DEIXIS AND INFORMATION STRUCTURE IN MON

The multifunctional particle $kòh$


Mathias Jenny
University of Zurich
jenny@spw.uzh.ch
WHAT ARE DEMONSTRATIVES? (Diessel 1999)

- **SYNTACTIC:** adnominal, pronominal, adverbial

- **PRAGMATIC:** focus hearer’s attention on referent/location;
  organise information flow in ongoing discourse

- **SEMANTIC:** two or more distinctions based on distance from
  centre of interest (deictically contrastive)

**EXOPHORIC:** proximal vs. distal (+ medial, etc.)

**ENDOPHORIC:** anaphoric, cataphoric, discourse deictic, recognitional

**Himmelmann (1996)**

Element in paradigmatic relation with other elements locating the entity
referred to on a distance scale.
I. Demonstratives in Old Mon (11th century)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Exophoric use</th>
<th>Discourse function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>woʔ</td>
<td>proximal</td>
<td>cataphoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goḥ</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>anaphoric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Demonstratives in Old Mon

**Exophoric/proximal: woʔ**

(1) Ananda plaques, Pagán (with picture showing two deities)

\[ \text{woʔ} \ brumha \ ku \ ?in. \]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{this} & \quad \text{Brahma COM Indra} \\
\text{‘These are Brahma and Indra.’}
\end{align*}
\]
ANAPHORIC 'goḫ', CATAPHORIC 'woʔ'; EXOPHORIC/PROXIMAL 'woʔ':

(2) Shweizigon inscription, Pagán

tarley ʔānan [... ] smāñ row woʔ: 
master:1s Ananada ask manner this

“ma tirla pa k<ir>ʔim woʔ ci mu het yo?”
REL master do <NML>smile this EMPH what cause Q

row goḥ tarley ʔānan smāñ da.
manner that master:1s Ananda ask FOC

‘Lord Ananda asked like this: “What is the reason that you smiled?”
Like that the Lord Ananda asked.’
II. Demonstratives in Middle Mon (15th century)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Exophoric use</th>
<th>Discourse function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṭano?</td>
<td>‘here’</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wwo?</td>
<td>proximal</td>
<td>cataphoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gah</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>anaphoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teʔ</td>
<td>distal</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Demonstratives in Middle Mon

Note:

noʔ and teʔ not in Old Mon corpus, but in closely related Nyah Kur, therefore probably present in Old Mon (uncertain function).
III. Demonstratives in Spoken Mon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Exophoric use</th>
<th>Discourse function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ᵇʔ</td>
<td>proximal</td>
<td>anaphoric, cataphoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ᵇʰ</td>
<td>medial (distance from speaker)</td>
<td>anaphoric (cataphoric)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ᵭʔ</td>
<td>distal</td>
<td>anaphoric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Demonstratives in Spoken Mon

Exophoric use

(3) ket lòc ᵇʔ. (4) ket lòc ᵇʰ. (5) ket lòc ᵭʔ.
   take text PROX       take text MEDL       take text DIST
CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMONSTRATIVES IN SPOKEN MON

Inclusiveness/uniqueness: \( nc?, tv? \) (not \( kòh \))

Singularising effect: \( nc?, tv? \) (not \( kòh \))

Always stressed: \( nc?, tv? \) (not \( kòh \))

(6) a. \( kl\varnothing \) ‘the/a dog, (the) dogs’
   \( kl\varnothing\ t\varnothing \) ‘(the) dogs’
   \( kl\varnothing\ nc?/tv? \) ‘this/that dog’ (*‘these/those dogs’)
   \( kl\varnothing\ t\varnothing n\varnothing/t\varnothing \) ‘these/those dogs’
   *\( kl\varnothing\ l\varnothing\ η\varnothing\ nc?/tv? \) ‘some dogs’

b. \( kl\varnothing\ kòh \) ‘that dog, those dogs’
   \( kl\varnothing\ t\varnothing\ kòh \) ‘those dogs’
   \( kl\varnothing\ l\varnothing\ η\varnothing\ kòh \) ‘some dogs’
**Derivate forms of the Demonstratives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic form</th>
<th>Pronominal</th>
<th>Locative</th>
<th>Adverbial</th>
<th>Temporal</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʔoʔ</td>
<td>?iʔ, ʔoʔ / ʔɔʔ</td>
<td>ʔənʔ</td>
<td>hənʔ</td>
<td>(həmùh)</td>
<td>tənʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kòh</td>
<td>?iʔ, kòh / cəh</td>
<td>ʔəkòh</td>
<td>həkòh</td>
<td>ʔəkòh</td>
<td>(toʔ kòh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>təʔ</td>
<td>?iʔ, təʔ / cəʔ</td>
<td>ʔətəʔ</td>
<td>(sac təʔ)</td>
<td>(laʔ təʔ)</td>
<td>tətəʔ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Basic demonstratives and derivate forms

ʔoʔ-, ʔə-: Nominalising prefixes

hə-: General prefix, here < sac ‘type, kind’

lə-: Prefixed form of laʔ ‘when’ (< Pali kāla ‘time’)
USE OF kòh

1. Frequency

86 tokens of kòh (with derivate forms) in one page (2 nɔʔ and 2 təʔ)
2. Functions

A. Previous explanations

Duroiselle (1921)

That; also a sign of the accusative case before the verb; it is often emphatic, laying stress on the word or phrase which precedes it. [...] As an emphatic particle = the Burmese 〈kāḥ〉 kà; very often it is simply indicative of the subject, and is equivalent to the nominative case.
Shorto (Old Mon, Middle Mon 1971, Spoken Mon 1962)

[OM] goḥ, goh, goḥh /gɔh/ ns. & n (ns.) deictic, that, and otherwise with nn. and n.phr. with mooted referent, esp. at head of sentence, the, then often serving to mark end of complex n.phr. [...] [MM] gah, rarely gåh ns., n phr. marker, rarely deictic except in such fixed phr. as khā gah then, het gah ra therefore [...] [SM] Particle marking nn. and nominal phr., esp. in initial prominence position, and occasionally complete sents. [...] kòh is occasionally deictic, esp. in phr. following doa ['in, at'], nù ['from'], where it stands as n.
Bauer (1982): Marker of “Determination” (= definiteness?)

The most versatile clitic and, on some contexts, particle of the nominal phrase is kòh; in most environments, it translates into English ‘the’.

In no case can kòh function as overt marker of grammatical subject or object. [...] in a sequence of subject verb object where subject and object may be simple or compound nouns with any number of noun-clitics either noun (subject or object) may be followed by kòh.

Also: Emphatic particle (esp. with pers. names and pronouns; ‘as for...’) Nominalising device (with verbal expressions and clauses)
B. Data

- Ambiguous scope of marking

(7) əʔ həmɛə pɔn həcət thɔʔ rɔə kwan poy kɔh
when Burmese shoot kill DISCARD group village 1p MEDL
‘when the Burmese shot the people in our village’

[poy kɔh]

[kwan poy kɔh]

[rɔə kwan poy kɔh]

[laʔ həmɛə pɔn həcət thɔʔ rɔə kwan poy kɔh]
- Co-occurring with other (exophoric or anaphoric) demonstrative

(8)  cèk  ceh  nù  kəpac  cèŋmày  tvʔ  kòh  mùə  kəpac,
march  go.down  ABL  part  Chiangmai  DIST  MEDL  one  part

cèk  ʔa  nù  klòŋ  kyac.pnəʔ  nɔʔ  kòh  mùə  kəpac.
march  go  ABL  way  Three.Pagoda.Pass  PROX  MEDL  one  part

‘[They] marched down from Chiangmai on one side, on the other side [they] marched from (here at) the Three Pagoda Pass.’

(9)  dɔə  kə  bèʔ  tvʔ  hmoŋ.plày  kòh  kòh
LOC  OBL  REFR  hill  prince  MEDL  MEDL
‘at the Prince Hill’
- Marking noun phrase with given referent (anaphoric)

(10) la kòh thɔʔ? thɔʔ? hɔʔɔt.
donkey MEDL discard DISCARD all
‘They left all the donkeys there.’

- Marking complex noun phrase (with REL clause, anchored)

[only with presupposed proposition in relative clause]

(11) kɔʔ? tɛʔ bɛʔ? kon ɲɛʔ hɔkəoʔ kląy kòh.
get HIT REFR child frog body search MEDL
‘He found the young frog he was looking for.'
- Marking constituent as referential (not predicative)

(12)a. \textit{mənìh klųŋ çiə? pəŋ}
    \begin{itemize}
    \item man come eat rice
    \end{itemize}
    ‘the people coming to eat’, ‘The people are coming to eat.’

b. \textit{mənìh klųŋ çiə? pəŋ kòh}
    \begin{itemize}
    \item man come eat rice MEDL
    \end{itemize}
    ‘the people coming to eat’

c. \textit{mənìh klųŋ çiə? pəŋ ra?}
    \begin{itemize}
    \item man come eat rice FOC
    \end{itemize}
    ‘The people are coming to eat.’
(13)a. *həm kəh lùə lòn, klon kəh wàt plon.*

   speak MEDL easy exceed do MEDL difficult again

   ‘Easier said than done.’ (‘To speak is easy, to do is difficult.’)

**COMPARSED WITH**

b. *(kon.ŋàc kəh)* *həm lùə.*

   (child MEDL) speak easy

   ‘(This child) is well behaved’ (‘easy to talk to/teach’)

c. *(kəlon nɔʔ)* *klon wàt.*

   (work this) do difficult

   ‘(This work) is difficult to do.’
- Marking complement clause (preposed, presupposed)

    person  NEG  give  if  NEG  GET  eat  MEDL  1s  know  STAY  FOC
    ‘I know that I cannot eat anything if they don’t give me [food].’

- Marking adverbial expression (preposed, presupposed)

(15) kla  dɛh  hù?  tɛh  ?ɔp  kɔh,
    before  3  NEG  HIT  surrender  MEDL

    dɛh  priəŋ  lɔ  senat.həldɔk  kɔh.
    3  prepare  DEPOSIT  cannon  MEDL
    ‘Before they had to surrender, they prepared that cannon.’
- Marking clause as adverbial (presupposed proposition)


  person give part  FINISH  MEDL 1S  go buy  eat  DISCARD

  ‘After he gave me half [of the money] I went to buy
 [something] to eat.’

**Preposed clause marked as IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (TOPIC)**

⇒ setting the frame for subsequent discourse
⇒ causal, conditional, sequential reading possible
- Marking constituent as antitopic or topic

(17) ʔuə hù?  ket  raʔ  pùh,  lòc  kòh.
1s  NEG  take  FOC  NEG  text  MEDL
‘I don’t want it anymore, that book.’

(18) pvaʔ-klɔm-pvaʔ  kòh  dèh  hùʔ  cao  nèm  pùh,
three-hundred-three  MEDL  3  NEG  return  yet  NEG
bɒt  dèh  kyaʔ  kòh  kyaʔ  ?a  yaʔ  (<ʔʔiʔ-ra).
just  3  lose  MEDL  lose  GO  NSIT (< PREF-FOC)

‘In 1303, they had not retreated yet, but (as for losing)
they had already lost [the war].’
- Marking NP with new referent (identifiable by association)

(19) tąęh nìʔmòń đoa mèśəlì tvʔ, cao  kəpən  bət tek  pən ᵇəpîdh
HIT invite  LOC Mesali DIST return eat  just beat fourhour

kəriʔŋ kòh  kòk “ʔə c kʰənc, ʔə c kʰənc” ɕiəʔ  hənəm.
Karen  MEĐL call  eat noodles  eat noodles  eat  noodles

‘We were invited to Mesali over there, and we went back to eat at about four o’clock, and the Karen called us “ʔə kʰənc, ʔə kʰənc”, [that means] ‘eat noodles’.’
- Marking NP with generic referent (referential)

(20) ɲèh pyɔ̀ kɔ̀h tɔ̀h ɲèh thiə.
   person hungry MEDL be person angry
   ‘A hungry man is an angry man.’

- Marking new referent (not identifiable, cataphoric relevance)

(21) kla tɔʔ siəŋ, nùm mɔŋ kon.ŋàc mùə kɔ̀h...
   before DIST be.so exist STAY child one MEDL
   ‘Long time ago, right, there was a boy ...’
**Summary of Functions of kòh**

**Demonstrative**

Exophoric (medial, speaker oriented)

Anaphoric

Accessible information → [identifiable]

New information → [relevant]

Topic
References


