

Preliminary notes on the Merge position of deictic, anaphoric, distal and proximal demonstratives*

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Abstract: In many languages the same demonstrative forms can be used either deictically (to point to some entity present in the speech act situation) or anaphorically (to refer back to some entity already mentioned in the previous discourse). In other languages deictic and anaphoric demonstratives are expressed by different forms, and in a subset of the latter group of languages the deictic and anaphoric demonstratives can co-occur, in a certain order. The two thus appear to be merged in different positions of the nominal extended projection, with deictic demonstratives arguably merged higher than anaphoric demonstratives, as is more clearly evident in certain languages. I submit that this is true of all languages even if most do not provide any overt indication of a different Merge positions. Some languages also appear to provide evidence that distal and proximal demonstratives are merged in distinct positions of the nominal extended projection.

Keywords: demonstratives, nominal extended projection, deixis, anaphora

I. Introduction.

Demonstratives, whether used deictically or anaphorically¹, are usually taken to be merged in the same position of the extended nominal projection. While most languages do not provide evidence to the contrary, there are some that do show a distinct Merge position for their deictic and anaphoric demonstratives (pointing to a higher Merge position for the deictic ones). Rather than taking this to be a parametric difference among languages, I submit that all languages merge their deictic and anaphoric demonstratives in two distinct positions. This will simply not be visible in those languages where the two cannot co-occur and/or where nothing raises between the position occupied by anaphoric demonstratives and that occupied by deictic ones.

*To Ian, to whom *nihil alienum est* in things linguistic, with fond memories and admiration.

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¹ Anaphoric demonstratives, together with 'cataphoric' and 'recognitional' demonstratives (the latter used for entities known from shared knowledge - Diessel 1999), are often termed 'endophoric', and are opposed to 'exophoric' (deictic) demonstratives, though anaphoric demonstratives may also show distal/proximal/etc. deictic distinctions. For simplicity I will keep here to the traditional terms 'anaphoric' and 'deictic'.

II. Languages where deictic and anaphoric demonstratives are formally distinct and can co-occur.

I consider first those languages where the two types of demonstratives are represented by different forms² and overtly display their distinct Merge position by occurring together.

One such language is **Ngiti**, a Central Sudanic Nilo-Saharan language. Demonstrative, numeral and adjectival nominal modifiers precede the head noun (Kutsch Lojenga 1994, Chapter 9) and deictic demonstratives are formally distinct from anaphoric ones (cf. §§9.5.1 and 9.5.2). See (1)a.-b.³

(1)a. yà dza (Kutsch Lojenga 1994:373)

Dem_{deictic} house

‘this house’

b. ndi dza (Kutsch Lojenga 1994:375)

Dem_{anaphoric} house

‘that house (mentioned before)’

As apparent from (2), the two types of demonstratives can co-occur with the deictic demonstratives preceding the anaphoric ones:⁴

(2) yà ndi dza (Kutsch Lojenga 1994:376)

Dem_{deictic} Dem_{anaphoric} house

‘this house (mentioned before)’

² Diessel (1999:§5.5) states that anaphoric demonstratives are morphologically more complex than deictic demonstratives, citing a number of languages where the former are formed by adding a morpheme to the latter. Dixon (2003:76f) however, documents the opposite case, where the deictic demonstrative is formed by adding a morpheme to the anaphoric one. For the internal complexity of demonstratives, composed of a determiner and an adjectival deictic adjective, see Leu (2007, 2015:§2.5) (pace Kleiber 1986).

³ The question arises whether the “anaphoric” demonstrative of Ngiti and of the other languages mentioned below are distinct from determiners. In Loniu at least (see fn. 5 below) the post-nominal anaphoric and deictic demonstratives are distinct from the determiners, which are pre-nominal. In the other languages, which lack determiners, this is harder to tell, though the relevant grammatical descriptions seem not to assimilate the anaphoric demonstratives to determiners. I thank Richard Kayne for raising this general question. Possibly some of the anaphoric demonstratives discussed below correspond to the “neutral” demonstratives of Kayne (2014,§11).

⁴ If nominal modifiers can move only as part of a constituent containing the N (Cinque 2005), the possibility that the deictic demonstrative of (2) is merged below the anaphoric one and is raised above it is not viable.

As pre-nominal modifiers (as opposed to post-nominal ones) reflect the order of Merge, with elements to the left higher than those to the right (Kayne 1994, Cinque 2009, 2016), this language provides direct evidence that deictic demonstratives are merged higher than anaphoric demonstratives.

Another language showing the distinct Merge position of deictic and anaphoric demonstratives, with the former arguably higher than the latter, is the Papuan (Yam) language **Komnzo**. Komnzo in addition to deictic demonstratives has one demonstrative, *ane*, which “has no spatial reference, but it is used for anaphoric reference. It marks a referent which has been established in the preceding context. [...] It may combine with the proximal and the medial demonstrative identifier as can be seen in example [(3)]” (Döhler 2016,128f) in the order N > anaphoric demonstrative > deictic demonstrative:

(3) *fintäth* **ane** **z=iyé** ... *yem=anme* *tagon*. (Döhler 2016:129)
prop.n dem_{anaphoric} prox=3sg.masc:npst.be cassowary=poss.nsg food
‘This *fintath* (*Semecarpus* sp) here is the cassowaries’ food.’

The relative order of the two is with the anaphoric demonstrative closer to the noun than the deictic demonstrative, as was the case in Ngiti. The linear order however is the reverse, arguably due to the successive raising of the NP, with pied piping of the *whose-picture* type, first above the lower anaphoric and then above the higher deictic demonstrative dragging along the lower anaphoric one, with the result of reversing the order entirely (cf. Cinque 2005, 2016).

Identical to the Komnzo situation is that of the Alor Pantar (Papuan) language **Kaere**, where the anaphoric demonstrative *erang* can combine with the deictic demonstratives *ga* ‘this’ or *gu* ‘that’ (Klamer 2014:§4) (see (4)), and that of the Oceanic language **Loniu** (Hamel 1994:§4.3.7), where the anaphoric demonstrative *nropo* can co-occur with the deictic demonstrative *itiyen* ‘that (relatively distant from speaker)’ (see (5)), in both cases with the order N Dem_{anaphoric} Dem_{deictic}⁵:

⁵ “[T]he two together are equivalent to English ‘aforementioned’” (Hamel 1994:99). In addition to the anaphoric and deictic demonstratives in post-nominal position, Loniu appears to also have determiners, in pre-nominal position. “The order of constituents in the noun phrase is, generally, as shown in the formula in [(i)] below.

(i) (Det) Noun (Possessor NP) (Associated NP) (Descriptive Adjunct) (Quantifier) (Prepositional Phrase) (Relative Clause) (Demonstrative)” (Hamel 1994,89). “The personal pronouns which function as determiner are the same as those used as nominals for subject, object, and so on. Although they may co-occur with inanimate nouns, the majority of NP’s in the data which contain personal pronoun determiners are animate.[...] These personal pronoun determiners, however, seem to be present only in NPs which are definite.” (Hamel 1994:90). See the example in (ii):

(4) kunang masak utug **erang gu** (Klamer 2014:120)
 child male three **that.ANAPH that**
 ‘those three boys (mentioned earlier)’

(5) .. hetow law a iy **nropo itiyen** ... (Hamel 1994:99)
 3PCL relative POSS 3SG **DEM_{anaphoric} DEM_{deictic}**
 ‘..to those aforementioned relatives of his ...’

The Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, languages **Gayo** (Eades 2005) and **Nias** (Brown 2005) and the Niger-Congo languages **Samba Leko** (Fabre 2004) and **Kistalinga** (Paluku 1998) instead show post-nominally the same order shown pre-nominally by Ngiti: NP > deictic demonstrative > anaphoric demonstrative:

(6)a. Serule-**ni-ne** (Gayo – Eades 2005:225)

Serule-**this-earlier**

‘This Serule’ [Serule-this-MENTIONEDearlier] (the aforementioned Serule)

b. Ba si’ulu wa e nama-da **andre nomema'e!**? (Nias - Brown 2005:579)⁶

CNJ noble D.PTCL D.PTCL father:MUT-1pi.POSS **Dem_{deictic} Dem_{anaphoric}**

‘And you mean that ancestor you’ve been talking about was a noble!?’

c. bā?–ā **yê dō** (Samba Leko - Fabre 2004:173)

fer **Dem_{deictic} Dem_{anaphoric}**

‘that iron we talked about’ [our translation]

(ii) iy pihin iy huti kawa (p.90)

3sg woman 3sg take basket

‘The woman takes the basket’

⁶ The anaphoric demonstrative *nomema* contains *mema* ‘earlier’. Adjectives and numerals follow the two demonstratives in that order (Brown 2001:412). Another language with an anaphoric demonstrative meaning ‘earlier/before’ is Madurese:

(i) Reng lake’ gella’ entar ka Sorbaja (Davies 2010:192f)

person male before go to Surabaja

‘That man (we were talking about just now) went to Surabaja’

d. omumelo rú-nì-lá (Kistalinga - Paluku 1998:203)
throat pp-**Dem**_{deictic} **Dem**_{anaphoric} (gorge celui-ci – en question)
‘this aforementioned throat’

My interpretation of the orders in (6) is that they are derived by raising the NP (or constituents containing the NP) above the two demonstratives in one fell swoop (without pied-piping) (cf. Cinque 2005,2016).⁷

III. Languages where deictic and anaphoric demonstratives are formally distinct, occupy different positions, but cannot co-occur.

In the Trans-New Guinea Alor-Pantar language **Abui** (Kratochvíl 2007:§3.5.2, §4.4 and Kratochvíl 2011) “[t]he deictic demonstratives precede the head noun while the anaphoric demonstratives follow it” (Kratochvíl 2007:156). See the overall structure of Abui determiner phrases in (7) (Kratochvíl 2007:156), and the illustrative examples of the order of the two types of demonstratives in (8):

(7) (DEM_{deictic}) (NPOSS PROPOSS-) N (NMOD) (ADJ/V) (QUANT) (DEM_{anaphoric})

(8)a. **oro** fala (Kratochvíl 2007:111)

Dem_{deictic} house

‘that house over there (far from us)’

b. fala **to** (Kratochvíl 2007:114)

house **Dem**_{anaphoric}

‘the house (you just talked about)’

If deictic demonstratives are merged higher than anaphoric demonstratives, the Abui DP internal order **Dem**_{deictic} N A Num **Dem**_{anaphoric} can be analysed as involving successive raisings of the NP with pied piping of the *whose-picture* type above the lower anaphoric demonstrative but not above the higher deictic demonstrative.⁸

⁷ For evidence that constituents appearing to the right of N/V/etc. cannot be taken to be merged there, but come to be there as a function of the N(P)/V(P)/etc. moving above them, see Cinque (2009).

⁸ The situation in **Topoke** (Bantu, C53) is only slightly different, as “the anaphoric demonstrative always follows the noun, whereas other demonstratives can either precede or follow.” (Van de Velde 2005:§2.4). This suggests that

In the Dogon language **Jamsay**, where the deictic demonstrative follows the noun (cf. (9)a.)⁹ and the anaphoric one precedes it (cf. (9)b.)¹⁰, within the overall order <Dem_{anaphoric}> N A Num <Dem_{deictic}>, the derivation must be different, involving raising of the constituent [Dem_{anaphoric} N A Num] (itself obtained via raising of the NP around A and Num) above the higher deictic demonstrative (cf. Cinque 2005,2016).

(9)a. èjù **núŋò** (Heath 2008:161)

field.L **Dem_{deictic}**

‘this/that field’

b. **kò** kùmàndâw kùⁿ bé (Heath 2008:161)

Dem_{anaphoric} Major Def Pl

‘those (aforementioned) Majors’

IV. Languages where deictic and anaphoric demonstratives are formally identical, occupy different positions, but cannot co-occur.

The same pattern is instantiated by a number of other languages, modulo the formal identity of the deictic and the anaphoric demonstratives.

Migdalski (2001) notes that “demonstratives may either precede or follow a noun in **Polish**. The latter option is stylistically marked and is used only when the noun followed by a demonstrative has been previously mentioned, [...] as in [(10)]” (p.142):¹¹

anaphoric demonstratives are obligatorily crossed over by the NP while deictic demonstratives are crossed over by the NP only optionally. Only slightly different is the case of **Rama** (Chibchan – Craig Grinevald 1988:§6.6), where the deictic demonstrative is only pre-nominal while the anaphoric one “meaning ‘previously mentioned’ [...] is found either pre- or post-nominally.” (p.15).

⁹ “*núŋò* is deictic, and may be accompanied by pointing or a similar gesture.” (Heath 2008:162).

¹⁰ “Unlike deictic [noun + *núŋò*], the phrase [*kò* + noun] is discourse anaphoric...” (Heath 2008:164).

¹¹ The Polish situation recalls the semantic difference between pre- and post-nominal demonstratives in Spanish and Modern Greek (modulo the obligatory presence of a determiner in pre-nominal position when the demonstrative is post-nominal). As observed by Bernstein (1997) and Taboada (2007) for Spanish and Panagiotidis (2000) for Modern Greek a post-nominal demonstrative is only interpreted anaphorically (unless a demonstrative reinforcer is added), while a pre-nominal one can be interpreted deictically. But see Brugè (2002, note 27; and Brugè 2000:§2.5.3 and p.167note 51) for discussion of a number of complexities and of differences among the Spanish distal and proximal demonstratives.

(10)a. **Ta** książka

‘**this** book’

b. Książka **ta** (acceptable if the book has been mentioned previously)

book **this**

Here too it is possible to analyse the pattern in Dem_{deictic} NP Dem_{anaphoric} as involving raising of the NP (with possible pied piping) above the lower anaphoric demonstrative but not above the higher deictic one.¹²

The opposite pattern Dem_{anaphoric} NP Dem_{deictic} is instantiated by Thimbukushu (Bantu language of Namibia - Fisch 1998), where “[u]sually demonstratives [...] occur as postpositive determiners after the nouns to which they refer” (p.50). See (11):

(11) [Mugenda **oyu**] na haka

guest **this** I like

‘I like this guest’

“If the demonstrative preposes the noun, it carries the meaning of “this aforementioned”, “this one mentioned” (p.50). See (12):¹³

(12) [**oyu** ngombe] (Fisch 1998:50)

the aforementioned cow

‘this cow’

¹² In Italian, where no evidence exists of a different Merge position of deictic and anaphoric demonstratives, there is still a difference between the two in the possibility for the former but not for the latter, in its neuter usage (presumably with a silent head noun THING - cf. Kayne and Pollock 2009), to take a locative ‘reinforcer’. See (i):

(i)a. Questo (*qui) non lo so

This (here) not it I.know

‘This I don’t know’

b. Quello (*lì) me lo sono chiesto anch’io

That (there) to.me it am asked even I

‘That I wondered myself’

¹³ Romanian appears similar. Post-nominal demonstratives have a deictic interpretation while pre-nominal ones, which belong to a non-colloquial style (cf. Brugè 2002, note 32), have an anaphoric interpretation (Giusti 2005:31; Nicolae 2013:299f).

This pattern can be taken to involve no movement of the NP above the lower anaphoric demonstrative (or possibly movement of the NP in the *picture-of-whom* mode, which has the effect of not changing the relative order of the two elements), and raising of the NP (or of larger constituents containing the NP) above the higher deictic demonstrative.

V. Languages where distal and proximal demonstratives occupy different positions.

In **Nawdm** (Niger-Congo, Gur - Albro 1998:§2.4) “there are two basic demonstratives [...], corresponding to “this” and “that” in English. Their distribution within the DP is different. The demonstrative corresponding to “this” appears at the end of the DP [...], and the demonstrative corresponding to “that” appears at the beginning of the DP.” See (13):

(13)a. **làʔà** bà hòʔə té tèreʔété: (Albro 1998:6)

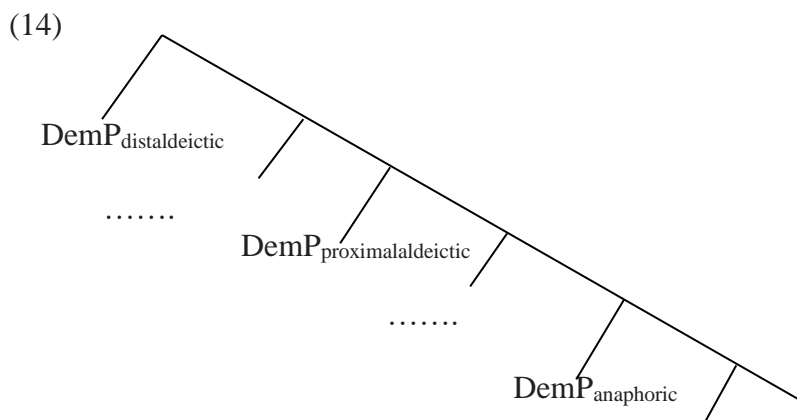
That dog black cl-pl cl-two-cl
 ‘those two black (big) dogs’

b. bà hòʔə té tèreʔètèn **ténté** (Albro 1998:6)

dog black cl-pl cl-two-cl **cl-this-cl**
 ‘these two black (big) dogs’

According to Apronti (1971:66ff), the same distribution (Dem_{that} N A Num and N A Num Dem_{this}) is found in the Kwa language **Dangme**.

It is thus tempting to assume that the distal and proximal deictic demonstratives occupy two distinct Merge positions, with distal demonstratives higher than proximal demonstratives, as shown in (14):



The order in Nawdm and Dangme would then involve raising of the NP with pied piping of the *whose-picture* type around A, Num and the lower proximal demonstrative, but not above the higher distal one, which then appears pre-nominally.

As in the case of Jamsay above a different derivation must be involved to yield the order Dem_{proximal} (Num) N (A) Dem_{distal} of **Tigre** (Afro-Asiatic, Semitic), where it is the proximal demonstrative that precedes the noun and the distal one that follows it (see (15)):¹⁴

(15)a. **ʔəllan** ʔamʕəlāt (Dryer 2011, after Raz 1983:45)

this.f.pl days

‘these days’

b. ʔəb laʔawkād **lahay**

at time **that.m**

‘at that time’

The NP must raise around A with pied piping of the *whose-picture* type (or with no pied piping) and then around Num and the lower proximal demonstrative with pied piping of the *picture-of-whom* type, after which it raises around the higher distal demonstrative again with pied piping of the *whose-picture* type (a mixture of movements typically involved in the derivation of non-consistent languages – see Cinque 2016).

The fact that the two positions are presumably close to each other may give the impression in those languages where no material raises between them that they are one and the same position.

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¹⁴ Also see the case of (ci)Luba (L31a), where “close demonstratives precede the noun and others follow” (Van de Velde 2005:§2.4).

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