



## Data

French demonstratives form a comprehensive paradigm (Kayne and Pollock, 2010), based on:

- a determiner (DEM), surfacing as *ce*, *cet* or *cette*, combining with nouns, strong pronouns (*elle*, *lui*) in the sense of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999), or appearing bare;
- and two suffix-like markers *ci* and *là*, probably derived from the adverbs *ici* ('here') and *là* ('there'). They can be used along with pointing, to express the proximal/distal distinction, contrastive focus, or anaphoricity.

**DEM+N:** both  $\{ci, là\}$  (appearing after N) and a relative clause (RC) are optional.

- (1) Marie aime **ce gars** (**{-ci, -là}**) (qui lit un livre)<sub>RC</sub>.  
 Marie likes DEM guy (**{-HERE, -THERE}**) (who reads a book)<sub>RC</sub>.  
 'Marie likes this/that guy, who reads a book.'

**DEM+pro<sub>strong</sub>:**  $\{ci, là\}$  or the RC *must* be realized, and both can be (with a non-restrictive reading of the RC). Non-human referents are preferred.

- (2) Marie aime **celui** (**{-ci, -là}**) (qui lit un livre)<sub>RC</sub>.  
 Marie likes DEM-3.SG<sub>strong</sub> (**{-HERE, -THERE}**) (who reads a book)<sub>RC</sub>.  
 'Marie likes this/that one who reads a book.'

**Bare DEM:** When  $\{ci, là\}$  is realized ((3)/(4)), the referent is preferably eventive/propositional and *can* be followed by a CP (but not a RC). When  $\{ci, là\}$  is not realized ((5)/(6)), the referent can be either an abstract or concrete individual, and *must* be followed by either a RC or a CP.

- (3) Marie aime **ce{ci, là}** (\*que Jean lit )<sub>RC</sub>  
 Marie likes DEM{HERE, THERE} (\*that Jean reads )<sub>RC</sub>  
 Intended: 'Marie like this/that thing that Jean is reading.'
- (4) Marie aspire à **ce{ci, là}** (que Jean lise)<sub>CP</sub>  
 Marie aspires for DEM{HERE, THERE} (that Jean read.SUBJ)<sub>CP</sub>  
 'Marie aspires for Jean to read.'
- (5) Marie aime **ce** \*(que Jean lit )<sub>RC</sub>  
 Marie likes DEM \*(that Jean reads )<sub>RC</sub>  
 'Marie likes the thing that Jean reads.'
- (6) Marie aspire à **ce** \*(que Jean lise)<sub>CP</sub>  
 Marie strives for DEM \*(that Jean read.SUBJ)<sub>CP</sub>  
 'Marie aspires for Jean to read.'

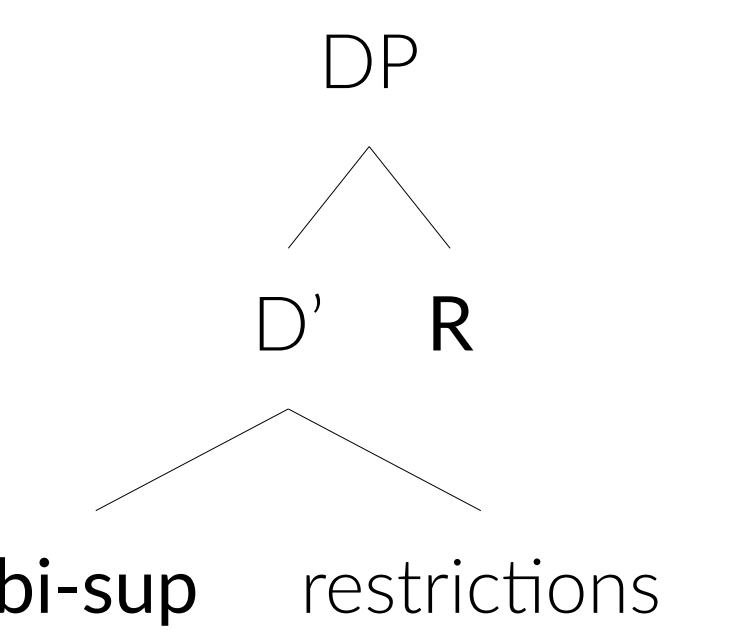
## Account

Ahn (2022) develops a unified theory of demonstratives making use of a binary maximality operator (**bi-sup**) taking two arguments:

- a set of restrictions;
- and a relation (**R**), which according to Ahn can be either one of a deictic pointing, an anaphoric index, or a RC.

**We argue DEM (ce) and ci/là respectively fill the bi-sup and R slot.** Depending on the context, *ci/là* behave as linguistic reflexes of pointing, or introduce bound variables – thus merging the roles of Ahn's "→" and *idx* functions. (7), (8) and (9) respectively show how *ci/là* can introduce pointing, contrast, and binding.

The LF of demonstratives



Entries posited for *ce*, *ci*, *là*, building on Ahn (2022)

$\llbracket ce \rrbracket = \llbracket \text{bi-sup} \rrbracket$   
 $= \lambda P. \lambda R. \iota x. \forall y. P(y) \wedge R(y) \Leftrightarrow y \sqsubseteq x$

$\llbracket ci \rrbracket = \lambda i. \lambda x. \text{At-Prox}(i, x)$

$\llbracket là \rrbracket = \lambda i. \lambda x. \text{At-Dist}(i, x)$

At-Prox(*i*, *x*) and At-Dist(*i*, *x*) as abstract "locator" functions

$$\text{At-Prox}(i, x) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } i \text{ is an index and } x = g(i) \\ 1 & \text{if } i \text{ is a location, } x \text{ is at } i \text{ and proximal} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

At-Dist(*i*, *x*) ~ At-Prox(*i*, *x*), except "proximal" becomes "distal"

- (7) Je veux **celui\*(-ci)**<sub>→<sub>1</sub></sub>, **celui\*(-ci)**<sub>\*→<sub>1</sub>/→<sub>2</sub></sub>, et **celui\*(-là)**<sub>\*→<sub>1</sub>/→<sub>2</sub>/→<sub>3</sub></sub>.  
 I want DEM-him\*(-HERE), DEM-him\*(-HERE), et DEM-him\*(-THERE)
- (8) **Celui\*(-ci)**<sub>→<sub>1</sub></sub> est grand, alors que **celui\*(-là)**<sub>→<sub>2</sub></sub> est petit.  
 DEM-him\*(-HERE) is big, while COMP DEM-him\*(-THERE) is small.
- (9) Si je vois un chien<sub>1</sub> et un chat<sub>2</sub>, **celui\*(-ci)**<sub>1</sub> va chasser **celui\*(-là)**<sub>2</sub>.  
 If I see a dog and a cat, DEM-him\*(-H) will chase DEM-him\*(-T).

Turning to the [restrictions] slot, it can be a full NP as in (1), a strong pronoun as in (2) or (we assume) a set of features with no overt exponent as in (3)-(6), which is consistent with Ahn's view and the intuition expressed by Kayne and Pollock (2010). **French, unlike English, realizes these three options transparently, using the same ce-{ci,là} "wrapper" structure.**

## Dealing with three puzzles

**Puzzle 1: ce-NP is standalone, while ce+pro requires an overt R.** This might be explained by the fact that the denotation of NPs is usually more specific than that of pronouns. **This might make the use of an overt R less useful to delineate the referent in the NP case** as opposed to pronominal cases.

**Puzzle 2: DEM-pro<sub>strong</sub>, unlike pro<sub>strong</sub>, is preferably -human.** DEM-pro<sub>strong</sub> distributes like a strong element: it can be topicalized, coordinated, put in object position short answers. We take this as evidence that neither DEM-pro<sub>strong</sub> nor pro<sub>strong</sub> are lexically specified for ±human, and that **pro<sub>strong</sub> acquires its sharp +human specification by pragmatic competition** with DEM-pro<sub>strong</sub>, due to:

- pro<sub>strong</sub> being structurally simpler;
- strong forms being empirically more likely to refer to humans.

Consequently, DEM-pro<sub>strong</sub> ends up *preferably* denoting -human entities.

**Puzzle 3. The distribution of ce(ci/là) w.r.t RCs and CPs (cf. (3)-(6)).** We claim that *ce* combines with a null *pro* denoting either a concrete -human individual (as in (3)/(5)), or an abstract "individual with propositional content" in the sense of Moulton (2015) (as in (4)/(6)). Starting with (5)/(6), **we assume that the CP in (6) is encapsulated within a covert predicational RC:** [<sub>RC</sub>which\_\_\_ is [<sub>CP</sub> that Jean read.SUBJ]]. This makes the CP "compatible" with the R slot and renders (6) analog to (5). The necessity of an RC in both structures was the topic of Puzzle 1. Turning to the contrast (3)/(4), we suggest that **(4) results from extraposition, so that the demonstrative and the CP are coindexed** (made possible by *ci/là*). Why (3) disallows an extra non-restrictive RC is a bit unclear, but may be traced back to the featural underspecification of the demonstrative.

## Conclusion & Outlook

We showed how the French demonstrative paradigm could transparently reflect the unified account of Ahn (2022), by providing a "fused" semantics for *ci* and *là*, seen as higher-level "locators" in the realm of space/variable assignments. The French data share some similarities with Afrikaans colloquial Swedish and Norwegian, which also use HERE and THERE particles (Leu, 2007).

**Further questions:** why is the distribution of *ce(ci)+CP* restricted to prepositional verbs? What about the free-relative reading of *ce que*, for which Ahn suggests DEM combines with no restriction? What about the availability of subject bare *ce* in predicative sentences (observed by Kayne and Pollock (2010))?