1. Definition:

First and foremost, three definitions repeatedly occurring in this presentation are very useful for further discussion (Richards & Schmidt 2002: 148, 152, 429):

**Demonstrative:**

A *demonstrative* is a word (a PRONOUN or a DETERMINER) which refers to something in terms of whether it is near to or distant from the speaker.

The demonstratives in English are: *this, that, these, those*. For example:

You take *these* books (here) and I’ll take *those* (there).

A demonstrative can refer to objective or subjective distance in space or time, as in “*This* idea does not seem as feasible as *that* you mentioned yesterday”.

Lu, Tianqiao (Prof.). Office: 206, School of Linguistic Sciences, Jiangsu Normal University, Xuzhou, China. E-mail: lutianqiao@maonan.org
**Determiner:**

A *determiner* is a word which is used with a noun and limits the meaning of the noun in some way. In English the following words can be used as determiners:

- **ARTICLES**, e.g. *a* pencil, *the* garden;
- **DEMONSTRATIVES**, e.g. *this* box, *that* car
- **POSSESSIVES**, e.g. *her* house, *my* bicycle
- **QUANTIFIERS**, e.g. *some* milk, *many* people
- **NUMERALS**, e.g. *the first* day, *three* chairs

**Pronoun:**

A *pronoun* is a word which may replace a noun or noun phrase (e.g. English *it, them, she*). For example:

*She* does not like *them.*
As tonality of these languages in the area is mainly lexically rather than grammatically significant, investigation of the grammatical operations of tonal inflection of their demonstratives is necessary. Data from Thai and other Tai-Kadai languages are used in this paper.

Tai-Kadai demonstrative determiners, as the term suggests, mainly behave as determiners modifying nouns or classifiers, while demonstrative pronouns function as pronouns. So, demonstrative determiners, like the Thai níi, are used to modify a noun phrase, while demonstrative pronouns, like the Thai nîi, normally occur as a deictic pronoun or an anaphor, e.g.

(1) \(\text{van níi } \) “today”

\(\text{day this but}\)

(2) \(\text{nîi khuu dòk kù làap } \) “This is a rose”

\(\text{This be CL rose}\)
In Thai, as in other Tai-Kadai languages like Lakya, Mulam, Zhuang, etc, grammatical properties of the demonstratives (roughly equivalent to *this* and *that*) are distinguished by distinct tonal patterns, featuring two syntactically distinct groups:

"**demonstrative determiners**" vs. "**demonstrative pronouns**":

\[
\text{Demonstratives} \\
\text{Determiner} \quad \text{Pronoun} \\
\text{Tone X} \quad \text{Tone Y} \quad \text{Tonal inflection} \\
\text{Thai:} \quad \text{High} \quad \text{Fall} \\
\text{Zhuang:} \quad \text{Mid-Fall} \quad \text{High} \\
\text{Mulam:} \quad \text{Low} \quad \text{Mid} \\
\text{Lakya:} \quad \text{Rise-Fall (nasal)} \quad \text{Rise-Fall (lateral)}
\]
2. Thai:

The distinction of determiner vs. pronoun in Thai can be shown as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstratives</th>
<th>Determiner</th>
<th>Pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tone X</td>
<td>Tone Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proximal: นิ่ (nī) นี่ (nîi)
Medial: นัน (nán)
Distal: น่าน (nôoon)

Many Thai linguists (Prasithrathsint 2000: 134-135; Panupong 1989: 67, etc) find that the determiner นิ่ (nîi) is only used to express special meaning and occurs as object of prepositions like นัย “in”, บน “on”, ใต้ “under”, ข้าง “beside”, among others.
Bo (2006: 14) points out that a construction like “preposition + demonstrative adjective” can be expanded to one like “preposition + noun + demonstrative adjective”, e.g.

(3)  
\[ \text{nai}^1 \quad \text{ho:ŋ}^3 \quad \text{ni}^4 \]  
in room this  
“In this room”

(4)  
\[ \text{bon}^1 \quad \text{to?}^4 \quad \text{ni}^4 \]  
on table this  
“On this table”

which implies that níi is still a determiner in the deep structure.
Prasithrathsint suggests that if the determiner nîi is used as a pronoun it often carries abstract meanings like time, viewpoint, etc, like càak nîi “from this time”, kòn nîi “before this time”, taam nîi “according to this”, etc. Therefore, the following is ungrammatical:

(5) *hây nîi “for this” (beneficiary)
(6) *kèe nîi “to this” (recipient)

The following phrases involving nîi and nîi display the difference of concrete and abstract entities:

(7) a. càak nîi “from here”
    b. càak nîi “from this (time)”

No evidence so far has shown that nîi has ever been used as subject or object (Prasithrathsint 2000: 134). The word nîi often complements with nîi where nîi does not occur (ibid: 136). Obviously, the syntactic features of the high tone nîi and falling tone nîi are distinct.

Noss (1964: 55) pointed out that nîi, nân and nôn are derived from nîi, nán and nôn through superfixation.
3. Zhuang:

The demonstrative system in Zhuang, spoken in Guangxi province of China, also shows such tonal inflection:

**Demonstratives**

![Diagram of Demonstratives with Tone X and Tone Y]

- **Proximal:** nai⁴ → nai³
- **Distal:** han⁴ → han³

For example:

1. (8) ŋɔ n² nai⁴ nai³ “today”
   - today
   - this
   - but

2. (9) nai³ tɯ k⁸ ya:n² kou² “This is my house”
   - this
   - be
   - house
   - 1SG
The function of nei⁴ is to modify the preceding classifier. Therefore, it does not occur in the slot for an argument. Hence the following sentence is either unacceptable or uncommon:

(10) *nei⁴ tuk an¹ ha:k⁸ yau²

this be CL school 1PL:incl

(This is our school.)

Such a sentence is possibly found in some modern registers like speeches by government officials. The prototypical expression should be:

(11) an¹ nei⁴ tuk an¹ ha:k⁸ yau²

CL this be CL school 1PL:incl

“This is our school.”
The Zhuang determiner **nei**⁴ cannot prototypically occur after a preposition in any case:

(12)  
*ta³ nei⁴  
from this  
(from this)  
but rather:

(13)  
ta³ nei³  
from this/here  
“From here”  

This syntactic structure should be an areal feature since Sinitic languages, like Mandarin, Cantonese, etc, all display such feature.
4. Mulam:

Such tonal inflection is also found in Mulam except for its more complex correspondence between the initial consonants (Wang and Zheng 1980):

**Demonstratives**

- **Determiner**
  - **Tone X**
  - **Proximal:** na:i⁶
  - **Distal:** ka⁶
- **Pronoun**
  - **Tone Y**
  - **Proximal:** ni⁵
  - **Distal:** hui⁵

Tonal inflection
For example:

(17)  \( ni^5 \)  \( si^6 \)  \( \varepsilon^5 na: \eta^2 \)?
     this      be     what
     “What is this?”

But

(18)  *\( na:i^6 \)  \( si^6 \)  \( \varepsilon^5 na: \eta^2 \)?
     This      be     what
     (What is this?)

This is because \( na:i^6 \) is a determiner.

(19)  \( \eta^2 \)  \( a:u^1 \)  \( ni^5 \),  \( ho^2 \)  \( a:u^1 \)  \( hui^8 \)
     2SG      take     this  1SG      take     that
     “You take this one and I take that one.”
When the determiners na:i⁶ and ka⁶ occur in the subject position, they usually represent time, which is in accordance with the usage in other Tai-Kadai languages. For example:

(21) na:i⁶ si⁶ o⁵naːŋ² si²hau⁵?
    Now     be     what     time

“What time is it?” (ibid: 51)

The determiner na:i⁶ cannot be replaced by the pronoun ni⁵ because it refers to time in this sentence.
5. Lakya:

In the case of Lakya, somehow, the inflection is realized through alteration in the initial consonants. Since historical tonal split in Kam-Tai languages are closely related with the property of initial consonants, such a scenario may also hold for this assumption:

- **Proximal:** ni² li²
- **Medial:** ŋan² la:n²
- **Distal:** nu² lu²
The determiners only occur as modifiers rather than elements occurring in argument slots (Liu 1999: 246-247):

(22)  pən³  ni²  (proximal)
     CL  this
     “This book”

(23)  fa:m¹  pei¹  ŋan²  (medial)
     three  year  that
     “Those three years not long ago.”

(24)  pən³  sɛu¹  nu²  (distal)
     CL  book  that
     “That book over there”
The pronouns, by contrast, occur in an argument slot rather than a modifier slot:

(25) \textit{li}^2 \textit{tok}^7 \textit{tsi}^1 \textit{in}^3 \quad \text{(distal)}

this be 1SG POSS

“This is mine.”

(26) \textit{la:n}^2 \textit{tok}^7 \textit{ma}^2 \textit{in}^3 \quad \text{(medial)}

that be 2SG POSS

“That one not far away is yours.”

(27) \textit{lu}^2 \textit{tok}^7 \textit{tu}^6 \textit{in}^3 \quad \text{(distal)}

that be 3PL POSS

“That one over there is theirs.”
The following demonstratives occur in an argument slot and can be translated as “here”, “there”, etc:

(28)  
tsi¹  at⁷  li²  
1SG  at  this/here

“I am here.”

(29)  
tu⁶  at⁷  lu²  
3PL  at  there

“They are over there.”

(30)  
ma²  at⁷  la:n²  
2SG  at  there

“You are there not far away.”
6. Others:

Other languages like Lue (Dai), Lao, Bouyei, etc, also show the same tendency.

The Lue demonstratives

- Even-numbered tones:
  ni⁸ (proximal), nan⁴ (medial) and nan⁶ (distal) typically modify a classifier. For example: phu⁴ ni⁸ “this person”, phu⁴ nan⁴ “that person”, phu⁴ nan⁶ “that person over there”.

- Odd-numbered tones
  ni³ (proximal), han³ (medial) and na³ (distal) are usually closely related to location. For example: ti⁶
  ni³ “here”, ti⁶ han³ “there”, ti⁶ na³ “over there” (Yu & Luo 1981: 51-52).
The study of Enfield (2007: 98-100) shows that the Lao determiners do not function as head of a phrase but as a dependent. For example:

(31) a. qanø-\textbf{ni}i\textit{i}4 \textit{dii3}
   MC.INAN-DEM good
   “This (thing) is good.”

   \textbf{b. *ni}i\textit{i}4 \textit{dii3}
   DEM good
   (This is good.)
In Bouyei, the demonstrative pronoun has not yet been developed from the demonstrative determiner. The demonstratives ne³¹ and te²⁴ can be used as modifiers only. For example:

(33) a. pu³¹ ne³¹ teŋ²⁴ kɔ³³ ku²⁴

CL this be elder brother 1SG

“This is my elder brother.”

b. *ne³¹ teŋ²⁴ kɔ³³ ku²⁴

this be elder brother 1SG

(This is my elder brother.)
The above data show that

1. the syntactic properties of these demonstratives are determined by their internal alteration of the tones.

2. Many Tai-Kadai languages lack the demonstrative pronouns roughly equivalent to “this” and “that”.

3. The demonstrative determiners occasionally occur independently in an argument slot because of omission of the head element in a modern register.

4. The omission might have resulted in the change of tones in these demonstratives, which could be the historical factors for their tonal inflection between determiners and pronouns.
7. Discussion:

Grammaticalization of the demonstrative determiners is the direct cause of the division of the demonstratives. Many studies show that demonstrative pronouns are rarely found in early literature of Tai-Kadai languages (Prasiththrathsint 1999; Wei 1985). They are found to occur much later than the determiners. There is no lack of similar evidence in other adjacent languages, which shows that these determiners began to function as pronouns not earlier than the Chinese Tang Dynasty (618-907) or even as late as Song Dynasty (960-1279) (Ye 1988). This implies that the Tai-Kadai pronouns could have developed from determiners through grammaticalization and reveals that modern Tai-Kadai languages could have split from the protolanguage before the emergence of the demonstrative pronouns.
References


Fine

Thank you!

ขอบคุณมากครับ!