Demonstratives in Arabic: Evidence from Taizi Yemeni Arabic and Hodeidi Yemeni Arabic

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Abstract: This study aims at exploring demonstratives in two dialects: Hodeidi Yemeni Arabic and Taizi Yemeni Arabic, and comparing them to Modern Standard Arabic. The description of the demonstratives in the two dialects along with Modern Standard Arabic focused on tracing the syntactic and semantic evidence they are like to exhibit. The model used to undertake the analysis follows Diessel (1999). Although demonstratives attracted considerable scholarly attention, the literature reflects a scarcity of research on the two dialects chosen for this study. The findings reveal that the two dialects somehow differ from Modern Standard Arabic. It is concluded that the differences between Modern Standard Arabic and the two other dialects are confined to a semantic aspect. As for the similarities, the study evidences that demonstratives in Modern Standard Arabic, Taizi Yemeni Arabic, and Hodeidi Yemeni Arabic syntactically belong to two categories (demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative adverbs) and they can occur in more than one syntactic context. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that Taizi Yemeni Arabic and Hodeidi Yemeni Arabic almost share similar linguistic features as far as demonstratives are concerned. The study ends up recommending further research on more Yemeni dialects.

Keywords: Demonstratives, MSA, TYA and HYA, Deictic Points, Category, Distribution

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1. Introduction

Diessel (1999) and Dixon (2003) point out that deictic expressions are of three semantic categories. First, the person deixis which consists of the personal pronouns 'I' and 'you'. Second, the place deictic expression which denotes objects, locations or persons, and the third category is time deictic expression which denotes a temporal reference point. With regard to demonstratives, they belong to the family of deictic expressions. Dixon (2003) states that "a demonstrative is any item, other than 1st and 2nd person pronouns, which can have pointing or (deictic) reference" (pp. 61-62). According to "[d]emonstratives have been traditionally analyzed as 'pointing words' whose primary function is to indicate relative spatial or temporal distance of a reference from speech participants Khalfaoui, (2009)". For a demonstrative is "a word (a pronoun or a determiner) which refers to something in terms of whether it is near or distant from the speaker Richards & Schmidt (2010)". However, demonstratives are primarily considered to be spatial deictic expressions as they denote the location of a place, a person or an object indicating the relative distance of each from the deictic center.

Moreover, demonstratives which are grammatically classified as closed word classes can be used to facilitate communication among participants in speech situations and discourse in general. For instance, demonstratives in languages function to draw the interlocutors' shared focus of attention. Due to their communicative roles in discourse, demonstratives acquired certain significance. These roles in turn led to their grammaticalization in some languages as markers of definite articles, sentence connectives, relative pronouns, copula, complementizers, focus markers and so forth Diessel (1999).

1.1 Language Under Investigation

Arabic[1] is a language that belongs to the Semitic family of languages which also includes languages like Hebrew and Aramaic. In fact, it is the most common and the largest member of the Semitic language family. Today, Arabic is spoken by more than 300 million people in the Arab World, and it is the official language for the Middle East countries as well as the North of Africa. Throughout the Arabic speaking world, two varieties of Arabic coexist: standard and colloquial/dialectal version. Each dialect (or language variety) has its own distinctive features that may be shared or not by other varieties spoken in different regional areas. The multiplicity of varieties/dialects though providing a rich environment for linguistic description, may constitute an obstacle for a full description of dialectal Arabic.

As classical Arabic (henceforth: CA) is no longer spoken in the Arab world, this study sheds light on only demonstratives of MSA and on the two closely related Yemeni dialects: Hodeidi Yemeni Arabic (henceforth: HYA) and Taizi Yemeni Arabic (henceforth). Arabic Demonstratives are linguistic items of the class of Nominals, which are used to show either distance or proximity from the speaker (i.e., the deictic center). It is crucial to assert that MSA has almost the same linguistic features as classical Arabic (CA) with respect to demonstratives. The only difference lies in the limited number of demonstratives that are still in use in MSA in contrast to the greater number of demonstratives in CA.

1.2. Literature Review

The topic of demonstratives was notably studied in various languages from different linguistic angles. Concerning Arabic demonstratives, the studies show an inclination among researchers towards a contrastive analysis of deixis within two languages, i.e., English and Arabic such as (Rabadi, 2016; Al Aubali, 2015; Al-saif, 2008; Al-Samei, 2004). The focus of the studies ranges from structural, semantic, pragmatic to pedagogical and applicational contexts (e.g. translation). Some studies examine deixis and demonstratives in regional varieties of Arabic such as (Khalfaoui, 2009; Manfredi, 2014; Saaida, 2017). However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no study has so far studied demonstratives contrastively in MSA and its Yemeni regional varieties. Therefore, the researcher pays attention to this 'unresearched' area focusing on MSA plus two Yemeni regional dialects: TYA and HYA. The study thereby represents the first attempt to bridge this gap.

2. Model

Diessel (1999) adopts a category-based description of demonstratives. For him, demonstratives should be described in terms of the spatial distance meaning (proximal, medial, distal) they express and the syntactic, pragmatic functions they serve. Although the existence of demonstratives is a notable characteristic in almost every language in the world, languages exhibit a variety of behaviors in using them. The morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features represent the basic criteria that linguists use to distinguish demonstratives in languages. Concerning the syntactic criteria, highlights the difference between the use of demonstratives in a specific syntactic context (their distribution) and their categorical status Diessel (1999). Accordingly, demonstratives can appear in four syntactic contexts: pronominal, adnominal, adverbial and identification. Diessel shows that demonstratives can be distinguished based on category if they are either phonologically distinguished or if they have different morphosyntactic properties. In such a case they belong to different grammatical categories, hence we get:

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[1] For the purposes of this study, the term 'Arabic' collectively refers to Modern Standard Arabic, Taizi Yemeni Arabic, and Hodeidi Yemeni Arabic, unless otherwise stated.

(i). demonstrative pronouns

(ii). demonstrative determiners

(iii).demonstrative adverbs

(iv).demonstrative identifiers

Semantically speaking, demonstratives are deictically contrastive, functioning to indicate relative spatial or temporal distance of a referent from a deictic center. "This deictic center, which is also called the 'origo', is usually associated with the speaker's location at the time of the utterance" Diessel (1999). Thereby languages vary where some may have two-deictic system, and some others may have two or more. In semantics, generally, two defining features/ criteria are considered by linguists: (a) Deictic features and (b) Qualitative features. The former refers to the location of the referent in the speech situation and indicates whether the referent is near or away from the deictic center, whether it is at a higher or lower elevation, whether the referent is visible or out of sight, uphill or downhill, upriver or downriver, or whether it is moving toward or away from the deictic center or across the speaker's line of vision Diessel (1999). The latter (i.e., qualitative features), as rightly points out, characterizes and gives more information about the referent, in terms of: (i) ontological status, (ii) animacy, (iii) humanness, (iv) sex, (v)number, and(vi) boundedness Diessel (1999).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Qualitative and Deictic Features of Arabic Demonstrative Pronouns

As far as Arabic is concerned, there is neither distinct demonstrative forms nor affixes for indicating animacy, or humanness. Instead, Arabic Demonstrative pronouns distinguish between their referents in terms of gender (masculine, feminine) and number (singularity, plurality, and[duality]). The only exception is in MSA with the plural 'ha'ulaai' which is used for either feminine or masculine referents with no distinction. In addition, the singular feminine "haðihi" or "tilka" are employed to refer to non-human plural referents regardless if they are animate or inanimate. In terms of locational and non-locational demonstrative referents, it seems that the semantic distinction between demonstrative adverbs and demonstrative pronouns in Arabic is related to the category distinction.

Like other languages, there is a feature for distance in Arabic. In fact, as has complyingly noted, demonstratives which indicate distance are an omni-present feature in any demonstrative system of any language, with some individual elements exceptionally lacking distance feature Diessel, (1999). MSA as many other languages, has three distance demonstratives that are deictically contrastive: proximal demonstrative, medial demonstrative, and distal demonstrative showing proximity, intermediation, and distance respectively. But since not all MSA demonstratives have three deictic points for the referent, it is worth noting that some scholars of Classical Arabic claim that the Arabic language has a two-deictic system. While some others, like, argue that Arabic has three deictic points (Sibawayeh, 1977; Ibn Hisham 1964). This view is strongly supported by the availability of affixes in the demonstrative morphological structure. For instance, the prefix -ha indicates nearness, the suffix ka- (vocative) indicates medial distance, and -li indicates far-distance. In MSA, prefixes and suffixes are used for differentiating demonstratives, thereby indicating the degree of the referent's distance.

It seems nowadays that dialects of Arabic have dropped the medial distance demonstratives, and adopted a two-deictic system (i.e., proximal, distal). This is perhaps motivated by the need of the interlocutors to simplify the system for facilitating communication. Thus, we can see, both MSA and CA exhibit a three-way contrast of relative distance from the speaker: haða (near), ðaka (far), ðalika (farther). However, this three-way contrast of distance no longer exists in HYA and TYA, a noticeable semantic difference which sets apart TYA and HYA from MSA (perhaps from some other dialects of Arabic).

As MSA displays three deictic points, we can divide MSA demonstrative pronouns into:

(i)   demonstratives of proximity as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Proximity demonstrative pronouns in MSA

Number	Gender	
	Masculine	Feminine
Singular	haða	haðihi
Dual(nominative)	haðani	hataani
Dual (genitive \ accusative)	haðayni	hatayni
Plural	ha'ulaai	ha'ulaai

(ii) demonstratives of intermediation as in Table 2.

Table 2. medial demonstrative pronouns in MSA

Number	Gender	
	Masculine	Feminine
Singular	ðaka	tilka
Dual	ðanika	tanika
Plural	ula'aika	ula'aika

(iii) demonstratives of far-distance as in Table 3.

Table 3. far-distance demonstrative pronouns in MSA

Number	Gender	
	Masculine	Feminine
Singular	ðaalika	tilka
Dual	ðanika	tanika
plural	uulaaika	uulaaika

Since TYA and HYA has only two deictic points, we divide demonstrative pronouns into two types:

(i) demonstratives of proximity as in Table 4.

Table 4. proximity demonstrative pronouns in TYA and HYA

	Number	Gender	
		Masculine	Feminine
TYA	Singular	iðoah, ðoah,haða, a'aðoah, ðooah	haðih,haði, iðaya,iðay
	Plural	haðom, a'aðom,iðonah	haðin
HYA	Singular	ðah	ðih
	plural	ðanah	ðinah

(ii) demonstratives of far-distance as in Table 5.

Table 5. demonstrative pronouns of far-distance in TYA and HYA

	Number	Gender	
		Masculine	Feminine
TYA	Singular	iðokah, ðokah iðoak,a'aðak,akoah	iðika,iðik, iðiaak,a'akeah
	plural	haðokm,iðoknah, ðakoom,iðokom	a'akahiin, iðakin ,iðakin, ðakin
HYA	Singular	ðak	ðik
	Plural	ðˤannak	ðinak

3.2. The Syntactic Aspect of Arabic Demonstratives

In Arabic, we distinguish between two demonstrative categories. The first is termed demonstrative pronouns and the second is demonstrative adverbs. Demonstrative identifiers and demonstrative determiners are lacking in

Arabic. There are three functions of Arabic demonstrative pronouns according to the position they occupy. First, they are used as independent pronouns in the argument position of verbs and ad positions (pronominal). Second, when they are used adnominally, they cooccur with a noun in a noun phrase. Third, they occur in non-verbal clauses which have an identification function. In the case of demonstrative adverbs, they have their distinctive forms which distinguish them from demonstrative pronouns.

3.2.1. Nature of Demonstrative Pronouns in Arabic

Arabic tends to use the same form of demonstratives as pronoun, as a modifier of a co-occurring noun, and as a constituent in a non-verbal clause. This tendency can be accounted for by the fact that in Arabic, pronominal, adnominal and identification demonstratives do neither have different stems nor they differ in their inflectional behavior, so they belong to the same categorical status. In other words, they are phonologically and morphologically indistinguishable. Further, Arabic demonstrative pronouns do not have specific syntactic properties. Demonstratives such as 'haða', 'haðihi' and 'ha'aulaai' in MSA or 'ðˁannak' in HYA or 'haðik' in TYA, can be used as independent pronouns or with co-occurring noun, or as an element in clause structure. When used adnominally, for instance, demonstratives of Arabic are combined with the neighboring noun despite the fact that the noun and the demonstrative can separately constitute a whole NP. To sum up, Arabic adnominal and identification demonstratives are free nominals (pronouns). In Arabic there is no particular class of demonstrative determiners or demonstrative identifiers. Adnominal and identification demonstratives are pronouns, where demonstrative pronouns can be adjoined to a neighboring noun in some kind of appositional structure or can be inserted within a clause structure.

3.2.1.1. Syntactic Distribution of Demonstrative Pronouns in Arabic

In Arabic, demonstrative pronouns, those shown in tables 1 to 5, can occur in different syntactic contexts.

- **Pronominal**:

The demonstrative pronouns can be used pronominally in the argument positions of verbs and ad positions.

1. ya'ati   haða   motaχiran.

   come=3SG.M[2]   DEM.PROX.SG.M   late

   'This comes late.'

2. wajad-tu   haða   Ɂal-bariħa.

   found=1SG   DEM.PROX.SG.M   yesterday

   'I found this yesterday.'

3. taħadath-na   ʕan   ðalika.

   talked=1PL   about   DEM.DIST.SG.M

   'We talked about that.'

Examples from TYA

4. ishtarit-u   haði   Ɂams.

   bought=ISG   DEM.PROX.SG.F   yesterday

   'I bought this yesterday.'

5. ħasˁal-tu   haðokum   Ɂams.
   found=1SG   DEM.DIST.PL.M   yesterday
   'I found those yesterday.'

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[2] Abbreviations are as follows:
ADV=adverbial/adverb, DEF=definite, DEM=demonstrative, DIST=distal, F=feminine, IMP=imperative, LOC=locative, M=masculine, MED=medial, PL=plural, PRO=pronoun, PROX=proximal, SG=singular,1SG=first person singular, 2SG=second person singular, 3SG=third person singular, 3PL= third person plural.

Examples from HYA

6.	shofi	ðannak	ʕind	ʔa-shgarah.
	look=IMP	DEM.DIST.PL.M	besides	the tree

'Look at those besides the tree.'

• Adnominal Demonstratives

The Arabic demonstrative pronoun can be a part of a noun phrase, co-occurring with a noun, and functioning as a determiner. So, in Arabic, a demonstrative and a definite noun form one syntactic unit, as shown in the examples below.

MSA sentences

7.	haðihi	ʔal-bint.
	DEM.PROX.SG.F	the girl

'This girl'

8.	ðaka	ʔal-walad.
	DEM.MED.SG.M	the boy

'That boy'

Examples from TYA

9.	haðkin	ʔal-ħareem.
	those=DEM.DIST.PL.F	the women

'Those women.'

Examples from HYA

10.	ðik	ʔal-bayt.
	that= DEM.DIST.SG.F	the house

'That house.'

• Identificational Demonstratives

Arabic demonstrative pronouns can occur in non-verbal clauses as identification demonstratives. As points out, demonstratives used in copular or non-verbal clauses can function as identification demonstrative pronouns, as is the case in Arabic Diessel (1999). In other words, Arabic does not distinguish formally between demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative identifiers, as both belong to the same category. Furthermore, in Arabic nonverbal clause containing demonstrative, the demonstrative pronoun serves as the subject of the clause. Therefore, a clause that contains an identification demonstrative, is followed or preceded by a predicate complement. On the contrary, in some languages, demonstratives used in such copular or non-verbal clauses constructions tend to have separate identifiers. This occurs in case they are phonologically or morphologically distinct or they behave syntactically different from other demonstratives. As a consequence, they form a class of demonstrative identifiers that are independent from demonstrative pronouns.

MSA sentences

11.	Haðihi	qaryah
	DEM.PROX.SG.	village

'This (is) a village'

12.	ha'aulai	banati.
	DEM.PORX.PL.F	my daughters

'These (are) my daughters.'

13. Haðihi   bayti.

DEM.PROX.SG   my house

'This[is] my house'

14. Haðhi   fatat-un   mujtahida-tun.

DEM.PROX.SG. F.   girl   hard-working

'This [is] a hard-working girl'

Examples from TYA

15. Iðika   ħagarah.

Dem-DIST.SG.F   stone

'That (is) a stone'

Examples from HYA

16. Ðinak   ħamir-u.

DEM.DIST.PL.F   donkeys

'Those [are] donkeys'

In addition, in a nonverbal clause, the demonstrative should be followed by an indefinite noun to form a clause, otherwise it would be just a noun phrase with a demonstrative functioning as a determiner. Occasionally, if the construction 'demonstrative + a definite noun' is used in a clause, a copula or a pronoun should be inserted to separate them (between the demonstrative and the definite noun). Ryding (2005) has convincingly argued that this kind of separation confirms the syntactic boundary between the two and that they do not form a phrase. Then, when the predicate of the sentence is a definite noun with a definite article, a personal pronoun is obligatorily inserted between the demonstrative and the noun with the definite article. This pronoun functions as a copular or as a substitute for a verb of being.

Examples from MSA

17. Haða   huwa   ʔal-tˤareeq

DEM.PROX.SG.M   PRO.SG.M   DEF= road

'This [it] the road'

18. telka   hiya   ʔal-qaryah.

DEM.DIST.SG.F   PRO.SG.F   DEF=village

'That was the village'

At times, when a copular verb is used, the pronoun functioning as separating pronoun can be left out, and the syntactic boundary has to be inferred from the surrounding context. Consider the following examples where the implicit pronoun 'hiya' is recoverable from the context.

19. Kanat   telka   ʔal-fatatu   ʔallti wajatooha   ʔal-bareha.

was=3SG.F   DEM.DIST.SG.F   DEF=girl   who found=ISG.F   yesterday

'That was the girl who I found yesterday'

3.2.2. Locative Demonstrative Adverbs in Arabic (MSA, TYA and HYA)

Arabic distinguishes at least two degrees of deixis of locational demonstrative adverbs: proximal (near), and distal (far). Adverbial demonstratives are present in all languages. This falls in conformity with assertion that each

language exhibits minimally two adverbial demonstratives of location (Diessel 1999 & Dixon 2003). In the case of demonstrative adverbs, considers them as deictics of location that accompany verbs to modify them Diessel (1999). They, thus carry a sense of locational action or the contextual clues that surround the verb. This is why their use in modifying verbs have resulted in considering them as adverbs. As far as MSA is concerned, words like 'huna', 'hunaka', 'hunalika', customarily differentiated in form from demonstrative pronouns, can function as adverbs as well as locative demonstrative pronouns. In other words, they locate a place and whether that place is close, distant or very distant from speaker. In a manner similar to MSA, TYA and HYA distal demonstrative adverbs are suffixed with the distal -ka, phonetically realized as only -k.

The demonstrative adverbs of MSA, TYA and HYA are summarized in Table 6. below.

Table 6. demonstrative adverbs in MSA, TYA and HYA

Demonstrative Adverbs in MSA		
Near	Mid	Far
huna	hunaka	hunalika
Demonstrative Adverbs in TYA		
Near	Mid	Far
a'aunah, hina	------------	a'aunnak, hinak
Demonstrative Adverbs in HYA		
Near	Mid	Far
hina, kaḏa	---------	hinak, kaðˤak

Examples of Demonstrative adverbs in Arabic (see table 6 above)

20. taʕal   huna. (MSA)   taʕal   hina (TYA/HYA)

IMP-come here   IMP-come here

'Come here'   'Come here'

21. rooħ   hunak.   (MSA)   rooħ   hinak (TYA/HYA)

IMP -go there.   IMP -go   there.

'Go there.'   'Go there'

In the above examples, the adverb 'here'(huna/hina) refers to a near place while 'there'(hunak/hinak) refers to a far-distance from the deictic point. In Arabic, locative demonstratives can also perform an existential function. In this sense, they resemble the English use of 'there is or there are'. Besides, they can be used with nouns as in 'ʔal-jaw huna/hina latˤiif' (the weather here is fine). More often than not, when the demonstrative proximal adverb huna/hina 'here' functions adnominally in a post-definite noun phrase, it assumes a pragmatic function. That is to say, it asserts the presence of the object referent denoted by the definite noun. Consider the example below.

Example

22. ʔal-banat   huna/hina   yaltaq-u

DEF=girl-PL   here   meet-3PL.F

 'The girls here meet each other.'

A demonstrative adverb can also perform another adnominal function. That is, the adverb consolidates an accompanying modifying demonstrative. Consider the examples below.

- **Adnominal demonstrative adverbs**

23. Đaka   ʔal-kalb-u   hunaka.

DEM.DIST.SG   the dog   DEM ADV.DIST.SG.M

'That dog there'

24. Telka   ʔal-shagart-u   hunaka.
DEM.DIST.SG.F   the tree   DEM ADV.DIST.SG.F

'That tree there'

25. Haða	ʔal-kalam	huna.
DEM.PROX.SG.M	DEF=talk	DEM ADV.PROX.SG.M

'This talk here.'

Despite their being used as modifiers, locational demonstratives of Arabic are considered syntactically independent whenever they refer to the location of a given action. Thus, when used exophorically, the locational demonstratives nominate places in the relevant context. Endophorically, they refer to an already-mentioned location in the universe of discourse, as the following examples respectively show.

26. huna/hina	taʕwad-na	natklam	hakatha
here1	PL=used to	1PL-speak	like this

'Here, we use to speak like this.'

27. wasˤal-na	beet ʔaχu-na	ʔal-sabto	wa min	hinak	safar-na
arrived-1PL	our brother's house	Saturday	and from there		travelled-1PL

'We arrived at our brother's house on Saturday, and we travelled from there.'

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

We can summarize the above discussion in the following conclusions. MSA has three deictic points, demonstratives of proximity, demonstratives of intermediation and demonstratives of far- distance. In contrast, both TYA and HYA display only two deictic points, namely demonstratives of proximity and demonstratives of far-distance. Syntactically, MSA, TYA and HYA have more or less the same properties. In fact, they all behave in a similar fashion with reference to distributions, functions and syntactic/ structural position of demonstratives. The findings show that there are two distinctive forms of demonstratives (demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative adverbs), which can occur in four different syntactic contexts (adnominal, pronominal, Identification and adverbial). The study could reveal and illustrate that TYA and HYA show more similarities than differences. The minimal differences that they show are only confined to the phonological aspect. This difference arises from the fact that demonstratives in both TYA and HYA have their own distinct roots. Thereby, other than these phonological differences, TYA and HYA are similar. We can thus draw the conclusion that the main differences between these two Yemeni dialects (TYA and HYA) and MSA are fundamentally restricted to the semantic aspect. It should be borne in mind that this study focused only on studying demonstrative system in TYA and HYA and comparing them to MSA. Classical Arabic is not taken into consideration because the study is tracing Arabic demonstrative behavior synchronically rather than diachronically. By focusing on these two dialects (TYA, HYA) the findings arrived at here may not applicable to other dialects such as Sana ani, Hadhrami, Ibbi etc. Therefore, we recommend further research on a large-scale study on demonstratives incorporating at least four Yemeni dialects.

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Yes.

Conflict of interest
The Authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that they are relevant to the content of this article.