

PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE: THE ROLE OF DEICTIC EXPRESSIONS IN DONALD TRUMP'S 2025 UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPEECH

Farman Ullah

Visiting Lecturer in English, Govt Degree College Domel Bannu

Email ullahf960@gmail.com

Aiman Hussain

Corresponding Author

MPhil in English Linguistics Scholar, City University of Science and Information Technology Peshawar

Zia Ullah Shah

MPhil Scholar, Department of English, Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST)

Email: ziaullahshah154@gmail.com

Abstract

This study presents a pragmatic analysis of political discourse by examining the role of deictic expressions in Donald Trump's 2025 United Nations General Assembly speech. Drawing on John Lyons' Theory of Deixis, the research identifies and categorizes person, spatial, temporal, discourse, and social deixis within the speech, exploring how these linguistic elements function to construct political identity, assert authority, and engage the international audience. The study Employing a qualitative methodology to analyzes the official transcript of Trump's address, focusing on the context and purposes behind each deictic usage. The findings reveal that Trump strategically deploys deictic expressions to personalize achievements, delineate group boundaries, and reinforce national and institutional hierarchies. Person deixis is used to foster solidarity and highlight leadership, while spatial and temporal deixis situate the United States at the center of global affairs and emphasize progress. Discourse and social deixis further contribute to narrative cohesion and the establishment of social roles. This research contributes to the understanding of how deixis operates as a persuasive tool in political communication, offering insights into the dynamic interplay between language, power, and audience perception in American political discourse.

Keywords:

Pragmatics, Deixis, Political Discourse, Donald Trump, United Nations, Speech Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Communication plays an important role in human life as it makes individuals share their thoughts, feelings and provide explanations (Kurniawati,2019 and Rehman T et al 2025). Moreover, communication can be fruitful when two-way interaction happens between the interlocutors while expressing their interests, knowledge and feelings in oral as well as in written communication. Oral communication can happen through speaking, discourse, and everyday conversation. The speaker employs some strategies to make the message easier to understand while delivering an address.

Speech is an act used to conveys ideas in community. In this perspective, the person who speaks will express their opinions about the problem. The person who address conveys some concepts or ideas to the public, and everyone in attendance will understands the goal of the address (Lewiński, et al 2023). Each word the speaker utter has a unique purpose and it relies on the setting and circumstances. When delivering an address, the speaker must maintain fluency and accuracy. As

it indirectly impacts the listener's perception of the idea of speech. Individuals use addresses for special purposes. Speech can have numerous settings, such as politics.

Language is crucial in the everyday lives of politicians (Farhan, et al 2024). Choosing appropriate language and words to communicate with certain audiences is crucial for creating a positive impression of oneself and the ideology they represent. Political language is purpose-oriented, since politicians use it to gain support, influence people's views, and attract potential voters (Crespo-Fernández, 2014). Political leaders do not haphazardly utilize language; their speeches and public statements are deliberately and meticulously crafted with a specific purpose and context. Pragmatics is the contextual study of utterances. According to Yule (2014) Pragmatics is the study of implied meaning in writing or speaking. In addition, Pragmatics is also relating the knowledge about a language such as vocabulary and patterns used in context (Griffiths, 2006). Pragmatics is a field which studies that show how meaning is conveyed by the speakers and writers and then interpreted by the listeners and readers as reported by (Mutadi & Respati, 2019).

Deixis is pointing out through language. According to Richards & Schmidt, 2013 concept used to describe a word or phrase that allows language users to "point," refer to, or connect their speech to a specific moment, location, or other. The only clear method that language structures themselves represent the link between language and context is through deixis (Levinson, 1983). A process known as deixis occurs when language lexicalizes or grammaticalizes context-specific elements (Huang, 2007). There are five categories of deixis: person deixis, place deixis, time deixis, social deixis, and discourse deixis which give birth to the pragmatic analysis. This research paper analyzes the types of deixis, context and purpose in which they are used.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The United Nations General Assembly (UN) serves as a crucial platform for world leaders to address global issues and engage in diplomatic discourse (Azzahra et al., 2023). The study aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of deixis in the speeches of American politicians, especially Donald Trump with a specific focus on understanding how linguistic elements such as demonstrative pronouns, and other deictic expressions which include pronouns like "I," "you," and "here," as well as time adverbs like "now" and "tomorrow" are employed for rhetorical and persuasive purposes. Deixis plays a crucial role in political communication, as it enables speakers to establish connections with their audience, convey ideologies, and manipulate discourse (Yahya, 2020; Chilton, 2004). Despite the significance of deixis in political speeches, there is a dearth of research specifically examining its use within the context of American political discourse, especially speech of Donald Trump at UN. This research addresses this gap by investigating the patterns and functions of deixis in the speeches of American politicians, contributing valuable insights to both linguistic and political communication. The findings are expected to enhance our understanding of the strategic deployment of language in political discourse and its impact on audience perceptions and political influence.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To find out the types of deixis are used in Donald Trump's 2025 United Nations General Assembly Speech
- To know about the context of deixis used by Donald Trump's 2025 United Nations General Assembly Speech

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What types of deixis are used in Donald Trump's 2025 United Nations General Assembly Speech?

- In which context deixis are used by Donald Trump's 2025 United Nations General Assembly Speech?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In an effort to increase researchers and student understanding of pragmatics and deixis as this study provides an in-depth analysis of these concepts. Additionally, the current study hopes to help the readers of languages especially students in comprehending deictic expressions found in a variety of texts, including legal, political, and literary texts. This research paper would also direct other researchers who are going to analyze deixis in future. This study is essential for gaining insights into the persuasive techniques used by the politicians to influence public opinion, shape narratives, and navigate complex socio-political landscapes. Moreover, the findings can have practical applications in political communication, media analysis, and language education, fostering a better understanding of the dynamic interplay between language, power and knowledge in the American political context.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The analysis of deixis in speeches of American politicians holds significant importance as it provides valuable insights into the linguistic strategies employed by political figures to shape public discourse and influence societal perceptions. Deixis, the linguistic phenomenon of referring to entities in relation to the speaker, audience, or context, serves as a powerful tool in political communication. Understanding how politicians utilize deixis enables a nuanced examination of their rhetorical strategies, the construction of political identity, and the manipulation of public sentiment. This study contributes to the broader understanding of political discourse in American, shedding light on the subtle yet impactful ways in which language is wielded to convey ideologies, establish authority, and connect with the electorate. By unraveling the intricacies of deixis in political speeches, this analysis enhances our comprehension of the persuasive techniques employed by politicians, fostering a deeper awareness of the linguistic dimensions that shape political narratives in the American context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language is an essential aspect of human existence, serving as both a means of communication and a reflection of identity, thought, and culture. Iyiola et al. (2024) emphasize that the bond between humans and language is inseparable, as it enables individuals to express emotions, share ideas, and interact meaningfully within their communities. Through language, people construct and interpret their social realities, shaping how they understand the world around them. Baldwin et al. (2023) note that language and communication exist in a reciprocal relationship, each sustaining and reinforcing the other. Beyond its communicative purpose, language fosters creativity, builds relationships, and preserves cultural continuity. Pasaribu and Hutahaeon (2020) describe language as a structured system vital for socialization and human connection, while Herman (2014, 2016) highlights its role in expressing emotions, transmitting knowledge, and communicating beliefs. Anwari (2020) further defines language as a system of conventional vocal symbols that functions cognitively and communicatively. Within this framework, speech emerges as the most direct and influential form of verbal communication, conveying ideas, arguments, and values across diverse settings. Schmitz (2005) defines speech as a structured sequence of meaningful verbal acts delivered on specific occasions for particular audiences, while Graefen (1997) observes that even prepared speeches often vary in delivery due to context and spontaneity. According to Bunyarang and Prasongsook (2022), powerful speeches by influential figures inspire and motivate audiences by translating ideas into persuasive language that shapes thought and collective identity. Thus, language and speech together form the foundation of human

communication, allowing individuals to express identity, convey emotions, and promote understanding within society.

Pragmatics, a branch of linguistics, study how meaning in language is influenced by context and interaction rather than by grammatical form alone. It examines how individuals use language to express intentions, interpret others' speech, and understand utterances based on the surrounding situation. As noted by Huang (2017), pragmatics encompasses several core aspects, including deixis, implicature, presupposition, politeness, and speech acts, all of which reveal how meaning extends beyond literal words. Deixis, derived from the Greek term meaning "pointing," is one of the most prominent features of pragmatic study. It refers to words or expressions whose meanings depend on who is speaking, when they are speaking, and where the conversation occurs (Putri & Kurniawan, 2015). Examples such as I, you, here, there, and now demonstrate that their interpretation varies according to context (Afrilian, Rozelin, & Rahmi, 2019). Halliday (2014) stresses that deixis functions through the coordination of the speaker, listener, and situation, where meaning arises from the relationship among these elements.

Levinson (1983) and Yule (1996) describe deixis as a linguistic mechanism that anchors language within its situational and social framework, emphasizing its role in linking words to real-world reference points. According to Lyons' Theory of Deixis, language inherently encodes personal, spatial, and temporal elements, allowing speakers to situate communication in time, space, and social relations. This contextual grounding transforms abstract language into meaningful expression. Deixis is typically divided into five categories: person, place, time, discourse, and social deixis. Person deixis identifies participants in an exchange; place deixis locates speech spatially; time deixis positions utterances temporally; discourse deixis refers to elements within the text itself; and social deixis encodes social distance or hierarchy. Together, these categories reveal how speakers construct relationships and meaning within communication, underscoring deixis as a central element in understanding how language functions in everyday discourse.

MY THEORY FOR THE RESEARCH PAPER

John Lyons' Theory of Deixis provides an essential framework for understanding how language encodes context-dependent meaning through expressions that rely on situational reference points. According to Lyons, deixis bridges the domains of semantics—the inherent meaning of linguistic forms—and pragmatics—the meaning shaped by context and usage. Deictic expressions such as I, here, and now derive significance not from their lexical content alone but from the specific circumstances in which they are uttered. Lyons categorizes deixis into five principal types: person, place, time, discourse, and social deixis. Person deixis distinguishes participants in communication, identifying the speaker, listener, and others; place deixis situates speech spatially using markers like here and there; and time deixis anchors events to temporal points such as now, today, or yesterday. Discourse deixis refers to parts of the text or conversation itself (e.g., this chapter, as mentioned earlier), while social deixis encodes social relations and levels of formality through titles or honorifics. Central to Lyons' model is the concept of the deictic center, a reference point typically aligned with the speaker's perspective where I represent the speaker, here denotes the speaker's location, and now reflects the moment of speech. This center may shift in narratives or reported speech, depending on the speaker's or character's viewpoint. Lyons (1977) emphasizes that the meaning of deictic terms cannot be interpreted in isolation but must be understood within their situational and cultural contexts. By integrating semantics with pragmatic interpretation, his theory explains how speakers anchor meaning in real-world situations, revealing how context, intention, and shared understanding shape linguistic interaction. Lyons' comprehensive categorization of deixis and his notion of the deictic center remain influential in linguistic analysis,

particularly in discourse studies and cross-linguistic research, where they illuminate how communication depends on contextual reference and speaker-listener dynamics.

Cahaya et al. (2024) conducted a descriptive qualitative investigation into the types and functions of deixis in the song *Dynamite* by Bangtan Sonyeondan, applying George Yule's theory of deixis as an analytical framework. Data were collected through lyric transcription and systematic identification of deictic expressions. The study revealed that person deixis occurred most frequently (62.2%), followed by spatial (20.7%) and temporal deixis (17.1%). Person deixis served primarily to identify individuals within the lyrics, while the repetition of nouns enriched contextual meaning and emotional resonance. Similarly, Wisniewska (2020) analyzed personal deixis in the 2020 U.S. presidential election speeches of Joe Biden and Donald Trump, focusing on the pronouns I, you, we, he/she, and they. Her findings demonstrated that Biden used I to emphasize personal responsibility, while Trump employed they to create ideological distance. Both speakers used we frequently, though with contrasting intentions—Biden's inclusive and unifying, Trump's institutional and exclusive. In a related pragma-stylistic study, Al-Maliki and

In a different context, Abdulameer (2019) examined deixis in a religious lecture by Imam John Starling at Queens College, focusing on the concept of imaan (faith). Using a descriptive qualitative method, the study identified person, place, and time deixis, with person deixis appearing 202 times far exceeding place (11) and time (6) deixis. The frequent use of person deixis reflected the lecture's devotional focus, as references to the Divine Entity employed the pronoun He, while You and We built audience engagement and communal identity. Similarly, Ramadhani and Fitriati (2021) conducted a pragmatic study of deixis in Imran Khan's 2019 address at the United Nations, emphasizing language's referential and persuasive functions. Their findings showed that time deixis appeared 554 times (41.81%), serving to mark urgency, establish historical continuity, and frame ideological claims. Likewise, Lorenza et al. (2024) explored deixis in the *Beauty and the Beast* movie script using Cruse's (2000) model, finding that person, social, and spatial deixis dominated most narrative sections. Their study concluded that understanding deictic distribution across narrative structures enhances pedagogical strategies in language and media studies. Together, these investigations confirm deixis as a key linguistic device for contextual grounding, rhetorical emphasis, and audience interaction in diverse genres.

Muhammad et al. (2023) offered a comprehensive pragmatic analysis of deictic expressions in Imran Khan's 2019 UN address through John Lyons' Theory of Deixis. Their qualitative analysis identified 247 deictic instances person (189), place (26), temporal (15), social (7), and discourse (10)—with I and we dominating, symbolizing self-referential authority and collective identity, whereas they and them marked ideological opposition. Similarly, Ramdhani and Fitriati (2021) highlighted the predominance of time deixis in the same speech, reinforcing thematic immediacy and continuity. In comparison, Fathurohman et al. (2023) examined Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential declaration speeches, reporting 124 occurrences of deixis—person (56), place (5), time (6), discourse (3), and social (48). Their findings emphasized deixis as a linguistic tool for constructing solidarity, leadership identity, and audience alignment. Collectively, these empirical studies affirm that deixis functions as a powerful pragmatic element that enriches political discourse, sharpens ideological positioning, and fosters interactive engagement between speakers and audiences.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research approach to analyze the use of deixis in the speech delivered by Donald Trump at the United Nations on 26 September 2025. The qualitative method is appropriate because it enables the researcher to interpret language within its natural context,

emphasizing meaning, function, and speaker intention rather than numerical measurement. As Polkinghorne (2005) and Rahman (2020) explain, qualitative inquiry focuses on understanding human communication through descriptive interpretation. The present study aims to examine how Donald Trump's deictic choices contribute to the construction of American's diplomatic identity, express alignment with global audiences, and negotiate political positioning in an international setting. Concentrating on a single speech allows for a detailed exploration of linguistic strategies, ensuring depth, accuracy, and contextual coherence in analysis.

The research design follows an explanatory paradigm, emphasizing contextual meaning over generalization. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), qualitative analysis seeks to uncover patterns of meaning embedded within language and discourse. To achieve this, the study applies John Lyons' Theory of Deixis (1977), which provides a systematic framework for identifying and interpreting context-dependent linguistic expressions. Lyons' model classifies deixis into categories such as person, spatial, temporal, discourse, and social deixis—each essential for understanding how speakers anchor meaning to their communicative situation. By using this theoretical model, the study examines how Donald Trump's speech employs deictic expressions to establish solidarity with the audience, emphasize temporal urgency, and project American's perspective within the global forum. The analysis thus moves beyond identifying linguistic forms to interpreting their pragmatic and rhetorical significance in political discourse.

The data for this research consist of the verified transcript of Donald Trump's UN speech, sourced from the official United Nations audiovisual archive. To ensure authenticity and precision, the transcript has been carefully cross-checked against the video recording of the speech available in the UN media repository. This verification ensures consistency between the spoken and written texts, maintaining the integrity of the data. Once verified, the transcript serves as the primary text for analysis. Each instance of deixis is identified, coded, and categorized according to Lyons' framework. The researcher then interprets these expressions in light of their communicative functions—such as asserting authority, fostering national unity, or framing diplomatic appeals. This methodical and contextually grounded approach ensures that the study captures not only the linguistic structure of deixis but also its broader pragmatic role in shaping the rhetorical and political force of Donald Trump's 2025 UN address.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Deixis in Donald Trump's speech at the 80th session of UN.

Person Deixis

we did was a victory and we saved so many lives of people that wouldn't make the journey. That journey was loaded up with death.
We are rapidly reversing the economic calamity we inherited from the previous administration.
In my first term, I built the greatest economy in the history of the world.
I'm here to tell the truth.
, I have ended seven unendable wars.
It's too bad that I had to do these things instead of the United Nations doing them.

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Donald Trump employs an extensive use of personal deixis—particularly first-person singular ("I") and plural ("we") pronouns—to construct a strong ethos of leadership, accountability, and national unity. Through expressions such as "we did was a victory" and "we saved so many lives," Trump invokes the inclusive "we" to associate himself with collective national and humanitarian achievement, positioning both

himself and his administration as active mediators of global progress. The contrast between “we” and “people that would not make the journey” establishes a moral hierarchy, framing the United States as a protector. In statements like “In my first term, I built the greatest economy in the history of the world” and “I have ended seven unendable wars,” the first-person singular deixis highlights his action and accomplishment, reinforcing his identity as a decisive and action-oriented leader. Moreover, by declaring “I’m here to tell the truth,” Trump uses deixis to assert authenticity and moral authority, appealing to credibility within the diplomatic setting. Finally, the phrase “It’s too bad that I had to do these things instead of the United Nations doing them” functions as a deictic shift that distances the speaker from the institution, subtly critiquing its inefficacy while elevating his positive attitude. Overall, Trump’s strategic placement of personal deixis not only personalizes his narrative of achievement but also strengthens his political persona as a leader who acts independently for the greater good, reflecting both self-assertion and national pride in the global context of the UN Assembly.

Spatial Deixis

I've come here today to offer the hand of American leadership and friendship to any nation in this assembly that is willing to join us in forging a safer, more prosperous world
There is no more serious danger to our planet today than the most powerful and destructive weapons ever devised by man of which the United States, as you know, has many
There are always lots of surprises, both good and bad.
No matter what happens from here on out, this was something that should have taken a matter of days, certainly less than a week, and they've been fighting for three and a half years and killing anywhere from 5 to 7,000, young soldiers, mostly, mostly soldiers on both sides, every single week from 5 to 7,000 dead young people.
European nations, all of you are gathered here right now, would have to join us in adopting the exact same measures. I mean, you're much closer to the city. We have an ocean in between, you're right there, and Europe has to step it up.
I look at London where you have a terrible mayor, a terrible, terrible mayor and it's been so changed, so changed

In his speech at the United Nations General Assembly, Donald Trump employs spatial deixis to establish an intense sense of position, distance, and direction that underscores his political stance and worldview. When he states, “I’ve come here today to offer the hand of American leadership and friendship,” the deictic expression “here” grounds his presence in the immediate context of the UN, reinforcing his role as a global representative of the United States and signaling a gesture of diplomacy. In contrast, phrases like “There is no more serious danger to our planet today” and “the United States, as you know, has many” expand the spatial frame from the assembly to the entire world, situating America at the center of global power and responsibility. Trump’s reference to Europe—“you’re much closer to the city. We have an ocean in between, you’re right there”—illustrates spatial distance as a rhetorical tool to differentiate America’s geographical and strategic position from that of European nations. This contrast subtly implies security and strength for the U.S., while urging European states to “step it up,” thereby linking geography with responsibility. The repeated deictic references like “here,” “there,” and “from here on out” not only create a sense of immediacy and perspective but also help the audience visualize the global scale of his argument. Even when he mentions “London where you have a terrible mayor,” the spatial deixis “there” shifts attention outward, allowing Trump to critique external governance and contrast it with his own perceived effectiveness. Overall, Trump’s use of spatial deixis functions to assert America’s

central position in world affairs, highlight geographical and ideological boundaries, and reinforce his message of leadership and protection in an interconnected but uneven global landscape.

Temporal Deixis

This is indeed, the golden age of America.
Now, it's a totally... After 12 days, it's a totally safe city(talking about Washington DC)
China, which now produces more CO2 than all the other developed nations in the world(THE GROWTH AND EMISSION LEVEL OF CHINA)
In May, I traveled to the Middle East to visit my friends and rebuild our partnerships in the Gulf
Now, I think we're going to have another.... We're going to find a lot.
the United States is now thriving like never before

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Donald Trump effectively employs temporal deixis to build a coherent narrative of progress, achievement, and optimism for America's future. The statement "This is indeed, the golden age of America" uses the present deictic marker "this" to situate the nation in a moment of peak success and prosperity, framing the current era as a culmination of his leadership. The repetition of "now" in phrases such as "Now, it's a totally safe city" and "the United States is now thriving like never before" reinforces a sense of immediacy and transformation, contrasting present stability with a less favorable past. When Trump notes, "After 12 days, it's a totally safe city," he employs a short-term temporal reference to underscore rapid progress, particularly in restoring security to Washington, D.C. His mention of "In May, I traveled to the Middle East" anchors his narrative in past action, linking earlier diplomatic initiatives to ongoing achievements in foreign policy. Similarly, his projection, "Now, I think we're going to have another..." introduces a forward-looking temporal frame, reflecting optimism and anticipation for continued success. Even when discussing China's emissions—"which now produces more CO2 than all the other developed nations"—Trump uses the temporal marker "now" to highlight a pressing contemporary issue, situating his remarks within current global challenges. Together, these temporal references—past, present, and future—create a cohesive timeline that underscores continuity and growth. Through this structured use of temporal deixis, Trump presents a persuasive vision of America as a nation that has overcome difficulties, achieved present strength, and stands confidently prepared for a prosperous future.

Discourse Deixis

but later I realized that the United Nations wasn't there for us.
They had massive cost overruns and spent between two and \$4 billion on the building.
You walk on terrazzo. Do you notice that? As far as I'm concerned, frankly, looking at the building and getting stuck on the escalator, they still haven't finished the job. They still haven't finished. That was years ago. The project was so corrupt that Congress actually asked me to testify before them on the tremendous waste of money because it turned out that they had no idea what it was
With Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity demolished, I immediately brokered an end to the 12-day war, as it's called, between Israel and Iran, with both sides agreeing to fight no longer.
Donald J. Trump, I bid on the renovation and rebuilding of this very United Nations complex.
We're both in good shape, we both stood.

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Donald Trump employs discourse deixis to refer back to earlier parts of his speech and to link his statements into a cohesive, self-referential narrative. When he remarks, "but later I realized that the United Nations wasn't there for us," the

phrase “later” serves as a discourse deictic marker pointing to a previously discussed moment of disillusionment, framing his current critique as a reflection born from past experience. His reference to the previous government—“they had massive cost overruns and spent between two and four billion on the building”—uses the deictic “they” to recall an earlier subject in his discourse, establishing continuity while assigning blame for inefficiency and corruption. Similarly, when he comments, “They still haven’t finished the job. That was years ago,” he uses discourse deixis to connect the present critique to a past narrative, reinforcing his portrayal of institutional failure. The anecdote about his personal involvement—“Donald J. Trump, I bid on the renovation and rebuilding of this very United Nations complex”—draws on prior discourse, aligning his professional experience with the topic at hand and lending credibility to his criticism. His mention of “the project was so corrupt that Congress actually asked me to testify” also refers back to earlier context, serving as a narrative bridge that binds his experiences with broader institutional critique. When he says, “With Iran’s nuclear enrichment capacity demolished, I immediately brokered an end to the 12-day war,” the phrase “as it’s called” operates as a metadiscursive marker, showing awareness of how events are labeled and discussed within public discourse. Finally, his closing statement—“We’re both in good shape, we both stood”—connects to a prior mention of his partner, marking cohesion within his personal narrative. Altogether, Trump’s use of discourse deixis allows him to weave past references, present reflections, and personal experiences into a coherent and self-reinforcing speech, giving his address a sense of continuity, authority, and narrative flow.

Social Deixis

Mr. Secretary General,
We know and I know and I get to view it all the time, "Sir, would you like to see?" And I look at weapons that are so powerful that we just can't ever use them. If we ever use them, the world literally might come to an end. There would be no United Nations to be talking about. There would be no nothing.
The UN also provided food, shelter, transportation, and debit cards to illegal aliens, can you believe that, on the way to infiltrate our southern border.
Now they want to go to Sharia law, but you're in a different country, you can't do that. Both the immigration and their suicidal energy ideas will be the death of Western Europe if something is not done immediately. This cannot be sustained.
First Lady of the United States
Where migrants have violated laws, lodged false asylum claims or claimed refugee status for illegitimate reasons, they should, in many cases, be immediately sent home.

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Donald Trump employs social deixis to establish social hierarchy, define roles, and express attitudes toward individuals, groups, and institutions. His opening address, “Mr. Secretary General,” serves as a formal social deictic expression, acknowledging the authority and status of the UN’s presiding figure while adhering to diplomatic decorum. However, this initial formality soon shifts toward a more assertive tone when Trump references his own position and privileged access— “We know and I know and I get to view it all the time, ‘Sir, would you like to see?’”—using titles like “Sir” to reflect hierarchical interaction and his elevated social standing as the U.S. President. Through these expressions, Trump highlights his authority in matters of defense and global security, reinforcing the power

dynamic between himself and his audience. His mention of the “United Nations” and “illegal aliens” introduces a social contrast, drawing a clear boundary between institutional actors and marginalized groups. The phrase “illegal aliens,” while controversial, functions as a social deictic marker that defines an out-group in contrast to lawful citizens, thus reflecting his political stance on immigration. Similarly, his reference to “First Lady of the United States” invokes institutional prestige and familial hierarchy, symbolizing both national identity and moral propriety. When he states, “Now they want to go to Sharia law, but you’re in a different country, you can’t do that,” Trump uses deictic reference to social and cultural boundaries, distinguishing between “us” and “them” and reinforcing national sovereignty. Finally, his assertion that migrants who “violated laws” should “be immediately sent home” employs social deixis to define legitimacy and belonging, situating migrants within a lower social and legal category. Collectively, Trump’s use of social deixis constructs a speech that mirrors global power relations—asserting authority, defining in-groups and out-groups, and reaffirming the social and institutional hierarchies that shape international discourse.

FINDINGS and CONCLUSION

FINDINGS

The analysis of Donald Trump’s address to the United Nations General Assembly reveals that his use of social deixis serves to express authority, reinforce social hierarchies, and define group boundaries within an international context. By addressing figures such as the “Mr. Secretary General” and referring to the “First Lady of the United States,” Trump adheres to formal diplomatic norms while highlighting positions of power and respect. His repeated references to himself through social markers, such as “Sir, would you like to see?” emphasize his presidential authority and insider access to matters of global security. These expressions not only demonstrate his command over social interaction but also reflect the power dynamics that shape political discourse at a global platform like the UN. Through such usage, Trump establishes his credibility and asserts his leadership role in addressing international concerns.

Furthermore, Trump’s speech illustrates how social deixis can be used to distinguish between social groups and cultural identities. Terms like “illegal aliens” and his comments on “Sharia law” draw a clear boundary between insiders and outsiders, revealing a discourse that separates national interests from external influences. While these expressions serve a persuasive function, they also reveal underlying ideological and cultural tensions within his rhetoric. His use of social deixis, therefore, not only defines relationships among individuals and nations but also reflects the broader social order he envisions—one grounded in authority, national sovereignty, and moral responsibility. Overall, the findings indicate that Trump’s use of social deixis operates as a linguistic tool to position himself and the United States as central figures in the global power structure while maintaining a formal yet assertive tone consistent with the norms of political communication.

CONCLUSION

The analysis demonstrates that Donald Trump’s speech at the United Nations General Assembly employs deixis not merely as a linguistic feature but as a strategic rhetorical device that strengthens his political stance and communicative authority. Across different deictic categories—personal, spatial, temporal, discourse, and social Trump constructs a discourse that merges personal experience with institutional power, national identity, and global responsibility. His deictic choices shape audience perception by situating the United States at the center of global dialogue, emphasizing both independence and leadership. The interplay of these deictic forms reveals how language in political communication operates to define relationships, assert dominance, and

influence interpretation within an international forum. Thus, deixis in Trump's UN address functions as a pragmatic tool that not only organizes the structure of his speech but also conveys underlying ideological meanings, allowing him to project confidence, authority, and a distinctly nationalistic worldview in a diplomatic setting.

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