

The pragmatic uses of demonstratives in Javanese conversation

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In this presentation I will outline the form and function of Javanese demonstratives in informal conversational interaction. Using Diessel's (1999) terminology, the Javanese system consists of a set of demonstratives that are used pronominally, adnominally and identificationally. There are additionally a number demonstrative adverbs with a variety of qualitative distinctions. All of these have three degrees of proximity. This presentation focuses on the variety of Javanese spoken in the Cirebon region of West Java. In this variety there is additionally wide variation of the form of each type of demonstrative in each degree of distance. While these demonstratives comprise a neatly symmetrical paradigm, when their usage in naturally occurring discourse is examined, there are major asymmetries in their functional range. Most descriptions of Javanese grammar describe the three degrees of proximity in terms of their relationship to person: near first person (*iki, kien* 'this'), near second person (*iku, kuen* 'that') and near third person (*ika, kaen* 'that over there'). However, a close examination of the use of demonstratives in informal conversational interaction reveals that speakers have preferences for particular demonstrative forms in different discourse-functional contexts, not necessarily related to person. Exophoric use of demonstratives in which a spatial orientation can be taken into account covers only about one quarter of the tokens of demonstratives. The remaining tokens of demonstratives in the data display a variety of endophoric functions. There is a tendency for proximate demonstratives to be more frequently used for exophoric references, medial demonstratives are particularly common for anaphoric reference (including reference to 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons), and all degrees of proximity, but notably the distal forms, are used for discourse reference. Paradigms of demonstrative adverbs cover location, manner and amount. In addition to their important role in coding information flow within discourse, demonstratives also have a number of interactional and regulatory functions, including as markers of hesitation, word searches, and information packaging, through marking ends of intonation units and larger discourse units. Javanese demonstratives are multifunctional not only in the sense that a given form may have a variety of functions within Javanese grammar but that they can also be seen to simultaneously have multiple functions in the one instance of use. This multifunctionality contributes to the incipient grammaticisation of certain demonstratives towards personal pronouns, determiners and complementisers.