

Different Considerations About the Concept of Deixis

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Abstract—This article discusses different considerations about the concept of deixis. According to world linguists, the deixis category is one of the categories of pragmalinguistics. Deixis plays a particularly important role in language. Deixis is the function of a linguistic unit expressed as meaning, or expressed through lexical and grammatical means. The relation of deixis to the context and speech situation indicates its relevance to pragmatics. Deixis includes the components of the speech act, the subject, the time and space localization of the fact. Appropriate verbal means are called deictic expressions or elements. Deictic elements show themselves as a style of reference. They perform a marking function and are attached to each item depending on the choice of speech moment.

Index Terms—deixis, context, communication, linguists, participants

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of deixis refers to language units. These units are used to refer to elements of a situational or discourse context. The category of deixis belongs to the most important categories of language communication. The universality of deixis is measured by the fact that the conversational process cannot be imagined without deictic units. The anthropocentric paradigm of modern linguistics allows us to consider that deixis is a unique natural occurrence of language egocentrism.

Deixis is a word of Greek origin, and its meaning is to indicate the position and point to the things and objects mentioned in the sentence. The fulfillment of this sign is called a deictic expression in a linguistic structure. Deixis is a kind of reference. The nature of this reference, its communicative functions, and its processing in language have long been the focus of attention of linguists. Since the word deixis etymologically means to show, to point, it is often equated with the demonstrative pronouns /this/ and /that/.

Deictic words and their accompanying gestures are part of the language system for creating reference. The main philosophical point is that deictic expressions are defined by non-linguistic action, as signification is required for reference. The sign pronoun /this,/ is defined by comprehension and non-linguistic action in the expression /this is a star/. This view affirms deictic utterances with a non-linguistic referent, and this referent is equated with a deictic utterance because the utterance is accompanied by a non-linguistic action or gesture. But this idea may not always be accepted as true. Because deictic expression does not identify the referent by extralinguistic means, it rather identifies the referent in a deictic situation, under a deictic description, by declaring its deictic existence by saying something about it. Also, the idea cannot be considered true that deictic expressions are expressed by non-linguistic actions indicating reference. Moreover, the idea that gestures are non-linguistic equates language with speech, but speech is only one of the means of language. For example, we can use the sign language used by the deaf as proof of this.

II. THE SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of study explores different views of linguists about the concept of deixis. In linguistics, deixis refers to words and phrases that cannot be understood without additional contextual information. Words are deictic when their semantic meanings are fixed, but their denotative meanings change over time and space. Deictic role in English is mainly played by pronouns. The various forms of language activity expressed in language are not only limited to dialogic communication, but are also significantly based on it. This concept also shows itself in deixis. The so-called deictic words are not created directly, but in the process of communication, that is, not in the language, but in the act of speaking. Deixis is the main mechanism for incorporating the information of the non-linguistic context of the speech act into the utterance. The main objectives of the investigation are to determine the deixis, its main kinds (such as: person, place, time) investigated by different linguists like Bühler (1934), Levinson (1983) who added two deictic categories: “Social deixis” and “discourse deixis”.

Objective of the study

The purpose of the article is to study different considerations about the concept of deixis, its means of expression, description of deictic information, as well as analysis of the implementation of expression of deictic means in sentences and sayings.

Methodology

Research methods include direct contextual analysis, cognitive-linguistic, or linguistic description. With the help of these methods, the considerations of different linguists about deixis are clarified. According to some linguists, deixis is a morphological category that includes a certain interesting word class. Such an approach makes perfect sense and is as closely related to the existing tradition as it is to the term itself.

III. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

In linguistics, deixis is traditionally understood as the function of speech that matches the spatio-temporal coordinates of the act of speech. The most important thing in the concept of deixis is that it ensures the effectiveness of the communication act with the participation of the general background knowledge of the communicator. When language is used, the deep connection and connection between language and context are made more clearly with the help of deixis in the language system.

In linguistics, the view of deixis is multifaceted, since it is both a deep and broad topic, its roots go back to early philosophical ideas in linguistics and semiotics.

Despite the rich history and widespread topic of deixis, it still remains an understudied problem, it is still a philosophically enigmatic and incomplete concept as a unit of natural language. Despite different approaches to the study of deixis, it seems that it manifests itself as a functional concept, so that the basis of the category of deixis is a functional sign. It is assumed that, unlike proper words, deictics separate referents according to their characteristics, which are related to other objects in the speech situation. Deixis is basically defined as the linguistic codification of the contextual nature of language. In one of the definitions of this concept, Fillmore writes: "*Deixis is the name given to those aspects of language whose interpretation is relative to the act of speaking, the time of speaking and the times before and after the time of speaking, the place of the speaker at the time of speaking, and the identity of the intended audience with the speaker. A broad theory of deixis takes into account other aspects of the speaker's spatial, temporal, and social orientation*" (Fillmore, 1971, p. 205).

Proposing formal and functional criteria for deixis, this definition defines the traditional categories of deixis - temporal, spatial and social. From this it is clear that deixis causes a special relationship in the event of speech. Example, A said to B on the phone, "*Will you be here?*" When asked, the linguistic expressions "*you*", "*here*" (and even "*be*") and "*will*" are interpreted as "*addressee*", "*speaker's place*" and "*after saying*" respectively. Lyons et al. (1968, 1977), and others have elaborated on deixis in considerable detail. Lyons has a detailed study in his *Semantics*, published in 1977, which mainly deals with human, spatial and temporal deixis. Lyons's definition of deixis (Lyons, 1977) is considered to be the most authoritative definition so far. J. Lyons's definition of deixis also corresponds to Fillmore's definition, but the very detailed outlines of specific types of signs can be considered as the main deictic base in the history of this term.

Lyons writes: "*The term deixis, derived from the Greek word for "to show, to indicate," is now used in linguistics to refer to the functions of personal and demonstrative pronouns, tense, and various other grammatical and lexical markers*" (Lyons, 1977, p. 154). This relates the utterances to the spatial and temporal relations of the act of utterance. The opinions of other linguists about deixis are also interesting. C.S. Peirce's triad of signification, symbol, icon, and index, characterizes distinct, connected signifiers and signifieds. According to C. Peirce, a sign is an object that defines something, which itself belongs to the object to which it belongs, and the effector, in turn, becomes a sign (Peirce, 2001). This characteristic feature is explained by the fact that "symbols" are only signs associated with the concept of their meaning. For example, members of a community may call a particular animal by an arbitrary name, say /it/. Icons are signs in which, through interpretation, objects enter into a natural relationship with each other. For example, an architectural sketch represents any building.

C. Peirce writes: "*An index is a sign that can immediately lose the character of its signifier, if its objects were removed, but if there were no interpreters, it would not lose its character*" (Peirce, 2001, p. 198).

All deictics are indexical because they can point to and indicate their referents based on existing relationships, but not all indexicals are deictic. C. Peirce's writings since the 20th century included the development of the term index for the first time, but his contemporary O. Jespersen considered this unique a problem. He believes that the meaning of these signs does not differ according to the situation. He called these deictics as shifters because they tend to change in mediated speech (Jespersen, 1958). G. Rauch distinguishes the following types of deixis: extralinguistic deixis, deixis of relation to fiction, deixis of constructive fantasies, textual deixis, analogical deixis, non-egocentric deixis, anaphoric deixis (Rauch, 1983).

O. G. Bondarenko correctly associates deixis with the components of situations that are reflected in real language (Bondarenko, 1998). If the basis of these components is the communicant, the place and time of communication, then the types of deixis must be personal, locative and temporal. Axelrud (1992) and Halliday (1972) offer relevant qualifications. D. A. Axelrud puts forward situational and textual deixis. Situational deixis includes personal, spatial and temporal types (Axelrud, 1992).

Determinatives corresponding to the means of expression of the identification, signifier, actualizing, indefinite, generalizing, qualitative and quantitative types in the text indicating the relationship between the free sentences.

With the development of cognitive linguistics in recent years, it seems possible to propose an empirical framework for the analysis of deixis. Unlike other philosophical views that influence linguistics, experiential realism views language as part of general cognition. This view is adopted in cognitive linguistics, which aims to explain how language

is systematically embedded in human cognition. One of the main principles of experiential realism and cognitive linguistics is that language reflects the reality perceived and experienced by people, not the reality that exists objectively.

As we mentioned above, the oldest use of the term "deixis" is reflected in K. Brugman's book *Griechische Grammatik*. In this book, he presents four types of deixis, which he selected from Indo-European languages. /Ich-Deixis/, /Du-Deixis/, /Der-Deixis/ and /gener-Deixis/ (Brugman, 1904).

This classification gives reason to believe that, according to K. Brugman, deixis is a morphological category that includes a certain interesting class of words (Brugman, 1904). We think that such an approach makes perfect sense and is as closely related to the existing tradition as it is to the term itself. Using examples from classical Greek, Brugman explains the deictic function of each pronoun in terms of these paradigms. K. Brugman gives an example of the term *ovioch* (meaning /this/- that) as an example of /Der-deixis/ in its anaphoric processing and /Du-deixis/ in the broad sense of /that/- (that is). Conversely, *öbe*, also /this/, is an example of /Ich - deixis/, because it refers to the speaker himself, or to what the speaker is passionately pursuing. K. Brugman claims that this term has more "deictic power" (Brugman, 1904, p. 98). Finally, /That one/ refers to objects outside the speaker.

These four terms of K. Brugman are cited in most of the literature on deixis. Such authors include Wackernagel et al. (1937). Of these, K. Bühler was the biggest fan of K. Brugman's paradigm. He also gave a comprehensive description of other important aspects of deixis. K. Bühler found a wider echo in translation, which gave impetus to the wide spread of the term "deixis" outside the German-language literature (Bühler, 1934). K. Bühler writes that /Ich-Deixis/ refers to any object near the speaker. /Du-Deixis/ refers to any object located near the addressed person. The use of Latin words instead of /this/ and /that/ was preferred over German pronouns, because K. Bühler explains that the signified /I/ (I) is not /the thou/ (you) but rather /i/ (I) and /the thou/ are places of deixis (Bühler, 1934).

According to K. Bühler, it seems that /Der Deixis/ /this/ - is used for the purpose of accentuation, contrast. According to him, /gener-Deixis/ is used to refer to something far away. He makes such a judgment that deictic terms fulfill their meaning by proceeding from their roots in the deictic field of the context. He then adds that deictics separate two domains depending on both context and contingent symbolic meaning (Bühler, 1934). We take his opinion as a basis. These he called shifters because they tend to change in mediated speech (Bühler, 1934). A few decades later, R. Jakobson proposed a completely new approach, and he continued O. Jespersen's ideas on shifters. R. Jakobson classified shifters as indexical symbols. According to this scientist, shifters are both symbolic and indexical. According to R. Jakobson, the /I/ substitution is located in the relations of presence with the speaker, so with the participation of such relations, it can present its object. But presence relationships are characterized not only by the 1st person singular personal pronoun, but also by the 2nd person pronoun and deictic demonstrative pronouns *this/that*, as well as deictic adverbs *here/now*. Therefore, deictic expressions are not pure signifiers (Jakobson, 1971). They combine two functions in themselves - the functions of a sign and a denoting symbol. In our opinion, it follows that, although their meaning is evaluated by context, they have an additional meaning that they do not count as evaluated by context. Personal pronouns in the speech act not only determine the attitude to participation, but also signal the person's category and liveliness; *here/there and this/that* are indicators of proximity and distance.

The pronoun /I/, refers to the speaker, which loses its property when the speech act ends. In such a case, the speaker becomes the score point in the deictic field or, as it is now accepted, in the deictic context. Everything that the speaker considers close to *him/her* is evaluated with *here/-adverb*, but everything that is far away from the speaker is evaluated with *there/*. The same time as the speech act is indicated by *now/*, but the time preceding the speech act is indicated by *then/*. Spatial deixis is defined by the place of the speaker at the moment of speech, and time deixis is defined by the moment in which the speaking moment occurs. The 1st and 2nd person pronouns play the role of active participants, while the 3rd person pronouns, on the contrary, play a passive role in the context. The demonstrative pronouns *this/that* are not always deictic, so they do not always express proximity/distance to the speaker. Their functionalization in speech is remarkably difficult, which leads to disputes among linguists. J. Lyons writes: "*the pronoun /this/ is close in meaning to the adverb /here/, and the pronoun /that/ is close in meaning to the pronoun /there/*" (Lyons, 1975, p. 231). Consider such examples:

*/What I know for sure is (this/ *that) will help us/.*

(I know for sure that this will help us).

/He will help us: (this/that) I know for sure/.

In such a case, the difference in the functionalization of /this/that/ is not only about proximity/distance, but also in more complex linguistic regularities in relation to the author of the speech, which also require precision. In this regard, the question arises whether anaphora/cataphora is a type of deixis. As already mentioned, K. Bühler considers anaphora a type of deixis (Bühler, 1934). Not all linguists accept this idea. It is no coincidence that there is such a difference of opinion in the interpretation of this issue, and the vast majority of linguists consider anaphora as an independent concept. In our opinion, anaphora and deixis are different from each other. We will talk about this later. The relationship between shifters, indexicals and deictics is not a settled issue. J. Lyons returns to this problem by adding other similar terms and complicating it. J. Lyons agrees to accept that deixis and indexicality are equivalents. He also notes the similarity between the terms deictic, ostensive and sign (Lyons, 1975).

So, R. Jakobson writes: “*shifters belong to the category of indexical symbols, because they require both convention and existing relationship with the referent to express their meaning*” (Jakobson, 1971, p. 177). He notes: “*each shifter has its own general meaning, and they are a complex category where codes and messages overlap. In other words, shifters have both a conventional meaning determined by the spoken language or code, and an indexical meaning determined by the contextualized instantiation of the message or speech*” (Jakobson, 1971, p. 178).

M. Silverstein is very reminiscent of R. Jakobson's reasoning and preferring it, he writes that shifters are divided into a more general category called duplex signs, which R. Jakobson called, so that, as mentioned above, they operate at the code and message level at the same time (Silverstein, 1976).

The category of duplex signs also includes temporal and spatial deixis, which R. Jakobson also defines and shows that some intended referent's temporal-spatial relations are directed to the speaker, the listener, and the other referent during the speech act (Jakobson, 1971). Calling deictics and shifters indexical symbols, R. Jakobson defines these terms according to their meaning, he emphasizes the functional characteristics of these terms by calling them intended referential indices (Jakobson, 1971). Because the concepts of meaning and function indicate what deixis is and how it functions, but it is neither meaning nor imagination itself. G. Frege writes: “*Besides the signified, it is also called the meaning of the sign, there is also an object related to the sign (name, phrase, written sign), which I call the meaning of the sign. In that sense, the type of the represented object, subject, event is expressed*” (Frege, 1966, p. 129). G. Frege calls the meaning as a subject, object and event, and he calls the object that gives rise to that subject a meaning. He repeatedly returns to this idea and tries to reveal his meaning in the form of both words and sentences. So, when a person communicates with his interlocutor, he uses this meaning. According to G. Frege, the meaning lies between the meaning of the sign and the subjective image it evokes, but it is neither the meaning nor the image itself (Frege, 1966).

J. Lyons explains the linguistic meaning in his book of semantics very well. He identifies three types of semantic meaning: descriptive, social and expressive (Lyons, 1975). We consider the descriptive meaning to be one of the important one, which in fact describes a state of affairs and can obviously be either affirmed or denied. Descriptive statements in their simplest form mean something about some particular entity or group of entities. This entity is called referent, which is used to refer to reference expressions (Lyons, 1975). For example, according to J. Lyons, in the sentence /Napoleon is a Corsican/ individual person Napoleon should be identified with reference phrase Napoleon. The second part of this sentence is news (he is from Corsica). Used together with this name, it gives some information about that individual, in order to give him some character (Lyons, 1975).

Meaning is a related concept at this point. J. Lyons defines it as follows: “*Processes and activities outside the language system, features, places, objects, persons and lexemes are meant by meaning. We will use the term meaning for class properties of objects. For example, “cow” means a particular class of animals and also denotes individual animals. Meaning helps to determine reference because it limits the class of things that the lexeme most properly refers to*” (Lyons, 1975, p. 157). Later, J. Lyons he writes: “*The concept of meaning can be extended beyond lexemes and applied to both predicative and referential expressions*” (Lyons, 1975, p. 158).

According to the example above, we can say that “the predicative expressing (be) a Corsican” also has a definite meaning, which is equivalent to saying what “Corsican” means. In general, meaning is the ideas and objects that are the imprints of impressions and actions on the soul. In the same sense, the same ideas are associated with the same meanings. Imagination is subjective, meaning no two people can imagine the same thing the same way. Meaning is a property of many, it is not part of the soul of the individual.

J. Lyons writes: “The descriptive function of language encodes descriptive meanings. It is the function of language that allows us to construct sentences. “Descriptive function” is synonymous with “referential function” and “meaning function”. All deictics have a descriptive function: so we are able to use them to pick out a referent from the context” (Lyons, 1975, p. 198). K. Bühler (Bühler, 1934) distinguishes descriptive, expressive and vocal functions, while R. Jakobson distinguishes referential, poetic, phatic, metalingual, emotive and conative functions (Jakobson, 1971).

What is the most relevant here, regardless of how functional the categories are, is that all non-descriptive functions encode the kind of meaning we have long called indexical. So, all deictics also have at least one additional function to the descriptive function (Jakobson, 1971). Looking at the function of meaning in the light of these different theoretical approaches, we can conclude that the definition of deixis is based on both semantic and pragmatic features. Deictic verses are a type of indexical sign because they derive part of the semantic meaning of words from the context in which they are uttered. The function of meaning, typical as deixis, is regarded as an individual approach to the referent and its conditional function. From all of the above, we can conclude that deixis has been named differently by different linguists. Thus, we have the pure index (Pierce, 1932), symbol (Bühler, 1934), and shifter (Jespersen, 1965, 1924), (Jakobson, 1971, 1951) we find the terms. Research shows that deixis has been a topic of study in philosophy since Greek times. In recent times, many research studies on deixis have been conducted from the linguistic point of view. As we mentioned earlier, in linguistics there were 3 traditional categories of deixis known to us: person, place and time. Referring to Lyons (1975) and Fillmore (1971), S. Levinson added social deixis to this triad, which is divided into honorifics and discourse deixis. S. Levinson later adds to his thoughts and writes that another deictic category called visibility (that is, visible and invisible) should be taken into account (Levinson, 2004). From the 6 categories mentioned above, spatial deixis, discourse deixis and visibility deixis are coded in markers. Those encoded in these markers have been analyzed in the literature and divided into different categories (Levinson, 2004).

IV. CONCLUSION

From the above, it can be concluded that according to different views of linguists the category of deixis is one of the categories of pragmalinguistics. Deixis is the function of a linguistic unit expressed as meaning, or expressed through lexical and grammatical means. Appropriate verbal means are called deictic expressions or elements. Deictic elements show themselves as a style of reference. They perform a marking function and are attached to each item depending on the choice of speech moment. The concept of deixis has always been a subject of discussion. The concept of deixis has existed since the earliest times since linguistics was shaped as an independent science. However, the interest of linguists in studying the deixis appeared in the second half of the twentieth century. This new phenomenon has led to the emergence of language at all levels, such as the universal category. Deixis is considered to be the main phenomenon in modern English. However, this phenomenon has many meanings, which is dependent on different approaches to understand it. As mentioned earlier, the characteristics of the deixis is an indication of the basic coordinates of the communicative act. As we know, the study of the phenomenon of the deixis is one of the subjects of both past and present linguists. Contemporary linguistics has gone forward with great steps in comparison with the initial undertakings of the deceased. Today, the definition of deixis used in the context of the use of linguistic expressions and other signs is more clearly understood by a communicative act (depending on its participants, location, and timing of the application of physical co-ordination).

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