Deixis Analysis of The Character Wednesday Addams: Wednesday Series First Season

Kholishotin Nufus[1], Endah Alamsari Andayani*[2], Yudy Prasetyo[3]

[1,2,3] Universitas PGRI Delta, Sidoarjo, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

Correspondence: ✉ **lastiarsitinjak@gmail.com**

Abstract

This study investigates how deixis is used in the character Wednesday Addams from the Netflix series Wednesday Season 1 (2022). Deixis is an important part of language that helps show meaning, character identity, and interaction in visual media. The aim of this study is to identify the types of deixis Wednesday Addams uses and to explain how this reflects her personality and her relationships with other characters. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method and content analysis. The data comes from Wednesday Addams' lines in all the episodes of the series. The analysis was based on Yule's (1996) theory of deixis, which includes personal, spatial, and temporal deixis, along with Miles and Huberman's (1994) model for analyzing qualitative data. The findings show that personal deixis is the most common type, with 624 occurrences. This is followed by temporal deixis, which has 139 occurrences, and spatial deixis with 124 occurrences. These results suggest that the frequent use of deixis reflects Wednesday Addams' independent, emotionally distant, and dominant personality in social interactions. In conclusion, deixis is an important feature that helps shape character identity and narrative meaning in visual storytelling.

INTRODUCTION

Deixis, one of the central issues in pragmatics, refers to the linguistic phenomenon in which the meaning of an expression depends on context. The term derives from Greek, meaning "pointing," and describes one of the fundamental functions of language (Yule, 1996). Numerous studies have examined deixis in both spoken and written discourse (Rifiyani et al., 2023). However, its use in audiovisual media, particularly in character development, remains a compelling area of exploration. Widiarini (2025) this phenomenon is especially significant in films, as deixis influences how characters, settings, and

chronological sequences are understood. The orientation, complication, and resolution portions are only a few of the several structures seen in a film (Marjelina Lorenza, 2024).

The Netflix series Wednesday (2022) became a cultural phenomenon, presenting Wednesday Addams as an intelligent, cold, cynical, and independent character. Her distinctive personality and unconventional social behavior make her language use particularly interesting to analyze. As movies and series increasingly influence society, linguistic studies on audiovisual media have also expanded. Maduwu & Rozzaq Wijaya (2024) Deixis anchors conversation and actions inside a common knowledge of context, which greatly enhances the realism of the story in cinematic works. Deixis in film dialogue plays an essential role in revealing meaning, shaping relationships, and constructing context within interactions among characters (Putriana et al., 2023).

As a context-dependent linguistic phenomenon, deixis is essential for understanding references to people, places, and times in discourse (Khoiriyah & Rosdiana, 2025). An utterance's intended meaning could be misunderstood if there is insufficient contextual awareness.

This study shows how language serves as a tool for character development and social positioning in addition to communication by analyzing personal, spatial, and temporal deixis. Br Sitepu et al., (2025) highlight the significance of deixis in discourse interpretation by emphasizing that it derives its meaning from the speaker's situational context. Deixis aids viewers in comprehending the speaker's viewpoint, emotional position, and interpersonal dynamics in fictional dialogue, especially in character-driven stories.

Additionally, by illustrating how deixis functions in audiovisual media—an area that is still less studied than written texts—this study advances pragmatic studies. Deixis guarantees relevance and clarity in communication, allowing viewers or listeners to fully understand the speaker's intent (Surakarta et al., 2025). According to Rebong & Handayani (2023), deixis is an essential component of pragmatic analysis since it necessitates awareness of the situational context. Consequently, this study advances our knowledge of how deixis facilitates character representation and meaning construction in fictional audiovisual works.

Previous research has looked at deixis in a variety of media, such as news stories, movies, and song lyrics. According to Saerudin (2024), deixis in

song lyrics uses contextual anchoring to convey feelings and interpersonal connections. By analysing CNN International news articles, Tauchid et al., (2022) showed how deixis allows readers to relate linguistic expressions to actual events. In a similar vein, Putriana et al., (2023) found that deixis in movies represents social roles, identity, and emotions in character interactions.

Despite these advancements, the majority of current research concentrates on the general use of deixis across texts or multiple characters without offering a thorough, character-cantered analysis. Furthermore, deixis in modern serialized audiovisual media has received little attention, especially when it comes to how it shapes the identity of a single character over extended dialogue.

In order to close this gap, the current study provides a fresh, comprehensive examination of temporal, spatial, and personal deixis in Wednesday Addams' conversation in a modern TV show. This study offers a more nuanced understanding of how deixis serves as a linguistic strategy to construct personality, identity, and social positioning in fictional narratives by focusing on a single iconic character. This character-focused methodology sets the current study apart from earlier investigations and offers fresh perspectives on pragmatic analysis in audiovisual media.

Therefore, this study specifically examines how deixis is used by Wednesday Addams to interact with other characters and express her identity. As noted by Ellis (2012) as cited in Wahyu Erdianto & Arifin (2024), strong dialogue plays a crucial role in sustaining character interaction in films. Deixis closely relates to character building because it reflects social relations, emotional stance, and narrative structure. Through deixis analysis, researchers can uncover how characters position themselves, interact with others, and construct identity through linguistic choices. Budiarta & Gaho (2021) Language is the primary focus of linguists' studies, especially when it comes to linguistics. Karimah et al., (2023) By using deixis analysis, we may uncover patterns in the words and phrases used by each character that reveal their perceptions of others and themselves, how they recognize places and times in the narrative, and how their speech conveys moral lessons. Yule (1996) categorizes deixis into three main types personal, spatial, and temporal which can be identified through expressions such as me, you, here, and now. These linguistic features help portray social status, emotional tone, and character relationships. As

Alduais et al., (2022) suggest, interpreting deixis requires understanding the message embedded in each utterance, which is always linked to identifying persons, objects, places, or times (Saerudin, 2024).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method because it aimed to describe and analyze the types and functions of deixis used by the main character in the Wednesday series Season 1 (2022). The qualitative approach was appropriate since the data were linguistic in nature and focused on spoken utterances rather than numerical measurements. To support this approach, the research design applied in this study was content analysis, which enabled the researcher to systematically examine the character's dialogue and interpret deixis based on linguistic theory and contextual meaning.

Data were selected for this investigation through purposive sampling. Wednesday Addams's statements from the TV show Wednesday made up the samples. The selection criteria were as follows, first, Wednesday Addams, the main character, produced the dialogue; second, the utterances contained temporal, spatial, or personal deixis; and finally, the dialogue took place in settings that obviously reflected interactional situations. This method was selected to guarantee that the information was pertinent to the study's goals and to enable a thorough examination of deixis in the speech of a single character.

In line with qualitative descriptive research, the main research tool was the researcher herself, who served as the organizer, data collector, data analyzer, and interpreter. A data classification table was employed as a supporting tool to guarantee systematic analysis. Based on Yule (1996) deixis framework, which divides deixis into temporal, spatial, and personal categories, this table served to document the chosen utterances, determine the type of deixis, and offer contextual explanations.

An instrument try-out was carried out by examining multiple dialogue snippets from a single episode of the series before the main analysis. The purpose of the try-out was to evaluate the deixis categories' applicability, the coding system, and the transcription method's clarity. The findings showed that the tool could reliably recognize deixis expressions and correctly categorize

them, demonstrating that it was appropriate for use when examining the complete dataset.

The data were analyzed using Miles (1994) qualitative analysis model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the reduction stage, utterances containing deixis were selected, coded, and grouped according to deixis type. During the display stage, the categorized data were arranged systematically in tables to facilitate further interpretation. In the conclusion-drawing stage, the researcher interpreted how deixis expressions reflected Wednesday Addams' personality, identity construction, social relationships, and interaction patterns with other characters in the series. The final interpretation was then connected to existing theories of deixis and character representation to provide a comprehensive understanding of how deixis contributes to the linguistic portrayal of the character.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of deixis in Wednesday season 1 highlights the use of deixis based on Yule (1996) theory, namely with the division of 3 main types, Personal, Spatial, and Temporal. Each of the deixis refers to a relationship tied to the character Wednesday Addams who is the object of this research. How can the analysis of deixis reflect the characteristics of the characters so as to strengthen the social relationships built in the character of Wednesday.

Personality Construction

Through personal deixis, Wednesday linguistically positions herself as independent, critical, and emotionally distant.
The frequent use of first-person deixis (I, me) suggests her strong self-awareness and autonomy. The following utterances findings below will support the statement above and also provide the different meaning for each context :

"I don't believe in heaven or hell." U (1)

The above utterance shows that Wednesday expresses disbelief and individualism.

"I don't believe in heaven or hell. But I do believe in revenge."U (2)

It means confronting a suspect about motive.

"My parents never told me the truth." U (3)

It shows her lack of trust in parents.

"I always get what I'm looking for." U (4)

It shows that she is unyielding.

"I don't trust anyone but myself." U (5)

It shows an individualistic personality.

According to Levinson (1983) in his book Pragmatics, personal deixis or deixis persona is a form of designation of language related to the participant in a speech act, namely who is speaking, to whom he is speaking, and about whom he is speaking. Personal deixis is used to identify participants in communication events, so the meaning of the word depends on the context of who is the speaker and the listener.

This result is in line with Putriana et al., (2023), who discovered that character identity and emotional stance are significantly shaped by first-person deixis in movie dialogue. Nevertheless, the current study offers a more concentrated, character-centered analysis, showing how the repeated use of I and me systematically constructs a single character's ego strength and resistance to social pressure throughout a serialized narrative, in contrast to Putriana et al., (2023) who examined multiple characters throughout a film. Wednesday also sets herself apart from other characters with her sparse use of inclusive pronouns (we, us).

In another word, Wednesday sees the world from his own point of view. Deixis "I" affirms the awareness that he has control over his own actions and decisions. Wednesday often uses "I" to express beliefs, decisions, and plans, not just feelings. It shows logical intelligence and analytical ability as the main traits of his personality. When he uses "me", the context often describes alienation or difference from others. This pronoun is used not to seek sympathy, but to affirm the psychological distance between oneself and the social world. Linguistically, the repetition of "I" and "me" serves as Wednesday's way of asserting her identity as a unique, rational, and tide-defying figure. In the context of personality construction, it describes the ego-strength ability to build and maintain one's identity in the midst of social pressure. Pragmatically, it signifies an individualistic and autonomous character, which forms a person's "self-contained" personality that does not depend on others to validate his thoughts. Her minimal use of inclusive pronouns (we, us) further reinforces her isolation and unwillingness to conform to social groups.

Interpersonal Interaction

In conversations with other characters, deixis helps show power dynamics and emotional boundaries. Her direct use of you often implies confrontation, sarcasm, or challenge, indicating her dominance and confidence in social interactions. This aligns with her portrayal as a cold yet intellectually superior individual.

"You don't know me yet."U (6)

The utterance above tells that Wednesday addressing Enid during their first conversation.

"They think I'm a monster." (7)

It refers to people at Nevermore and society in general.

"You should stay away from me." (8)

It shows that Wednesday gives warning a classmate during conflict.

The predominant use of I and me suggests that Wednesday puts herself at the centre of every interaction. In an interpersonal context, this means that he does not conform to others, but rather forces the world to conform to him. In other words, personal deixis functions as a tool of self-assertion in social relationships. When Wednesday often uses I and rarely we or us, it shows that there is social distance between him and the interlocutor. He does not want to be in an equal relationship, but maintains a dominant position through language. Pragmatically, it builds an asymmetrical interpersonal relationship Wednesday speaks from a position of strength, not proximity. Interactional meaning: consistent use of I creates an impression of authority and extreme independence in conversation.

Personal deixis me is used Wednesday in contexts that indicate misunderstanding, isolation, or indifference to social acceptance. He uses me not to seek empathy, but to mark emotional distance from others. This shows that interpersonally, Wednesday controls emotions and maintains personal boundaries so that they do not dissolve in social relationships.

The dominance of I and Me indicates that Wednesday communicates in a monological, not dialogical, style. Even though he talks to others, the meaning of his communication remains centred on himself. This shows a character who expresses opinions more than listens, a characteristic of individualistic personality that results in rigid and one-way interactions. The dominance of personal deixis in the form of "I" and "me" in Wednesday's dialogue forms a pattern of social interaction: self-centred, dominant, emotionally distant, and

boundary-focused. That is, in interpersonal interactions, Wednesday is not looking for closeness, but maintaining control. He communicates not to build social relationships, but to maintain his identity and autonomy.

According to Levinson (1983) in his book Pragmatics, social deixis or social deixis is a form of language designation used to mark social differences between speakers and listeners, or between speakers and people being spoken. In other words, social deixis is concerned with social status, hierarchical relationships, and the level of politeness in language interactions. Levinson explains that social deixis does not depict time, place, or participants directly like other deixis (personal, temporal, spatial), but it shows social relationships and status differences among communication participants. Through the choice of words, greetings, or certain grammatical forms, the speaker can show respect, closeness, familiarity, or social distance towards the interlocutor.

This result supports the claim made by Tauchid et al., (2022) that deixis facilitates the establishment of relational positioning between speakers and listeners. While Tauchid et al., (2022) concentrated on reader-writer relationships in news discourse, the current study extends deixis analysis to interpersonal meaning in narrative dialogue by showing how deixis constructs power dynamics within fictional character interactions.

Wednesday's emotional restraint is further demonstrated by the frequent use of "me" in situations involving miscommunication and apathy. This study shows that first-person deixis may also serve to indicate emotional restraint and social distance, especially in characters with individualistic and dominant personalities, in contrast to studies like Saerudin (2024) that link it to emotional expressiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study shows how deixis serves as a pragmatic and narrative mechanism for character construction in modern television series, going beyond simply identifying different types of deixis in Wednesday Addams' dialogue. The results show that temporal, spatial, and personal deixis are linguistic strategies that systematically create Wednesday's identity as an independent, emotionally restrained, and socially aloof character rather than just referential devices. Theoretically, by applying conventional deixis frameworks—like those put forth by Levinson (1983) and Yule (1996) to the field of audiovisual fiction,

this study advances pragmatic and discourse analysis. The current study highlights the interpretive role of deixis in forming personality, power dynamics, and emotional positioning within narrative discourse, whereas earlier research has mostly concentrated on identifying deixis types. This emphasizes deixis as a tool for active meaning-making rather than just a grammatical characteristic. In terms of methodology, this study presents a character-centered approach to deixis analysis, offering a framework for further investigations into the construction of linguistic identities across various characters, genres, or episodic developments. By performing comparative analyses across several characters or looking at longitudinal changes in deixis use throughout a series, future research may broaden this approach. Such studies would enhance our knowledge of how language plays a role in the development of identities in fictional stories.

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