

## Demonstratives, Definiteness and Determined Reference

The relationship of demonstratives to the typology of definite noun phrases is still not fully understood, although demonstratives have been the subject of extensive work in linguistics and philosophy. This talk offers a new analysis of English demonstrative determiners which accounts for three uses of these determiners and addresses the relationship of demonstratives to other definites. The key is the treatment of definiteness: an extension of the “determined reference” approach proposed in Farkas 2002 leads to new insight into the meaning of demonstratives.

“Canonical” demonstratives (a term due to Roberts (2002)) refer to an entity in the discourse context and are often accompanied by a demonstration, as in (1). This use led Kaplan (1989) to propose that demonstratives have direct reference. Demonstratives can also be used anaphorically, as in (2). The two uses have different scopal possibilities: canonical demonstratives always have apparent widest scope, while anaphoric demonstratives have the same scopal possibilities as definite descriptions. Examples (3-5) show anaphoric demonstratives with narrow scope, a clear problem for the direct reference approach. A third use of demonstratives, largely ignored in the literature, is found in formal registers and characterized by stress on the determiner, an obligatory postnominal relative clause or AP, and the impossibility of an associated demonstration, as shown in (6).

The three uses share a special uniqueness condition. Many researchers have noticed that, unlike definite descriptions, the descriptive content of demonstratives need not determine a unique referent. Instead, the referent is uniquely determined by an associated speaker intention. The demonstration associated with a canonical demonstrative makes this intention public. An anaphoric demonstrative must have a unique antecedent that the speaker intends to refer to. In the special construction illustrated in (6), the postnominal phrase describes the speaker intention, supporting the view that the speaker intention associated with demonstratives should be represented in the semantics.

Demonstrative determiners can be given a straightforward, unified treatment under the determined reference approach to definiteness (Farkas 2002), an approach that captures what is common to the uniqueness and familiarity requirements on definites. The framework adopts van der Sandt’s (1992) version of DRT with incremental updates and assumes that noun phrases contribute a variable and associated conditions. The variable introduced by a definite noun phrase has *determined reference*: intuitively, when other variables are held constant, it has only one possible value. This property is shared by anaphoric definites and discourse-new definites with unique referents.

Whether a variable has determined reference depends in part on the nature of the associated conditions. Equative conditions imply determined reference: if a variable is equated to a (fixed) element, then it will only have one possible value. According to Farkas (2002), names and pronouns contribute equative conditions and thus have inherently determined reference. Demonstratives fit naturally into this picture, as they also contribute an equative condition. The condition equates the variable to the speaker’s intended referent, capturing the special uniqueness condition on demonstratives. The three uses of demonstratives differ only in how the “intended referent” is specified.

The scopal facts fall out from this analysis. Canonical demonstratives refer to entities in the context, which are related to discourse referents at the highest level of representation, so canonical demonstratives must have widest scope. Other uses have more scopal possibilities simply because they do not necessarily refer to entities in the context. In the bigger picture, the analysis completes the typology of definites. Demonstratives join names and pronouns as noun phrases that are definite as a side effect of their equative conditions, while definite descriptions, which stipulate determined reference, are the odd one out — and the only kind of definite not found in all languages. The analysis thus sets the stage for crosslinguistic work on the typology of definites.

The analysis presented in this talk accounts for the interpretation and scopal possibilities of three uses of English demonstratives, and has implications for the theory and typology of definites.

## Examples

- (1) [Pointing at John] Look at that man!
- (2) [A woman]<sub>i</sub> walked in. [That woman]<sub>i</sub> sat down.
- (3) [Every dog in my neighborhood]<sub>i</sub>, even the meanest, has an owner who thinks [that dog]<sub>i</sub> is a sweetie. (Roberts 2002)
- (4) Scott picked [a number]<sub>i</sub>. [That number that Scott picked]<sub>i</sub> could be odd. (King 2001)
- (5) Mary believes that [a unicorn]<sub>i</sub> is in her garden. She believes that [that unicorn]<sub>i</sub> is ruining her lawn.
- (6) a. THAT hero who kills the dragon will inherit half the kingdom.  
b. #[Pointing at Sir George] THAT hero who kills the dragon will inherit half the kingdom.

## References

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