

**RESEARCH ARTICLE****MAPPING MEANING: A DISCOURSE-PRAGMATIC LENS ON DEIXIS IN ACADEMIC WRITING****Yulia Sri Hartati<sup>1</sup>, Iswadi Bahardur<sup>2</sup>, Annisa Silvia<sup>3</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Universitas PGRI Sumatera Barat, Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia<sup>2</sup>Universitas PGRI Sumatera Barat, Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia<sup>3</sup>Universitas PGRI Sumatera Barat, Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia**Article History**

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**ABSTRACT**

Deixis, as a key pragmatic feature, plays an important role in structuring meaning, positioning the writer, and guiding the reader through academic texts. This study investigates the use and function of different deixis categories in research proposals written by students, intending to reveal their role in academic positioning and reader engagement. Adopting a pragmatic approach, five research proposals from scientific writing were purposively selected. The analysis identified five primary types of deixis—person, time, place, discourse, and social—each serving distinct rhetorical purposes. Person deixis was found to be crucial in negotiating writer–reader relationships, while time deixis organized the research narrative chronologically and signaled methodological procedures. Place deixis localized the research context, discourse deixis ensured textual cohesion, and social deixis indexed academic politeness and formality. The findings reveal that while students demonstrate basic control over deictic expressions, there is limited strategic use of deixis for building stance, engagement, and argumentation strength. This suggests a pragmatic competence gap affecting research proposals' persuasive and coherent delivery. The study highlights the pedagogical implications of integrating pragmatics into academic writing instruction, enabling novice writers to position themselves within the academic community effectively. This research contributes to the growing body of pragmatic studies by focusing on an underexplored genre, research proposals within scientific writing. Future research is recommended to expand the dataset, include cross-linguistic comparisons, and explore multimodal deixis in digital academic submissions. This study provides valuable insights for improving research writing pedagogy and fostering advanced academic literacy skills by deepening the understanding of how deixis shapes academic discourse.

**Introduction**

Language has an important role in the realm of human life. Humans use language to communicate. This follows the statement (Pringgawidagda, 2002:4) that language is the main tool for communication in human life, individually and collectively. As a communication tool, the language used must be understood by those who use it. In the academic world, the form of communication created is scientific communication. In scientific communication, clarity of meaning is needed so that various parties can properly understand the information conveyed. The language used in the academic world is a language that uses a clear structure, standardized language variety, objectivity, and systematicity. Scientific writing is a written work that uses a clear context. Gani (2008:10) states that scientific writing is a work produced using scientific methods implemented systematically, critically, and carefully. Dalman (2014:5) Scientific writing is a written work whose contents attempt to explain a scientific discussion by a writer or researcher. A research proposal is a form of scientific writing. According to Supranto (2004:2), a research proposal is a written work plan; the outline contains questions of intent, or the script of the plan explains what, why, how, where, when, and for whom the research proposal is carried out. Ridwan (2009:28) states that a research proposal is a research design from a student who will conduct scientific writing in the form of a undergraduate thesis, thesis, dissertation.

Writing is a productive skill. Writing activities can communicate language (Indriastuti, Mutia Olivia et al., 2023). Writing can help people express their ideas and opinions through words. Writing is also a means to convey information, organize thoughts in a structured manner, write down organized concepts so that many people know. Moreover, to convey and disseminate the results of scientific thinking that can add to the khsanah of the community. Therefore, writing is important today in the field of education (Weigle, 2002). When writing a proposal, students are required to convey their ideas systematically. This is because proposal writing is a process to convey data to readers clearly. Writing skills are needed in this case, such as the use of clear language so as not to confuse the reader in interpreting the data. Proposals are evidence of a student's ability to design research and develop knowledge in one particular scientific field. With the definition above, it is possible to write a research proposal using deixis.

Pragmatics is a linguistic discipline that interprets language through communication in real or abstract situations. One of the aspects that can be studied in pragmatics is deixis. In linguistic studies, deixis is one of the important phenomena related to the relationship between language and context. The use of deixis in scientific writing such as research proposals is significant because it can affect written discourse's clarity, cohesion, and coherence. The language used in scientific writing is a language that uses scientific variety. It is characterized by the use of standard, straightforward, objective, and formal language. The use of language in scientific writing must provide clarity of meaning and appropriate references so as not to cause confusion or different views of what is read. Some rules and guidelines can be followed. These rules and guidelines will cover how to write, the language used, and the assignment format. How to write down ideas is related to how you think about your writing. This is assisted by a good command of language, making the resulting writing easy to read and understand (Copus, 2013:2).

Deixis as one of the pragmatic studies is a context-bound expression (Agbo, I. I., & Odinakachi, 2023). use of deixis in scientific writing is sometimes unavoidable. Therefore, the proper use of deixis can provide a clear reference. This is done so that readers can understand who the speaker refers to in the writing, the time and place of the event in question, and the social reference or discourse involved. Conversely, inappropriate use of deixis can lead to ambiguous interpretations and reduce the quality of the scientific argumentation presented. The term deixis comes from the Greek "deiktikos," meaning direct designation. Deixis acts as a pointer to a reference or referent in speech whose meaning depends on who, when, and where the speech is delivered. According to Putrayasa (2014:28), deixis is a form of language in words or others that function as a pointer to certain things or functions outside the language. In other words, a form of language can be said to be deixis if the reference or referent moves or changes depending on who the speaker is and the time and place it is spoken at that time. Yule (1996 :15-22), (Brown, P., & Yule, 1988), divides deixis into three parts namely; persona deixis, place deixis, and time deixis. Meanwhile, (Sunarwan et al., 2014) divides deixis into five, namely deixis persona (person), deixis place, deixis time, deixis discourse, and social deixis (Djenar, 2001).

Some research on deixis in writing has been conducted by (Aliyah et al., 2022) on Social Deixis Analysis in Detik News Online Media News Texts About Covid-19, (Mutia Rahmah et al., 2022) on Deixis Analysis in Natural Disaster News on Sindonews.Com Online Media January-March 2022 Edition, (Wiharja et al., 2022) on Deixis in Indonesian Language Textbooks for Class VII of Junior High School, (Maarif et al., 2023) ) on Deixis Analysis in Opinion Column Writing on Mojok.co. (Mashruhah, 2024) on Deixis Analysis in Tvonenews.Com Online Media News Texts About Sacrificial Animals. (Alqurashi, 2025) wrote the Effect of Academic Level on the Use of Deixis Expressions in ESL Learners' Writing.

Deixis in scientific writing has not been studied much. This opens up opportunities to see how deixis is also used in scientific writing. If, so far, deixis has been studied more in literary works, films, talk shows, and others that are narrative in nature, deixis in scientific writing has become something important to study. Although research on deictics in various contexts, such as student conversations, deictics in mass media opinion columns, or deictics in literary works, has been conducted extensively, there are still several gaps that need to be filled by further research. One of them is how deictics are used in scientific writing.

The novelty of the study of deictics in this article can enrich pragmatic theory, particularly by deepening our understanding of how language is bound to context in communication. The study of deictics sharpens and clarifies the use of words that fall under deictics. Examples of deictic expressions that refer to something,

such as “saya”, “kita”, “sekarang”, “di sini” in scientific writing, undergo a shift in meaning depending on the context. Words that are usually found in scientific writing in the form of the persona “I” are replaced by the words “peneliti” or “penulis”. This study aims to find deixis used in scientific writing in the form of student research proposals. In academic communication, deictics can help students understand how context affects meaning. Understanding deictics can improve students' critical skills in academic writing, such as proposals. This can help students interpret context accurately and avoid misinterpretations due to a lack of understanding of context when writing proposals.

Deixis contributes to proposal writing. Proposals written by students will be more structured and communicative if they recognize the elements of deixis correctly. Accurately using the deixis of the person, time, and research place ensures the proposal is not misinterpreted. Proficiency in placing deictics in writing is important in ensuring that students' academic writing (proposals) is coherent. Deictics in proposals ensure that references in the writing indicate who and what is being referred to. This allows the arguments presented to be logically connected. In competency development, students' academic communication skills can be improved through mastery of deictics. This competency helps students construct arguments and proposals. In addition, mastery of deictics can improve social interaction and communication in various contexts.

## Materials and Methods

This type of research is qualitative research. Qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the research subject, for example behavior, perception, motivation, and action holistically and by describing in the form of words and language, in a special natural context by utilizing various natural methods (Lexy J, 2011:6). The data source in this research is student proposals that have been disseminated in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program at PGRI University of West Sumatra in 2025. The proposals analyzed were five proposals. The scope of the five proposals studied was five in teaching using quantitative research methods. The data used in this research are words, phrases, and sentences that belong to deixis. The research method used in this research is descriptive research. According to Arikunto (2010:2), descriptive research aims to describe the findings in words with the form of analysis.

The data collection technique in this research is the listening method. According to Sudaryanto (2025:27), this method follows its name: listening or listening to language use. The listening method used is simak bebas libat cakap. The technique used in the listening method is the note-taking technique. The data collection technique can automatically record the data in the table, followed by classification. Stages in data collection: (1) Listening by reading student research proposals. (2) Marking the part of the proposal that uses deixis and marking the deixis found. (3) Performing note-taking technique on the types of deixis found. The data coding procedure involves reading the data sequentially and following the proposal. The letter (P) in the data code stands for the word proposal, and the number after the letter (P) represents the proposal sequence that is the data source. The data found is then abbreviated with the letter (D), and the number after the code (D) represents the serial number of the data found. (4) Classifying the data of deixis types in the data inventory table. The data analysis technique used in this research uses the intralingual pairing method. According to Sudaryanto (2015:27), the commensurate method has a basic technique of sorting out the determining elements or PUP technique, which is a data analysis technique by sorting out the analyzed language units with mental determinants. After being recorded in the data inventory table, the determining element sorting technique is then sorted based on the types of deixis, namely, persona deixis, time deixis, place deixis, social deixis, and discourse deixis. To ensure the validity of the researchers' findings, the data obtained was checked for validity. The data validity checking technique used was triangulation. The triangulation technique used in this study was time triangulation. The researcher repeatedly conducted data validity checks at multiple time points or rechecked the data to establish data certainty (Sugiyono, 2018).

## Results and Discussion

This study aims to analyze the types of deixis employed in five student research proposals, particularly how these linguistic elements anchor meaning within the context of academic writing. As a pragmatic phenomenon, Deixis plays a crucial role in connecting language to its situational context. The findings reveal

that students consistently utilize five major types of deixis: persona deixis, time deixis, place deixis, social deixis, and discourse deixis. Each of these categories reflects the students' awareness of context and their ability—or in some cases, their struggle—to present information clearly and appropriately in a formal academic register. The use of persona deixis in the proposals highlights how students position themselves concerning their research and their audience. Pronouns such as *saya* (“I”) or *kami* (“we”) are frequently employed to assert researcher presence, while references to the reader (e.g., *pembaca* or *Anda*) are less common, reflecting the academic norm of focusing on the research rather than on direct engagement with the audience. This indicates that students develop an academic identity but may still oscillate between personal and impersonal tones in their writing.

Time deixis emerges prominently in outlining research timelines, such as the use of expressions like *akan dilakukan* (“will be conducted”) or *pada tahun ini* (“in this year”). These temporal markers situate the research within a projected future framework, emphasizing planning and academic accountability. However, some instances show vague or inconsistent temporal deixis, suggesting that students sometimes struggle to present a coherent and precise timeline in their proposals. Place deixis appears in references to research locations, such as *di sekolah X* (“at school X”) or *di Padang* (“in Padang”). These deictic expressions are vital in contextualizing the scope and setting of the research. The specificity or generality of place deixis reflects how concretely students frame the boundaries of their study. More precise place deixis correlates with stronger proposal clarity, while vague references may weaken the reader’s understanding of the research context.

Social deixis plays an important role in demonstrating politeness, respect, and acknowledgment of academic hierarchy. Expressions such as *responden*, *guru*, or *mahasiswa* signal recognition of social roles, while honorifics like *Bapak/Ibu* reveal sensitivity to cultural and institutional norms. This type of deixis highlights how students navigate academic etiquette while situating their research within a community of practice. Finally, discourse deixis is evident in how students structure their proposals. Phrases like *seperti dijelaskan pada bab sebelumnya* (“as explained in the previous chapter”) or *pada bagian berikut* (“in the following section”) show how the text refers to itself, guiding the reader through its internal organization. Effective use of discourse deixis helps ensure cohesion and coherence across the proposal, while its absence or misuse may result in disjointed arguments. Overall, the analysis of deixis in student research proposals uncovers the linguistic mechanisms students employ and reflects their evolving competence in academic writing. The strategic—or sometimes problematic—use of deixis reveals the intersection of language, context, and academic convention, offering valuable insights for improving students’ proposal-writing skills.

Type of Deixis	Frequency
Persona Deixis	7
Time Deixis	25
Place Deixis	8
Social Deixis	16
Discourse Deixis	15

**Table 1.** of Frequency of Occurrence of Deixis Types

The findings of this study demonstrate that the frequency of deixis in student research proposals is not evenly distributed but instead reflects the functional priorities of academic writing. The dominance of time deixis with 25 occurrences indicates that students pay significant attention to temporal aspects in structuring their proposals. This includes specifying the data collection period, research implementation schedules, and the school year of participants. Such frequent use underscores how time deixis is a key organizing principle in academic texts, ensuring clarity, precision, and accountability in presenting research activities. It also reflects the institutional expectations of research proposals, where clear timelines are essential to assess feasibility. The second most frequent category, social deixis with 16 occurrences, highlights the students’ awareness of social hierarchy and respect within academic discourse. Using titles such as *Bapak/Ibu*, references to positions like *guru* or *responden*, and acknowledgment of roles

demonstrates sensitivity to cultural norms of politeness and respect in Indonesian academic contexts. This pattern shows that proposal writing is not merely technical but also embedded in social practices where relationships between researchers, participants, and authorities must be carefully managed through linguistic choices.

Meanwhile, discourse deixis appears 15 times, reflecting students' efforts to structure their writing cohesively. Phrases like *seperti dijelaskan pada bab sebelumnya* ("as explained in the previous chapter") or *pada bagian berikut* ("in the following section") signal an attempt to guide readers through the text. The relatively high frequency of discourse deixis illustrates that coherence and textual navigation are important for maintaining the logical flow of arguments, even though some proposals still show inconsistency in linking sections effectively. Place deixis (8 occurrences) and persona deixis (7 occurrences) appear less frequently, but their presence remains significant. Place deixis is typically used to specify research locations such as *di sekolah X* or *di Padang*, anchoring the study in a clear geographical context. Persona deixis, on the other hand, marks researcher involvement and perspective, often using pronouns like *saya* or *kami*. Although less frequent, persona deixis is important in shaping academic identity and situating the researcher concerning the study. These findings reveal that student research proposals rely most heavily on time deixis, supported by social and discourse deixis, with place and persona deixis playing more supplementary roles. This distribution shows that proposal writing prioritizes clarity of scheduling, acknowledgment of social relations, and textual coherence. At the same time, the relatively limited use of persona deixis reflects the academic convention of minimizing personal presence in favor of objectivity. Together, the patterns demonstrate that deixis is not just a pragmatic device but also a reflection of students' negotiation between academic norms, cultural politeness, and formal writing demands.

## Discussion

This section will elaborate on the research findings regarding using persona deixis, time deixis, place deixis, social deixis, and discourse deixis in student research proposals. Each deixis will be explored concerning its function within the academic writing context, highlighting how students utilize these linguistic devices to construct meaning, clarify references, and maintain coherence in their proposals. Analyzing each deixis makes it evident that students' choices are not merely grammatical but serve pragmatic functions that reflect academic conventions and cultural values.

First, persona deixis illustrates the researcher's involvement as an active subject in the proposal. Pronouns such as *saya* or *kami* position the author concerning the study, either as an individual researcher or as part of a team. In academic contexts, persona deixis also negotiates between objectivity and subjectivity: while proposals require a formal and impersonal tone, Indonesian academic culture still allows for a modest acknowledgment of the researcher's role. Thus, persona deixis plays a subtle but important role in shaping the identity and stance of the writer. Second, time deixis emerges as the most dominant category, reflecting the structural importance of temporal markers in research design. References to dates, durations, and research schedules help establish the feasibility and scope of the study. Using time deixis, students ensure that their proposals are anchored in clear, measurable timelines, a crucial criterion for academic credibility. The emphasis on time also reflects the procedural nature of research, where success is highly dependent on systematic planning.

Third, place deixis is employed to situate the study within specific contexts, such as schools, universities, or particular regions. These references provide geographical grounding and function as a justification for research relevance. For example, choosing a particular school as the research site may signal accessibility, contextual suitability, or representativeness. Place deixis, therefore, does more than identify a location; it legitimizes the research by connecting it to a real-world context. Fourth, social deixis is a striking feature of the proposals, as it reflects the importance of cultural norms and politeness strategies in Indonesian academic discourse. By referring to participants with titles such as *guru*, *kepala sekolah*, or *responden*, students demonstrate respect and adherence to hierarchical structures. Thus, Social deixis serves as a linguistic marker and an expression of cultural values, particularly the principle of *kurmat* (respect) in communication. Finally, discourse deixis shows how students attempt to maintain textual cohesion and guide readers through the structure of their proposals. Expressions like *pada bab berikutnya* or *seperti dijelaskan*

di atas help connect different text sections, ensuring logical flow and readability. This indicates an awareness of the need to orient the reader within a larger textual framework. While not as frequent as time or social deixis, discourse deixis is equally vital in academic writing by linking ideas into a coherent narrative.

### Deixis Persona

Persona deixis indicates who is involved in the speech, both as an actor and as the entity referred to. In the context of student research proposals, persona deixis highlights the writer's position in the text and the participants referenced in the research. The analysis shows two main types of persona deixis: first-person singular deixis and third-person plural deixis, each serving different pragmatic functions in constructing academic authority while maintaining objectivity in writing. For first-person singular deixis, the words *peneliti* (the researcher) and *penulis* (the writer) are consistently found in the proposals. Instead of personal pronouns like *I* or *me*, the choice of these terms reflects an effort to maintain formality and objectivity in academic writing. This deixis does not merely identify the actor of the research but also serves as a discursive strategy to project the student's identity as an academic writer. It helps establish credibility while aligning with the conventions of scientific writing.

Meanwhile, third-person plural deixis appears through the word *mereka* (they), typically referring to research subjects such as students, teachers, or communities under study. This deixis distinguishes the writer's position from the research participants, thereby reinforcing the academic distance required in research writing. Using *they*, the writer presents observations about participants in a way that appears neutral and detached rather than subjective. So, persona deixis in student research proposals operates not only as a grammatical marker but also as a discursive practice. On the one hand, it asserts the identity of the student as a legitimate academic actor (*peneliti/penulis*), while on the other, it positions participants (*mereka*) as objects of study. This practice reveals students' pragmatic awareness in balancing personal involvement with the objectivity required in academic discourse.

#### a. First Person Singular Personal Deixis

Data P2D04      *Penulis ingin meneliti "Efektivitas Outdoor learning dalam Pembelajaran Menulis Teks Puisi Kelas X Fase E SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko".*

The author wants to research "The Effectiveness of Outdoor Learning in Learning to Write Poetry Texts for Class X Phase E of SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko"

The sentence above illustrates first-person singular deixis through the word *penulis*. In this context, *penulis* is a substitute for the more personal pronoun *saya* ("I"), which is generally avoided in academic writing to maintain a formal and objective tone. By using *penulis*, the writer distances themselves from personal subjectivity and instead adopts the persona of a researcher. This lexical choice is not merely stylistic but reflects a broader academic convention, where the researcher's authority is emphasized through depersonalized forms of self-reference.

Using *penulis* as a deictic marker also signals the author's position in the research process. It indicates that the writer is the actor who designs and implements the study and the narrator who documents and evaluates it. In this case, the sentence's meaning demonstrates the author's intention to investigate "Efektivitas Outdoor Learning dalam Pembelajaran Menulis Teks Puisi Kelas X Fase E SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko." Through this deixis, the student researcher marks themselves as the primary agent of the academic inquiry while maintaining the impersonal and authoritative style expected in scientific discourse. Another important aspect of first-person singular deixis in academic proposals is that it allows the writer to clarify ownership of ideas and actions without breaking the conventions of neutrality. Unlike *saya*, which foregrounds the personal self, *penulis* foregrounds the scholarly identity. This shift from individual subjectivity to academic authorship highlights how deixis is also a discursive strategy that aligns the student's writing with established norms of scientific communication.

In addition to *penulis*, similar instances of persona deixis are found in other parts of the proposal. For example, data P4D10 also reveals the use of first-person deixis where the writer strategically inserts their role as the researcher while maintaining a formal register. These instances demonstrate that persona deixis is not random but deliberately chosen to balance personal involvement and academic detachment. In this way, first-person deixis in research proposals is a tool to establish the researcher identity, credibility, and adherence to academic conventions.

Data P4D10     *Ketiga, bagi peneliti sendiri penelitian ini memberikan kesempatan bagi peneliti untuk memperdalam pengetahuan tentang model pembelajaran Think Talk Write dan materi tentang cerpen.*

Third, as a researcher, this research allows researchers to deepen their knowledge about the Think Talk Write learning model and material about short stories.

The sentence above demonstrates first-person singular deixis through the words *peneliti* and *penulis*. Both terms are substitutes for the personal pronoun *saya* (“I”), which is typically avoided in academic writing to maintain objectivity and formality. By choosing *peneliti* or *penulis*, the author positions themselves as the active subject in the research while simultaneously adhering to the conventions of scientific discourse. These deictic markers highlight the researcher’s central role in conducting, analyzing, and presenting the study, without overtly personalizing the narrative. The function of first-person singular deixis in this context is grammatical and discursive. Using *peneliti* signals responsibility and accountability for the research process, emphasizing that the study results from deliberate actions taken by the researcher. At the same time, *penulis* reflects the authorial voice in academic communication, indicating the individual who composes, explains, and interprets the findings. These two markers—*peneliti* and *penulis*—establish a dual identity: one as the actor engaged in the empirical process and the other as the narrator who documents the scholarly work. Moreover, the strategic avoidance of *saya* and the preference for depersonalized forms like *peneliti* or *penulis* demonstrate the researcher’s alignment with academic norms that value neutrality and professionalism. In this way, deixis functions as more than a linguistic device; it becomes a means of identity construction in scholarly texts. The researcher is both present and absent: present as the responsible subject of the study but absent as a personal individual, replaced by an institutionalized academic persona. This dual use of *peneliti* and *penulis* also reinforces the coherence of the proposal by ensuring consistency in perspective. It allows the reader to easily identify who is acting within the research while maintaining the impersonal style demanded in scientific writing. Thus, first-person singular deixis in this context carries both a referential and a rhetorical function, grounding the study in personal responsibility while conforming to the collective standards of academic communication.

#### **b. Third person plural deictic**

Third-person deictic refers to a person who is neither the speaker nor the listener of an utterance. An example can be seen in the following P2D10 data.

Data P2D10     *Selain itu belajar di luar kelas merupakan upaya yang dapat mengarahkan siswa untuk melakukan aktivitas yang bisa membawa mereka pada perubahan perilaku terhadap lingkungan sekitarnya.*

In addition, learning outside the classroom is an effort that can direct students to carry out activities that can lead them to changes in behavior towards their surrounding environment.

The sentence above illustrates third-person plural deixis through the pronoun *mereka* (“they”). Unlike first-person deixis, which highlights the presence and responsibility of the researcher, third-person plural deixis

refers to groups of individuals external to the author, often participants, subjects, or other entities relevant to the study. In the example “...aktivitas yang bisa membawa mereka pada perubahan perilaku terhadap lingkungan sekitarnya”, the word *mereka* refers to a group of students who are expected to undergo behavioral changes toward their surrounding environment. This shows how the pronoun functions as a marker of reference that connects the text to its research subjects.

Using *mereka* in academic writing reflects the author’s effort to create a clear distinction between the researcher and the participants. By employing third-person deixis, the researcher ensures objectivity by positioning the students as the focus of observation without merging them into the author’s perspective. This also prevents ambiguity, as the audience can easily identify that the group being referred to is not the authors themselves but individuals studied in the research. In this way, deixis functions as a precision tool, maintaining clarity in academic discourse. Moreover, the third-person plural deixis carries discursive significance because it categorizes and generalizes groups of people. In this case, *mereka* is not tied to a single individual but to a collective, making it suitable for research contexts where findings are expected to apply to groups rather than individuals. The choice of *mereka* also reinforces the universality of the study’s claims, suggesting that the behavioral changes discussed are not isolated but can be attributed to a broader group of students.

Another occurrence of third-person plural deixis can be seen in the P3D06 data, where *mereka* is again employed to indicate external participants. Each instance underscores how students, as study subjects, are represented linguistically as “others” observed from an academic distance. This contributes to the neutrality of the text while simultaneously highlighting the centrality of the participants in the research. Thus, third-person plural deixis not only identifies groups outside the author but also plays a vital role in structuring the discourse of academic research by balancing objectivity, clarity, and participant representation.

Data P3D06     *Dalam kelompok, setiap siswa memiliki tugas dan tanggung jawab masing-masing, sehingga mereka belajar bekerja sama dan bertanggung jawab.*

Each student has their own tasks and responsibilities in groups, so they learn to work together and be responsible.

The sentence above uses third-person personal pronouns, namely the word *mereka*. In the sentence above, *mereka* refers to a group of students in each group who are learning to work together and be responsible. They are often written in proposals as a substitute for a group or collection of students. The function of personal deictics in the above data is to refer to the plural form. The use of third-person plural pronouns indicates this function. The word *mereka* marks the form found in this third function. Personal deictics in scientific writing is used to clarify the individual as the subject conducting the research or refer to the object being studied. This aligns with the statement by (Wiharja et al., 2022): “First-person singular personal pronouns are used in formal contexts and are generally employed in official writings or speeches. The third-person plural pronoun ‘they’ serves as the speaker’s reference to individuals outside the communication act.”

### Place Deixis

Place deixis refers to linguistic elements that indicate location relative to the speaker or writer’s position. In scientific writing, particularly research proposals, place deixis serves as a pointer to the specific location of the research activities. Unlike in spoken communication, where place deixis such as *here* or *there* depend on immediate physical presence, these markers are tied to explicitly identified research sites in academic writing. For example, when a proposal states, “Penelitian ini dilakukan di SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko,” the phrase *di SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko* functions as a deictic reference that situates the research spatially. This provides clarity for the reader and establishes the boundary within which the study takes place.

The use of place deixis in proposals demonstrates the writer’s effort to contextualize the research in a specific, tangible setting. The writer provides a spatial anchor that validates the research design by pointing to the school, village, or district where the research is carried out. For instance, mentioning Nagari Koto



Tengah or Laboratorium Bahasa Universitas in a text is more than just stating a place—it is a deictic act that signals the research’s scope and environment. This localization reinforces the proposal's credibility, showing that the study is grounded in an observable and verifiable context rather than being abstract or generalized. Moreover, place deixis in academic writing often works alongside other deixis forms, such as time and social deixis, to build a complete picture of the research setting. When combined, these deictic references help readers understand where the study takes place, when it occurs, and who is involved. Thus, place deixis functions discursively as part of a broader contextualization strategy, ensuring that the proposal meets academic standards of precision and transparency. Finally, place deixis carries interpretive weight because it implicitly highlights the relevance of the chosen location. By specifying the research site, the writer signals why that location is important to the study, for example, its unique cultural, social, or educational characteristics. In this way, place deixis is not just a technical marker of location but also an argumentative tool that situates the research within a meaningful spatial context, linking the study’s findings to the lived realities of a particular community.

Data P2D01      *Penerapan kurikulum merdeka di SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko masih tergolong baru dan belum sepenuhnya berjalan secara optimal.*

Implementing the independent curriculum at SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko is still relatively new and has not been fully implemented optimally.

The sentence above demonstrates place deixis, which in scientific writing shows the specific location where the research is conducted. In this case, the place deixis is marked by the phrase SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko, which identifies the research site explicitly. By mentioning this institution, the researcher situates the study in a concrete context, ensuring that readers clearly understand where the independent curriculum is implemented. Such specification is important because it strengthens the credibility of the research by anchoring it to an observable and verifiable location.

The use of place deixis, like SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko, also reflects the principle of contextual accuracy in academic writing. A research proposal that only states “this school” or “that place” would lack clarity and reduce the academic rigor of the study. Instead, naming the school is a precise deictic reference that eliminates ambiguity. It not only points to the geographical site of the research but also connects the findings to the unique socio-educational environment of that institution. This makes the results more meaningful, as they can be interpreted in the specific context of SMA Negeri 5 Mukomuko. Another example of place deixis, as seen in data P2 D09, further illustrates how writers consistently use spatial markers to ground their research. For instance, proposal references to villages, classrooms, laboratories, or districts serve the same deictic function, anchoring the research in a particular setting. These markers are not merely descriptive; they act as discursive tools that signal the scope and applicability of the research findings. Thus, place deixis in scientific writing plays a dual role: it informs the reader about the research site. It legitimizes the study by demonstrating its rootedness in a specific, real-world context.

Data P2D09      *Dengan demikian, outdoor learning merupakan suatu kegiatan yang menyampaikan pelajaran di luar kelas, sehingga kegiatan atau aktivitas belajar mengajar berlangsung di luar kelas atau di alam bebas.*

Thus, outdoor learning is an activity that delivers lessons outside the classroom, so that teaching and learning activities take place outside the classroom or in nature.

The sentence above uses place deixis. Place deixis is written specifically as a marker where the location of teaching and learning is carried out. In this case, the place marker is used in writing *luar kelas atau alam bebas*. This indicates that the teaching and learning process is not done in the classroom but outside. This deictic serves to indicate location or place. The function of place deictics is important for clarifying the geographical boundaries within which the research was conducted. Place deictics in scientific writing indicate where the research or learning process was conducted. Their use directly refers to the intended location to clarify the researcher's intent. This aligns with what is written by (Laia, 2023) that place deictics are useful for determining the location of an event concerning its reference point, known as place deictics or spatial deictics.

### Time deixis

Time deixis is an important linguistic element that indicates when an event occurs, usually concerning the moment of utterance. Time deixis is crucial in situating research activities within a specific temporal frame in scientific writing. Unlike everyday conversation, where time deixis such as “now,” “yesterday,” or “tomorrow” are common, in academic contexts these markers are often formalized into exact references like “in the 2023/2024 academic year” or “during the second semester.” This precision ensures that readers understand what was studied and the exact period in which the study took place, allowing for replication and contextual interpretation of the findings.

For example, in the P1 D07 data, the temporal deictic phrase provides information about the research schedule. Such references might include “the research will be conducted in March 2024” or “data collection took place over two months.” These markers are explicit indicators that anchor the research process to a certain timeframe. By doing so, they establish a temporal boundary for the study, showing when data collection, analysis, or observation occurred. This is particularly significant in educational research, where the timing of implementation, such as during the exam season or school year transitions, may directly influence the results. Moreover, time deixis in research proposals provides clarity and reflects the researcher’s planning and organizational skills. A well-structured timeline, indicated by deictic markers, signals to readers or reviewers that the researcher has carefully considered the feasibility and duration of the project. For instance, specifying that “the research will be carried out over four weeks in the even semester of the 2023/2024 academic year” demonstrates methodological rigor and preparedness.

Finally, temporal deixis also carries an interpretive function in the broader academic discourse. By situating the research within a particular historical or institutional moment, such as “following the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in 2022,” the researcher links the study to larger educational or policy developments. This contextualization enhances the research's relevance and allows readers to interpret the findings in light of contemporary challenges and transformations. In short, time deixis in scientific writing is more than a simple temporal pointer—it is a discursive tool that strengthens the research's validity, clarity, and contextual depth.

Data P1D07      *Berdasarkan wawancara dengan salah seorang guru bahasa Indonesia yang mengajar di SMK Negeri 1 Ranah Ampek Hulu Tapan yaitu, Karlindawani, S.Pd. Pada tanggal 21 Januari 2025.*

Based on an interview with one Indonesian language teacher at SMK Negeri 1 Ranah Ampek Hulu Tapan, namely, Karlindawani, S.Pd. on January 21, 2025.

The sentence above demonstrates the use of time deixis through the marker 21 Januari 2025. This explicit date functions as a clear temporal reference that situates the research activity—in this case, an interview with an Indonesian language teacher at SMAN 1 Ranah Ampek Hulu Tapan within a definite time. Unlike general expressions such as “kemarin” (yesterday) or “nanti” (later), the use of a specific date strengthens the scientific quality of the writing because it leaves no ambiguity for readers. It precisely informs them of when the research activity took place, thus providing a verifiable chronological context for the data collected.

In addition, this time deictic also indicates that the event belongs to the past context, as the proposal was written after the interview. This temporal positioning is important because it distinguishes between completed and planned activities. Doing so reflects the researcher's awareness of sequencing in the research process, what has been accomplished, what is ongoing, and what is scheduled for the future. Such distinctions are crucial in research proposals, since they demonstrate the progress of data collection and the level of readiness of the researcher to carry out further analysis.

The inclusion of a specific date also has methodological implications. It not only situates the research temporally but also provides readers with contextual background, such as the academic calendar, school activities, or even social and cultural events that might have influenced the interview. For instance, if the interview occurred during an examination period or following a recent curriculum reform, the teacher's responses might have been shaped by those circumstances. Hence, time deixis like 21 Januari 2025 does more than mark chronology it contributes to a deeper understanding of the conditions under which the data was gathered. Another example of temporal deixis can be found in the P1 D013 data, which further demonstrates how students, when writing their research proposals, employ precise temporal markers to strengthen the validity of their research design. These references show that temporal deixis in academic writing is a linguistic element and a discursive strategy to enhance transparency, credibility, and accountability in research reporting.

Data P1D13      *Seiring waktu penyajiannya mengalami perubahan ke arah fiktif dan menampilkan tokoh-tokoh yang dekat dengan kehidupan sehari-hari.*

Over time, the presentation has changed towards fiction and features characters who are close to everyday life.

The sentence above uses time deixis. The time deixis marker is the phrase *seiring waktu*. *Seiring waktu* refers to change or development. In the sentence above, the use of time deixis helps to interpret the sentence as indicating a change or development in the story's presentation that occurs in line with time. The function of time deictic in the phrase "seiring waktu" is relative time deictic. The phrase does not refer to a specific time but rather to a continuous and progressive temporal relationship understood based on the situation. Temporal deictic functions in scientific writing are used as temporal markers. These temporal deictic functions also serve as tools for textual coherence, ensuring that the information presented is systematic and easily understood by scientific readers. This is in line with the results of deictic analysis in various studies, which show that temporal deictic functions play a role in organizing temporal information in texts, which is crucial for presenting facts, procedures, and research results systematically and chronologically. Similarly, (Sunarwan et al., 2014) state that temporal deictic functions are references to the time intended by the speaker in a linguistic event.

### Social Deixis

Social deixis in scientific writing is important in maintaining objectivity and formality, two key principles in academic discourse. Unlike casual communication, which often employs personal references such as *aku*, *kamu*, or kinship terms, scientific writing demands linguistic markers that reflect respect, hierarchy, and social distance while avoiding subjectivity. The use of social deixis ensures that the text does not lean toward an overly personal or informal tone but adheres to conventions of neutrality and professionalism. For instance, in a student research proposal, references to research participants are made through formal titles such as *guru Bahasa Indonesia*, *kepala sekolah*, or *siswa kelas X*, rather than personal names. Such designations highlight the participants' institutional or social roles within the research context.

Data P1D02 *Kurikulum merdeka merupakan inovasi dalam dunia pendidikan di Indonesia yang diciptakan oleh Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan oleh Nadiem Makarim sejak tahun 2019.*

The independent curriculum is an innovation in Indonesia's education world created by the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim, since 2019.

Social deixis in the sentence above illustrates how academic writing encodes hierarchical roles and institutional authority through linguistic choices. The marker *Menteri* in the phrase *Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan* is not merely a lexical reference to an individual but carries the weight of an official position within the state apparatus. By referring to the role rather than the personal identity of the minister, the text emphasizes the institutional authority of the office and foregrounds its relevance to the discourse. In this way, the deixis legitimizes the statement being reported, since it comes from a figure with recognized authority in education and culture. This use of social deixis also reflects the broader principle in scientific writing of prioritizing roles over personal identities. By using *Menteri* instead of the minister's personal name, the text highlights the official responsibility and status of the speaker rather than their individuality. This helps maintain an objective and formal tone, aligning the writing with academic conventions that seek to avoid unnecessary personalization. Such a practice also ensures that the reader interprets the statement in light of its institutional importance rather than as a subjective opinion of a particular individual.

Furthermore, the explicit mention of both job titles and personal names in some contexts reinforces the hierarchy and authority structure being invoked. For example, writing *Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Nadiem Makarim* clarifies the speaker's personal identity and the institutional legitimacy that authorizes the statement. This dual reference underscores the alignment between the individual and the role, strengthening the authoritative weight of the discourse. In proposals and research contexts, this practice signals the writer's awareness of the power dynamics embedded in language use, where deictic markers do more than reference—they position, evaluate, and legitimate. Thus, social deixis in this case performs multiple functions: it marks social status, signals institutional hierarchy, and legitimizes authority within the text. This illustrates how deixis in academic discourse is not merely a grammatical category but a discursive strategy that shapes how meaning, authority, and credibility are constructed. Another clear example of this practice can be seen in the data P1D015, which similarly uses social deixis markers to establish positional authority and maintain the formality of the academic text.

Data P1D15 *Guru membagikan lembar kerja peserta didik yang bermuat teks anekdot yang akan dialihkan menjadi teks puisi dengan menjelaskan petunjuk dalam mengalihwahanakan teks anekdot kedalam menulis teks puisi.*

The teacher distributes worksheets to students containing anecdotal texts that will be converted into poetry by explaining instructions for converting anecdotal texts into poetry texts.

The sentence above uses social deixis. The social deixis used is the word *guru*. The word *guru* in the data above can be interpreted as someone who teaches at school. The word *guru* is a social deixis in the form of a profession. The function of social deictics here is to indicate authority, position, and hierarchical relationships between teachers as task givers and students as task recipients. Social deictics indicate social relationships or levels of formality between the speaker and the listener. In scientific writing, deictics can appear when quoting statements, job titles, or explaining the writer's relationship with informants or respondents. Social deictic indicates the social relationship, social hierarchy, and social status or level of

formality between the speaker and the listener. (Aliyah et al., 2022) State that the function of social deixis is to differentiate social levels.

### Discourse deixis

In students' scientific writing, discourse deixis is crucial in maintaining textual cohesion and guiding the reader's interpretation of information across different parts of the proposal. The words *ini* and *tersebut* are common markers of discourse deixis that point backward to information already mentioned or to what will be elaborated. For example, when a student writes, *penelitian ini bertujuan untuk...*, the deictic marker *ini* signals that the current sentence is tied to the broader research described in the proposal. This creates a sense of continuity and helps the reader situate the statement within the larger argumentative structure of the text. Similarly, the word *tersebut* often appears after a concept, figure, or phenomenon has been introduced earlier in the text. For instance, *data tersebut akan dianalisis menggunakan metode* indicates that the data being referred to is the same as that mentioned previously, thereby avoiding unnecessary repetition. Students use discourse deixis to economize language while ensuring textual coherence. It also reflects an understanding of how academic writing requires precision in reference-tracking, ensuring the reader is never uncertain about what is being discussed.

The frequent use of *ini* and *tersebut* demonstrates that students recognize the importance of creating logical connections between sentences and sections of their proposals. Beyond their grammatical function, these markers also signal argumentative progression: *ini* often introduces something central or present in focus. In contrast, *tersebut* signals a return to something established earlier, reinforcing the continuity of ideas. By employing these markers, students grasp how discourse deixis contributes to the overall readability and persuasiveness of academic writing. So, discourse deixis in the form of *ini* and *tersebut* is not merely a linguistic feature but a discursive tool that helps students structure their arguments, maintain coherence, and ensure clarity in scientific writing. Its presence in research proposals highlights how deixis functions beyond interpersonal reference; it becomes a key element in the rhetorical organization of academic texts.

Data P1D10      *Pada bagian ini akan membahas beberapa teori yang berhubungan dengan (a) pengertian menulis, (b) tujuan menulis, dan (c) manfaat menulis.*

In this section, we will discuss several theories related to (a) the meaning of writing, (b) the purpose of writing, and (c) the benefits of writing.

The above example demonstrates how discourse deixis is a cohesive device in students' scientific writing. The deictic marker *ini* specifically points to a part of the text—Chapter II, the Theoretical Framework. Its role is not limited to indicating reference but also structuring the flow of discourse. Using *ini*, the writer ensures that the reader can easily follow the shift from a general statement to a more detailed explanation of theories relevant to the research, such as the definition, purpose, and benefits of writing. This shows that deixis is a linguistic marker and an organizational tool that enhances clarity and coherence.

The function of *ini* in this context is highly significant because it bridges the gap between different sections of the proposal. It acts as a pointer emphasizing continuity and focus, ensuring the reader is guided logically through the argument. Without such markers, academic texts risk becoming fragmented or difficult to follow. In other words, *ini* supports the chronological and logical progression of ideas, a hallmark of effective scientific writing.

Furthermore, discourse deictics like *ini* reflect the students' awareness of the reader's perspective. By providing clear signals about what section or idea is being discussed, the writer makes the text more accessible, reducing ambiguity and potential misinterpretation. This demonstrates that deixis plays a dual role in scientific writing: it aids textual cohesion while simultaneously positioning the writer as a competent academic communicator. Another example of discourse deixis, as mentioned in data P2D17, shows how students consistently rely on such markers to maintain the integrity of their arguments across sections. This

consistency underlines the importance of deixis as a discursive strategy in constructing well-structured academic texts.

Data P2D17     *Berdasarkan variabel tersebut, jenis data dari penelitian ini adalah data kuantitatif karena data yang diperoleh dalam bentuk angka-angka. Data tersebut adalah pertama, kemampuan menulis puisi tanpa menggunakan outdoor learning dan dengan menggunakan outdoor learning.*

Based on these variables, the data type of this study is quantitative because the data obtained is in numerical form. The data are, first, the ability to write poetry without using outdoor learning and with using outdoor learning.

The word *tersebut* in the sentence above illustrates how discourse deixis is crucial in maintaining textual cohesion in academic writing. In this context, *tersebut* refers back to quantitative data in the form of students' poetry writing ability, both before and after the implementation of outdoor learning. By employing this deictic marker, the writer explicitly signals to the reader which variable or data set is being discussed, thereby reducing ambiguity and ensuring clarity. Unlike *ini*, which often points to the section under discussion or the immediate next focus, *tersebut* typically refers to information already introduced, functioning as a retrospective marker. The function of *tersebut* is to guide the reader to a previously established point, reinforcing continuity within the discourse. This is particularly important in scientific writing, where accuracy and coherence are essential. For example, when describing findings, the use of *tersebut* helps the reader connect current explanations with earlier data presentations, ensuring that the flow of information is easy to follow. In this sense, *tersebut* acts as a textual anchor that ties new commentary or analysis to what has been previously stated.

Moreover, this contributes to logically sequencing ideas in research proposals or reports. The word signals reference to prior content and helps structure the order in which data or variables are presented, allowing readers to systematically trace the progression of arguments. This demonstrates that discourse deixis does more than just point to text it actively shapes the coherence and organization of the academic narrative. Overall, using *tersebut* in student proposals highlights their awareness of the need for precision in reference. It shows that deixis is integral for linking sections and enhancing readability, making complex information more accessible and logically connected. In scientific writing, words or phrases connect parts of the text. The deixis refers to a clear context, such as using this word (Yuan, 2023).

## Conclusions

Deixis is also found in scientific writing. In scientific writing, deixis is useful for clarifying references in the text, maintaining coherence between sections, and showing the author's involvement. In addition, deixis also facilitates the designation of certain parts, such as tables or figures, so that the flow of discussion becomes clear. The persona deixis in the research proposal is first-person singular and third-person plural deixis. The first person singular deixis found are the words *researcher* and *writer*. The third-person plural deixis found is the word *they*. The place deixis used refers directly to where the author conducted the research. The time deixis used is the date of observation and sampling in the ongoing school year. In addition, there are also other time deixis indications. The social deixis used refers to position and profession. Discourse deixis is found in the form of *this* and *that*. Other elements in the branch of linguistics, with research proposal data sources, can also be researched. For example, researching language errors. Future research is recommended to expand the dataset, include cross-linguistic comparisons, and explore multimodal deixis in digital academic submissions. This study provides valuable insights for improving research writing pedagogy and fostering advanced academic literacy skills by deepening the understanding of how deixis shapes academic discourse.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest concerning the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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