Demonstrative Shift and Proximal Markedness

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Objectives
Semantic shift and grammaticalization processes have long been the focus of historical linguistic and language change scholarship. This research adds to these conversations by:
- Observing the synchronic characteristics that differentiate the demonstrative pronouns.
- Implementing a survey in English to observe synchronic semantics of demonstrative pronouns.
- Reanalyzing a definition of demonstratives such that they reflect the difference in markedness in the lexemes.
- Extending the potential of synchronic semantic definitions of pronouns such that they reflect their diachrony.

Introduction
Demonstrative pronouns (this, that) making exophoric reference appear in every language [1], and are involved in myriad grammaticalization clines [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6].

Survey
Each video consisted of a 4 second video prompt with every commutation of pointing location and demonstrative pronoun represented, e.g.:

I like to wear that shoe pointing far more than that shoe pointing near.

Results
Mean ratings for the ‘matching’ positions:
that/far: 73.29 this/near: 71.60
Mean ratings for the ‘mismatching’ positions:
that/near: 61.78 this/far: 53.05

Main Finding
The mean rating for the ‘mismatching’ positions is similar. There was a significant drop in grammaticality for the proximal ‘mismatch’ (I like to wear this shoe pointing far more than this shoe pointing near as compared to the distal ‘mismatch’ (I like to wear that shoe pointing near more than that shoe pointing far). These data show a potential link between markedness and availability for grammaticalization toward functional items.

Demonstrative Definition
The reconfigured definitions for exophoric demonstrative reference include requirements for a unique referent, a specific location for deictic reference, a pointing action to accompany the deixis to that place, and an extra requirement for the proximal demonstrative to be close to the speaker.

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References
[4] Nick Baum 