the study aims to extend the understanding of deixis beyond conventional discourse types and highlight its role in shaping the expressive and storytelling qualities of song lyrics.

## Method

This research utilized a qualitative approach to examine the use of deixis in the lyrics of Michael Learns to Rock's album *Strange Foreign Beauty*, with a specific focus on the song "Out of the Blue." The study aimed to identify the different forms of deictic expressions and analyze how they functioned within the lyrical context. The lyrics from the album served as the primary data source. The analysis was carried out in two main stages: initially, the deictic elements were classified according to (Levinson, 1983)typology, which includes person, time, place, discourse, and social deixis; subsequently, their contextual meanings were analyzed using (M.A.K. Haliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, 1985) framework of Language, Context, and Text, which emphasizes the roles of field, tenor, and mode. The overall goal was to offer insights into how deictic expressions contributed to meaning-making in song lyrics, particularly in expressing viewpoints, emotions, and interpersonal dynamics within the music of Michael Learns to Rock. In this research, the data collection process utilized the observation method as its primary approach. Techniques such as attentive listening, thorough reading of the song lyrics, and systematic note-taking were applied to gather meaningful data. These methods allowed the researcher to capture both linguistic features and contextual nuances effectively. Consequently, the data obtained was comprehensive and well-suited for in-depth analysis.

## Result and Discussion

There were 38 data person deixis obtained from "Out of The Blue" song lyrics by Michael Learns To Rocks. Here, person deixis is divided into some categories: singular first Here, person deixis is divided into some categories: singular first-person deixis, plural first person deixis, singular second-person deixis, plural second- person deixis, singular third person deixis, and plural third person deixis. The tables below show is the use of person deixis by Michael Learn To Rocks.

**Table 1. Person Deixis used by Michael Learn To Rocks**

Person Category	Deixis	Person Expressions	Deixis	Frequency	Percentage
Singular First Person Deixis		I		4	10,53%
		Me		7	18,42%
		My		16	42,11%
Plural First Person Deixis		We		-	-
		Our		-	-
		Us		-	-
Singular Second Person Deixis		You		9	23,68%
		Your		2	5,26%
		Yourself		-	-

Plural Second Person Deixis	You	-	-
Singular Third Person Deixis	He	-	-
	His	-	-
	Him	-	-
	Himself	-	-
	She	-	-
Plural Third Person Deixis	They	-	-
	Them	-	-
	Their	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		38	100%

The analysis of person deixis in MLTR's *Out of the Blue* lyrics shows a strong emphasis on singular first and second-person pronouns, reflecting the song's intimate and personal nature. The singular first-person deixis such as "I," "Me," and "My" occurs most frequently, with a total of 27 instances, highlighting the speaker's emotions and perspective. Similarly, singular second person deixis, mainly "You" and "Your," appear often, indicating that the lyrics are addressed to a specific individual, likely a loved one. The absence of plural and third-person deixis suggests the song focuses on a one-on-one emotional exchange, reinforcing its direct and personal tone. This pattern of deixis emphasizes the deep personal connection and emotional interaction portrayed in the song. **Singular First Person Deixis**

Levinson (1983) explains that singular first person deixis involves words that directly refer to the speaker in a conversation or written text. These include the pronouns *I*, *Me*, and *My* where "I" is used as the subject, "me" as the object, and "my" shows possession. First person deixis indicates the speaker. The pronoun "I" serves as the singular subject form, while "me" is its counterpart used in the object position (Fitria, 2020). In semantic theory, it is widely held that the pronoun 'I' in the first person singular is a deictic or indexical expression in a strong sense, as it exclusively refers to the individual who is speaking or writing (Kasia Jaszczolt, 2013). These terms are dependent on the context, as their meaning changes depending on who is speaking. Categorized under personal deixis, they specifically highlight the speaker's role in the communication. After collecting the data, this study found 3 words representing person deixis, which consisted of three words of first person deixis, which are *I*, *Me*, and *My*. Here are some data that explain the meaning and context of the situation in person deixis which has covered a data of "Out Of The Blue" song lyrics by Michael Learn To Rocks.

#### Data 1.

*I* was wondering what love was all about  
*I* was trying but couldn't work it out  
 But then, you came along to my surprise  
 And made my frozen mind come alive  
 (Out Of The Blue: lines 9-12)

Based on (Levinson, 1983) concept of person deixis, the pronoun “**I**” functions as a first person deixis, referring specifically to the individual who is delivering the message. In the lines “*I was wondering what love was all about / I was trying but couldn't work it out,*” the term “**I**” indicates that the speaker is the one experiencing uncertainty and attempting to understand love. This application of first person deixis signals the speaker’s direct involvement in the situation and brings a personal dimension to the narrative. Through the use of “*I*,” the lyrics reveal the speaker’s internal emotions and struggles, allowing the audience to engage more deeply with the speaker’s perspective and feelings.

In the lyrics of “*Out of the Blue*” by Michael Learns to Rock, the pronoun “**I**” functions as a personal reference according to (M.A.K. Haliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, 1985) theory of cohesion. This pronoun refers to the speaker or narrator who experiences a personal emotional journey from confusion about love to understanding, following the arrival of someone who changes their life. Within the context of situation, which consists of the **field** (what is happening), **tenor** (the relationship between participants), and **mode** (the form of communication), “**I**” appears in a situation where the speaker is reflecting on their deepest feelings. The **field** in this case involves a mental process of searching for the meaning of love, the **tenor** reveals a personal and emotional relationship between “**I**” and “**you**”, likely a romantic partner; and the **mode** shows that the communication occurs in the form of song lyrics, which are expressive and artistic. The repeated use of “**I**” strengthens the cohesion of the text and builds a consistent narrative identity, while also revealing the speaker's emotional transformation through mental process verbs such as wondering, trying, and come alive. Thus, the pronoun “**I**” not only serves a grammatical function but also plays a crucial role in constructing meaning and cohesion within the emotional structure of the song.

## Data 2.

You took *me* right out of the blue  
Simply by showing that you love *me* too  
Only by giving *me* your everything  
With a love so true, you took *me* out of the blue  
(Out Of The Blue: lines 5-8)

According to (Levinson, 1983) theory of person deixis, the pronoun *Me* functions as a first person deixis, referring specifically to the speaker or narrator of the song. In *Out Of The Blue* by Michael Learns to Rock, “**Me**” designates the speaker as the individual who undergoes the feelings and actions expressed in the lyrics. For instance, in the phrase “*You took me right out of the blue,*” the word “**Me**” indicates that the speaker is the one affected by the love and care from the person being addressed. This first-person deixis establishes a personal and emotional bond, allowing the speaker’s feelings and viewpoint to be directly communicated to the listener.

In the song “*Out of the Blue*” by Michael Learns to Rock, the pronoun “**Me**” acts as a personal reference that points to the speaker, who is expressing their emotional experience. Based on (M.A.K. Haliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, 1985) concept of reference cohesion, “**me**” is an anaphoric element, meaning its interpretation relies on

understanding the speaker within the text. The consistent repetition of "Me" throughout the lyrics strengthens the connection between the speaker and the emotional impact caused by the person addressed as "You." Looking at the context of situation, the **field** describes an emotional shift, the **tenor** shows a close personal bond, and the **mode** is lyrical and expressive. This use of "Me" highlights the speaker's inner change, showing how unexpected love has had a profound effect on them, and it supports the overall unity and meaning of the lyrics.

### Data 3.

I was almost about to lose *my* faith  
Was still dreaming, but feared it was too late  
But then, you came along to *my* surprise  
And stole my heart before *my* very eyes  
(Out Of The Blue: lines 1-4)

In the lyric "*I was almost about to lose my faith*" from "*Out Of The Blue*" by Michael Learns to Rock, the pronoun "My" serves as a clear example of singular first person deixis, as outlined in (Levinson, 1983) theory of person deixis. "My" is the possessive form of the first-person pronoun "I," and it indicates that the noun it modifies in this case, "faith" belongs specifically to the speaker. Levinson defines person deixis as the way language points to participants in the communicative situation, with first person deixis referring to the speaker. The use of "My" situates the experience of losing faith directly within the speaker's personal perspective, emphasizing the emotional ownership and internal struggle being described. This use of deixis personalizes the lyric, allowing listeners to connect closely with the speaker's vulnerability and emotional journey.

In the song "*Out of the Blue*" by Michael Learns to Rock, the pronoun "My" is used to express the speaker's deeply personal feelings and emotional states, such as "my faith," "my heart," and "my very eyes," showing a shift from despair to newfound hope through love. Using (M.A.K. Haliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, 1985) framework, the **field** refers to the emotional situation the speaker is describing moving from a place of doubt and loneliness to being uplifted by someone's unexpected presence. The **tenor** involves a close and likely romantic relationship between the speaker and the person addressed as "you," with "my" showing how emotionally invested and open the speaker is in sharing these private thoughts. The **mode** is poetic and expressive, designed to be performed as a song, focusing on conveying strong emotions rather than presenting information, and although the lyrics are monologic, they are directed toward someone, creating a personal and emotional connection. The repeated use of "My" emphasizes the speaker's emotional ownership and highlights the intimate impact this person has had on their life.

### Second First Singular Deixis

According to (Levinson, 1983), singular second person deixis refers to words that indicate the person being directly addressed by the speaker. This includes

pronouns such as "You" and "Your," which are dependent on the context of the conversation. In several European languages, there are two variations of second person deixis. The T-form is commonly used in informal settings with close friends or family, expressing familiarity. On the other hand, the V-form, originally a plural expression, is used in formal situations to show respect or when speaking to someone less familiar (Li, 2009). Their meaning varies depending on who the speaker is talking to, making them context-sensitive. These expressions function to directly involve the listener in the discourse and reflect their role as the addressee. After collecting the data, this study found 2 words representing person deixis, which consisted of three words of second person deixis, which are *You* and *Your*. Here are some data that explain the meaning and context of the situation in person deixis which has covered a data of "Out Of The Blue" song lyrics by Michael Learn To Rocks.

#### **Data 4.**

*You* took me right out of the blue  
Simply by showing that *you* love me too  
Only by giving me your everything  
With a love so true, *you* took me out of the blue  
(Out Of The Blue: lines 13-16)

In the phrase "*You took me right out of the blue*" from "Out of the Blue" by Michael Learns to Rock, the pronoun "You" is an example of person deixis, as described in (Levinson, 1983) study of deixis in language. Person deixis refers to words like pronouns that indicate the participants involved in a conversation, such as *I*, *You*, and *He/She*. In this instance, "You" is a second person deixis expression that points directly to the person being addressed the listener or addressee. Its interpretation depends on the context because it requires knowing who the speaker is talking to. In the song, "You" identifies the loved one who has emotionally impacted the speaker. This use of "You" emphasizes the intimate relationship between the speaker and the addressee and highlights the personal effect of the addressee's actions. Levinson emphasizes that person deixis is vital for understanding how participants relate to each other in communication, and here it strengthens the emotional resonance of the lyrics.

In Michael Learns to Rock's song "Out of the Blue," the pronoun "You" can be examined through (M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, 1985) framework of context of situation, which includes field, tenor, and mode. The **field** refers to the content of the interaction where the speaker talks about a sudden emotional change triggered by the love and commitment of another person. The **tenor** focuses on the relationship between the participants, with "You" representing the loved one whose affection deeply influences the speaker, highlighting a close and personal bond. The **mode** relates to the form of communication, which here is a poetic and expressive song designed to share intense emotions. In this setting, the pronoun "You" functions as a direct and personal reference to the beloved, emphasizing their significant role in the speaker's emotional transformation and contributing to the intimate and sincere mood of the lyrics.



#### Data 5.

You took me right out of the night  
Simply by filling my heart with light  
Only by giving me *your* energy  
With a love so true, you took me out of the blue  
(Out Of The Blue: lines 25-28)

In the lyric "*Only by giving me your energy*" from *Out of the Blue* by Michael Learns to Rock, the pronoun "Your" functions as a second person deixis expression, referring directly to the addressee likely a romantic partner whose identity is understood from context. According to (Levinson, 1983) person deixis is used to anchor participant roles in a speech event relative to the speaker (the deictic center). Here, "Your" establishes the listener as an emotionally significant figure who provides the "energy" that transforms the speaker's emotional state. This use of second person deixis not only creates intimacy and immediacy in the lyrics but also highlights the personal and direct impact of the addressee's presence on the speaker's emotional wellbeing.

The lyric "*giving me your energy*" in the song *Out of the Blue* by Michael Learns to Rock uses the word "**your**" to refer directly to the person being addressed, emphasizing their role as the source of emotional support. From the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), this expression reflects an interpersonal exchange where the emotional input of the addressee through their energy and affection positively affects the speaker's state of mind. The **field** of the clause reveals a meaningful emotional interaction, while the **tenor** indicates a close, intimate bond between the speaker and the person they are addressing. The possessive pronoun "your" underlines a sense of belonging and emotional closeness. Furthermore, the **mode** is informal and expressive, designed to convey the speaker's feelings openly and show how deeply the other person's presence influences them. Thus, the use of "your" serves as a vital linguistic element that bridges the speaker's emotional transformation with the influence of the other person.

#### Conclusion

This research explored the application of person deixis in Michael Learns to Rock's song *Out of the Blue*, emphasizing the role of first and second person pronouns in shaping meaning and conveying emotional depth. The results showed a strong presence of singular first person pronouns (I, me, my) and second-person pronouns (you, your), underscoring the song's intimate and personal tone. These deictic elements functioned not just grammatically but also served to build emotional engagement and narrative coherence between the speaker and the listener. The study uses pragmatic and systemic functional approaches to analyze deixis in songs, highlighting how it enhances emotional expression and deepens understanding of language in artistic texts.

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