88 Order of Demonstrative and Noun

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1 Defining the values

This map shows the different orders of demonstrative and noun. For the purposes of this map, a word or affix is considered a demonstrative if it satisfies at least one of two criteria: (1) it has among its uses a meaning that contrasts with some other form in terms of physical proximity to the speaker, so that there is at least a two-way contrast of proximal (near speaker) versus distal (not near speaker); or (2) the form has among its uses an indication that the hearer is intended to direct their attention towards something in the physical environment. In many and probably most languages, demonstratives are associated with both of these functions. The words *this* and *that* (and their plural forms *these* and *those*) constitute the demonstratives of English. In many languages, including English, the demonstratives can be used without a difference in form, either as modifiers of nouns, as in (1a), or pronominally (not modifying a noun), as in (1b).

(1) a. *I want that book.*
    b. *I want that.*

This map shows the order of such words with respect to the noun when they accompany a noun, as in (1a). In some languages, the form of demonstratives depends on whether they are being used pronominally or with a noun; see Map 42 for more on this phenomenon.

○	1. Demonstrative word precedes noun (DemN)	496
●	2. Demonstrative word follows noun (NDem)	478
◇	3. Demonstrative prefix on noun	9
◆	4. Demonstrative suffix on noun	29
●	5. Demonstrative simultaneously before and after noun	15
○	6. Two or more of above types with none dominant	58
	total	1085

The first type shown on the map consists of languages in which **the demonstrative is a separate word which precedes the noun**. English is an instance of such a language, as in (1a), as is Fore (East New Guinea Highlands, Trans-New Guinea; Papua New Guinea), as in (2).

(2) Fore (Scott 1978: 89)
    má: ntamá
    this   house
    Dem   N
    'this house'

The second type includes languages in which **the demonstrative is a separate word which follows the noun**. An example of a language of this type is Maba (Maban, Nilo-Saharan; Chad), as in (3).

(3) Maba (Trenga 1947: 70)
    mašuk   ɯak   kulak   ti
    man   this   tall   be.3SG
    N   Dem
    'This man is tall.'

The third type consists of languages in which **the demonstrative is a prefix** on the noun. An example of such a language is Abzakh Adyghe (North-West Caucasian; Caucasus region, Russia), illustrated by the prefix *mə-* 'this' in (4).

(4) Abzakh Adyghe (Paris 1989: 175)
    mə-səɣ-ǧʷəneǧʷə-r
    this-1SG.POSS-neighbour-DEF
    'this neighbour of mine'

The fourth type consists of languages in which **the demonstrative is a suffix on the noun,** as in (5) from Gude (Chadic; Nigeria).

(5) Gude (Hoskison 1983: 45)
    a. *zəmə-na*   b. *zəmə-ta*
       food-this   food-that.far
       'this food'   'that food (far)'

The fifth type involves languages where the expression of demonstrative meaning involves **a demonstrative word or affix preceding the noun occurring simultaneously with a demonstrative word or affix following the noun**. An example of such a language is Milang (Tibeto-Burman; north-east India), as illustrated in (6).

(6) Milang (Tayeng 1976: iv)
    yo   miu   yo
    this   boy   this
    'this boy'

In Nishi (Tibeto-Burman; north-east India), the demonstratives that precede are different from those that follow the noun, as in (7); the ones that precede are the words that otherwise function as demonstrative adverbs (*here, there*).

(7) Nishi (Hamilton 1900: 20)
    sa   mindui   sî
    here   buffalo   this
    'this buffalo'

In Lai (Tibeto-Burman; Myanmar), there is an invariant demonstrative word that precedes the noun, while the demonstratives that follow vary for distance, as in (8).

(8) Lai (Hay-Neave 1953: 37, 44)
    a. *mah   lam   hi*   b. *mah   miɸa   khi*
       DEM   road   this   DEM   man   that
       'this road'   'that man'

In Chai (Surmic, Nilo-Saharan; Ethiopia), the demonstrative takes the form of a simultaneous prefix and suffix. The prefix is constant, but there are two suffixes, one with proximal meaning, the other with distal meaning, as illustrated in (9).

(9) Chai (Last and Lucassen 1998: 400)
    a. *ɲà-sábbá-à*   b. *ɲà-ɓíré-nù*
       DEM-head-this   DEM-stick-that
       'this head'   'that stick'

In some languages, the pattern of demonstratives simultaneously preceding and following the noun is optional. An example of such a language is Bawm (Tibeto-Burman; India and Bangladesh); in (10a), there are demonstratives both preceding and following the noun, while in (10b), there is only a postnominal demonstrative.

(10) Bawm (Reichle 1981: 136, 137)
    a. *hi   Pathian   biakin   hi*
       this   God   temple   this
       'this temple of God'
    b. *khuavâng   kha*
       prophet   that
       'that prophet'

Such languages are shown on the map according to the position in which the demonstrative is obligatory; hence Bawm is shown as placing the demonstrative after the noun.

The sixth type includes languages in which **two or more of the above constructions occur without either being dominant**. Most of these languages are ones in which both orders of

demonstrative and noun are common, as in Gulf Arabic, illustrated in (11).

(11) Gulf Arabic (Holes 1990: 175)
    a. *il-qaraar*   *haadha*   b. *haadha*   *l-qaraar*
    the-decision   this   this   the-decision
    'this decision'   'this decision'

Tigre (Semitic; Eritrea) represents a fairly rare subtype of the type in which neither order is dominant, in that the proximal and distal demonstratives occur in different positions: the proximal one obligatorily precedes the noun while the distal one normally follows, as in (12).

(12) Tigre (Raz 1983: 45)
    a. *ʔəllan*   *ʔamʕəlāt*
    this.F.PL   days
    'these days'

    b. *ʔəb*   *laʔawkād*   *lahay*
    at   time   that.M
    'at that time'

Also treated as languages in which no one type is dominant are languages with two constructions, one involving an affix, the other involving a separate word. For example, Doyayo (Adamawa, Niger-Congo; Cameroon) has both demonstrative suffixes, as in (13a), and separate demonstrative words that occur at the end of noun phrases, as in (13b).

(13) Doyayo (Wiering 1994: 148, 170)
    a. *i³s-ɔ²³*
    goat-that
    'that goat'

    b. *wa²lɛ³* *sɛ¹rɛ³* *rɔ⁴bɛ¹* *gbɔ¹lɛ³* *ee¹rɛ¹* *wɔ¹rɔ¹*
    man.PL   young   foreign   big   two   those
    'those two big young aliens'

The demonstrative suffix and the demonstrative word in Doyayo cannot co-occur in the same noun phrase. It is not clear what conditions the choice between them.

    The order of demonstrative and noun is more often fixed than is the case with many other pairs of elements. In many languages in which word order is in general flexible within the noun phrase, the order of demonstrative and noun is fixed. For example, in Mangarrayi (Northern Territory, Australia), adjectives, numerals, and genitives can either precede or follow the noun, but the demonstrative must precede the noun, as in (14).

(14) Mangarrayi (Merlan 1982: 63)
    ŋaḷi-na   *ŋala-gaḍugu*
    F.NOM-that   F.NOM-woman
    'that woman'

While this map shows the order of demonstrative and noun and excludes words that are specifically definite articles, there are many languages in which one of the demonstratives, most commonly the distal demonstrative, is very frequently used anaphorically in ways that resemble a definite article. See Chapter 37. However, such a word or affix will be treated as a demonstrative as long as it satisfies one of the two criteria described in the first paragraph of this chapter as definitional for demonstratives. It should be noted that languages sometimes have words that are called *demonstratives* in grammars but which lack both of the two functions treated as definitional here;

this is generally because they belong to a class of words that also includes words that do satisfy the definition assumed here. For example, in Mauka (Mande; Côte d'Ivoire; Ebermann 1986: 76), there is a word that Ebermann calls a demonstrative pronoun that occurs either as a pronoun or as a modifier of the noun, but whose meaning is necessarily anaphoric in the discourse context, meaning 'the aforementioned'. Since it lacks a contrast involving proximity and since it is not used to direct the hearer's attention to something in the physical environment, I do not treat it as a demonstrative.

2 Geographical distribution

Languages with demonstrative words preceding the noun are the overwhelmingly dominant type in most of Europe and Asia, except in South-East Asia and except for a few languages in western Europe (Celtic languages and Basque). This is also the dominant type in the Americas, though there are many scattered exceptions. Languages with demonstrative words following the noun are the overwhelmingly dominant type in Africa and in a large area stretching from South-East Asia eastward into the Pacific. Both of these types are common in Australia and in New Guinea, and there are complex areal patterns within Australia. Languages with demonstrative affixes are not common, though they are somewhat more common in Africa, and languages with prefixes are more common in areas where demonstrative words tend to precede the noun while languages with suffixes are more common in areas where demonstrative words tend to follow the noun, as in Africa. Languages with demonstratives preceding and following the noun are not common; they are found in widely scattered areas, with a notable pocket among Tibeto–Burman languages in north-east India. Languages in which none of the preceding types is dominant are widely scattered, somewhat more common than average in Africa and somewhat less common in Europe and Asia.

3 Theoretical issues

The term *determiner* is often used, especially with reference to English, for a class of words that includes demonstratives but often other words as well, such as articles (words like *the* and *a* in English). The concept of determiner is well motivated for English, since there is a single syntactic position in the noun phrase which can be filled by at most one determiner. But for many other languages, there is less motivation for a grammatical class of determiners, since the language may lack articles, or it may have articles but they occur in a different position in the noun phrase from demonstratives (see Chapters 37 and 38 on articles). For example, in Kana (Niger-Congo; Nigeria), the definite article precedes the noun, while the demonstrative follows, and the two can co-occur, as in (15).

(15) Kana (Ikoro 1996: 70)
    ló   *bárí*   *āmā*
    DEF   fish   this
    'this fish'

Similarly, in Ngiti (Central Sudanic; Democratic Republic of Congo), the demonstrative and definite article both precede the noun, but can co-occur, as in (16).

(16) Ngiti (Kutsch Lojenga 1994: 376)
    yà   *ndɨ*   *dza*
    this   DEF   house
    'this house (mentioned before)'