REGULATIONS ON USE

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3. DEIXIS AND DEMONSTRATIVES
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Please note: this does not replace the Wilkins & Pederson questionnaire for table-top space (Field Manual 1996). It supplements it with additional thoughts, queries and 'scenes'.

This document has two main parts: a set of reminders about theoretical distinctions (Sections 1 and 2) and then a set of more practical queries and elicitation suggestions for field use which explores a subset of those distinctions (Section 3). There is thus some redundancy between especially section 2 and 3.

1. Delimiting the focal set of linguistic expressions:

Although the traditional Latinate categories, demonstrative pronouns (*this*) vs. adjectives (*this one*) vs. place adverbs (*here*) vs. presentatives (*voilà*), etc., may be useful as a starting point, they may also be misleading. The focus of interest ought to be delimited by the union of semantic/functional and morphosyntactic/formal criteria:

(a) **Semantic**: those forms which have a spatial deictic function – i.e. which serve to pick out a referent or place by using a spatial contrast involving the present location of speech act participants; some of these forms will typically be associated with pointing gestures.

(b) **Morphosyntactic**: those morphosyntactic sets of forms which include the forms with the semantic functions of spatial deixis. Such sets may include forms which are not themselves spatially deictic, but whose members together make clear the underlying semantic parameters for the whole set. The sets should be delimited by collocational constraints.

In general, one is interested in the whole relevant linguistic ecology of expressions, and thus the interactions with anaphora, definiteness and given/new constraints, and other more-specialized deictic expressions like those requiring gestural demonstrations (*thus*), presentations (*voila*), etc. Note that 'hither/thither' type directionals may perform many of the same functions, and need to be taken into account. Watch out for discontinuous morphemes (as in *cette table la*) and possible internal morphological complexity (Latin *is-te* 'it-you'). Note that where demonstratives are pronominal they are likely to form part of the third person pronominal paradigm, including question words/quantifers (Tamil: *i-tu* 'this', *a-tu* 'that', *e-tu* 'which?'; *i-nke*, 'here', *a-nke*, 'there', *e-nke*, 'where?)'. Also, demonstratives are definite (indeed definite articles may be no more than spatially neutral demonstratives), and need to be considered against other markers of definiteness.

The uses of demonstratives will be constrained by syntactic factors, e.g. equational sentence constructions may not permit 'what's this?' constructions, preferring

'what's here?' (as in Finnish), while demonstratives in some languages may head relative clauses, unlike in English (*this who came*).

Various collocations with other deictics (e.g. 'come'/'go' verbs) need to be checked out – e.g. can one say "I am coming that (vs. this) way" or "This ran thither"?

For more hints, see Wilkins/Pederson questionnaire, and Anderson & Keenan 'Deixis' in Shopen (ed) *Language Typology & Syntactic Description III*, pp. 277-95, Fillmore 1997 *Lectures on Deixis*, Hanks 1990, *Referential Practice* (or précis in Gumperz & Levinson 1996).

2.0 The semantic background:

The Wilkins/Pederson questionnaire explores the kinds of contrast available in 'table-top' space, with one, two or three objects at various distances and in various planes. But it does not fully probe other possibilities. This questionnaire tries to push a bit beyond this.

Demonstratives are multi-functional, and never restricted only to spatial uses – to understand when one has a spatial use one needs to understand other uses. Traditionally, the deictic fields include space/perception, time, person, discourse, each with their own parameters – demonstratives typically cross these fields (*this cup/this Saturday/this man/he said this*), and serve many other functions too, from anaphora to affect-marking. Even within the spatial uses, the spatial/perceptual parameters are hard to fully elucidate. Thus, there are many parameters that need to be explored. Some of these are listed immediately below as reminders; then in the following section a subset of these are further explored in practical elicitation tasks.

A. Details of the Spatial Parameters

(1)   **Addressee-based terms vs- Speaker/Distance based systems:**
        Some analyses (e.g. Anderson & Keenan) treat 'this-near-addressee' as just an additional term – e.g. a way to recruit a middle-distance demonstrative. But in fact such a term may herald an entirely different kind of system: a participant-based system vs. a speaker/distance-based system. Feature systems (despite their limitations) may help to clarify this. Consider e.g. the following (Samal) kind of system (+ = *in designated person's 'space'*):

	Speaker	Addressee	Present Other	Absent Other
'this$_1$'	+	-	-	-
'this$_2$'	-	+	-	-
'that$_1$'	-	-	+	-
' that$_2$'	-	-	-	+

More commonly we have a core:

	Speaker	Addressee	
'this$_1$'	+	-	
'this$_2$'	-	+	
'this$_3$'	+	+	'equally near us both, i.e. mid-distance'
' that$_1$'	-	-	'equally far from us both, far distant'

Note that such systems can further subdivide each cell by introducing additional parameters; e.g. Cup'ik (T. Woodbury, pc.) divides both 'this$_1$' and 'this$_2$' into three distinct demonstratives according to referent properties (restricted, extended, obscured), and the 'that$_1$' series into 24 items by adding absolute direction parameters.

So if you have a close-to-addressee term you need to see whether the whole system patterns as above, OR whether it just adds one term to a basic Speaker-based Distance system like the following:

	Close to S	Far from S
'this'	+	-
'that'	0	0 (0 = unmarked, medial by pragmatic contrast)
'yonder'	-	+

to which if we add a near-addressee term, adding a 'that$_2$', we get a system like the following:

	Close to S	Close to A	Far from S
'this'	+	0	-
'that$_2$'	-	+	-
'that'	0	0	0
'yonder'	-	0	+

Such a system might evolve from the Arrernte-type system below by re-analysis of the medial term:

	Prox to S	Distal to S	Far from S
'this'	+	-	-
'medial'	-	0	-
'that'	-	+	0
'yonder'	-	-	+

Playing around with such feature systems may be useful heuristically.

(2) Priveleged position of proximal deictics like 'this' and 'here':

The unmarked slot (0) in the feature systems above is based on the following idea. Recollect the Wilkins & Hill (1995) analysis of *come/go*: 'come' may be deictically marked, 'go' unmarked, and so 'go' picks up the complementary interpretations of 'come' by pragmatic opposition, thus explaining its greater flexibility of usage. In the same way, 'this' and 'here' may be marked for deictic proximity, 'that' and 'there' unmarked: note that in English, anaphoric reference is with (unmarked) *that* and *there*, not *this* and *here*, and that *this* and *that* can refer to objects at the same physical distance.

(3) Questions about 'Distance', perceptual proximity and evidentiality

    (a)   **Scaling:** To what extent are there absolute scale restrictions, so that e.g. a ' yonder' term cannot be employed in table-top space? Or if one object A is more distant than B, but both are within reaching space, can one use a distal term at all?

    If there are no absolute scale restrictions, and the whole set can be rescaled to any relevant scale of contrasts, are the divisions of space equal? Are they influenced by 'framing' (e.g. the edge of a table vs. same arrangement on the ground)?

    (b)   **Calculating distance:** If distance is a relevant parameter (and note that in e.g. Speaker- vs Addressee-based systems it may well not be), on what basis do relative contrasts in distance appear to be calculated?

    - Are the contrasts based on referent locations, or the regions in which referents lie?

    - Does the size of referents make a difference (so one can say 'this tree' when it is 3 metres distant, but not 'this ant'?), etc.

    (c)   **Distance and perceptual accessability:**

    'Distance' may be a bad gloss for what is involved. How space is perceptually partitioned may be influenced by many perceptual/motor factors, only a few of which are likely to be relevant to a particular language. For example, a S- vs. A- based system of the kind above may make primary reference to an action-basis, e.g. the arm-reach of participants, while an S-based system may be visually-based. If visually-based, the laws of perspective predict that there should be an increasing scale of distance in a 'this', 'that', 'yonder' partitioning of space.

    A perception-based system may not privilege vision – it may make any perceptually salient referent (e.g. a loud noise) a 'proximal' one (we say "what was that?" but they may say "what was this?"). Explore reference to auditory proximal/distal stimuli.

    (d)   **Evidentiality:**

    Note that perceptual accessability can conflate with evidentiality – e.g. a term may gloss 'that (perceptually indistinct, speaker uncertain about its existence)'. Some analysts (e.g. Hanks) think that evidentiality may be the crucial underlying basis for demonstrative systems: proximity might then

amount to 'mutually evident', distality to 'less evident', etc., and the
occurence of visibility/invisibility distinctions in demonstratives better
explained.

(e)   Attentional focus:

An alternative basis for demonstrative distinctions may be attentional focus –
'this' might mean 'in our focus', 'that' might gloss 'not centrally in focus', etc.
If so, in such a system one would expect the same object to be referred to with
proximal and distal forms in succession.

(f)   Common ground:

A further alternative basis would be the degree to which a referent is
established in the shared background. Thus "We must pay this bill" (said
without copresence of the bill) may presuppose that we are both thinking
about it, whereas "We must pay that bill" may not.

(4) Social and interactional factors

These may cloud what is otherwise a relatively simple system. Consider e.g.:

(a)   *Taking the other's point of view*:

One source of analytical confusion may be that some systems may more
freely allow (or even, for politeness reasons, require) taking the addressee's
perspective: thus if S is facing Addressee, S may be able use 'this' for the
object further from S but nearer to A.
Check this by elicitation facing your addressee.
Note that in narrative the deictic center may of course be shifted to the
location of the protagonists at that time in the narrative.

(b)   *Politeness factors*:

The demonstrative pronouns are normally understood to be 3rd Person, but
not usually used to refer to persons (though note English "This is Mr
Lawson" or in Taba (Bowden p.c.) one politely indicates bystander by
saying 'this'). In Finnish, the 'near-addressee' term otherwise means
'yonder invisible', perhaps for politeness reasons (Bowerman p.c.).

(c)   *'Segmentary opposition'*:

What is 'here' vs. 'there' is a matter of what is being contrasted (cf. 'Here
on earth...but there on Mars...'). But social segementations of the
environment (e.g. walls, plots of land) may constrain such usages (see
Hanks 1990 op. cit. for elaboration), and provide the essential interpretive
background.

(d)   *Shifted Reference*:

In English I can say pointing to a bill "This company always gets it
wrong", or pointing to a book "I once met this author". It's not clear how
cross-linguistically general this kind of sloppy reference is.

(5) Accompanying gesture

It's important to check out whether all the demonstratives occur with, or
require, accompanying gesture (see also chapter 4. Ethnography of pointing
questionnaire). Note that:

- Strictly obligatory gestures are likely to occur with only some deictics (e.g. presentatives or demonstration terms like 'thus').

- Gestures may be distinct for proximal vs. distal forms.

- It may be inappropriate to gesture with deictics coding invisibility, or especially epistemic uncertainty.

- Demonstratives which distinguish type of referent (as in Eskimo distinctions between Extended vs. Restricted entities) may require distinct handshapes.

- Reference to body-parts may offer two options: one can wiggle the body part, e.g. uttering 'this finger' (not 'that finger'), or one may point to the body-part, e.g. uttering 'that finger'.

- Pointing may make accessible, and thus 'proximal', what would otherwise be distal: one may then be able to say "See this distant church?". Such usages may require other indicators of attentional focus (e.g. head-craning).

The conditions under which gestures become obligatory are worth investigating: "I hurt this finger" requires a wiggle or a point, but "I like this city" doesn't. Is the explanation as simple as the following: demonstratives are definite, therefore there must be a unique enitity denoted by the referring expression – if the expression alone fails to denote (e.g. I have more than one finger), then a gesture must occur?? (For plural referents, e.g. *these children*, there must be a uniquely identifiable set, rather than unique individual of course.) Note that we don't usually use a demonstrative when a definite article alone would do the job – e.g. we prefer *The Parthenon* to *This Parthenon*: the demonstrative indicates that pragmatic information, including gesture, is necessary to get unique reference.

Try to test what happens when gesture is suppressed or non-communicative. Try to collect two versions of the same 'space game' (Farm Animals, Picture-Object matching is the best) in a screened condition (where Director and Matcher cannot see one another) and a non-screened condition (where Director and Matcher can see one another, but matcher cannot see Director's prototype display).

The underlying function of gesture with demonstratives may be to assert or establish that the referent is mutually accessible, or within an attentional focus of some sort. These may also be general functions of demonstratives.

B.   Non-spatial Contrasts:

Many non-spatial contrasts may be relevant to the choice between terms, especially where there is spatial neutralization. In order to isolate spatial distinctions, it is essential to be able to set aside non-spatial uses. As mentioned, demonstratives typically play a role in non-spatial deictic domains, but they also have additional uses:

1. **Roles in other deictic domains:**
   (a) Temporal domain:
   Demonstratives interact with calendrical units in complex ways, so that *this year* refers to the (calendrical or 365-day) year including speaking time, while *this*

morning glosses as 'the morning of the diurnal unit including speaking time', thus invoking the next higher calendrical unit (see Fillmore 1997). Note that systems may differ in how they map spatial proximity onto time: some may equate proximal 'this' with Non-Past (so covering present and future), others may equate it with the Present, so requiring a distal 'that' for future.

An important question is whether there are conventions of gesturing accompanying temporal demonstratives (e.g. in Tzeltal one seems to point uphill for the future).

(b) Discourse deixis and anaphora

Demonstratives (universally?) are used anaphorically. This confuses the analysis in discourse, since very often the referent may have been referred to before, and it can be unclear as to whether anaphoric or spatial usage is intended. Note that anaphoric and spatial uses can both be operative simultaneously, as in *I have my own mug: that one.*

Typically only part of the demonstrative paradigm has anaphoric uses: an unmarked item like English *that* may be reserved for **anaphora**, with a marked item like English *this* for **cataphora**. Sometimes there is a demonstrative that is *only* used anaphorically (as in Tzeltal).

Note that technically there is a distinction between discourse deixis and anaphora: the first involves metalinguistic reference to parts of the text iself (as in "This is my imitation of a seagull: SQWARK"), while anaphora involves reference to extra-textual entities through hook-up with a prior referring expression. Languages may e.g. use demonstratives for anaphora, and 'thus'-type deictics for text deixis.

Demonstratives are definite, but occasionally they may be used indefinitely to introduce new references as in "Yesterday, this man came up to me and said..."

See Himmelmann (1996) 'Demonstratives in narrative' in B. Fox (ed.) *Studies in Anaphora.*

2. Non-deictic functions:

(a) Sequence and Contrast:

Where objects are equidistant a proximal/distal opposition may be re-used to indicate contrast (as in "I like this one but not that one"). In English, the first reference must then be proximal, the second may be distal (e.g. "Take these pills before you take those ones", not "Take those ones before you take these ones" for equidistant bottles).

(b) Affect: The distal demonstrative can code negative affect, as in "Get that dog out of here".

(c) Grammaticalized uses: Demonstratives seem to be a prime source for grammaticalization of relative clause markers (always unmarked distal forms?), definite articles, etc.

(d) Non-space-deictic centres: Some Papuan languages are said to ground the use of 'here'/'there' not in the speaker's location, but in the speaker's home-base regardless of his present location (cf. English uses of *come* as in "You must come

and see us when we get back"). Such uses would still be deictic, but not spatially-deictic, as they don't make use of the place of speaking as ground-zero.

Section 3.0 Practical suggestions for Field Elicitation

Note: "this" and "that" are used as glosses for whatever the local contrasts are. Where there are 3-way contrasts, or more, try those out too.

1. Spatial neutralization:

(a) Can one say of one's own body parts: "This hand hurts me, but that one is OK"?
Or must one say "This hand hurts me, but this (other) one is OK"?
Can one use a distal form here ("That tooth is bothering me, that one is Ok")?
Test whether imputed motion makes a difference:
"The rash spread from here to here" vs. "here to there"

(b) Place two cups equidistant at 50 cm apart and 50 cm before the speaker:

○   ○

●
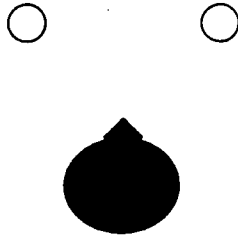
Can both be designated "this cup" (proximal to S)?
.... "that cup" (distal to S, or to S & A)?
If one starts with one term ("this cup") must one then use another term for the second cup?
Can one reverse the sequence, starting "that cup"and following with "this cup"?
Is there a left/right preference (as in Tamil) for "this cup" (or v.v.) to the left?

2. Order and Contrast:

The Questions in 1 should establish whether Contrast and Order are possible
functions for the demonstratives where there is no distance contrast. Now try to see
whether these can *over-rule* a spatial contrast:
Place two cups (say red and blue) one behind the other, in the direction away from the
speaker. Suppose the blue one is further from the speaker.

○ Blue

○ Red

●

Can one say:

"I like this blue cup, not that red one"?

"I don't like that red one, I like this blue one"?

"First give me this blue cup, then that red one"?

3. **Anaphora:**

Some forms in the demonstrative paradigm:

(a) are likely to be priveleged as the ones normally used for anaphoric (cf. English *that*) or cataphoric usage (cf. *this*) – this may indicate unmarked/marked status in the spatial array too;

(b) may be restricted to anaphoric or cataphoric usages *only*, while still having spatial demonstrative uses. Explore this in frames like the following:

"John thought this cup is Bill's. But __ (this?) is not Bill's, that one is."

4. **Perceptual space:**

(a) Auditory applications:

- If there is a loud noise outside the door, vs. outside the village, is there a contrast "What was this?/that?" (or where this construction is unavailable: "This/that is just John/the bus coming")

- If there is an apparent visible/invisible distinction, how do the forms now get used in an auditory context (e.g. do they now mean 'distinct/ 'indistinct', or have evidential meanings)?

- Is there a different demonstrative used to distinguish between asking about the object that is the source of the noise, vs. asking about the noise itself: cf. "What is this (music)?" vs. "What is that (bird)?"

– Can one gesture while asking "What is that noise?"

Note that *proximal/visible* may correlate with 'given directly by perception' vs. 'by hearsay'etc. Can one say "John can hear this/that distant boat (or bus or bird), but I can't"?

(b) Visual vs. Motor factors in distance distinctions:

Explore whether the table-top space distinctions look like they follow the laws of perspective, so that 'proximal' hasa radius less than half the radius of

'medial', etc. See if you can get your informant to offer you 'prototype', best examples of use, by asking her/him to place objects on a table such that they can best be described as 'this', 'medial', 'that'.

Check whether something that is outside the Spkr's reach can still be proximal; ditto for something outside Addressee's reach (in A vs. S based systems test the A-proximal form, for S-based systems test the near distal vs. far distal forms).

(c)   **The handling of perceptually peripheral or hidden areas:**
How the areas to the left/right and behind the spaker are handled may be especially revealing of perceptual vs. motor divisions of space. Some of the obvious tests for objects behind or to the side of the speaker are given in the Wilkins/Pederson questionnaire. Does it make a difference whether the objects are all in reach or not?

Also try placing a cloth over objects in the visual field – does this make a difference or not?

(d)   **Distance, Clustering and Framing:**
The original Wilkins/Pederson questionnaire had a number of shortcomings. First, when three (or more) objects were presented in a line, the spacing intervals between the objects were kept the same: i.e., there were no cases where two objects in the line were closer to one another and the third objects was located away at a larger interval. It turns out such "clustering" can signficantly affect the choice of demonstrative, such that it appears to be regions rather than objects over which "distance" is calculated in some languages. This should be manipulated in follow-up elicitations. Second, it was not emphasised sufficiantly that one should consider how the space in which the objects are framed actually "frames" the objects. It now appears that the size of a table and the axis of the table used, not to mention the shape of a table, can all have an influence on demonstrative choices. So the general question for investigation is, how does size and shape of the framing space affect the application of demonstratives? [Wilkins has piloted a task which examines clustering and framing issues, see him for details.]

5. Beyond Table-Top Space:

(a) Hunting scenario:
(This has potential confounds, but in conjunction with (b) may be useful.)

Set up five trees (or rocks, etc.), as follows, explaining that Spkr (toy man) can't see

trees 2 and 4 because they are behind 1:

3

1 2 4

□ O
Spkr
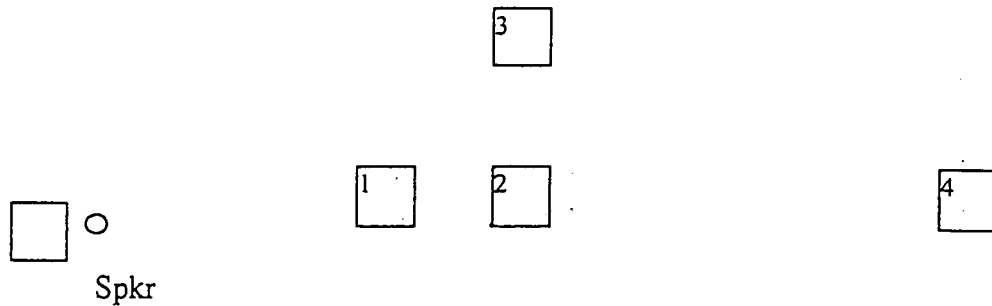
Now suggest that the speaker S is going to try to shoot/slingshot birds in the trees, aided by a spotter friend the addressee A (represented by another toy man). Place A first next to S, then at tree 1, tree 2, tree 3, and so on. The spotter A should tell S "There's a bird in this/that tree here/there" for each tree from each location.

Such a set-up explores the following dimensions: Spkr-centered vs. Addressee-centered, Distance (3 degrees), Visibility. If your system is known to have further dimensions, try adding appropriate elements into the scenario, but keep the core the same for comparative purposes.

(b) Try and find **real-life instantiations** of something like the scenario in (a): for example, a village scene, with a set of houses, or a stand of coconut palms.
   (i) You can ask how you would shout accross to a remote addressee, as above: "Is John in that house?/up that tree?" etc.
   (ii) You can ask your informant next to you to play the following game: I know that child X is in one of those houses: you guess which one – he should point 'That one' etc., until he exhausts the possibilities.

(c) In the field situation, there are no doubt locations which grade into the far distance – for example, this village, that one on the hill, and one over the hill. Or: this island, that one on the horizon, that one over the horizon. Check demonstrative usage for these locations. Check whether the usage is the same whether one is talking about going (outwards) vs. coming (homewards) directions of travel.

6. Natural data:

It is well known that natural uses of demonstratives are much wider than those predicted by distinctions within the spatial deictic field. This is because demonstratives are typically multi-valent (e.g. across the deictic fields), and within the spatial field are neutralized in various ways by other functions. Thus the interpretation of natural data will always be underdetermined by the circumstances of use, and your interpretation will rely crucially on what you have been able to pin down in elicitation as possible functions of each term.

(A) Locally-situated narrative:
We have a good collection of videoed narratives set in local settings, including a Dutch reference collection of narratives about local history (e.g. war stories) from Millingen. These provide plenty of demonstrative examples. So if you don't have such data, please collect some. Two tacks recommended:
(a) Ask for historical narratives about the local scene;
(b) Ask how the place has changed in the informants' lifetimes.
Note that the addressee should be included on the video, preferably sitting at c. 90 degrees from the speaker. [A clearer description of this task is provided in Chapter 5 of this manual]

(B) Discussion of objects in a large array
Asli Özyurek's data suggests another useful genre: discussion/assessment of a collection of objects. For example one could put a set of traditional artefacts on the ground and ask *who* made them, *what* are they for, *how* are they made, how do they differ in *quality*, which would cost the most, etc.

You will get better data if the discussion is of real local interest, e.g. there is rivalry in craft manufacture, or the objects are of intense local interest (John Bowden used novel plastic fish lures among Taba fishermen; SCL has asked about denominations of local shell money and other valuables).

(Some fieldworkers have had success with asking about the parts of a house, or how one builds a house, but others have found that locally self-evident procedures only elicit brief and inexplicit descriptions.)