p-ISSN: 2580-2712 e-ISSN: 2580-2720

# Personal and Social Deixis as A Political Campaign Strategy Used in Donald Trump's Rally

Johan Tobias Kristiano
Universitas Sanata Dharma
Jalan Affandi Tromol Pos 29, Mrican, Catur Tunggal,
Depok, Caturtunggal, Kec. Depok, Kabupaten Sleman,
Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 55002
johan.tobi@gmail.com\*
\*corresponding author

Received: Revised: Accepted: Published: 29 January 2021 26 August 2021 26 August 2021 20 October 2021

#### **Abstract**

The use of personal and social deixis often has a crucial role in political speeches. This study investigated how personal deixis was used as a strategy to get other people's support in Donald Trump's presidential campaign speech. The object of the study was Trump's speech in his presidential rally on October 10, 2020, and the data were the personal and social deixis in the speech. The occurrences of deixis were counted to reveal the parties to whom Trump gave his attention, and an analysis of the words used was conducted to see Trump's attitudes toward the parties addressed by the deixis. The study revealed that Trump used personal deixis more than social deixis. There were five big parties to which he gave his attention using the deixis: the audience, Trump himself, the USA and its people, his opponents, and his party and government. Using the deixis, Trump also showed a positive attitude to his side and a negative attitude to the opponents. His use of personal and social deixis was also used as a campaign strategy. The deixis created inclusiveness, positioned Trump in different roles, showed support from several American communities, and influenced the audience's attitude toward Trump's opponents.

**Keywords:** deixis, Donald Trump, personal deixis, political campaign, social deixis

### Introduction

In many countries, political campaign or rally is a common event which is conducted before an election. Through campaign speeches, candidates try to convince people by telling their plans and solutions for the people's problems. The use of personal and



social deixis in the speeches could be crucial for convincing the people. For example, a candidate can create a feeling of inclusiveness in his speech through his choices of personal deixis. With inclusiveness, people might feel more appreciated and interested in supporting the candidate. The people's perception toward the opposition can also be manipulated by how the candidate creates negative images using social deixis. Therefore, the use of personal and social deixis in political campaign speech can be crucial and advantageous.

This study aimed to investigate how Donald Trump used personal and social deixis in his presidential campaign on October 10, 2020. Donald Trump is often regarded as a controversial politician for his controversial speeches and ideas. There have been several studies examining how he uses deixis in his speeches. Astuti (2019) analyzed how Trump used personal deixis in his 2016 campaign speeches and found that I and we were used to promoting himself while they and she were employed to attack his opponents. Meanwhile, Retnowaty (2019) found that Trump dominantly used personal deixis in his speech in the United Nations General Assembly. It could be concluded from the two studies that the use of personal deixis becomes one of Donald Trump's strategies in delivering political speeches. The presence of social deixis, although it is not dominant in his speeches, might also bring impacts to the listener. Therefore, the researcher was interested in examining how Trump showed his attention toward the parties he mentioned in his campaign speech using personal and social deixis and used the deixis as a strategy to promote his positive image and show that he was better than his opponents. There are two questions raised from this background: (1) how was Trump's attention toward the parties he mentioned using personal and social deixis? and (2) how were personal and social deixis used as a campaign strategy in Trump's campaign speech?

### Deixis and its use in political speeches

In verbal communication, a speaker needs to make the hearer understand what he/she intends to say. It can be achieved by making a reference or referring, using linguistic forms to point to the object, individual, or the thing about which the speaker intends to discuss or do (Carlson, 2006; Cutting, 2002). The entity referred to in a reference is called referent, while the linguistic forms used to refer to the referent are referring expressions (Cutting, 2002). Culpeper and Haugh (2014) state that there are three kinds of referring expressions, namely definite expression, anaphora, and deictic expression or deixis. They add that definite expressions are more semantic and deixis are more pragmatic, while anaphoric is between them (p. 15).

Deictic expression or deixis is described as a referring expression that points to a certain entity in relation to its context of utterance, whether or not the interlocutor could see the entity (Akmajian et al., 2010; Cutting, 2002). By using deictic expressions, a speaker projects their discourse and context position (deictic center) to the addressee and speaks from the addressee's point of view (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014). The examples of deixis are I, you, it, this, those, etc. Levinson (1991) further describes



deixis as how language grammaticalizes features of utterance context or speech event. Thus, the presence of a context, the aspects of situations in which a speaker speaks, is essential for deixis (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014). With the involvement of context, deixis becomes the intersection point between linguistic structure and social setting (Hanks, 2011). Deixis can be divided into four categories based on what it refers to, namely personal deixis, spatial deixis, temporal deixis, and discourse deixis.

This study focused only on the use of personal and social deixis in Donald Trump's speech. Personal deixis refers to deictic expressions which point to an individual(s) as the referent (Cutting, 2002). Its function in an utterance is to identify the individual roles in the speech event, such as a speaker/first person, a hearer/second person, and other/third person (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014; Levinson, 2006). Personal deixis is expressed by personal pronouns and possessive adjectives, such as I, you, we, they, she, my, etc. (Cruse, 2006). It is important to note that third-person pronouns he and she are regarded as anaphoric expressions although they can be used deictically. Then the use of we can be divided into two: it can be inclusive (+speaker, +addressee) or exclusive (+speaker, - addressee, +Aug/other individuals) (Levinson, 2006). English personal deixis also carries grammatical distinctions: numbers, singular, and plural; genders, feminine, masculine, and neuter; and persons, first, second, and third (Perkins, 1992).

Social deixis shows what and how is the relationship between the speaker and the referred party, including social status, roles, and the distance between them (Hanks, 2011; Levinson, 2006). Besides social relationships, social deixis shows other social factors, settings, and formality (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014). The following table shows the type of social relationship markers.

Table 1. Social Relationship Markers Adapted from Culpeper and Haugh (2014)

Type	Examples	Relationship
Endearments	Darling, love, sweetie	Close relationship, family
		member, sexual partner,
		favorite person
Family (kinship)	Mum(my), $dad(dy)$ , $ma$ , $pa$ ,	Family member
terms	granny	
Familiarizers	Guys, mate, bro, dude	Solidarity between males
First names	<i>Tom, Jack</i> , or with the suffix –y/	Friends, family members,
	-ie, e.g. Jackie	also possible for
		acquaintances
Title and surname	Mr./Mrs. Johnson,	More distant relationship,
		formal, respectful
Honorifics	Sir, madam, ma'am	Formal, asymmetric
		relationship



Kristiano	Personal and Social Deixis as A Political Campaign Strategy Used in Donald Trump's Rally
Other	Lazy, silly, boy, you reds, those Various who may concern, depending on speaker's creativity

The use of personal deixis in political speeches has been a popular topic to be studied, while social deixis seems less popular. Putri and Kurniawan (2015) analyzed how Barack Obama and Mitt Romney used personal deixis in their presidential campaign speeches. The research revealed that the two of them used personal deixis to promote themselves and criticize their opponents. Personal deixis was also used to create a positive self-image in order to gain people's support. Khalifa (2018) found that Donald Trump used personal deixis differently in three speeches. In his inauguration speech, Trump mostly used the second-person pronoun you and the inclusive plural pronoun we to appreciate the audiences and his supporters. Then, he also used inclusive we to glorify his meeting with Arab leaders in which he delivered a speech. The use of personal deixis in Trump's speech at the climate summit in Paris was different as he used I and exclusive we frequently to create focus on himself, the USA, and the people of the USA. Meanwhile, his use of social deixis was much less frequent, only to express respect and indicate the uniqueness of his audience when meeting the Arab leaders. Another study by Retnowaty (2019) revealed that the use of personal deixis was more frequent than other deixis in Donald Trump's speech in the UN General Assembly. He mostly used we to refer to the USA to portray himself as a part of USA society. Lastly, Astuti (2019) found that Trump used personal deixis to promote himself and to attack his opponents in the 2016 election. The personal deixis I and we were used with a positive attitude to promote himself and create inclusiveness. Trump also used she and they to attack his opponents, Hillary Clinton and her party.

### Method

This study analyzed the use of personal and social deixis in Donald Trump's presidential rally on 10 October 2020. The object of the study was the full transcript of Trump's speech downloaded from www.rev.com, and it is around 2,800 words long. In the data collection, only personal and social deixis, including the anaphoric third-person pronouns, were taken to be analyzed. The deixis was then marked and categorized based on the word used and the party to which the deixis refers. The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the research questions. The numbers of deixis used to refer to the parties in Donald Trump's speech were counted to reveal which party Trump had most of his attention on. Meanwhile, the qualitative analysis was employed to explain more about his attention toward the parties and how he used personal and social deixis as a political campaign strategy to gain support from the people. The analysis results are presented in the following section, starting with the tables from quantitative analysis followed by an explanation from the qualitative analysis.



p-ISSN: 2580-2712 e-ISSN: 2580-2720

### **Finding and Discussion**

The analysis found that Donald Trump used a total of 365 personal and social deixis in his campaign. The majority of the deixis used were personal deixis with 309 words while only 56 words for the social deixis. These findings confirm Retnowaty's (2019) and Khalifa's (2018) findings that Trump dominantly used personal deixis in his speeches. The following are the distributions of personal and social deixis based on the word used.

Table 2. Personal Deixis Distribution

Twell 2.1 Gibonon 2 Ginis 2 Istile Giller						
No.	Expression	Total	%			
1	We, our, us	97	31.39			
2	I, my, mine	71	22.98			
3	You, your	66	21.36			
4	They, their, them	55	17.80			
5	He/she	15	4.85			
6	Everyone, everybody	4	1.29			
7	Somebody	1	0.32			
Total		309	100			

Table 3. Social Deixis Distribution

No.	Expression	Total	%
1	Other	29	51.79
2	Name	12	21.43
3	People	11	19.64
4	Title	3	5.36
5	Title and name	1	1.79
Total		56	100

It can be seen from Table 2 that the variant of we (we, our, us) dominated the use of personal deixis in Trump's speech. It was followed by I variants (I, me, my) and you variants (you, your). Meanwhile, the use of social deixis was dominated by the use of 'other' expressions.

Besides the number of deixis and the expression, the study also identified the parties mentioned and addressed in Donald Trump's campaign speech. The parties were the audience/Trump's supporters, Trump, Trump's opponents, Trump's party/government, the USA, and neutral others. Both the parties mentioned and the expressions used were explored to see his attention toward the parties he addressed in his speech and how he used personal and social deixis as a campaign strategy.

### **Donald Trump's Attention toward the Parties He Mentioned**



Six parties were addressed by the use of personal and social deixis in Donald Trump's campaign speech, namely the audience/supporters, Trump, the opponent, Trump's party/government, USA, and neutral others. The frequencies of deixis uttered to refer to those parties are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Frequencies of the Parties in Trump's Speech

No.	Party	Personal D.	Social D.	Total	%
1	Audience/supporters	86	-	86	23.56
2	Trump	73	-	73	20
3	Opponents	47	20	67	18.36
4	USA	46	21	67	18.36
5	Trump's party and government	53	12	65	17.8
6	Neutral others	4	3	7	1.92
Total		309	56	365	100

Trump seemed to have five parties as his main concerns in the campaign speech, with the audience receiving most of his attention. It could be seen from the gap between the percentages of the audience, the mostly addressed party, and Trump's party and government, which is fifth on the rank, that is below 6%. Thus, it could be said that Trump fairly shared his attention to these five parties. The use of deixis was different with the neutral parties who only got less than 2% of Trump's attention.

In his campaign, the audience or his supporters was the party Trump addressed most, therefore, they are the party that had the most of Trump's attention. The intention of giving the audience most of his attention seems understandable, as they are the party to whom the speech was delivered and who was expected to be influenced by the speech. This can be seen in the following excerpts.

- (1) I want you to know our nation's going to defeat this terrible China virus ...
- (2) We're here today to deliver a united message to police officers ...

The word you in (1) was aimed at the audience who came to the location or watched the speech from somewhere else. In this sentence, Trump was telling the audience his hope that the USA will be free from the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the third-person pronoun we in (2) was also used to address the audience but it also included Trump as a part of the group. The word we here is inclusive as it includes the notion of I and you (+speaker, +addressee). It brings the idea that all the people present at the campaign gave their support to police officers. From the examples, Trump's use of you and we to refer to the audience can be seen as carrying a positive attitude.



### METATHESIS: JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LITERATURE AND TEACHING Vol. 5, No. 2, Oktober 2021 PP 140-154

DOI: 10.31002/metathesis.v5i2.3582

p-ISSN: 2580-2712 e-ISSN: 2580-2720

The second main attention was Trump himself. Here, Trump focused on himself with three roles: as an individual, as a presidential candidate, as the current president of the USA. Trump gave himself a positive attitude for all of the roles. He positioned himself as an individual when he thanked his supporters for their prayers when Trump was hospitalized. It also happened when he complimented his supporter's shirts as in the following excerpts.

- (3) I know you've been praying and I was in that hospital.
- (4) *I* want to put one of them on instead of a white shirt.

*I* in both (3) and (4) refers to Trump as an individual without his status as the President of the USA. Then, it could be seen that this use of *I* is for more personal messages and thoughts rather than political messages.

Then, Trump also positioned himself as a presidential candidate as in (5), and as the current president of the USA as in (6).

- (5) I think we have the support of every law enforcement group in this country practically.
- (6) *I* want to thank our law enforcement and *I* want to thank everybody in the community, ...

In (5), Trump was speaking as a presidential candidate since the word we in the sentence referred to his party. Hence, there was his status as a presidential candidate attached in I. In (6), however, Trump used I for delivering a message as the president of the USA. He thanked the law enforcement and the people for their service and support during his reigning time.

Trump also put big attention on his opponents, which included Joe Biden, his party, and his supporters. He even did not hesitate to attack his opponents as can be seen in (7) and (8), indicating that he had a negative attitude toward his opponents.

- (7) We got to vote these people into oblivion, ...
- (8) They've been vandalized and burned by left wing fanatics, total bad people.

Excerpts (7) and (8) show how Trump had a negative attitude toward his opponents and he was not afraid to show his dislike toward them. In (7), the social deixis these people shows the distance that Trump wanted to create between him and his opposition. While in (8), Trump was even harsher by accusing and labeling his opponents' supporters with strong words. From his choice of social deixis, it could be said that Trump's negative attitude to his opponents was close to hating.

Donald Trump gave the USA the same amount of attention compared with his opponents. However, Trump's attention to the USA was positive by mostly showing support. The context of the USA in the speech was the USA as a whole country



including its people in general and smaller groups of community. These smaller groups were police officers, the black community, the Hispanic community, and institutions that were funded by Trump's government. In his speech, Trump showed his support to these groups.

- (9) It's going to increase money coming into the **black community**, to the **Hispanic community**, ...
- (10) We're here today to deliver a united message to police officers all across our great land that are American.

The mentioning of black and Hispanic communities was done to show that Trump cared about these communities, the groups about which Trump was believed to dislike. Then, Trump also included *police officers* as a part of the American people. The same went with *our* which refers to American people in general.

Trump's fifth major concern was his party and government. He showed positivity to his party and government by showing their achievements and future goals. Trump also mentioned that his vice-president had done a great job in taking the responsibilities. It is clear that Trump tried to portray his party and government as the better side in the election. It can be observed in (11) and (12).

- (11) ... if you look at what **we**'ve done with historically black colleges and universities, where **we** funded them, ...
- (12) No, **he** did a great job because **we** 're in the side of right.

The pronoun we in (11) and (12) is exclusive. It does not include Trump and the audience but instead Trump and his government. The pronoun was used to show off their achievements and beliefs. Besides, the pronoun he was used to highlight Trump's vice president with the work he had accomplished during his time.

Apart from his opponents, Trump showed a more positive attitude toward the other four big parties. It can be interpreted that most of his attention revolved around himself, his people, and the USA of which he positioned himself as a part and leader.

However, there was a small party that was mentioned several times in Trump's campaign speech. This small party included 'neutral others' who were neither on Trump's side nor his opponents' side. They were 'people' in a more general context.

- (13) ... if you look at what we've done in healthcare, **people** don't talk about it.
- (14) The people of our country and the whole world is watching, are seeing things now that **they** haven't seen in this country for decades.

Excerpt (13) shows the use of the word *people* in a general context, not specified to Trump's supporters, opponents, or the people of the USA. While in Excerpt (14),



the pronoun *they* refers to the people of the USA and the whole world. It is another way to say 'everyone'. As this party was not on his side nor the opponents' side, Trump's attention toward neutral others was also neutral. He did not show support nor dislike toward them.

To summarize, Trump dominantly gave a positive attitude to the audience, himself, the USA, and his party and government. The most significant deixis for expressing a positive attitude in his speech was personal deixis, with the words we (both inclusive and exclusive), I, and you. The similar findings to Khalifa's (2018), Astuti's (2019), and Retnowaty's (2019) that we and I are often used by Trump show that Trump's positive attention revolves around himself and the groups of which he considers himself a part. Trump gave a negative attitude to his opponents whom he attacked in his speech. The negative attitude was mostly shown by the use of personal and offensive social deixis to create a negative image of the opposition. This finding supports Astuti's (2019) claim that Trump used personal deixis to attack other presidential candidates.

The Use of Personal and Social Deixis as a Campaign Strategy in Trump's Speech The expressions used by Donald Trump to address or talk about the parties mentioned in his speech might have effects on the audience. As a presidential candidate, Trump must convince the people to get their trust and support. The use of personal and social deixis might help him in convincing the people. This section discusses how Trump used personal and social deixis as a campaign strategy.

Previously mentioned, personal deixis was more frequently used in Trump's speech than social deixis. Table 5 shows how personal deictic expressions were used to address the parties whom Trump mentioned.

Table 5. The Distribution of Personal Deixis to the Parties in Trump's Speech

-		Party						
No.	Expressions	Aud./ sup.	Tr.	Tr's party/ gov.	Opp.	USA	Neu.	Total
1	We variants	20	-	49	-	28	-	97
2	I variants	-	71	-	-	-	-	71
3	You variants	63	-	-	-	3	-	66
4	They variants	-	-	2	36	14	3	55
5	He/she	-	2	2	11	-	-	15
7	Everyone/ everybody	3	-	-	-	1	-	4
8	Somebody	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total		86	73	53	47	46	4	309

Aud./sup.: Audience/SupportersOpp.: OpponentsTr.: TrumpNeu.: Neutral Others



Tr's party/gov. : Trump's party/government

The word we had the highest frequency in Trump's speech. Trump used we to refer to the audience, his party and government, and the USA, with the emphasis on his party and government. Both exclusive and inclusive we were found in Trump's speech. The frequent use of we was similar to Trump's strategy in 2016 in which the pronoun was the second frequently used personal deixis in Trump's campaign speeches (Astuti, 2019). With the word we, Trump involved himself in delivering what his party wanted to achieve and what his government had done as in (11). The word we for referring to Trump's party and government is an exclusive we since it excluded the audience as the hearer when the speech was delivered (Levinson, 2006). In referring to the USA, we variants were used to position Trump as a part of the USA and to create inclusiveness between himself and the Americans. Furthermore, Inclusive we was also used for addressing the audience to build a strong relationship with them Hence, the audience would feel included in the speech so they might be interested in and convinced by Trump's campaign. The frequent use of we could be more beneficial when the audience could not distinguish the exclusive we and assumed that all of them are inclusive.

Trump used the singular first-person pronoun *I* and its variants (*me* and *mine*) to refer to himself as the speaker. The frequent use of *I* by Trump was similar to what Barack Obama and Mitt Romney did in 2012 (Putri & Kurniawan, 2015) and Trump himself in 2016 (Astuti, 2019). Trump positioned himself in three roles. As an individual, Trump expressed more personal things, such as thanking his supporters for their support and complimenting the audience. Then, he positioned himself as a presidential candidate in promoting himself and his party as in (5). Trump also used *I* to show his role as the current president. The frequent use of the singular first-person pronoun in his speech is Trump's way to promote himself. The researcher agrees with Khalifa (2018) that Trump used the pronoun *I* to show his power and significance. In his campaign speech, he might want to be the center of attention with his achievements, his plans, and his as an individual as in (15).

(15) I did that. I did that. I got that done. And I worked with a lot of people, but we got it done.

You and its variants were mostly used to address the audience. The word you portrays a positive close relationship between Trump and the audience. This shows that the speaker's attitude affects the distance between the speaker and the referent of a personal marker (Wilson, 1990). Trump also used you to refer to the American police officers to whom Trump gave his support. This strengthens the idea that you in the speech carried a positive attitude.

The variants of *they* were used to refer to Trump's opponents, American people, neutral others, and Trump's government. Most of the time, *they* were used to express a negative attitude toward Trump's opponents. Not only did Trump distance his



## METATHESIS: JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LITERATURE AND TEACHING Vol. 5, No. 2, Oktober 2021 PP 140-154 DOI: 10.31002/metathesis.v5i2.3582

p-ISSN: 2580-2712 e-ISSN: 2580-2720

opponents from himself, but also the word *they* was used to distance them from Trump's audience to influence them to dislike the opponents. His strategy of using *they* was also done in the 2016 election (Astuti, 2019). This finding is different from what Putri and Kurniawan (2015) found in Barack Obama and Mitt Romney's campaign speeches in which they rarely mentioned their opponents back in the 2012 election. This shows that Trump has a different campaign strategy and sees the election as a competition he must win. Meanwhile, the attitude of *they* for referring to American people was much more positive. It was used to portray what American people felt during Trump's time as the president. *They* was also used in stating that Trump's government had worked excellently. In referring to neutral others, however, the attitude was not positive nor negative, or in other words, it was neutral. The positive use of *they* is different from what Astuti (2019) found that in the previous election Trump used *they* only for addressing his opponents. The current study's findings show that *they* could also be employed to deliver a positive attitude.

Trump used the third-person pronoun *he* to address his rival and himself. Besides using *they* to refer to his opponents, Trump used *he* to talk about Joe Biden. It was the same strategy with his campaign speeches in 2016 when he used the singular third-person pronoun to refer to his competitor at that time (Astuti, 2019). The attitude delivered by this use of *he* was also negative. Trump influenced the audience by directly placing Joe Biden at a great distance from himself and the audience. Meanwhile, it is interesting that Donald Trump also used *he* to refer to himself. In this case, Trump expressed what his opponents would say about him related to the support from the law enforcement and about his belief in freedom as can be seen in (16).

(16) Then they'll say, "He doesn't believe in freedom."

By using their opponents' point of view, Donald Trump wanted to influence the audience to disagree with his opponents' thoughts. He wanted his supporters to distrust his opponents and instead believe in his idea. This strategy could be considered a direct attack on the opposition.

There were also personal markers *everyone*, *everybody*, and *somebody* which were also used in Donald Trump's speech. The words *everyone* and *everybody* were for addressing the audience and American people in general. The attitude delivered by the two expressions was positive since there is a sense of inclusiveness carried by these words. The attitude of *somebody* was arguably neutral since it was not used to point to a particular person. It did not have an exact referent in the speech.

The social deixis found in Trump's campaign speech can be categorized into five groups. Sorted by their frequencies in the speech, those are 'other' social deixis, proper names, *people*, title, and title and name. Table 6 displays the distribution of the social deixis for referring to the parties addressed in the speech.

Table 6. The Distribution of Social Deixis to the Parties in Trump's Speech



		Party						
No.	Expressions	Aud./ sup.	Tr.	Tr's party/ gov.	Opp.	US	Neu.	Total
1	'Other'	-	-	2	11	16	-	29
2	Proper names	-	-	6	6	-	-	12
3	People	-	-	1	3	4	3	11
4	Title	-	-	2	-	1	-	3
5	Title and name	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Tota	1	-	-	12	20	21	3	56

The social deixis in Trump's speech was dominated by the 'other' category, while the parties referred to the most by social deixis were the USA and Trump's opponents. The expressions from the 'other' category were employed for showing positive and negative attitudes. Sixteen of the expressions were referring to the groups of American people, such as the incredible men and women of law enforcement, the black community, the Hispanic community, and Latino Americans. Trump mentioned these groups as he claimed that he had support from those groups and had paid attention to them during his reign. By doing so, he might expect that he would get more support. Moreover, it was also his response to the racial and social problems in the USA in which those groups were involved. Trump also used the phrases two really brilliant, smart young people to refer to two people who had helped him in the presidential campaign. This expression was certainly used to show Trump's appreciation toward them.

On the other hand, the social deixis to refer to Trump's opponents were filled with a negative attitude. It was his strategy to degrade and create distrust toward his opponents. Trump blatantly called his rival *sleepy Joe Biden* and referred to Biden's party as *left wing politicians* and *radical socialists left*. Trump also labeled Biden's supporters as *left wing fanatics* and *total bad people*. These expressions are offensive and showed that Trump was not afraid to attack his rival. The words also showed Trump's dislike and were utilized to influence the audience to have the same perception. The use of proper names, such as *Joe Biden*, *Kamala Harris*, and *Obama* also indicated that Trump was not afraid of those people. It also emphasized the rivalry between Trump and his opponents.

The use of the word *people* in Trump's speech could actually be included in the 'other' category. However, this analysis separated *people* from 'other' category to highlight its use for addressing several parties in Trump's speech. Since there were several referents of *people*, Trump needed to make sure that the contexts in the utterances must be clear to avoid ambiguity. In this case, the context of the utterance



## METATHESIS: JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LITERATURE AND TEACHING Vol. 5, No. 2, Oktober 2021 PP 140-154 DOI: 10.31002/metathesis.v5i2.3582

p-ISSN: 2580-2712 e-ISSN: 2580-2720

is essential in pointing at an entity using a deictic expression (Cutting, 2002). The word *people* was employed to refer to the American people, Trump's opponents, neutral others, and Trump's party. Therefore, different attitudes, both positive, negative, and neutral, were also delivered by the word *people* depending on who the addressee was.

The least used social deictic expressions were titles and titles followed by a name. The expressions used in Trump's speech included *First Lady*, *police officer*, and *Senator Tim Scott*. The use of titles as a social deictic expression shows a respectful and distant relationship between the speaker and the addressee (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014). From the expressions he used, Trump showed his respect to those referred. It was the same when Trump delivered a speech in front of Arab leaders in which he used titles to show respect to the audience (Khalifa, 2018). The distance created by the use of titles was to show a formal relationship although the parties referred might have a more personal and close relationship with Trump. Trump might need to make it formal since he was speaking on a formal occasion.

Several political campaign strategies could be inferred from how Donald Trump used personal and social deixis in his speech. First, he created inclusiveness with his audience and the USA people in general. He used inclusive we, everyone, and everybody to show he was a part of the people. By creating inclusiveness, it was expected that people would trust him and believe that what he said was for the sake of the USA. Second, he often focused on himself by using the single first-person pronoun I and its variants. The purpose was to highlight himself with three roles, as an individual, the president of the USA, and a presidential candidate, to be the center of attention. It was also used to show his power and significance (Khalifa, 2018). Then, Trump tried to show that he supported and had support from many people. It was done by mentioning several communities, such as the Hispanic community, the black community, and law enforcement. Lastly, Trump tended to distance himself from and attack his opponents. He created a gap between him and his opponents mostly using personal deixis they. Meanwhile, he also used harsh social deixis to attack and cause distrust toward the opponents. The negative attitude toward the opposition was his way to influence the people for not choosing the other candidate.

### **Conclusions**

This study found that Donald Trump used personal deixis much more frequently than social deixis. With the deixis, Trump showed his attention mostly toward the audience himself, his opponents, the USA, and his party and government respectively. Trump's attitude toward those parties was shared relatively equal in quantity. From those parties, only his opponents got Trump's negative attitude.

Both personal and social deixis was used as a campaign strategy. The word we which dominated the use of personal deixis created inclusiveness in Trump's speech. Trump also used the singular personal pronoun I to position himself in three roles, as an individual, presidential candidate, and the current president of the USA. Related to his opponents, Trump used the word they and he to directly point at his opponents and



create a distance between his side and the opponents. Interestingly, Trump also used the word *he* to refer to himself from the point of view of the opponents. Trump also benefitted from the use of social deixis. In promoting himself and his party, Trump used 'other' social deixis to address groups of American community which were claimed to support and be supported by Trump. Trump's negative attitude toward his opponents was also shown by social deixis in the form of harsh expressions. With these expressions, Trump tried to influence the audience to dislike his opponents, and it was also used to show that Trump was not afraid of them.

This study provides a picture of Donald Trump's style in using personal and social deixis for addressing a political speech. His style could not be generalized as the common style of political speeches, especially in terms of deixis use, as personal characteristics also affect how a person delivers a speech. Therefore, the researcher encourages future researchers to conduct studies on other politicians' speeches to provide a broader view of how deixis could be useful in political speeches.

### References

- Akmajian, A., Demers, R. A., Farmer, A. K., & Harnish, R. M. (2010). *Linguistics: An introduction to language and communication* (6th ed.). The MIT Press.
- Astuti, W. D. (2019). Person deixis in Trump's campaign speeches. Diponegoro University.
- Carlson, G. (2006). Reference. In L. R. Horn & G. Ward (Eds.), *The Handbook of Pragmatics* (pp. 74–96). Blackwell.
- Cruse, A. (2006). A glossary of semantics and pragmatics. Edinburgh University Press.
- Culpeper, J., & Haugh, M. (2014). *Pragmatics and the English language*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cutting, J. (2002). Pragmatics and discourse: A resource book for students. Routledge.
- Hanks, W. F. (2011). Deixis and indexicality. In W. Bublitz & N. R. Norrick (Eds.), *Foundations of Pragmatics* (pp. 315–346). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Khalifa, R. (2018). A deictic analysis of the political discourse of some of Donald Trump's presidential speeches based on the discourse space theory. *Sahifatul-Alsun*, 34, 41–71.
- Levinson, S. C. (1991). Pragmatics. Cambridge University Press.
- Levinson, S. C. (2006). Deixis. In L. R. Horn & G. Ward (Eds.), *The Handbook of Pragmatics* (pp. 97–121). Blackwell.



### METATHESIS: JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LITERATURE AND TEACHING Vol. 5, No. 2, Oktober 2021 PP 140-154

DOI: 10.31002/metathesis.v5i2.3582

p-ISSN: 2580-2712 e-ISSN: 2580-2720

- Perkins, R. D. (1992). Deixis, grammar, and culture. John Benjamins.
- Putri, N. A., & Kurniawan, E. (2015). Person deixis in USA presidential campaign speeches. *ENGLISH REVIEW: Journal of English Education*, *3*(2), 190–200.
- Retnowaty. (2019). Deixis in Donald Trump's speech to UN general assembly. *Lingua Didaktika*, 13(2), 109–122. https://doi.org/10.24036/ld.v13i2.106880
- Schwarz-Friesel, M., & Consten, M. (2011). Reference and anaphora. In W. Bublitz & N. R. Norrick (Eds.), *Foundations of Pragmatics* (pp. 347–372). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Wilson, J. (1990). Politically speaking. Basil Blackwell.

