

Exploring the Reflection of Romantic Relationship Through Person Deixis in the *After* Movie

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Abstract

This study explores person deixis whose context reflects a romantic relationship in the movie After. Person deixis is the use of personal pronouns usually used in a conversation. The purpose of this study is to explore the types of person deixis in the context of a romantic relationship using the Pragmatic theory proposed by Levinson (1983). Data were taken from the After movie and analyzed using documentation techniques and analyzed using descriptive qualitative methods. This study found three types of persons deixis: first person deixis, second person deixis and third person deixis. These findings indicate the importance of context in interpreting deixis and contribute to a deeper understanding of how language shapes and reflects the development of relationships in cinematic narratives.

Keywords: *After Movie, Person Deixis, Pragmatic.*

INTRODUCTION

In communication, particularly in the context of romantic relationships, the use of personal deixis serves as an important indicator of the relationship between the speaker and the audience. Personal deixis, which includes pronouns such as *I*, *you*, and *we*, not only conveys information about the speaker and the interlocutor, but also reflects the relationship that is being established between the speaker and the listener. In the film “*After*,” directed by Jenny Gage and adapted from the novel by Anna Todd, the interactions between the main characters, Tessa and Hardin, provide a rich context for examining how these pronouns signal close relationships and reflect romantic relationships.

Research has shown that deixis is prevalent in both spoken and written communication, playing a significant role in expressing emotions and reflecting the dynamics of interpersonal relationships (Sebastian et al., 2019). According to Levinson (1983), deixis emphasizes the context of the utterance, influencing its interpretation based on relational dynamics. In a romantic context, the use of personal deixis can signal closeness or intimacy, depending on the situation. For example, the pronoun “*we*” can indicate unity and shared experiences, while “*I*” and “*you*” can highlight tension and disconnection during conflict.

Previous studies have explored the use of personal deixis in various contexts, including political speeches and animated films. Astuti (2019) analyzed personal deixis in Trump’s campaign speeches, revealing how pronouns are used to assert dominance and undermine opponents. Similarly, Manba’ani (2021) examined personal deixis in “*Frozen II*,” focusing on how this linguistic element accompanies character development. However, there is still a gap in the literature regarding the specific role of personal deixis in reflecting romantic relationships in cinematic narratives.

This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the use of personal deixis in “After” to show how language influences and reflects the dynamics of romantic relationships. By examining the pronouns used by Tessa and Hardin, this study seeks to uncover how these language choices convey emotional closeness, conflict, and the evolution of their relationship. These findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of interpersonal communication in film and highlight the importance of language in shaping emotional experiences.

In conclusion, this study highlights the important role of person deixis in conveying the intricacies of romantic relationships. By analyzing the language choices made by the characters in “After,” this study reveals how language serves as a powerful tool for expressing emotions and navigating interpersonal dynamics. The results of this study will pave the way for future research on the interplay between language and relationships across media and social contexts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This analysis is based on Levinson’s (1983) theory of deixis, which examines how language encodes contextual information about participants in an utterance. Person deixis involves pronouns and vocatives that indicate who is speaking, who is being spoken to, and who or what is being talked about. This study applies Levinson’s framework to identify and interpret the use of first-, second-, and third-person deixis in the film, with a particular focus on the contexts that reflect and shape the developing romantic relationship between the main characters.

Deixis

According to Levinson (1983, p. 54) Deixis examines how language encodes or underscores aspects of speech events or utterance contexts, and as a result, how analysis of those speech contexts affects how utterances are interpreted. In this context, indexical expressions present unique challenges because their meaning and reference change depending on the circumstances of the utterance, like the speaker, time, place, and situation in which they are used. Deixis is divided into five types: person deixis, time deixis, place deixis, discourse deixis, and social deixis.

Person Deixis

Person deixis relates to how language refers to participants in a communication event, assisting in identifying the responsibilities of individuals within that context. It works by using pronouns and other terms that are directly related to who is speaking, who is being addressed, and those who are neither speakers nor addressees.

Types of Person Deixis

1. First Person Deixis

First person deixis, as defined by Levinson (1983), refers to the use of pronouns that indicate the speaker’s involvement in an utterance. It is used when the speaker refers to themselves or to a group that includes themselves, reflecting their perspective, involvement, and relationship to others in a conversation.

2. Second Person Deixis

Second person deixis, according to Levinson (1983), involves the use of pronouns that directly address the hearer or addressee in a conversation. The main pronoun used for this purpose is "you," which can refer to either a single individual or a group, indicating who is being spoken to in the interaction.

3. Third Person Deixis

Third person deixis, as defined by Levinson (1983), involves pronouns used to refer to people or things outside the current conversation. Unlike first and second person deixis, it does not include the speaker or the addressee. The main third person pronouns are he, she, it, and they, which allow the speaker to mention external individuals, objects, or concepts clearly.

METHOD

This study uses the film *After* (2019), directed by Jenny Gage, as a data source. The film, a romantic drama adapted from Anna Todd's novel, features complex and dynamic interactions between its main characters, Tessa Young and Hardin Scott. These interactions provide rich examples of person deixis in the dialogue, reflecting the relationship in a romantic context. The film's dialogue-driven and intimate style makes it an interesting subject to analyze how person deixis functions in character interactions.

Data collection was conducted through documentation by watching the film and identifying utterances containing person deixis. The researcher recorded the utterances and classified them according to the categories of first, second, and third person deixis according to Levinson (1983). Screenshots of relevant scenes were also taken to support the descriptive presentation of the findings, which helped contextualize the expression of deixis in the film's narrative.

Data analysis used a qualitative descriptive method, which focused on identifying and categorizing personal pronouns in the film's dialogue. This analysis examined how the use of first, second, and third person deixis reflects the dynamics of the romantic relationship between the characters. The results are presented informally with verbal explanations and supported by screenshots, following Levinson's pragmatic theory. This approach allows the research to explore how people's deixis contributes to expressing emotional and relational nuances in the film.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. Types of Person Deixis

Category	Types of Person Deixis	Frequency	Person Deixis Word
Person Deixis	First Person Deixis	8	I (3 data); My (1 data); Mine (1 data); We (3 data)
	Second Person Deixis	4	You (4 data)
	Third Person Deixis	-	-
Total		12	12

Based on the results of data analysis in this study, it was found that the most dominant type of person deixis was first-person deixis with a frequency of 8 data. Words included in this category include *I* (3 data), *My* (1 data), *Mine* (1 data), and *We* (3 data). Meanwhile, second-person deixis expressions were found in 4 data points, all of them using

the word *You*. No third-person deixis expressions were found in the analyzed data. These findings indicate that the utterances in the data focus more on the speaker's self-expression and direct relationship with the interlocutor, reflecting personal involvement in the interaction.

First Person Deixis

Data [3-1]. "*I want to show you something.*".

The use of the first person singular pronoun *I* in Hardin's statement, *I want to show you something*, refers directly to Hardin, the speaker, in this context. When Hardin is speaking to Tessa, the pronoun *I* functions as the subject, emphasizing that Hardin is speaking for himself and expressing his own thoughts and feelings. This highlights his intention to connect with Tessa on a deeper level by showing her a place, which could symbolize an attempt to bridge their emotional distance or create a shared experience.

Data [3-2]. "*Welcome to my favorite place.*"

In this data consists of Hardin's statement, *Welcome to my favorite place*, the pronoun *my* directly refers to himself as the speaker and emphasizes his personal relationship with the location. When talking to Tessa, Hardin's use of the word *my* reflects his personal experiences and emotions at that time. As a possessive pronoun, *my* highlights that the location is not only important to him, but also very personal. By sharing his favorite place with Tessa, Hardin allows Tessa to be a meaningful part of his life, which symbolizes trust.

Data [3-3]. "*I'm sorry for how I treated you.*"

The data *I'm sorry for how I treated you* uses the first person singular pronoun *I* twice, each of which functions as a first person deixis that directly refers to the speaker, Hardin. This pronoun plays an important role in the statement, as it reflects personal responsibility. The pronoun *I* functions as the subject of the phrase, emphasizing that the apology is coming directly from Hardin.

Data [3-4]. "*That you're mine.*"

In Hardin's statement, the word *mine* in the sentence *that you are mine* functions as a possessive pronoun, which is directly related to the concept of person deixis. This pronoun refers to the speaker (Hardin) with the listener (Tessa). The possessive pronoun *mine* is a form of first person deixis, which directly refers to the speaker, Hardin, as the person expressing ownership or attachment.

Data [3-5]. "*Nothing could ever change the way that I feel about you.*"

Data [3-5] is in the sentence *Nothing could ever change the way that I feel about you*, the pronoun *I* functions as a person deixis, specifically a first person singular pronoun. This pronoun directly refers to the speaker, Tessa, indicating that she is expressing her personal emotions and feelings. As the subject of the sentence, *I* highlights Tessa's role in the statement, making her the focal point of the romantic statement.

Data [3-6]. "*I don't think we can ever be just friends.*"

I don't think we can ever be friends, which is Hardin statement in this data the pronoun *we* functions as a first person plural deixis, referring to both the speaker (Hardin) and the listener (Tessa). The pronoun *we* includes both Hardin and Tessa, indicating that his statement applies to their relationship as a unit. By using the word *we*, Hardin implies that they are both involved in a dynamic that is more than just friendship.

Data [3-7]. "*I think that we're both a mess.*"

This data in the statement *I think we're both falling apart*, the pronoun *we* functions as a first person plural deixis, referring thoroughly to both the speaker Hardin and the listener Tessa. This use of *we* emphasizes their shared state and positions them as equally involved in the challenges or complexities of their relationship. This statement presents a use of person deixis that reveals critical insights into the romantic dynamic between Hardin and Tessa.

Data [3-8]. "*We can stay here for the rest of the year.*"

Data [3-12] consist of the sentence "*We can stay here for the rest of the year.*" the pronoun *we* functions as a first person plural deixis, referring to the speaker, Hardin, and the listener, Tessa. This usage reflects a shared moment and expresses a shared decision, underscoring the bond and interaction between them. The term *we* brings Hardin and Tessa into the statement, indicating that the thought or plan involves them equally.

Second Person Deixis

Data [3-9]. "*You can wear my t-shirt.*"

This utterance uses the second person pronoun *you*, which functions as a personal deixis that directly refers to the listener, Tessa. The pronoun *you* functions as the subject of the sentence, explicitly addressing Tessa and showing Hardin's focus on her needs. By using the word *you*, Hardin personalizes his offer, creating a sense of direct involvement and attention.

Data [3-10]. "*I like it better on you.*"

The utterance *I like it better on you* uses second person deixis through the pronoun *you*, which directly refers to Tessa as the listener. In this context, *you* functions as the object of the preposition, positioning Tessa as the main focus of Hardin's statement. The pronoun *you* is an example of second person deixis, as it associates the utterance with the person being spoken to in this case, Tessa.

Data [3-11]. "*I can find out who you are by sitting here and spending time with you.*"

This utterance contains a significant use of second person deixis through the repeated pronoun *you*, which serves multiple functions in reflecting the romantic relationship between Hardin and Tessa. The first instance of *you* in *who you are*, functions as a subject complement, directly addressing Tessa's identity and personality. The second *you* in *with you*, acts as the object of the preposition, emphasizing the shared experience between the two characters.

Data [3-12]. "*You're so much more.*"

The utterance *You're so much more* employs second person deixis through the pronoun *you*, which functions as the subject of the clause and directly addresses Tessa. This use of *you* places Tessa at the center of Hardin's statement, emphasizing her importance and significance in his perception. By focusing on *you*, Hardin personalizes his declaration, creating an intimate and direct connection that highlights his admiration for her.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that person deixis plays an important role in reflecting the romantic relationship between the main characters in the film *After*. This study found that first-person deixis is the most dominant type used, indicating a tendency for characters to express feelings, ownership, and personal involvement directly in

interactions between characters. Meanwhile, second-person deixis also appears as a form of direct address that reinforces the emotional closeness and involvement between the speaker and the interlocutor. The absence of third-person deixis in the analyzed data indicates that the focus of the conversation is more directed at personal relationships and direct interactions between the main characters, rather than at third parties outside the conversation. This study critically demonstrates that context greatly influences the interpretation of deixis, so that language analysis in films can provide a deeper understanding of the language that shapes, affirms, and reflects the development of relationships in a film's narrative. However, this study has limitations in terms of the amount of data and the scope of films analyzed, so the results cannot be generalized to all romantic films or different cultural contexts.

As a suggestion, future research should expand the scope of study by analyzing more films from various genres and cultural backgrounds to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the function of personal deixis in character interactions. In addition, researchers can also explore other pragmatic aspects such as time, place, or social deixis to enrich the understanding of the role of language in building relationships between characters in films.

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