THE ‘DOUBLE DEMONSTRATIVES’ OF CHANTYAL

Michael Noonan
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

0. INTRODUCTION

The Chantyal language [Tibeto-Burman: Bodic: Bodish: Tamangic] is spoken by about 2000 of the 11,000 ethnic Chantyal in the Myagdi District of west-central Nepal.¹ Chantyal attests a number of Bodic demonstrative etyma, but only members of three sets retain clear demonstrative senses and oppositions based on spatial deixis.² In this paper, I will discuss these three sets of demonstratives and, in particular, how demonstratives from different sets can combine to form a construction I will call the ‘double demonstrative’.

1. INDEPENDENT DEMONSTRATIVES

The first of these demonstrative oppositional sets I will refer to as the ‘independent’ set since its members are the only ones which regularly occur alone as independent words. This set contrasts a proximal cu with a distal ce. These forms may fill grammatical roles such as subject or object independently — i.e. they may be pronominal heads of NPs — or they may be used adnominally to determine and modify nouns. As pronouns, they are often used to translate English third person pronouns, though there are also dedicated third person pronoun forms as well, singular khi and plural the-ma, both of which are also based historically on demonstratives though they no longer express spatial deixis. khi and the-ma are used almost exclusively with human referents; as pronouns, cu and ce may have human or non-human referents. In non-deictic pronominal usage, distal ce is by far the most common. Some examples follow:

¹ Work on Chantyal has been supported by the National Science Foundation, grant No. DBC-9121114. See Noonan (1996), Noonan (2000), Noonan et al (1999) and references cited there for additional information about the Chantyal people and their language. Textual material is from Noonan et al (1999) and Noonan & Bhulanka (to appear). I would like to thank Ram Prasad Bhulanka for discussing with me some of the issues presented in this paper.
² There are some additional contrasting sets which include members of the three sets discussed in this paper. For example, cunna ‘right here’ and canna ‘same place’, which include ‘independent demonstratives’ [§1], contrast with khanna – khyanna ‘right there’, which contains a demonstrative element not found in any of the other sets though cognate with the 3s personal pronoun khi.
(1) **ca** bfulun-yə sāyesapət təy a-thāy-i
that leopard-GEN noise nothing NEG-know-PERF
‘I wasn’t aware of that leopard’s noise.’ [I3]

(2) a:: cu samra nə təy ta-sere ley
ah this thigh topic nothing become-ANT+NEG+NPST surprise
‘This thigh had not yet become nothing [i.e. it hadn’t rotted away]!’ [I11]

(3) **ca** garāwa mu
mu good be+ NPST
‘That’s nice.’

(4) kfiyam-əŋ bini-ri-wa yəwta cinisi-wa masār-ra
way-LOC Beni-LOC-NOM one know-ANT-NOM teacher-DAT
dño-ṣi-ra ca-ye ligam lagi-i
meet-ANT-SEQ that-GEN after follow-PERF
‘On the way, I met a teacher I knew from Beni and followed him.’ [G16-7]

2. LOCATIVE DEMONSTRATIVES

The next set of demonstratives I’ll refer to as the ‘locative’ set since they
are attested only in a small set of locative constructions. This set contrasts a
proximal ca- and a distal te-. They are always found with one of a set of three
suffixes:

(5) ca-ŋ ‘this place, over here’  te-ŋ ‘that place, over there’
ca-r ‘in this way/direction’   te-r ‘in that way/direction’
ca-jam ‘this side [of river/gorge]’  te-jam ‘that side [of river/gorge]’

ca-ŋ and te-ŋ are suffixed with a locative case marker of limited
distribution and indicate location, either static or dynamic. ca-r and te-r
contain a form etymologically related to the unmarked locative -ri, which has
both locational or directional senses, in contrast to the directional sense found
in the forms with final -r: in this/that way or direction. The morpheme -jam is
found only with the locative demonstratives. The forms listed in (5) can be
affixed with additional case markers, case compounding being a common
process in Chantyal. Examples follow:

(6) ni te-r səri-o sə
little that-LOC move-IMP FRUSTRATION
‘Move over a little!’
(7) ca-ŋ-gəmsə te-ŋ fiya-ro
this-LOC-ABL that-LOC go-IMP
Go there from here.’

(8) te-jam-wa sirkharkə
that-side-NOM Sirkharka
‘the Sirkharka on the far side of the river’

EXAMPLE (8) illustrates the use of the nominalizer -wa in forming attributive constructions.³

The independent demonstratives also form locative constructions, e.g. with the locative case marker -rl: cu-rl ‘here’ and ca-rl ‘there’. These forms have both locational and directional senses and thus can be used in place of either ca-ŋ and te-ŋ or ca-rl and te-rl. All three sets are idiomatic and are found frequently in discourse, with the forms containing the locative set preferred when there is a felt need to emphasize locational or directional senses.

3. PREFIXAL DEMONSTRATIVES

The last set of demonstratives will be referred to as the ‘prefixal’ set. The prefixal demonstratives form a three-way deictic opposition: proximal yi-, distal fiə-, and remote wu-. As the name implies, the prefixal set are found prefixed onto other forms.⁴ There is a limited set of forms to which the prefixal demonstratives can be attached. Some of these forms are illustrated in (9):

(9) yi-sər ‘this way/manner’ yi-ddyo ‘this big’
fiə-sər ‘that way/manner’ fiə-ddyo ‘that big’
wu-sər ‘that way/manner’ wu-ddyo ‘that [over there] big’
yi-jjəgar ‘this much [quantity]’ yi-jjəjyar ‘this much [volume]’
fiə-jjəgar ‘that much [quantity]’ fiə-jjəjyar ‘that much [volume]’
yi-tu ‘up here’ yi-məŋ ‘down here’
fiə-tuŋ ‘up there’ fiə-məŋ ‘down there’
wu-tuŋ ‘up there yonder’ wu-məŋ ‘down there yonder’
yi-tor ‘to up here’ yi-mar ‘to down here’
fiə-tor ‘to up there’ fiə-mar ‘to down there’
wu-tor ‘to up there yonder’ wu-mar ‘to down there yonder’

³ See Noonan (1997) for discussion.
⁴ Proximal yi- is cognate with yi ‘right here’, a form that can be used independently. I’ve recorded some instances of the other prefixal demonstratives being used in similar ways, though yi is the only one that occurs frequently and that all speakers seem to agree is an independent word.
The final /r/ in these forms is etymologically related to locative -ri, and the final /g/ to the non-productive locative -ŋ. yi-ddyo 'this big' and ha-ddyo 'that big' contain the adjective thya-wa 'big': the allomorph -ddyo is found only in this construction. Some of the roots above — -sar 'manner, kind', -jagar 'quantity', and -jjyajyar 'volume' — either mostly or always occur with the prefixal demonstratives. A few examples of the prefixal set follow:

(10) ha-sar
DISTAL-manner do-IMP
'Do it that way!'

(11) yi-sar-wa
PROXIMAL-manner-NOM jagel
'forest
this sort of forest' [V35]

(12) ta-i na ha-jagar na bhi-lane
become-PERF TOPIC DISTAL-quantity TOPIC say-COND
'If I say that much, it’s enough.' [W49]

(13) wu-tuŋ dhuŋ-ra-wa yinəni thu-la kham mu-ē,
REMOTE-up-LOC tree-LOC-NOM bitter.apple pick-COND be.able be-NPST.Q
a-kham mu
NEG-be.able be-NPST
'Can you pick the bitter apple on the tree up yonder, or can’t you?'

4. DOUBLE DEMONSTRATIVES:

Of special interest to us here is the fact that the prefixal set can be attached to both the independent and locative demonstratives, resulting in forms which I will refer to as ‘double’ demonstratives. The following double demonstratives have been recorded with the independent demonstratives as the second element:

(14) cu 'this'
   yi-cu PROXIMAL-PROXIMAL
   ha-cu DISTAL-PROXIMAL
   cu PROXIMAL-DISTAL
   yi-ɕə PROXIMAL-DISTAL
   ha-ɕə DISTAL-DISTAL
   wu-ɕə REMOTE-DISTAL

The following double demonstratives have been recorded with the locative demonstratives as the second element:

(15) caŋ 'this place, over here'
    yi-caŋ PROXIMAL-PROXIMAL
    ha-caŋ DISTAL-PROXIMAL
    caŋ DISTAL-DISTAL
    yi-ɕə PROXIMAL-DISTAL
    ha-ɕə DISTAL-DISTAL
    wu-ɕə REMOTE-DISTAL
    teŋ 'that place, over there'
    yi-teŋ PROXIMAL-PROXIMAL
    ha-teŋ DISTAL-DISTAL
    wu-teŋ REMOTE-DISTAL