Demonstratives are pervasive and ubiquitous in every human language. This study explores further evidence from Kerinci, a Malayic sub-variety spoken in Sumatra, Indonesia. It highlights the referential uses of the Kerinci proximal demonstratives ineh/neh ‘this’ and the distal demonstrative itoh/toh ‘that’. It is based on a corpus containing eight hours of recordings. The basic indexical functions of demonstratives within the referential domain are sketched from three perspectives, namely syntactic contexts, deictic expressions, and pragmatic uses. In light of the evidence presented, this study supports the most accepted principle that demonstratives are universal. However, this research also suggests that the form, use, and meaning of the Kerinci demonstratives are language-specific as presented in this paper.

I. INTRODUCTION

Demonstratives are universally used across all languages. They are basic human language components learned by children at an early age (Clark and Sengul, 1978). They are also used by adults in conversation ubiquitously. The most prevalent function of demonstratives is its basic indexical functions. They determine the intended referent in which the interlocutor may gesture toward. Kaplan (1977; 1989) and Reimer (1991) suggest that the intended referent depends on the interlocutor, while Bach (1992) proposes that referential intentions may be determined by the audience as well.

A survey of the crosslinguistic variation of demonstratives in 85 languages has been conducted by Diessel (1999). From a morphological perspective, he postulates that demonstratives are mostly independent. Semantically, he marks that the division and opposition of distance such as here and there are not universally shown in all languages. He also examines the syntactic functions of demonstratives across languages synchronically. Inspired by Himmelmann’s (1996, 1997) work, the pragmatic uses of demonstratives are reviewed from a crosslinguistic perspective. He concludes that demonstratives are pervasive in every language as an expression to refer to an entity deictically, albeit the syntactic structures vary across languages.

Previous studies on demonstratives typically consist of an analysis of a few constructed instances (e.g., Maphike, 1982; Malinga, 1982; Xu, 1987; Buba, 2000; Ekah and Udosen, 2018). The use of demonstratives from a pragmatic point of view has been studied by Levinson (1983), Fillmore (1997). Demonstratives in Malay varieties have been observed many times (Kaswanti Purwo, 1984; Djenar, 2014).

Although the use of demonstratives deictically has been surveyed by many researchers across languages, to my knowledge, there are no similar studies of the use of demonstratives in Kerinci Malay. Kerinci Malay, the language under study, is a Malay sub-variety spoken in Sumatra, Indonesia. This analysis focuses on a dialect of Kerinci called Pondok Tinggi. Pondok Tinggi is spoken in the eponymous central town of Kerinci.
The most striking feature of Kerinci Malay is a morphophonological and/or morphosyntactic phenomenon coined phrasal alternation (Ernanda 2017a). Almost all words in this dialect display two forms, known as absolute and oblique, which differ in their final syllable rime’s phonological shape. The term absolute and oblique were first proposed by Prentice and Usman (1978) and Steinhauer and Usman (1978) in their work on the neighboring dialect of Sungai Penuh. Ernanda (2017b:792) emphasizes, “It should be pointed out from the onset that the terms absolute and oblique are used in a different sense from what can be found cross-linguistically in the wider typological literature (Comrie 1989; Payne 1997; Song 2012; Dixon 2012).” She adds that these terms refer to the phenomenon of phrasal alternation specific to the Kerinci language. These labels are applied in a purely language-specific sense Ernanda (2017b).

A discussion on any PT grammar element cannot be separated from these absolute and oblique alternations. The absolute and oblique forms in PT correspond with a single lexical item in Standard Indonesian as can be seen in table 1. We will find the absolute (henceforth, A) and oblique (henceforth, O) forms throughout the data since this is the most salient feature of this language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute</th>
<th>Oblique</th>
<th>Indonesian</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>matao</td>
<td>mato</td>
<td>mata</td>
<td>eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahai</td>
<td>ahei</td>
<td>hari</td>
<td>day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baheu</td>
<td>bahu</td>
<td>baru</td>
<td>new</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of demonstratives in the referential domain has not been elucidated. Thus, this study seeks to develop an understanding of the uses of the Kerinci Malay demonstratives itoh ‘that’ (the full form), toh ‘that’ (the truncated form), ine ‘this’ (the full form) and neh ‘this’ (the truncated form) in the referential domain.

II. METHODS

This qualitative study aims at explaining language use in its natural environment. It is based on a corpus containing eight hours of recordings of two genres, namely conversation and storytelling. To obtain naturalistic and elicited data for this study, three fieldworks were conducted in Kerinci. Attempts were made to record naturalistic data (e.g., conversation) during the fieldwork. The Kerinci native speakers’ daily life conversations that comprise various topics were recorded and collected. Storytelling using either a frog storybook by Mayer (1969) or a pear video was recorded. Both conversations and storytelling were the primary instruments of data collection.

Data elicitation as a supplement was collected using a questionnaire made especially for this language by paying closer attention to the characteristic of the grammar of the language, namely phrasal alternation. All kinds of constructions in this questionnaire trigger the use of phrasal alternation in many contexts. The language consultants were asked to produce the constructions prepared in the questionnaire in their native language. For this study, the use of demonstratives in the corpus was sorted.

Language consultants were selected using a traditional method; NORM-Nonmobile Older Rural Males. However, the data collecting process did stray from the principle in one way by having female consultants participated in some recording sessions since it was intended to collect as much data as possible. The recordings were transcribed using the software tool ELAN (EUDICO Linguistic Annotator), and they were exported to FLEX (FieldWorks Language Explorer). The data annotation was proceeded using FLEX. Then, the annotated data was sorted, classified, and analyzed to reach the goal of this study.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section addresses the uses of demonstratives within the referential domain in Kerinci Malay. To get a consistent description of the demonstratives in Kerinci Malay, we can distinguish three classifications, namely syntactic contexts, deictic expressions, and pragmatic uses.

Syntactic Context

Diesel (1999) points out four syntactic contexts where demonstratives occur cross-linguistically. He also claims, “Some languages have only one series of demonstratives that they use in all four contexts,
but most languages employ distinct demonstrative forms in some or all of these positions”. In Kerinci, however, only two grammatical categories attested according to their syntactic contexts; demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative determiners.

**Demonstrative Pronouns**

Demonstrative pronouns are also called *simple demonstratives* (Wolter, 2009). Demonstrative pronouns can be used as independent pronouns stand alone as the subject or object of a sentence. Before discussing demonstrative pronouns, the personal pronouns in Kerinci Malay are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2. Personal pronouns in Kerinci Malay**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>kantai</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>kajao</td>
<td>əmpao (masculine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>kaau (feminine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>dijea</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>po</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in Table 2, the second-person singular pronoun distinguishes the use of masculine pronoun əmpao and feminine kaau. However, the use of demonstratives in Kerinci is not gender-related. When functioning as a pronoun, the full form of demonstratives is used, and the truncated form of demonstratives never occurs at all. The third person pronoun can be replaced by the demonstrative, whereas other personal pronouns cannot be replaced by the demonstrative. In (1), the proximal demonstrative *ineh* is used to replace the third person pronoun *po* ‘her’.

(1) kamai nدو? alo uدو? 1.SG3 FUT go upstream.A

\[
\text{yanta} \quad \text{ineh} \\
\text{ACT.deliver.A} \\
\text{‘I’m about to go to upstream to bring her’}
\]

The distal demonstrative, *itoh* can also be used to replace the third person pronoun. In example (2), *itoh* refers to the third singular pronoun *po* and *uha tandʒun paauh*.

(2) *adea uha tandʒun paauh* exist people.A 3.SG ACT.teach.A in

\[
\text{tɔmpé? ku dyafu daʃ?} \\
\text{place.O 1.SG sell.A TAG}
\]

\[
\text{itoh ba-caritaɔ} \\
\text{that VBLZ.story.A}
\]

‘There is a person from Tanjun Pauuh. She teaches at the place where I sell my product. She told me a story’

(3) *kipæ po tuwan* money.A 3.SG master

\[
\text{‘The money is hers’}
\]

(3) a *ineh po tuwan* this 3.SG master

\[
\text{‘This is hers’}
\]

(3) b *itoh po tuwan* that 3.SG Master

\[
\text{‘That is hers’}
\]

Both proximal and distal demonstratives can replace common nouns. The word *kipæ* ‘money’ in example 3 can be replaced by the proximal demonstrative *ineh* in (3)a and by the distal demonstrative *itoh* in (3)b.

(4) a *kanuhei skæo*5 asli

\[
\text{kanuhei.O skæo.A original}
\]

\[
\text{pa caro kincai} \\
\text{really way kerinci.A}
\]

‘*Kanuhei skæo* is an authentic hallmark of the Kerinci culture’

(4) b *itoh asli po* that original really

\[
\text{caro kincai} \\
\text{way kerinci.A}
\]

‘*That* is an authentic hallmark of the Kerinci culture’

---

2 The variations akeu and aku are also used.
3 Even though its main function is the first-person plural pronoun, kamai is also used to refer to the first person singular. A more polite nuance of meaning is achieved by using it.
4 This usage is further discussed in the section on pragmatic use (see anaphoric use).
5 Kanuhei skao is a cultural ceremony in Kerinci.
The demonstrative replaces a noun phrase. The noun phrase kanuhei skao in (4)a can be replaced by the distal demonstrative itoh as shown in (4)b.

Demonstratives cannot substitute the first and second-person pronouns because they are already referential, and it is not polite to use demonstratives to position the speaker and the addressee that way.

**Demonstrative Determiners**

The demonstrative determiner is also called *complex demonstratives* (Wolter, 2009). The demonstrative determiner is adnominal; it modifies the noun preceding it. Distance is a critical parameter in the spatial interpretation of nearby and faraway (Kemmerer, 1999; Coventry et al., 2008). The spatial interpretation of demonstratives is dubbed ‘proximal’ and ‘distal’ to indicate the notions of nearby and faraway (Clark and Marshall, 1981). To repeat the earlier explanation, proximity and distance concepts are represented by (i)neh and (i)toh respectively in Kerinci Malay. The use of them in constructions are presented in the following examples.

(5) SD teladan itoh/toh,
    esde teladan that
    ha ludi? toh
    EXCL upstream.O that
    ‘That Teladan School, (and our house is)
    on that upper side’

(6) kalo uyga ahei,
    if rain.A day.O
    ba-lcuea? usun ineh/neh
    QUA.muddy.A village.O this
    ‘When it was raining, this village was
    very muddy’

As a determiner, either the full forms or the truncated forms of demonstratives can be used. In the examples below, the distal demonstrative (i)toh in (5) and the proximal demonstrative (i)neh (6) modifies the preceding noun.

**DEICTIC EXPRESSIONS**

Demonstratives display deictic characteristics. The referent depends on the person who utters the utterance, the place where it is uttered, and the time of utterance. Hence, we can distinguish three types, namely person deixis, place deixis, and time deixis (Bühler, 1982). Person deixis in Kerinci Malay encompasses personal pronouns, presented in Table 2. The personal pronouns are assessed from the speaker’s point of view as the deictic center. Place deixis indicates “objects, locations or persons (apart from the speech participants)” (Diestel 1999). Time deixis refers to “a temporal reference point relative to the time of the speech event” (Diestel 1999). I will discuss place deixis and time deixis in the following subsections.

**Place Deixis**

Place deixis refers to an entity’s location relative to the speaker’s bodily orientation as the anchorage point in the speech event. Describing space from an egocentric perspective is considered universal cross-linguistically (e.g. Carlson-Radvansky and Irwin, 1993; 1994; Moeketsi, 1994).

According to the corpus, the truncated form of the proximal demonstrative neh in example (7) is used to indicate the noun preceding it near the speaker. The full form of the proximal demonstrative ineh can also be used in this context. However, the use of the distal demonstrative itoh/toh would have been ungrammatical. In (7), it is explained that the age of children to go to school in the old times was determined by assessing the length or their arms and the ability to reach their ear over their head. The speaker touches and points to her own ear which is proximal. Although the speaker points to her own ear, the reference is made with regard to the ear of a child in the past.

(7) sampae dyahi nuse
    reach.A finger.O to
    kaliyo? (i)neh.
    lah isua
    ear.O this already able
    asau? sula
    enter.A school.A
    ‘If one’s hand could reach one’s ear,
    (one) was allowed to enrol in school’

---

6 Some languages are distance-neutral (Carlson, 1994; Himmelmann, 1997; Diessel, 1999)
Very often demonstratives co-occur with extra-linguistic gestures. Hanks (2005) suggests that “while both indexicality and gesture are pervasive in language, referential deictics are unique in joining the two systematically”. Both of them are used to “indicate” (Clark, 1996). For example (8), the speaker uses a hand gesture to mark a salt pill size. The bigger the gesture, the bigger the size of the salt pill. According to the corpus, the truncated form of proximal demonstrative is used in this context. The use of the full form is also acceptable.

(8) gahon pel don-don neh
salt.O pel RED.big.O this
‘A salt pill as big as this’

Demonstratives and pointing gestures are considered to have a special relationship (Cooperrider, 2015). Both of them direct attention to an entity. For example (9) below, the distal demonstrative is used when the speaker asks the interlocutor to close the window while pointing to the window far from the speaker.

(9) saa? kaco toh hoh
close.A glass.O that EXCL
‘Close that window!’

Demonstratives can also indicate a referent that is not visible from the perspective of the interlocutor. The features ‘proximal’ and ‘distance’ are still important even though the referent is invisible. In (10), the speaker talks about a kris, an ancestor used that only exists in the speaker’s mind. The kris does not exist physically at the speech moment. The distal demonstrative (i)toh can be used if the object is far away in the speaker’s mental space.

(10) ha kareih (i)toh di-cabut
EXCL kris.O that PASS,pull.out.O
‘That kris was pulled out angrily (and he) ran to Pondok’

When the object is close by in the speaker’s mental space, although it is out of sight and only exists in the speaker’s imagination or memory, the proximal demonstrative inei/neh is used. In (11), the event discussed by the speaker happened in the past. However, the referent is proximal to the speaker’s position or viewpoint.

(11) padoi uma
paddy.A at.the.paddy.field.A
neh di-ambi? po
this PASS.take.O 3.SG
‘Paddy rice at these paddy fields were taken by them’

The notions here and there are used for locational deictics (Fillmore 1982). The referent of these demonstratives depends on the location of the context. In Kerinci Malay, location markers inei ‘here’ and itou ‘there’ can be combined with a demonstrative that functions as an emphasis marker. The demonstrative follows the location marker. The fixed combinations are:

inei neh  itou toh
Here this  There that

Examples (12) and (13) show the use of the fixed expressions. Inei neh indicates the proximity and itou toh expresses the distance relative to the speaker.

(12) pit padua ijon.
PN Padang stay.O
Idia po inei neh
NEG 3.SG here this
‘Pit lives in Padang. She is not here indeed’

(13) adea sabolah kolam laau?,
exist next to pond fish.A
itou toh dea?
there that TAG
‘It is next to that pond, right there indeed’

The location markers can also be used without being followed by the demonstratives, as shown in (14) and (15). The nuance produced by the location marker is not emphatic since it loses the demonstrative that carries the emphatic marker.

(14) digan nomor oma
with number six.A
adea inei
exist here
‘The one which is number six is here’

(15) sahun tinga itou
sheath.O left.A there
kareih pundau?
sharrow.O pondok.A
‘The sheath was left there, the kris was in Pondok’

7 In Zulu, however, distance is not an important matter when demonstratives are used to refer to invisible objects (Nkabinde 1971).
**Time Deixis**

Deixis reference to time, as I will use it in this paper, involves locating a referent relative to the moment of utterance as the deictic center. The proximal demonstrative *ineh* is used to indicate the moment of speech, whereas the distal demonstrative *itoh* is used to indicate a moment or period before the moment of speech or after the moment of speech. In other words, the proximal demonstrative *ineh/neh* is used to mark the present time. The non-present (past and the future) time is marked with the distal demonstrative *itoh/toh*. Table 3 displays the time deixis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Earlier (past)</th>
<th>Now (present)</th>
<th>Later (future)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ahei itoh/toh</em></td>
<td><em>ahei ineh/neh</em></td>
<td><em>ahei itoh/toh</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘that day’</td>
<td>‘today’</td>
<td>‘that day’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bulon itoh/toh</em></td>
<td><em>bulon ineh/neh</em></td>
<td><em>bulon itoh/toh</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘that month’</td>
<td>‘this month’</td>
<td>‘that month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>taun itoh/toh</em></td>
<td><em>taun ineh/neh</em></td>
<td><em>taun itoh/toh</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘that year’</td>
<td>‘this year’</td>
<td>‘that year’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data below indicates the contrast between the past time marked with the distal demonstrative *itoh* and the present time marked with the proximal demonstrative *neh*. For example (16), the speaker uses the distal demonstrative *itoh* to refer to a time that is far away from the speaker in the past. By using *itoh*, the speaker creates a distance. When the temporal reference point is close to the speaker, *neh* is used as shown in example (17).

[A conversation about colonialism during the Japanese era]

(16) *dpupa maso ihoth*  
Japanese. A time that  
*sapat ganas*  
very.O cruel  
‘The Japanese at that time was very cruel’

[A conversation about a building]

(17) *minin neh lah di-bukua,*  
now this already PASS.open.A  
*di-bayun lao ali?*  
PASS.build again back.O  
‘Right now (it has been) opened (and was) built again’

In addition, the conjunction expressing time *samantaro* ‘while’ and the time preposition *salamo* ‘during’ can also be combined with demonstratives
.

8 The same phenomenon is observed in Indonesian (Kaswanti Purwo, 1984).
PRAGMATIC USES

This section is based on Himmelmann’s (1996) classification that distinguishes the pragmatic uses of demonstratives, namely: anaphoric, discourse deixis and recognitional uses.

Anaphoric Use

In the anaphoric use, deictics refer to an aforementioned entity in a discourse (Levinson, 1983; Diessel 1999). Himmelmann (1996) calls it tracking use. It is used to keep track on the entity that has been mentioned previously.

The distal demonstrative *itoh* in example (22) below refers to the previously mentioned phrase *gungi alauh toh*. For example (23), the proximal demonstrative *ineh* refers back to the antecedent *kipae* ‘money’.

(22) *gungi alauh toh.*
gunny.sack.O soft.A that

*Itoh dzadi kaan*
that become clothes.A
‘That soft gumnysack. That was made into clothes’

(23) *suduah po magih kipe*
already 3.SG ACT.give.O money.O

*Ineh po*
this 3.SG
‘He has given the money. Here it is’

Beside demonstratives, personal pronouns can also be used anaphorically. In example (24) below, the referent, *balandea* ‘Dutch’, is mentioned previously. The third person plural pronoun, *po*, is used anaphorically to refer back to the aforementioned referent.

(24) *balandea kan, mewah*
dutch.A TAG luxurious

*kitao diawot po*
1.PL.INCL by 3.PL

*cuma itoh, tanah kitao*
however that land.A 1.PL.INCL

*di-ambi? po dea?*
PASS.take.O 3.PL TAG
‘(In the) Dutch (colonial era), our lives were made luxurious by them. However, our lands were taken by them’

Discourse Deixis

Discourse deixis serves to keep track of the propositions instead of objects in a discourse. The main point of attention is the message indicated by a phrase or a sentence. In these constructions, the referent does not exist in the physical world. Both the full form of distal demonstrative *itoh* and the full form of the proximal demonstrative *ineh* can be used. The distal demonstrative *itoh* in the last sentence in (25) and the proximal demonstrative *ineh* in (26) refer to the aforementioned proposition.

(25) *adea kaau tuau gatoh*
exist 2.SG.F know gum.O

*parah toh, di-nu lah*
rubber.A that PASS.make.O already

*sodon kaki indau*
as.big.as leg toe.A

*itoh dzadi lampou mala.*
that become.O lamp.O evening.A

*pagoi lah ita ineh.*
morning.A already black.A this

*ha itoh maso dzapua.*
EXCL that time japan.A
‘Do you know rubber gum? (It) was made into something as big as a toe. That was the lamp in the evening. In the morning, this was getting black (pointing at her nose). That was what happened in the Japanese era’

(26) *idia po alo sula.*
NEG 3.SG go school.A

*Idia po ba-ladguna*
NEG 3.SG VBLZ.study.A

*ineh pa-njbot*
this NMLZ
‘He didn’t go to school, he didn’t’

Recognitional Use

In the recognitional use, both the speaker and the interlocutor are assumed to know a particular referent. Therefore, the recognitional use condition is shared knowledge about the referent between the speaker and the interlocutor. In example (27), it is
assumed that both the speaker and the interlocutor have shared knowledge about ‘the child’ in the conversation. Thus, the ‘child’ is already definite and specific for both of them. Although ‘the child’ is not mentioned previously in the conversation, both the speaker and the interlocutor understand

\[(27) \text{muə}^\text{kin} \text{nalo}\? \text{ye} \] possible ACT.look.for.O REL
\[\text{adea kamar dea}? \] exist room TAG
\[\text{nədə} \text{ano} \text{toh} \] for child.O that
‘(They) perhaps are looking for (a house) which has rooms, right! (That’s) for that child’

the context and have shared knowledge about the child.

If the interlocutor does not recognize the referent precisely. The speaker might add additional

\[(28) \text{mulae kitao kincal neh} \] start.A 1.PL.INCL kerinci.A this
\[\text{makaŋ gahon toh} \] eat.O salt.O that
\[\eta^\text{a} ba-suŋkauh, səgi wmpa}\] REL QUA.chunk.A edge.O four.A
‘We, the Kerinci people started to consume that salt which was in a chunk, like a cube’

information about the referent in a relative clause to help the interlocutor to identify the referent as shown in (28).

This section revealed various uses of demonstratives in Kerinci Malay within the referential domain. Finally, the three paradigms; syntactic contexts, deictic expressions, and pragmatic uses display that demonstratives are universal across the world’s languages, albeit their language-specific usages.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

This paper has examined the uses of Kerinci Malay demonstratives within the referential domain. We have explored the uses of distal demonstrative (i)toh and proximal demonstrative (i)neh performing their indexical functions. The demonstratives’ uses are grouped into three perspectives, namely: syntactic contexts, deictic expressions, and pragmatic uses.

Within syntactic contexts, Kerinci Malay presents two grammatical categories, namely demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative determiner. The former only takes the full form itoh/ineh while the latter takes both the full form itoh/ineh and the truncated form toh/neh. Demonstrative pronouns can replace personal pronouns whereas demonstrative determiner modifies the preceding nominal constituent and makes it definite. As deictic expressions, person deixis, place deixis, and time deixis are attested in the language. It also marks that gesture is an important extra-linguistic element that co-occurs with demonstratives. Both proximal and distal demonstratives are used to refer to time. The present time is indicated with the proximal demonstratives whereas the non-present (past and the future) time is marked with the distal demonstrative. Finally, based on a widely accepted approach by Himmelmann (1996), the pragmatic uses of demonstratives are explored. This study shows that although demonstratives are universal cross-linguistically, the referential uses and characteristics of demonstratives in Kerinci Malay are unique to the language.

This paper has described various uses of demonstratives in Kerinci Malay within the referential domain. However, demonstratives exhibit a broader scope of discussion that has not been presented in this paper. Thus, some potential topics on demonstratives for further research in Kerinci Malay include the analysis of locational marker; inei ‘here’ and itou ‘there’ and demonstratives of manner; nineh ‘like this’ and nitoh ‘like that’.
REFERENCES


