

Free and Not-So-Free Demonstratives in Jingpo

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Following Abney (1987), it has been standardly assumed that various elements can be classified as determiners: articles, demonstratives, numerals and quantifiers; however, recent literature suggests that only the articles, definite and indefinite, occupy the D position (Giusti 1997). Giusti (1997) argues that demonstratives are lexical elements and are generated in the Specifier of a functional head and must be moved to SpecDP at the latest at LF. Cheng and Sybesma (1999) argues that the Chinese demonstratives are basically locative elements, and that there is no reason to assume that they necessarily occur in D. However, they leave as an open question what position demonstratives occupy. Cheung (2006) argues that a demonstrative is universally base-generated in Specifier position of Locative Phrase (LocP), where Loc^0 is the locus of [deictic] feature. It takes Numeral Phrase (NumP) as its complement. LocP is subcategorized by D^0 . She further suggests that the demonstrative must raise to Spec-DP before Spell-Out in order to check the [+def(inite)] feature. In this paper, we offer new data about the distribution of demonstratives in Jingpo and propose that a unified universal treatment of demonstratives is not desirable. In English demonstratives should be treated as D, while in other languages such as Chinese and Spanish demonstratives should be treated as Adjectives. In Jingpo, a Tibeto-Burman language, demonstratives could have dual status: D and A. Jingpo has singular demonstratives and plural demonstratives, marked by dedicated plural morphemes. Singular demonstratives can occur either prenominally or postnominally; while plural demonstratives can only occur postnominally. (The corresponding data are shown in the next page)

(1) N>Dem (Singular) Dem (Singular) > N

(2) N> Dem (plural) *Dem (Plural) > N

When a nominal phrase is complex enough to have a cardinal numeral, a classifier and a demonstrative, there are several word orders. Singular demonstratives show the following distribution patterns:

(3) N>Dem>Num>CL Dem>N>Dem Num>CL

(4) N>Num>Dem>CL Dem> N>Num>Dem>CL

(5) N>Num> CL>Dem Dem> N>Num> CL>Dem

From (3) to (5), the prenominal position can be occupied by another Dem (singular).

Since plural demonstratives are incompatible with cardinal numbers semantically,

they cannot cooccur. Therefore, plural demonstratives can only occur after CL.

(6) N>CL>Dem(Plural) Dem (Singular)> N>CL>Dem(Plural)

The seemingly freedom shown in the syntactic distribution of Jingpo demonstratives can be best accounted for with our proposal that prenominal demonstratives are D-type demonstratives and post-nominal demonstratives are A-type demonstratives.

Data

- (1) a. Marau hpun **dai** grai tu tsom ai.
 pine tree that very grow beautiful SPF-3Sg-STA
 ‘That pine tree grows up beautifully.’ (Dai and Xu, 1992: 368)
- b. **Dai** marau hpun grai tu tsom ai.
 that pine tree very grow beautiful SPF-3Sg-STA
- (2) a. Marau hpun **dai-hte** grai tu tsom ai.
 pine tree that-Pl very grow beautiful SPF-3Sg-STA
 ‘Those pine trees grow up beautifully.’ (Dai and Xu, 1992: 368)
- b. ***Dai-hte** marau hpun grai tu tsom ai.
 that-Pl pine tree very grow beautiful SPF-3Sg-STA
- (3) N-gu **ndai** kyin masum n ra nngai.
 rice this Cl three NEG want SFP-1Sg-STA
 (Lit.) ‘I do not want this three catties of rice.’
- (4) [nye a laika] buk **ndai** lahkong
 my GEN book CL this two
 ‘these two books of mine’
- (5) a. [nye a laika] buk lahkong **ndai**
 my GEN book CL two this
 ‘these two books of mine’
- b. **ndai** [nye a laika] buk lahkong **ndai**
 this my GEN book CL two this
 ‘these two books of mine’
- (6) a. N-gu kyin **ndai-hte** n ra nngai.
 rice Cl this-Pl NEG want SFP-1Sg-ST
 ‘I do not want these catties of rice.’
- b. **ndai** [nye a aika] buk **ndai-hte**
 the my GEN book CL this-Pl
 ‘these books of mine’

References

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