Morphosyntactic and functional asymmetries in Vatlongos demonstratives

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Discourse Functions of Demonstratives 15/06/2018
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2. Evidence of recent changes
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries
4. Endophoric uses in the NP
5. Adverbs of place and time
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1. Overview

ak
Proximal
~once every 60 words
Unmarked, used for fairly distant referents

Can be phonologically and grammatically independent,
or cliticise to 3sg pronoun $x\hat{i}$ and locative stem $ig$

-e
Distal
~once every 180 words
Usually occurs in contrastive contexts

Suffix that attaches to pronouns and quantifiers,
and locative stem $ig$
2. Evidence of recent changes

Gary J. Parker’s 1970 dictionary describes a three way distinction:

\[ ak \text{ ‘this, here’}, \quad xiak \text{ ‘now, here’} \]
\[ xai \text{ ‘that (relatively near)’} \]
\[ xor \text{ ‘there, that (relatively far)’} \]
2. Evidence of recent changes

\textit{xai} ‘that (relatively near)’

\textit{xor} ‘there, that (relatively far)’

now mostly occur in forms with locative stem \textit{ig}

- \textit{igoxor} is usually a locative adverb
  (~1 per 550 words)

- \textit{igaxai, iaxai} can function as a locative adverb or nominal demonstrative, especially for new referents
  (~1 per 1500 words)
    - (it could also be source of \textit{iaxa} which is used as a comment marker in cleft–like constructions)
2. Evidence of recent changes

\( xai \) ~1/2000 words

\( xor \) ~1/4000 words

Use of the bare forms now indicate conservative speech patterns of individual speakers:

(1)  
\[
\text{thing } \text{PROX.MID } \text{3SG.DFUT–go_to } \text{side } \text{DIST}
\]

‘this one will go over there.’ [20170224a_n01s141_61]

- Older speakers
- speakers of Endu dialect,
  (which also has \( xa \)/variant)
- or speakers who have lived in urban diasporas
  (in Mele Maat or Port Vila)
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

*ak, ok*

- Usually an independent phonological word
- Occurs at the right edge of an NP
- Follows:
  - nouns, pronouns, adjectives, quantifiers, possessive classifiers, preposition phrases,
  - any word at the end of a relative clause
- Can also occur as a locative adverb
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

(2) *Atou ak*
woman PROX
‘This woman’ [20170331b_n01s034_30]

(3) *[[horamue nalu] xalu] ak*
boy 3DU.POSS DU PROX
‘these two boys of theirs’ [20141220g_n01s080_03]

(4) *[[holesok sap] xil] ak*
thing different PL PROX
‘these different things’ [20170413e_n01m030_21]

(5) *[vul [te oum]] ak*
hole of crab PROX
‘this crab hole’ [20141106f_n01e018_07]

(6) *[venu [xa di gan] e nesau]] ak*
volcano REL CONT 3SG.NFUT.burn LOC up PROX
‘this volcano that’s burning up there’ [20170222f_n01s153_49–50]
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

*ak*

- Within an NP, *ak* can be followed by a relative clause, a coordinator or *mun* ‘too’

(7)  
\[xil \ ak \ xa \ tahal \ Maat\]
3PL PROX REL from Maat
‘the ones from Maat’ [20150219b_n01m001_44]

(8)  
\[tut \ atuli \ ak \ xal \ mama \ nan\]
little girl PROX with mum 3SG.POSS
‘this little girl and her mum’ [20141106f_n01e018_26]

(9)  
\[tatal \ ak \ mun \ be \ xalu\]
snake PROX too 3SG.NFUT.go_to 3DU
‘The snake also went to them.’ [20141106f_n01e018_21]
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

**xiak**

*ak* can also be combined with pronouns, especially the 3sg pronoun *xi*

- and occupy a similar syntactic position in the NP

(10) tovolih    ak    xi=ak    xa    mei
old_woman    PROX    3SG=PROX    REL    COME
mi-leh         rat     [vueili aralu]   xi=ak
3SG.NFUT–take out pig 1DL.INCL.POSS SG=PROX

‘It was this old woman who came and took out this pig of ours.’

[20141027a_n01m001_111]
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

**xiak**

- or function as a pronoun

(11)  
\[\text{xi}:=\text{ak} \quad \text{bitene} \quad \text{va-hur} \quad \text{sepin-ien} \quad \text{nar}\]  
\[3\text{SG}=\text{PROX} \quad 3\text{SG.NFUT}.\text{want} \quad 3\text{SG.IFUT}-\text{take} \quad \text{talk-NMLZR} \quad 1\text{PL.INCL.POSS}\]  
‘This one wants to learn our language.’ [20141028a_c01m002_07]

- and frequently occurs within a relative clause

(12)  
\[\text{mi-gur} \quad \text{oum} \quad \text{xa} \quad \text{xi}=\text{ak}\]  
\[3\text{SG.NFUT-NFUT}.\text{take} \quad \text{crab} \quad \text{REL} \quad 3\text{SG}=\text{PROX}\]  
‘she took this crab’ [20141106f_n01e018_15]

(normal pattern with adjectives, nouns and demonstratives:
the copular verb is not required in relative clauses)
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

*igak*

- *ak* can also combine with the locative stem *ig* to form an adverb and locative noun meaning ‘here, this place’

(13)  
\[
\text{to–mmei} \quad \text{igak!} \\
\text{PC.IMP–come} \quad \text{here} \\
\text{‘come here!’ [20141028a_c01m002_01]}
\]

(14)  
\[
\text{Na–vil} \quad \text{pas} \quad \text{igak} \\
\text{1SG.NFUT–punch} \quad \text{break} \quad \text{here} \\
\text{‘I punched this place’ [20170218b_n01s144_60]}
\]
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

- \(e\)

- distal \(-e\) is a suffix that cannot occur independently
- it attaches to third person pronouns or the quantifiers derived from the pronominal forms
- or with the locative stem \(ig\)

contra Diessel’s (1999:25) hypothesis that bound demonstratives are always clitics rather than affixes
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

quantifier –e

• occurs adnominally in quantifier position

(15) tovolih       xi–e
  old_woman       SG–DIST
  ‘that old woman’ [20141027a_n01m001_109]

(16) [tim    saratel]    xi–e
  home            1 PL.INCL.POSS SG–DIST
  ‘our home there’ [20141220g_n01s080_11]

(17) ma–be         [[rute [xa   xouk  o–bit
  1 DL.EXCL–NFUT.go_to place REL 2 SG  2 SG–NFUT.say
  mal–naa–va      ti    en]] xi–e]
  1 DL.EXCL.FUT–NEG–go NEG in     SG–DIST
  ‘We went to that place that you told us not to go to.’
  [20141220g_n01s080_11]
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

pronoun – e

(18) xil–e la–pangei nou
3PL–DIST 3PL.NFUT–spoil 1SG
‘They disrespected me.’ [20141208a_n01m045_29]

(19) lu–bunit ni xi–e
3DL.NFUT–NFUT.cover_laplap INSTR 3SG–DIST
‘They covered the laplap with that’ [20141116b_c01m_26]
3. Morphosyntactic asymmetries

**xie**

Like *xiak*, *xie* is often used in relative clauses

(20) \( tatal \quad xa \quad xi-e \)

snake REL 3SG–DIST

‘that snake’ [20141107b_n01e020_31]

and as an adverb

(21) \( xale-n \quad daen \quad xi-e \)

tail–3SG.POSS 3SG.NFUT.be_in_it 3SG–DIST

‘its tail was in there’ [20141219c_n01s033_21]
4. Endophoric uses in the NP

- *ak* forms are the default for anaphora

(3) \[[[horamue \ nalu] \ xalu] \ ak\]

\begin{align*}
\text{boy} & \quad 3\text{DU.POSS} & \text{DU} & \text{PROX} \\
& \quad \text{[20141220g_n01s080_03]} \\
\end{align*}

They had two boys. They had these two boys of theirs, *they looked after them...*’

and for recognitional uses

(22) \[tila \ \ nam \ \ ak\]

\begin{align*}
\text{aunt} & \quad 2\text{SG.POSS} & \text{PROX} \\
& \quad \text{‘this aunt of yours’} \\
\end{align*}
4. Endophoric uses in the NP

• *e* forms are used contrastively

(16) \[tim\] \[saratel\] \[xi-e\]  
home \ 1 PL.INCL.POSS \ SG-DIST  

[20141220g_n01s080_11]

‘You must go hunt this side [ak] because of our house there’

(19) \[lu-bunit\] \[ni\] \[xi-e\]  
3 DL.NFUT-NFUT.cover_laplap \ INSTR \ 3 SG-DIST  

[20141116b_c01m_26]

‘They covered the laplap with that \[= nel nel\] leaves as opposed to the usual *hahau* leaves for laplap’
4. Endophoric uses in the NP

\[ e \text{ forms are used for negative affect} \]

• enemies

(15) \textit{tovolihi} \quad \textit{xi-}e \quad xie

\text{old_woman} \quad \text{SG-DIST} \quad \text{3SG.DIST}

‘that old woman’

\text{[20141027a_n01m001_109]}

(20) \textit{tatal} \quad \textit{xa} \quad \textit{xie}

\text{snake} \quad \text{REL} \quad \text{3SG.DIST}

‘that snake’

\text{[20141107b_n01e020_31]}

(18) \textit{xil-e} \quad \textit{la-pangei} \quad \textit{nou}

\text{3PL-DIST} \quad \text{3PL.NFUT-spoil} \quad \text{1SG}

‘They disrespected me.’ \text{[20141208a_n01m045_29]}
4. Endophoric uses in the NP

*e* forms are used for negative affect

- forbidden things and taboos

(17)  

\[
\text{ma-be} \quad [\text{rute} \quad [\text{xa} \quad \text{xouk} \quad o\text{-bit}]
\]

1DL.EXCL-NFUT.go_to \quad place \quad REL \quad 2SG \quad 2SG-NFUT.say

\[
\text{mal-naa-va} \quad [\text{ti} \quad \text{en}]] \quad \text{xi-e}
\]

1DL.EXCL.FUT-NEG-go \quad NEG \quad in \quad SG-DIST

‘We went to that place that you told us not to go to.’

[20141220g_n01s080_11]

(21)  

\[
\text{xale-n} \quad \text{daen} \quad \text{xie}
\]

tail-3SG.POSS \quad 3SG.NFUT.be_in_it \quad there

‘its tail was in there’ [20141219c_n01s033_21]
4. Endophoric uses in the NP

*ak* forms, especially *xiak* and other pronoun=*ak* forms often mark establishing or switch topics

(23) sepinien namem xiak,
speech 1 PL.EXCL.POSS PROX
‘this story of ours, *it’s our story of how the volcano struck us.*’
[20141117a_n01m003_54]

(24) tumen xil vus xil=ak,
bird PL all 3 PL=PROX
‘All of these birds, *their food and yams were just there.*’
4. Endophoric uses in the NP

*ak* forms, especially *xiak* and other pronoun=*ak* forms often mark establishing or switch topics

- e.g. in tail–head linkage structures

(25)  
\begin{verbatim}
na–sep ulis ti vatiang xa bas xir.
1SG.IFUT–say about PART cyclone REL 3SG.NFUT.hit 1PL.INCL
\end{verbatim}

`Vatiang`
cyclone

‘I’m going to talk a bit about the cyclone that struck us.
This cyclone, *we heard news about it*’ [20150410a_h01s121_02]
4. Endophoric uses in the NP

*ak* is used in discourse repair, marking a constituent after a hesitation:

(26) \[\text{lu–pus \ na \ nim \ ok}\]
3DU.NFUT–see \ HES \ house \ PROX

‘They saw um, this house.’ [20150305h_h01o111_12]

whereas *–e* forms modify a placeholder instead:

(27) \[\text{na \ relit \ neta \ xa \ xi–e}\]
HES \ egg \ thing \ REL \ 3SG–DIST

‘they took out um this thing’s egg’
4. Adverbs of place and time

Forms based on *ig* (*igak, ige, igaxai, igoxor*) are primary strategy for locative adverbs and pronouns.

Forms based on 3sg *xi* can be used for time and place.

And so can *ak*, more rarely.

(28)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>na-taa-ra</th>
<th>ti</th>
<th>ak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG–NFUT.NEG–NEG. stay</td>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘I wasn’t here.’ [20170413a_h01m169_95]
xiaik is the unmarked for a demonstrative adverb, and can be used for places at some distance and times in the past (at least in narrative)

(29)  xouk  di  o-pol-ni  mi-dep  xiaik?
    2SG  CONT  3SG.NFUT-do-TR  3SG.NFUT-NFUT.how  PROX
    ‘What are you doing now?’ [20141027a_n01m001_48]

(30)  la-ling-i  de  joj  xiaik
    3PL.NFUT-put-3OBJ  3SG.NFUT.be_at church  PROX
    ‘They put him in the church there.’ [20170222h_h01o154_50]
4. Adverbs of place and time

*xie* is restricted to contrastive and negative times and places

(31)  
```
mu-lul  vatang   xi-e
3SG.NFUT-shake    a_lot    3SG-DIST
```

‘It [the earthquake] shook a lot then.’

(32)  
```
mei    ma-di   xie
COME  1PL.EXCL-NFUT.stay   DIST
```

‘We came here [igak], but we came because of a disaster, we came here’ [20141121a_n01m041_74-5]
5. Verbal demonstratives

Verbal manner demonstrative based on *ak, mak* is very frequent (~1/150 words)

It occurs both as main verb and in serial verb constructions modifying a main verb

(33)  *la-pis-i mak*  
3PL.NFUT–roll–3OBJ 3SG.NFUT.like_this
‘You roll it like this.’ [20141212g_p01s046_04]
5. Verbal demonstratives

*mak*

discourse deixis:

(34) *mi-*sak *pis-*i *va*–*leh* *rat* *asu* *va*–*mak*
3SG.NFUT–do try–3OBJ 3SG.IFUT–take out rat 3SG.IFUT–like_this
‘He pulled and pulled and pulled... he tried to take out the rat like this’ [20170331c_n01s140_60]

recognitional:

(35) *yangfala* *xil,* *samtaem* *ra*–*di* *mak*
youth PL sometimes 1PL.INCL–NFUT.stay 3SG.NFUT.like_this
‘young people, sometimes we stay like this’
[20170406a_n01m164_61]
5. Verbal demonstratives

Closely related Paamese has two verbal demonstratives, maintaining deictic distinction

proximal *mukok* (*muko*=*ke*)

distal *mukonek* (*muko*=*neke*)

The Paamese examples with the distal all modify realis–marked situations in the past that are finished

In Vatlongos this distinction is less useful, as this can be marked by prior in the TAM prefixes

So perhaps this difference has collapsed in Vatlongos…
5. Verbal demonstratives

...except maybe:

*merei*

(36)  
\begin{align*}
\text{ana–pis} & \quad \text{siboro} & \quad \text{ti} & \quad \text{nga} & \quad \text{merei} \\
2\text{SG.PROH–roll} & \quad \text{dumpling} & \quad \text{NEG} & \quad \text{just} & \quad 3\text{SG.NFUT.like_that} \\
\text{e} & \quad \text{o–pis} & \quad \text{siboro} & \quad \text{i–xoni} & \quad \text{ngan=ak} \\
\text{but} & \quad 2\text{SG.IFUT–roll} & \quad \text{dumpling} & \quad 3\text{SG.DFUT–like} & \quad \text{one=PROX} \\
\end{align*}

‘You don’t roll a dumpling like that, you roll it like this one.’

[20141212g_p01s046_11]
5. Verbal demonstratives

Or maybe:

*mue*, verbal hesitation form

\[
\text{(37) } \text{di } \text{ma-mue, di } \text{ma-ga-ni}
\]

\text{CONT 1PL.EXCL.NFUT-HES CONT 1PL.EXCL.NFUT-NFUT.eat-3OBJ}

‘We um, we eat it.’ [20150303d_p01e016_03]

\[
\text{(38) } \text{lal-mue } \text{neta, lali-staat}
\]

\text{3DU.DFUT-HES thing 3DU.DFUT-start}

‘they’ll um, they’ll start’ [20150310d_n01s117_03]

perhaps a distal restricted to referents that are inaccessible to both speaker and hearer
5. Conclusion

• In Vatlongos a previously described three term demonstrative system seems to be being replaced by a two term system, especially in discourse functions.

• The proximal is the unmarked form while the distal is restricted to contrastive and negative affect contexts.

• The proximal is a clitic that can function as an independent phonological word, while the distal is a suffix that must be hosted by a pronoun or quantifier.
5. Conclusion

• The proximal marks a ‘repaired’ constituent provided after a hesitation, while the distal modifies an underspecified placeholder e.g. ‘thing’

• There is a very frequent verbal manner demonstrative based on the proximal form, used for discourse deixis and recognitional functions

• The verbal hesitation form *mue* could be derived from a distal verbal manner demonstrative, now restricted to inaccessible situations
References
Namme xamitel!