

A PRAGMASTYLISTICS ANALYSIS OF DEIXIS AND IMAGERY IN @SIMPLEMAN DIGITAL HORROR THREADS

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Abstract: This study examines the role of deixis and imagery in creating a horror atmosphere and preserving narrative coherence in digital horror stories uploaded on the @SimpleMan Twitter account in 2024. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the research focuses on three purposively selected horror threads containing significant pragmatic and stylistic features. Deixis is analyzed through Yule's (2022) framework, while imagery is identified based on Nurgiyantoro's (2019) classification. The data were gathered through observation and documentation by identifying utterances containing person, spatial, and temporal deixis alongside visual, auditory, sensory/olfactory, and motion imagery. The results indicate that personal deixis, especially third-person references, appear most frequently with 30 occurrences, reflecting the narrator's preference for a third-person viewpoint to sustain plot continuity and emotional distance. Spatial deixis occurs 7 times and mainly directs readers toward unsettling settings, whereas temporal deixis appears only once to highlight an important event. Regarding imagery, visual imagery dominates with 23 occurrences, enabling vivid mental representation of scenes and characters. Auditory imagery appears 9 times and strengthens the frightening atmosphere through sounds such as whispers, footsteps, and laughter. Sensory and olfactory imagery occur 8 times, intensifying immersion by stimulating touch and smell sensations, while motion imagery appears once to reinforce suspenseful actions. The findings demonstrate that deixis and imagery work together to shape perspective, stimulate sensory responses, and maintain tension within the limited format of Twitter threads, thereby enriching contemporary digital storytelling discourse.

Keywords: *deixis, horror stories, imagery, stylistics, Twitter thread*

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, social media has evolved into a major platform for communication, information exchange, and creative expression. Through social networking platforms, individuals not only consume information but also actively construct interactions and share experiences within global communities. One of the most widely used platforms for this purpose is Twitter, currently known as X, which enables users to distribute opinions, news, and narratives in concise yet interactive forms. According to Zahra (2022), Twitter has been utilized for various purposes, ranging from sharing personal experiences to producing complex fictional stories. The emergence of the thread feature further expands the platform's narrative potential by allowing users to post interconnected tweets sequentially. This feature has become increasingly popular in digital storytelling because it enables writers to deliver long narratives while maintaining audience engagement within the platform's limited format. Among the most popular digital narratives on Twitter are horror threads, particularly those

published by the @SimpleMan account, which gained widespread attention due to their suspenseful atmosphere, immersive storytelling style, and cultural settings closely related to Indonesian beliefs and mysticism. The popularity of these stories reflects how social media has transformed from a medium of brief interaction into a space for innovative literary and narrative practices.

The effectiveness of horror storytelling on Twitter is closely connected to the strategic use of linguistic and stylistic elements that sustain narrative cohesion and emotional tension. In pragmatic studies, deixis refers to linguistic expressions whose meanings depend on contextual references such as person, place, and time. The use of personal, spatial, and temporal deixis allows writers to direct readers' perspectives, establish situational context, and maintain continuity across fragmented narratives. Within Twitter threads, deixis becomes particularly significant because readers must follow the storyline gradually through interconnected tweets. In addition to pragmatic elements, stylistics also plays a crucial role in shaping readers' experiences. Stylistics examines how language choices and stylistic devices are intentionally employed to create aesthetic and emotional effects. One of the most prominent stylistic devices in horror narratives is imagery, which enables readers to visualize scenes, perceive sounds, sense movements, and experience sensory impressions that intensify suspense and fear. Through the integration of deixis and imagery, horror narratives on Twitter are able to construct immersive storytelling experiences.

Previous studies have explored the application of pragmatic and stylistic approaches in various narrative contexts; however, limited attention has been given to their integration within digital horror narratives on social media. Umami Salamah et al. (2021) investigated deixis from a pragma-stylistic perspective in literary texts and demonstrated that deictic expressions contribute not only to contextual reference but also to the construction of narrative meaning and readers' interpretation. Similarly, Zulhamsyah (2017) analyzed the stylistic features of Suzzanna's utterances in the "*Sundelbolong*" movie and found that diction, sentence structure, and figurative language played an essential role in creating a compelling horror atmosphere. More recently, Yudono and Wahono (2022) examined imagery in the digital horror fiction "*Rumah Tumbal Janin*" and reported that visual and auditory imagery were the dominant stylistic devices used to evoke fear and strengthen readers' sensory experience.

Although these studies have made valuable contributions to the fields of pragmatics and stylistics, they primarily examined pragmatic features and stylistic devices separately or focused on conventional literary works and films. Research investigating the interaction between deixis and stylistic elements within digital horror narratives remains limited, particularly in the context of X (formerly Twitter) threads, which possess distinctive narrative characteristics through sequential storytelling and interactive digital communication. Consequently, the role of deictic expressions in supporting stylistic effects and constructing readers' immersion in digital horror narratives has not been sufficiently explored. To address this gap, the present study investigates the use of deixis and imagery in three horror stories published in 2024 on the @SimpleMan X account by adopting a pragma-stylistic approach. Specifically, it analyzes person, spatial, and temporal deixis alongside visual, auditory, sensory/olfactory, and motion imagery to examine how these linguistic features interact in constructing horror atmosphere, maintaining narrative cohesion, and enhancing readers' immersion in digital storytelling. By integrating pragmatic and stylistic perspectives, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of meaning construction in digital horror narratives and expands the application of pragma-stylistic analysis to contemporary social media discourse.

METHOD

This section outlines the scientific procedures employed to generate valid conclusions, including the research design, data sources, data collection techniques, and data analysis methods. This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design, which is rooted in the post-positivist paradigm as proposed by (Sugiyono, 2019). This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to examine the use of deixis and imagery in digital horror threads posted on the @SimpleMan X account. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on interpreting linguistic phenomena within their contextual use rather than measuring numerical data. The analysis was conducted using a pragma-stylistic approach by combining Yule's (2022) theory of deixis and Nurgiyantoro's (2019) theory of imagery to reveal how both linguistic features contribute to the construction of horror narratives.

The data consisted of utterances containing deictic expressions and imagery extracted from selected horror threads published on the @SimpleMan X account. The threads were purposively selected because they represent popular Indonesian digital horror narratives characterized by rich contextual references and vivid descriptive language, making them suitable for pragma-stylistic analysis. Data were collected through documentation and non-participant observation. The researcher repeatedly read each selected thread, documented all relevant tweets, identified utterances containing deictic expressions and imagery, and organized the data into a classification table based on the analytical categories of the study.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (2014), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the reduction stage, utterances containing deixis and imagery were selected from the collected data. The selected data were then classified according to Yule's (2022) categories of deixis and Nurgiyantoro's (2019) categories of imagery. Finally, the findings were interpreted using a pragma-stylistic perspective to explain how deictic expressions and imagery interact in constructing narrative perspective and creating horror effects within the digital stories.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study analyzes three horror story threads from the Twitter account @SimpleMan, with a particular focus on the types of deixis and imagery employed in the narratives. The analysis of deixis encompasses three primary categories, namely persona deixis, place deixis, and time deixis. In addition, the study examines several types of imagery, including visual, auditory, olfactory and sensory, as well as motion imagery. Through this analytical framework, the research aims to identify how these linguistic and stylistic elements function in constructing meaning, enhancing narrative atmosphere, and supporting the overall storytelling structure within the selected horror threads.

The bar chart illustrates the frequency distribution of four types of imagery—visual, auditive, olfactory and sensory, and motion—in relation to three categories of deixis, namely person, spatial, and temporal, as identified in the analyzed horror story threads. Overall, person deixis emerges as the most dominant type and is most frequently associated with visual imagery. In contrast, temporal deixis appears as the least frequent category, occurring only once and exclusively in conjunction with motion imagery.

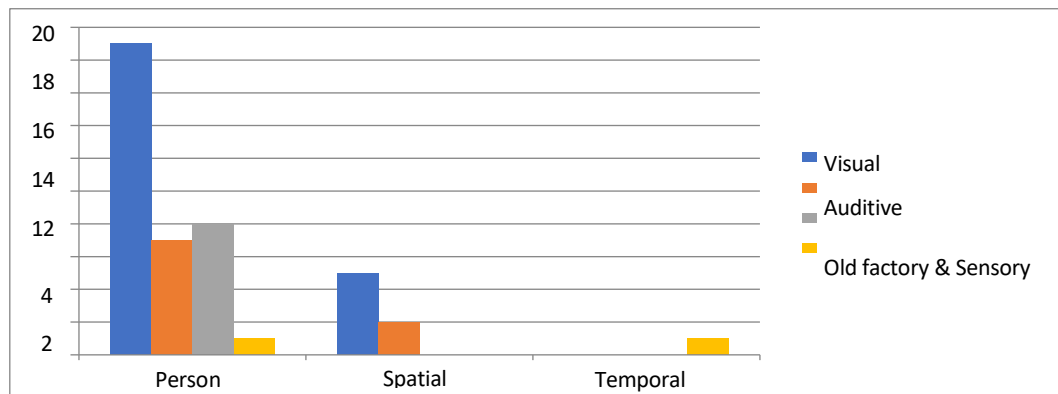


Figure 1 Frequency of Deixis and Imagery Types

The figure shows the relationship between deixis types and imagery types in the narratives. It indicates which types of imagery commonly occur with person, spatial, and temporal deixis.

Person deixis has the strongest association with imagery, with visual imagery occurring most frequently at 19 occurrences. This shows that references to people are often accompanied by visual descriptions of characters, objects, or situations. Person deixis is also associated with sensory and olfactory imagery 8 times and auditory imagery 7 times. These combinations help readers imagine what characters see, hear, smell, or physically experience. Motion imagery occurs only once with person deixis.

Spatial deixis is less frequent than person deixis. It occurs with visual imagery 5 times and auditory imagery 2 times. This suggests that references to places or locations are mainly supported by visual descriptions, helping readers form a clearer image of the setting. The auditory imagery also helps emphasize sounds associated with particular places. Meanwhile, temporal deixis has the lowest frequency in the figure. It appears to be associated with sensory and olfactory imagery twice. Although it occurs less frequently, this combination can still contribute to the atmosphere by connecting particular moments with physical or sensory experiences.

Overall, the findings suggest that person deixis, especially when combined with visual imagery, plays the most important role in constructing a vivid horror atmosphere. Spatial deixis mainly helps establish the setting, while temporal deixis has a more limited role. Together, deixis and imagery help readers visualize the characters and settings and experience the narrative more immersively.

Types of Deixis

Deixis is generally classified into three main types, namely person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. In this study, all three types of deixis were identified in the horror threads published by @SimpleMan on the X platform, with each type appearing across the analyzed stories. This finding indicates that deixis plays a consistent role in structuring the narratives and guiding readers' interpretation of context within the stories. According to (Yule, 2022), person deixis is further categorized into three subtypes: first person, second person, and third person. However, the findings of this study reveal that only third person deixis is present in the selected data. This suggests that the narratives predominantly employ a third-person perspective, which may contribute to the storytelling style by creating a certain narrative distance while still maintaining coherence and clarity in the depiction of characters and events.

Table 1 Frequency of Deixis

No	Deixis	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Person	30	78,9 %
2.	Temporal	1	2,6 %
3.	Spatial	7	18,4 %
Total		38	100 %

This table presents the frequency of the three types of deixis identified in the data: person, temporal, and spatial deixis. A total of 38 instances of deixis were found. Person deixis is the most frequent type, with 30 occurrences (78.9%). This shows that references to participants or characters are dominant in the narratives. The frequent use of person deixis indicates that the narratives often focus on who is involved in the events, such as the speaker, listener, or other characters. Next, spatial deixis occurs 7 times (18.4%). It refers to locations or places, such as *here*, *there*, *this place*, or *that place*. Although less frequent than person deixis, spatial deixis helps establish where the events take place and supports the construction of the narrative setting. Last, temporal deixis appears only once (2.6%), making it the least frequent type. This suggests that explicit references to time are limited in the analyzed data.

Overall, person deixis clearly dominates the data, accounting for almost four-fifths of all deixis occurrences. This suggests that the narratives are primarily constructed around characters and their experiences, while spatial and temporal deixis play supporting roles in establishing the setting and time of event

Person Deixis

The use of person deixis is determined by the participants involved in the interaction, including the speaker, the addressee, and other referenced individuals. It occurs within utterances and reflects the relational dynamics among participants in a specific communicative context. Through this function, person deixis not only identifies referents but also encodes the roles and relationships that structure the interaction within the discourse.

Excerpt 1

*“Dia melihat ada sesuatu yang tampak aneh, namun entah benar atau tidak kalau diperhatikan dengan seksama dibelakang foto keluarga itu tampak ada sesuatu seperti siluet figur seorang wanita yang tampak melotot kearah kamera, rambut **wanita itu** panjang menutupi sebagian wajahnya,”*

(“He noticed something strange, but whether it was real or not, if you looked closely behind the family photo, there appeared to be something like the silhouette of a woman staring at the camera, her long hair covering part of her face.”)

In this excerpt, the personal deixis “*dia*” (he) and the phrase “*wanita itu*” (that woman) function not only as referential markers but also as devices that position readers within Mr. Idris's perspective. By shifting the deictic center from the narrator to the character, the narrative limits readers' access to events through his perception, creating uncertainty about whether the figure truly exists. This perspective is simultaneously reinforced by the visual imagery describing the woman's glaring eyes and long hair covering part of her face. Rather than functioning independently, the deictic expressions establish the reader's narrative viewpoint, while the visual imagery fills that viewpoint with vivid sensory details. Consequently, readers experience the frightening figure from the same limited perspective as

Mr. Idris, making the encounter appear increasingly tangible despite its ambiguous existence within the story. This pattern demonstrates that personal deixis and visual imagery work together to construct the narrative perspective and strengthen readers' perception of the horror scene.

Temporal Deixis

Temporal deixis refers to linguistic forms or expressions that indicate a specific time frame relative to the moment an utterance is produced. It functions to situate events or actions within a temporal context, reflecting when they occur in relation to the time of speaking. Through this mechanism, temporal deixis enables speakers to anchor discourse in time, thereby facilitating the interpretation of sequences and timing of events within communication.

Excerpt 2

*“Apa mungkin Lidya sudah kembali ke kamarnya, entahlah namun yang jelas **saat ini** Bu Diyah sedang melangkah buru-buru untuk cepat kembali ke kamarnya, sebelum sesaat dari arah belakang terdengar sayup-sayup suara anak-kecil sedang bersiul, Bu Diyah berhenti sejenak,”*

(“Perhaps Lidya had already returned to her room, but what was clear was that Mrs. Diyah was hurrying back to her room when, suddenly, she heard the faint sound of a child whistling from behind her. Mrs. Diyah stopped for a moment.”)

In this excerpt, temporal deixis is marked by the expression “*saat ini*” (right now), which anchors the events to a specific moment within the narrative and directs readers' attention to the character's immediate experience. Although the nighttime setting is not explicitly mentioned, it can be inferred from the surrounding narrative context, positioning readers within the same temporal frame as Mrs. Diyah. This temporal perspective is reinforced by the kinesthetic imagery “*melangkah buru-buru*” (hurrying back), which conveys her anxious movement, and the auditory imagery “*sayup-sayup suara anak-kecil sedang bersiul*” (the faint sound of a child whistling), which unexpectedly interrupts the scene. Rather than functioning independently, temporal deixis establishes the precise moment in which the events unfold, while the motion and auditory imagery enrich that moment with sensory details that allow readers to experience the character's uneasiness more directly. The combination of these linguistic features demonstrates how temporal reference and imagery work together to shape readers' perception of the unfolding scene and strengthen the narrative progression.

Spatial Deixis

Spatial deixis refers to the linguistic process of identifying or indicating location based on the speaker's perspective or positional context within an interaction. It functions to situate entities or events in space relative to the speaker, thereby enabling the interpretation of spatial relationships within discourse.

Excerpt 3

*“Malam itu rupanya lebih sunyi dari biasanya, tak terdengar suara binatang malam apa pun di sekitar rumah ini. hanya suara langkah kaki Bu Diyah yang terdengar menggema **di sepanjang lorong** sebelum tiba-tiba Bu Diyah merasakan sesuatu seperti ada yang membuntutinya, “tap tap tap tap tap tap” Bu Diyah yg merasakan itu sempat berhenti”*

("That night was apparently quieter than usual; not a single sound from nocturnal animals could be heard around the house. Only the sound of Mrs. Diyah's footsteps echoed along the hallway—until suddenly, Mrs. Diyah felt as if something was following her. Tap tap tap tap tap tap. Feeling it, Mrs. Diyah paused for a moment.")

In this excerpt, the phrase "*di sepanjang Lorong*" (along the hallway) functions as spatial deixis by locating the events within a specific setting inside the house and positioning readers alongside Mrs. Diyah as she walks through the corridor. This spatial reference is immediately reinforced by the auditory imagery of her footsteps "*terdengar menggema*" (echoing) and the repeated sound "tap tap tap tap tap", which transforms the physical setting into a vivid sensory experience. Rather than functioning separately, the spatial deixis establishes where the events occur, while the auditory imagery allows readers to perceive the emptiness and silence of the hallway through sound. As Mrs. Diyah begins to sense an unseen presence following her, the interaction between these linguistic features guides readers to experience the scene from within the same spatial perspective, making the corridor feel increasingly confined and unsettling. This pattern demonstrates that spatial deixis and auditory imagery work together to shape readers' perception of the narrative space and heighten awareness of the unseen presence surrounding the character.

Types of Imagery

The findings reveal that all four types of imagery in stylistics, namely auditory imagery, visual imagery, sensory and olfactory imagery, and motion imagery, are present in the selected horror stories.

Table 2 Frequency of Imagery

No.	Imagery	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Auditive	9	22 %
2.	Visual	23	56,1 %
3.	Sensory & olfactory	8	19,5 %
4.	Motion	1	2,4 %
Total		41	

Table 2 shows the distribution of 41 instances of imagery found in the narratives. Four types of imagery were identified: auditory, visual, sensory and olfactory, and motion imagery. Visual imagery is the most frequent type, occurring 23 times or 56.1% of the total data. This suggests that the narratives rely heavily on visual descriptions to present settings, objects, characters, and situations. These descriptions help readers create clear mental images and strengthen the horror atmosphere.

Auditory imagery appears 9 times or 22.0%. It describes sounds such as footsteps, breathing, or other noises that can create suspense and tension. Sensory and olfactory imagery occurs 8 times or 19.5%, representing physical sensations and smells. Although less frequent, this type helps make the narrative more immersive by engaging the readers' senses. Meanwhile, motion imagery occurs only once (2.4%), making it the least frequent type. Despite its limited occurrence, it can still contribute to the narrative by describing movement and increasing tension in particular scenes.

Overall, the findings show that visual imagery is dominant, followed by auditory, sensory and olfactory, and motion imagery. This distribution suggests that the narratives primarily use visual descriptions to construct the setting and atmosphere, while the other types of imagery support the creation of suspense and a more immersive horror experience.

Auditive Imagery

Auditory imagery refers to imagery associated with the sense of hearing and is used to evoke sound impressions within the narrative. In the selected horror stories, this type of imagery contributes significantly to the construction of suspense and horror atmosphere.

Excerpt 4

*“Malam itu rupanya lebih sunyi dari biasanya, tak terdengar suara binatang malam apa pun di sekitar rumah ini. Hanya suara langkah kaki Bu Diah yang **terdengar menggema** di sepanjang lorong, sebelum tiba-tiba Bu Diah merasakan sesuatu seperti ada yang membuntutinya: “tap tap tap tap tap tap”. Bu Diah yang merasakan itu sempat berhenti.”*

(“That night was quieter than usual, with no sounds of nocturnal animals around the house. Only the sound of Mrs. Diah’s footsteps echoed along the hallway before she suddenly felt something following her, ‘tap tap tap tap tap tap.’ Mrs. Diah, who felt this, stopped for a moment.”)

The excerpt illustrates auditory imagery through the description of footsteps echoing along a silent hallway. The expression “*terdengar menggema*” (echoed) enables readers to perceive the sound within the quiet setting established by the spatial reference “*di sepanjang Lorong*” (along the hallway) and the temporal reference “*malam itu*” (that night). Rather than functioning independently, these deictic expressions provide the contextual framework in which the auditory imagery becomes meaningful. The repeated sound “tap tap tap tap tap tap” further amplifies readers’ awareness of an unseen presence, transforming an ordinary sound into a disturbing auditory experience. As a result, the interaction between deictic references and auditory imagery guides readers to experience the scene from the same spatial and temporal perspective as the character, making the unfolding events feel more immediate and psychologically unsettling.

Visual Imagery

Visual imagery refers to imagery associated with objects or scenes perceived through the sense of sight. In horror narratives, this type of imagery functions to create vivid mental representations that intensify fear and strengthen readers’ emotional engagement.

Excerpt 5

*“Lampu petromax yang dibawa oleh Bu Diah seketika jatuh dan menghantam lantai hingga pecah, membuat lorong itu mendadak menjadi gelap total. Namun, Bu Diah tidak akan pernah lupa saat-saat terakhir sebelum cahaya petromax lenyap. Ia sempat melihatnya: wujud anak-anak kecil yang mungkin seumurannya dengan Yusuf. **Mereka tengah berdiri sembari memeluk kepalanya yang buntung. Seluruh kepala anak-anak itu menyeringai tepat ke arahnya.**”*

(“The Petromax lamp carried by Mrs. Diah suddenly fell and hit the floor, shattering into pieces, plunging the corridor into complete darkness. However, Mrs. Diah would never forget the final moments before the Petromax light faded away; she had caught a glimpse of it, the forms of small children, perhaps around Yusuf’s age, standing while holding their severed heads. All the children were grinning directly at her.”)

The excerpt employs visual imagery through vivid descriptions that enable readers to imagine the horrifying appearance of the children holding their severed heads and grinning directly at Mrs. Diyah. These disturbing visual details become more striking because they are presented within the spatial reference “*lorong itu*” (that corridor), which confines the events to a specific location and positions readers within the same setting as the character. Rather than functioning independently, the spatial deixis provides the narrative space in which the visual imagery unfolds, allowing readers to perceive the terrifying scene from Mrs. Diyah's immediate surroundings. The contrast between the corridor suddenly falling into complete darkness and the final glimpse of the children's grotesque appearance further intensifies the visual impact of the scene. This interaction demonstrates that spatial deixis and visual imagery work together to construct a concrete narrative space while directing readers' attention toward the frightening details revealed within it.

Sensory & Olfactory Imagery

Sensory and olfactory imagery refers to imagery that represents tactile and smell-related experiences in a concrete form, allowing readers to perceive such sensations through imagination. In horror narratives, this type of imagery is often used to intensify discomfort and strengthen the atmospheric effect of fear.

Excerpt 6

“Sering kali dia menyoal hidungnya sendiri, terkadang sampai menutupnya rapat-rapat, hanya untuk membuang bebauan yang entah dari mana datangnya. Kadif seperti mencium sesuatu yang seperti aroma tulang babi yang direbus.”

(“He often pinches his nose, sometimes closing it tightly just to get rid of the smell that comes from nowhere. Kadif seems to smell something like the aroma of boiled pork bones.”)

The excerpt illustrates olfactory imagery through the description of the unusual smell “*aroma tulang babi yang direbus*” (the aroma of boiled pork bones), which evokes an immediate sense of discomfort and revulsion. This sensory experience is presented through the third-person deixis “*dia*” (he), referring to Kadif, which positions readers to observe the disturbing event from the character's perspective. Rather than functioning independently, the deictic reference establishes whose sensory experience is being narrated, while the olfactory imagery allows readers to imagine the unpleasant smell perceived by the character. The repeated actions of pinching and tightly covering his nose further reinforce the intensity of the odor and highlight Kadif's physical reaction to it. Together, these linguistic features guide readers to perceive the abnormal smell through the character's experience, making the sensory disturbance a central element of the unfolding narrative.

Motion Imagery

Motion imagery is a form of description that evokes a sense of movement or physical activity, allowing readers to visualize dynamic actions within a narrative and experience them as if they are unfolding in real time.

Excerpt 7

“Apa mungkin Lidya sudah kembali ke kamarnya, entahlah namun yang jelas saat ini Bu Diyah sedang melangkah buru-buru untuk cepat kembali ke kamarnya, sebelum sesaat dari arah belakang terdengar sayup-sayup suara anak-kecil sedang bersiul, Bu Diyah berhenti

sejenak,”

(“Perhaps Lidya had already returned to her room, but what was clear was that Mrs. Diyah was hurrying back to her room when, suddenly, she heard the faint sound of a child whistling from behind her. Mrs. Diyah stopped for a moment.”)

The excerpt demonstrates motion imagery through the phrase “*melangkah buru-buru*” (hurrying), which vividly depicts Mrs. Diyah's rapid movement as she attempts to return to her room. This movement is framed by the temporal deixis “*saat ini*” (right now), which places readers in the character's immediate situation, and the spatial reference “*dari arah belakang*” (from behind), which indicates the direction from which the faint whistling sound emerges. Rather than functioning independently, these deictic expressions establish the temporal and spatial context in which the motion imagery unfolds. The abrupt interruption of Mrs. Diyah's hurried steps after hearing the child's whistle highlights the sudden shift from movement to stillness, emphasizing her immediate reaction to the unseen presence. Together, the deictic references and motion imagery guide readers through the character's experience, allowing them to perceive both her physical movement and the unexpected disruption that alters the course of the scene.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the use of deixis and imagery in @SimpleMan's digital horror narratives functions not merely as linguistic features but as strategic devices in constructing an intense horror atmosphere. This supports Yule's (2022) view that deixis, particularly person and spatial deixis, organizes readers' referential orientation toward characters, space, and time. In the context of horror, deixis extends beyond simple reference, as it shifts perceptual focus and positions readers within a constrained and uncertain narrative perspective. The predominance of third-person deixis suggests that @SimpleMan deliberately adopts an observer-oriented narrative perspective. Rather than directly involving readers as participants, the stories encourage readers to witness frightening events through the characters' perceptions, creating uncertainty regarding the reality of supernatural occurrences.

Furthermore, the findings indicate the dominance of visual imagery, followed by auditory, olfactory-sensory, and kinesthetic imagery. As defined by (Nurgiyantoro, 2019), imagery serves as a stylistic device that activates sensory imagination, enabling readers not only to understand but also to experience the narrative. In the context of digital horror, visual imagery such as “the silhouette of a long-haired woman” and auditory imagery like “the sound of children's laughter” work in conjunction with deixis to enhance narrative immersion. Similar to Yudono and Wahono (2022), this study found that visual imagery is the dominant stylistic feature in digital horror narratives. However, while their study primarily emphasized the aesthetic function of imagery, the present study demonstrates that visual imagery becomes more effective when integrated with deictic expressions that orient readers toward the narrative perspective.

The most significant finding of this study is that deixis and imagery operate as complementary rather than independent linguistic resources. Deictic expressions establish readers' orientation by identifying who experiences the events, where they occur, and when they unfold, whereas imagery transforms this orientation into vivid sensory experiences through visual, auditory, olfactory, and kinesthetic descriptions. This pragma-stylistic interaction enables readers not only to follow the narrative but also to experience the horror from within the characters' perspective. This aligns with (Praningrum and Wati, 2021), who found that reader engagement increases when texts employ stylistic strategies that directly

immerse readers in the narrative experience. In this study, deixis functions as an anchoring mechanism that directs readers to narrative coordinates (who, where, and when), while imagery fills this framework with concrete and unsettling sensory details.

In addition, these findings resonate with (Mutadi and Respati, 2019), who demonstrated that shifts in person, time, and space contribute to narrative dynamics. Unlike previous studies that investigated deixis or imagery independently, the present study demonstrates that both linguistic features function interdependently in digital horror narratives. This integrated perspective represents the primary contribution of the study to pragma-stylistic research on digital literature.

These findings imply that digital horror writers rely not only on frightening descriptions but also on pragmatic orientation to shape readers' experience. The integration of deictic references and imagery therefore provides a useful analytical framework for examining reader immersion in other forms of digital literature.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and data analysis of deixis and imagery in horror story threads on the Twitter platform, it can be concluded that three types of deixis are employed, namely person, spatial, and temporal deixis. Among these, person deixis is the most dominant, reflecting its close relationship with the narrative characteristics of digital horror stories, which are predominantly constructed from an external narrator's perspective. The use of third-person deixis enables the narrator to present an external and seemingly objective viewpoint, creating a distance between the narrator and the characters. This distancing effect generates an observational perspective, positioning readers as if they are "peeking" into the events, thereby intensifying emotional tension. Meanwhile, spatial deixis functions to establish the setting of events, and temporal deixis reinforces the temporal context within the narrative.

In terms of stylistic elements, four types of imagery are identified: visual, auditory, sensory/olfactory, and motion imagery. Visual imagery is the most dominant, as it effectively conveys horror elements in a concrete and vivid manner, allowing readers to visualize scenes intensely despite the limitations of short-form digital text. This type of imagery enhances the reader's mental representation, making the narrative feel more immediate and emotionally engaging, often evoking fear, surprise, or discomfort. Auditory imagery contributes to building tension through sound representation, while sensory and olfactory imagery, although less frequent, produce strong emotional effects by stimulating physical imagination. Motion imagery, despite appearing only once, plays a significant role in indicating shifts in situations and reinforcing narrative tension.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that deixis and imagery operate synergistically in shaping the horror atmosphere and creating an immersive reading experience. Deixis provides the structural framework by determining the participants, spatial setting, and temporal context of the narrative, whereas imagery enriches this framework by conveying sensory and emotional experiences. This interaction enables horror narratives on social media platforms, despite their structural constraints, to deliver evocative and intense storytelling capable of eliciting strong emotional responses from readers. This study distinguishes itself from previous research through its focus on both object and medium. While earlier studies have primarily examined deixis and imagery in novels, films, or news discourse, this research specifically investigates horror threads on Twitter, a platform characterized by concise yet impactful narrative forms. Furthermore, this study contributes to the field by integrating deixis and stylistic analysis to demonstrate their combined role in constructing immersive

experiences within digital storytelling contexts.

This study is expected to provide a foundation for future research that seeks to compare the use of deixis and stylistic elements across different narrative genres. Further studies are recommended to expand the scope of analysis by incorporating additional types of deixis, such as discourse deixis and social deixis, which were not addressed in the present research. Such extensions would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of deixis within diverse communicative contexts. In addition, this study demonstrates how linguistic and stylistic approaches can be effectively applied to contemporary narrative texts in digital media. It highlights the relevance of social media as a legitimate object of literary and linguistic inquiry, reflecting the evolving nature of discourse in the modern era. Therefore, future researchers and students are encouraged to explore digital platforms as rich sources of data for analyzing emerging narrative forms and language use.

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