

THE SEMANTICS OF SPACE IN TAKIVATAN BUNUN

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The Takivatan dialect of Bunun, one of the Austronesian languages spoken on the island of Taiwan, has a number of different deictic paradigms that all centre around an alternation between the morphs *-i* 'proximal' / *-un* 'medial' / *-a* 'distal'. There are (1) two sets of bound definiteness markers *-ti/-tun/-ta* and *-ki/-kun/-ka*; (2) four demonstrative paradigms; (3) the third person personal pronominal paradigm; and (4) a set of place words *ʔiti/ʔitun/ʔita*. Although quite common in Takivatan, none of these paradigms, with the exception of the place words, appear in descriptions of other Bunun dialects such as Zeitoun (2000).

The bound markers are unusual for a number of reasons. First, there are two sets of definiteness markers that cannot be explained by grammatical distinctions such as case, number or instantiation. On the basis of distributional data, I will demonstrate that their existence can be explained by a conceptual dichotomy between the material aspects of objects or events and their spatio-temporal embedding. A second particularity of these markers is that they occur on nouns as well as verbs and on arguments as well as predicates. Though unusual, there is no good functional reason why it would be theoretically impossible: the correlation between certain verb classes (in particular motion verbs) and deixis has been pointed out repeatedly in the literature, e.g. in Fillmore (1982). Adding to this, all markers are optional and mostly occur in narrative discourse.

An interesting property of many deictic paradigms based on the *i/un/a*- tripartition is that they have developed a number of metaphorical meaning extensions. Most accounts of deixis, such as Dixon (2003), elaborately discuss the use of demonstratives and other deictics for temporal, phoric and discourse reference. However, apart from temporal deixis, these usages are largely absent from Takivatan deictics. Instead, the distance dimension in Takivatan expresses delineation, animateness and empathy.

Dixon, R.M.W. 2003. Demonstratives. A cross-linguistic typology, *Studies in Language* 27 (1), 61-112.

Fillmore, Charles J. 1982. Towards a descriptive framework for spatial deixis. In Robert J. Jarvella & Wolfgang Klein (Eds.), *Speech, Place, and Action: Studies in Deixis and Related Topics*, p. 31-59. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

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