

DOI: 10.24412/2470-1262-2022-2-111-118

УДК(UDC) 808.51

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*For citation: Sayadyan Nadya, (2022).
Deixis in Elizabeth II's Christmas Messages.
Cross-Cultural Studies: Education and Science,
Vol. 7, Issue 2 (2022), pp. 111-118 (in USA)*

Manuscript received 03/05/2022

Accepted for publication: 31/05/2022

The author has read and approved the final manuscript.

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DEIXIS IN ELIZABETH II'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGES

ДЕЙКСИС В РОЖДЕСТВЕНСКИХ ПОСЛАНИЯХ ЕЛИЗАВЕТЫ II

Abstract:

This study aims to examine the types and peculiarities of deixis utilized in the Queen's Christmas messages. The data of the research is collected from the Christmas transcripts from 1952-2021. The basic method of analysis is Critical Discourse Analysis, which is based on Yule's theory and patterns of realization of deixis. The result of the research shows that deixis form an inseparable part in the Queen's Christmas messages transcripts. As for the absence of particular types of deixis like exclusive, "we" comes to ground the fact that the Queen stays loyal to her unique style and register-high style and Queen's English trying to remain the perfect model of a native-speaker in the eyes of her subjects. The wish to serve as an ideal leader not only for the people of the Commonwealth, but for those outside it serves as a basis for the Monarch to stay within the boundaries of face-saving strategies and norms and select a proper register for the sake of her authority. It can be concluded that Her Majesty performs these strategies to provide a face-saving act so as to minimize the negative reaction of the public and focus on the positive side of Christmas.

Keywords: Christmas discourse, high style, Queen's English, middle class audience, transparency, intelligibility, sociocultural competence, chronicle, deixis.

Аннотация:

Целью данного исследования является изучение типов и особенностей дейксиса, используемых в рождественских посланиях королевы. Данные исследования собраны из рождественских стенограмм за 1952-2021 годов. Основным методом анализа является критический анализ дискурса, который основан на теории Юла и схемах реализации

дейксиса. Результат исследования показывает, что дейксис составляет неотъемлемую часть стенограмм рождественских посланий королевы. Что касается отсутствия особых типов дейксиса, таких как эксклюзивное «мы», то это подтверждает тот факт, что королева остается верной своему уникальному стилю и высокому регистру, а королевский английский пытается оставаться в глазах идеальной моделью носителя языка из ее подданных. Желание быть идеальным лидером не только для людей Содружества, но и для тех, кто за его пределами, служит основой для того, чтобы Монарх оставался в рамках стратегий и норм, сохраняющих лицо, и выбрал правильный регистр ради ее авторитета. Можно сделать вывод, что Ее Величество применяет эти стратегии, чтобы сохранить лицо, свести к минимуму негативную реакцию публики и сосредоточиться на позитивной стороне Рождества.

Ключевые слова: рождественский дискурс, высокий стиль, королевский английский, аудитория среднего класса, прозрачность, разборчивость, социокультурная компетентность, хроника, дейксис.

I. Introduction

1.1 The Notion of Deixis

One of important subfields of pragmatics is deixis, which denotes the relationship between the communicative act and the situation in which it takes place.

Deixis is a Greek word meaning pointing via language. Any linguistic form used to perform the function of pointing is called a deictic expression.

The term deixis covers the functions of personal and demonstrative pronouns, tense and a variety of other grammatical and lexical features. In order to emphasize the general features of deixis we would cite the words of Ch. Fillmore who said, "By deixis, is meant the location and identification of persons, objects, processes and activities talked about in relation to the spatial-temporal context created and sustained by the act of utterance and the participation in it of a single speaker and at least one addressee (Lyons 1977:636).

Deixis is an important field studied in pragmatics, semantics and linguistics. Deixis refers to the phenomenon wherein understanding the meaning of certain words and phrases in an utterance requires contextual information. Words or phrases that require contextual information to convey meaning are deictic. (Levinson, 1983:54)

Linguists acknowledge three main types of deixis: personal, temporal and spatial. In addition, Levinson suggests two more types: social and discourse deixis.

1.2 Personal Deixis

The general situation of the utterance is egocentric, i.e. it has a deictic centre in the sense that the speaker acquires the role of an ego and relates everything from his point of view. During the communication the role of the speaker is transferred from one participant to another, so that the deictic centre is constantly changing and has a transferred meaning depending on who is communicating and where and when the communication is taking place.

Person deixis is based on three-part division: first person (I), second person (you) and third person (he, she, it). In many languages the use of the pronouns indicating the speaker, addressee and other(s) is related to the social status, age and factors, which is described as social deixis. For example, the use of the personal pronoun for the second person plural may be used with reference to a single person. Expressions which indicate higher status are called honorifics. Thus, in German, French, Armenian, Russian the second person plural is used in reference to addressees of higher social rank, unfamiliar persons and older persons than the speaker. The English language does not observe this distinction. The American linguist Mencken writes that

English has “an output of pronouns so simple that one of them suffices to address the President of the United States or a child in arms”.

We can also speak of two types of “we”. There is an **exclusive we**, when the addressee is excluded, and **inclusive we** when the speaker and the addressee are included.

In deictic terms the third person (singular and plural) is not a direct participant in a communication act. But sometimes it may be used instead of the second person. It occurs for some ironic or humourous sake (Would His Excellency come and help me?)

The distance associated with third person may be expressed by other pronouns as for example, when rebuking someone for not performing their duty (Somebody did not make the bed in the morning).

1.3 Spatial Deixis

Contemporary English has two deictic adverbs **here** and **there**, showing proximal and distant space respectively. There are some old forms which sound archaic: **yonder** (more distant from the speaker), **hither** (to this place), **thence** (away from that place).

Some verbs of motion such as **come** and **go** express deictic meaning when they are used to show movement toward the speaker (Come to the blackboard!) or away from the speaker (Go to your seat!).

Demonstrative pronouns **this** and **that** and their respective plural forms can also indicate deictic category to show proximal and distant space or place. (This is a book and that is a notebook).

In some contexts, the adverbs *here* and *there* may lose their deictic meaning to some extent. For example, in *Papers were scattered here and there on the floor* the adverbs mean “in various places”.

Sometimes the deictic centre can be shifted. For example, if I am speaking on the telephone I may say “I’ll come there as soon I am free.”. In this case the deictic centre is shifted to the place where the hearer is located.

1.4 Temporal Deixis

The deictic centre of time is the adverb **now** having proximal temporal reference. Words and phrases expressing past and future refer to distal deixis (then, yesterday, last week, tomorrow, next month, etc.).

One form of temporal deixis is the choice of the verb tense. The present tense expresses proximal deixis, the past tense the distant deixis (I am a student now. I was a student then).

Deictic adverbs of time and place also undergo shifting: if the reporting verb is in the past tense the proximal adverbs are replaced by those of distal deixis. But sometimes they remain unchanged when they are relevant for the given time or space situation (She said she will be here in a minute).

1.5 Social Deixis

Social deixis is used to express social relationship between the speaker and the addressee. There are many aspects of language usage that depend on these relations. Obvious examples of such usage are polite pronouns, titles of address, honorifics (Your Honor), vocatives, such as, sir, madam, professor, captain, doctor. Other words which show intimate or friendly relations (dear, buddy, honey, etc.).

There are deictic forms attached to a social role (Your Majesty, Your Excellency). Polite pronouns (for example, Russian **Вы**, Armenian are used **Ձեր** to show deference to an addressee, when the second person plural is used in reference to one person.

1.6 Discourse Deixis

Discourse or textual deixis concerns some portion of the discourse that signals its reference to the surrounding text. For example, the pronoun **this** can be used to refer to a forthcoming portion of the discourse **that** to a preceding portion: (This is what I am going to inform you. That was the most humorous story I have ever read).

There are other ways in which an utterance signals its relation to the surrounding text. For example, in *Naturally, he agreed to the terms* the modal adverb *naturally* indicates that the utterance is logically connected with the previous events or state of things. There are many words and phrases that indicate relationship between an utterance and the prior discourse, such as *in conclusion, summing up, besides, therefore, however, etc.*

To sum up, the interpretation of deictic words depends on the context, the speaker's perception of facts and his intention. **Their pragmatic meaning consists in communicating more than is said.**

CHAPTER II

Analysis of Stylistic Devices Used in Christmas Speeches

❖ *Personal Deixis (316 occurrences):*

- ✓ Today I am doing this to you, who are now my people. (1952)
- ✓ Above all, we must keep alive that courageous spirit of adventure that is the finest quality of youth; and by youth I do not just mean those who are young in years; I mean too all those who are young in heart, no matter how old they may be. (1952)

❖ *Inclusive We (180 occurrences)*

- ✓ Above all, we must keep alive that courageous spirit of adventure that is the finest quality of youth; and by youth I do not just mean those who are young in years. (1952)
- ✓ If we can do these three things with courage, with generosity and with humility, then surely we shall achieve that "Peace on earth, Goodwill toward men" which is the eternal message of Christmas, and the desire of us all. (1952)
- ✓ Even so we need something more. We all need the kind of security that one gets from a happy and united family. (1958)

❖ *Exclusive We*

- ✓ The angels came to frightened shepherds with hope in their voices: 'Fear not', they urged, 'we bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord.' (2011)

The examples of inclusive "we" come to ground the fact that the Queen always does her best to assure her subjects that she cares about them and suffers from any misfortune of theirs. She tries to assure everybody that she is a member of their families. On the contrary, examples of exclusive "we" have not been observed except for the couple of instances quoted from the carols.

❖ *Spatial deixis (64 occurrences)*

Examples with Proximal Space Deixis

- ✓ That spirit still flourishes **in this old country** and in all the younger countries of our Commonwealth. (1952)
- ✓ Christmas on **this side of the equator** comes at the darkest time of the year: but we can look forward hopefully to lengthening days and the returning sun. (1974)

✓ There are many serious and threatening problems **in this country** and in the world but they will never be solved until there is peace in our homes and love in our hearts. (1986)

✓ **In this country** and throughout the Commonwealth there are groups of people who are giving their time generously to make a difference to the lives of others. (2002)

Examples with Archaic Forms

✓ "Though with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. 91957)

Examples with Deictic Adverbs, Phrases

✓ People of goodwill **everywhere** are working to build a world that will be a happier and more peaceful place in which to live. (1966)

✓ Many ideas are being questioned today, but these great truths will continue to shine out as the light of hope in the darkness of intolerance and inhumanity. (1968)

✓ Here are the angels, bringing the glad tidings to the shepherds, who listen attentively. Down here, where baby Jesus lies in the stall, you can see Mary and Joseph, watching over him, quite unmoved, it seems, by the man playing the bagpipes overhead. (1988)

✓ Every year we herald the coming of Christmas by turning on the lights. And light does more than create a festive mood—light brings hope. (2020)

❖ *Temporal deixis (45 occurrences)*

Deictical forms expressed by time adverbials

✓ **Today** I am doing this to you, who are now my people. (1952)

✓ To that new conception of an equal partnership of nations and races I shall give myself heart and soul **every day** of my life. (1953)

✓ I wished to speak of it from New Zealand **this Christmas Day** because we are celebrating the birth of the Prince of Peace, who preached the brotherhood of man. (1953)

✓ My beloved grandfather, King George V, in one of his broadcasts **when I was a little girl**, called upon all his peoples in these words: "Let each of you be ready and proud to give to his country the service of his work, his mind and his heart." (1955)

✓ **Today** is another landmark because television has made it possible for many of you to see me in your homes on Christmas Day. (1957)

✓ **Now** we can all say the world is my neighbour and it is only in serving one another that we can reach for the stars. (1962)

✓ Some speak **today** as though the age of adventure and initiative is past. (1964)

✓ **Every year** the familiar pattern of Christmas unfolds. (1965)

✓ Many ideas are being questioned **today**, but these great truths will continue to shine out as the light of hope in the darkness of intolerance and inhumanity. (1968)

✓ My message **today** is one of encouragement and hope. (1974)

✓ **Today** we are not just nameless people in a crowd. (1975)

✓ My hope **this Christmas** is that the Christian spirit of reconciliation may burn as strongly in our hearts during the coming year. (1977)

✓ **Today** we celebrate the birth of the child who transformed history and gave us a great faith. (1979)

✓ Only **then** can we make the message of the angels come true: 'Peace on earth, goodwill towards men'. (1983)

✓ **This year** I hope we will continue to remember the many innocent victims of violence and intolerance and the suffering of their families. (1987)

✓ **Nowadays** there are all too many causes that press their claims with a loud voice and a strong arm rather than with the language of reason. (1990)

✓ **This Christmas** we can take heart in seeing how, in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, where it has endured years of persecution and hardship, the Christian faith is once again thriving and able to spread its message of unselfishness, compassion and tolerance. (1991)

✓ “Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee **tonight**.” (1993)

✓ **This Christmas**, as we pray for peace at home and abroad - not least in Russia itself - we can also give thanks that such cathedrals and churches will be full and that the great bells, which greeted us, will be ringing out to celebrate our Saviour's birth. (1994)

✓ At the centre of our lives - **today and tomorrow** - must be the message of caring for others, the message at the heart of Christianity and of all the great religions. (1999)

✓ It is a simple message of compassion... and yet as powerful as ever **today**, two thousand years after Christ's birth. (2000)

✓ **Now today**, of course, marks the birth of Jesus Christ. (2007)

✓ One cause for thankfulness **this summer** was marking 70 years since the end of the Second World War. (2015)

✓ **Today**, we celebrate Christmas, which, itself, is sometimes described as a festival of the home. (2017)

✓ Yet **this year** we marked the fiftieth anniversary of the famous Apollo 11 mission. As those historic pictures were beamed back to earth, millions of us sat transfixed to our television screens, as we watched Neil Armstrong taking a small step for man and a giant leap for mankind -- and, indeed, for womankind. (2019)

✓ **This year** we marked another important anniversary: D-Day. (2019)

✓ **This year**, we celebrated International Nurses' Day, on the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. (2020)

✓ **Today**, our front-line services still shine that lamp for us - supported by the amazing achievements of modern science - and we owe them a debt of gratitude. (2020)

✓ This wonderful story of kindness is still as relevant **today**. (2020)

As can be seen from the examples stated above, the Queen uses the adverbial modifiers of time “today” and “tomorrow” rather frequently, because she always spreads the idea of tolerance, eagerness to help each other and constant hope for a better future.

Her Majesty's Christmas messages serve as a chronicle of the past events. The fine example of this is the frequent use of the deictical phrase “this year”.

Deictical forms expressed by special prepositions:

✓ **Each Christmas, at this time**, my beloved father broadcast a message to his people in all parts of the world. (1952)

✓ Particularly **on this day of the family festival** let us remember those who like the Holy Family before them - have been driven from their homes by war or violence. (1956)

✓ **Every year at this time** the whole Christian world celebrates the birth of the founder of our faith. (1961)

✓ **At this time** our concern is particularly for the lonely, the sick and the elderly. (1969)

✓ **In this Christmas** spirit, let us greet all our fellow men and join in this festival of tolerance and companionship. (1972)

✓ **At this time of the year**, Christians celebrate the birth of their Saviour, but no longer in an exclusive way. (1982)

- ✓ Christmas is the celebration of the birth of the founder of the Christian faith, an event which took place almost 2000 years ago; **every year, at this time**, we are asked to look back at that extraordinary story and remind ourselves of the message which inspired Christ's followers then, and which is just as relevant today. (1995)

The Queen always says that Christmas is a time for family reunion. She highlights the importance of this special event as a reason for all the families to gather together and celebrate the birth of our Saviour. She introduces family as an isolated island in the troubled world.

<i>Past</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Future</i>
When I was a little girl (1 occurrence)	Today (11 occurrences)	Tomorrow (1 occurrence)
	Every year (3 occurrences)	
	At this time (5 occurrences)	
	now/ each Christmas/ nowadays /in this Christmas (1 occurrence)	

❖ **Social deixis (5 occurrences)**

- ✓ For all the inhumanity around us, let us be grateful for those who have received him and who go about quietly doing their work and **His** will without thought of reward or recognition. (1993)
- ✓ I never thought it would be possible in my lifetime to join with **the Patriarch of Moscow** and his congregation in a service in that wonderful cathedral in the heart of the Moscow Kremlin. (1994)
- ✓ This Christmas, as we pray for peace at home and abroad - not least in Russia itself - we can also give thanks that such cathedrals and churches will be full and that the great bells, which greeted us, will be ringing out to celebrate our **Saviour's** birth. (1994)
- ✓ If we resolve to be considerate and to help our neighbours; to make friends with people of different races and religions; and, as our **Lord** said, to look to our own faults before we criticise others, we will be keeping faith with those who landed in Normandy and fought so doggedly for their belief in freedom, peace and human decency. (1994)
- ✓ I would like to read you a few lines from 'Pilgrim's Progress', because I am sure we can say with **Mr. Valiant for Truth**, these words. (1957)

Surprisingly enough social deixis and the way it occurs in speech transcripts come to support the assumption that Christmas speeches tend to possess the peculiarities of written discourse more than those of spoken one. The use of capital letters is a vivid example of the latter.

❖ **Discourse deixis (6 occurrences)**

- ✓ Already, **indeed**, in the last half-century it has proved itself the most effective and progressive association of peoples which history has yet seen; and its ideal of brotherhood embraces the whole world. (1953)
- ✓ **On the contrary**, never have the challenges been greater or more urgent. (1964)
- ✓ **Of course**, it is right that people should hold their beliefs and their faiths strongly and sincerely, but perhaps we should also have the humility to accept that, while we each have a right to our own convictions, others have a right to theirs too. (1987)

- ✓ The birth of Jesus **naturally** turns our thoughts to all new-born children and what the future holds for them. (2006)
- ✓ Now today, **of course**, marks the birth of Jesus Christ. (2007)
- ✓ **Of course**, for many, this time of year will be tinged with sadness: some mourning the loss of those dear to them, and others missing friends and family-members distanced for safety, when all they'd really want for Christmas is a simple hug or a squeeze of the hand. (2020)

Having in mind the fact that the Queen's Christmas message, in fact, is a discourse, the presence of discourse deixis is turns to be rather natural in her Christmas speech transcripts.

Conclusion

The Queen's Christmas messages encompass a plenty of deixical expressions, which is natural in the way that deictic words are a crucial element in the context of the utterance.

- As the analysis shows, Her Majesty's Christmas messages are rich in personal deixis. The examples of inclusive "we" come to ground the fact that the Queen always does her best to assure her subjects that she cares about them and suffers from any misfortune of theirs. She tries to assure everybody that she is a member of their families. On the contrary, examples of exclusive "we" have not been observed except for the couple of instances quoted from the carols.
- As religious events connected with the special celebration of Christmas are one of those topics, which reoccur in almost all the speeches delivered annually, quotations from the Bible, carols serve as a source of some archaic forms, which are presented as special deixis.
- Like any other oral speech, Her Majesty's Christmas speeches also encompass discourse deixis, because they are so to say the mixture of written and spoken discourse, as they are officially pre-published and pre-recorded, therefore, tend to possess the peculiarities of written discourse. But, in fact, they are delivered orally, consequently they cannot be absolutely free from the elements and peculiarities of spoken discourse i.e. hedging, discourse deixis, etc.
- Social deixis needs a special attention to be paid as they come to prove the assumption that, in fact, Christmas speeches are keen on possessing the peculiarities of written discourse more than those of the spoken one, i.e. the peculiarities of written discourse have privilege over those of spoken one and the way special deictic words occur in the transcripts is a vivid example of this-they are written with a capital letter.

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Acknowledgments: I thank colleagues for valuable advice in the process of this research and editing the article and I thank the reviewers for their valuable suggestions.

Contribution of the author. The author contributed equally to the present research.