Demonstratives



Ideas for

Intervention

Here you will find resource materials for intervention. These are not programs or recommended methods but are meant to aid you by providing myriad resources and techniques for intervention. We’ve taken the time to research available resources and to offer them for you to consider.

Let’s start by defining what demonstratives are:

Demonstratives serve as articles to locate referents on a continuum of proximity (Owens, 2014).

* This may include nominals as pronouns or adjectives (i.e., *this, that, these, those*) that refer to a person or a thing (Owens, 2014).
* Demonstratives may be adverbs (i.e., *there, right there, now, then, here*) that refer to a place or time (Owens, 2014).
* Demonstratives also include the verbs, *see* and *look* when used to specify a particular referent (Rowley, 2018).
* Note that demonstratives refer to something else in the sentence for their meaning to be interpreted (Owens, 2014).

According to Dr. Robert Owens the link to the referent must be clear and unambiguous, as well as “appropriate for the listener’s knowledge, shared physical context, and preceding linguistic context (2014).

* Demonstratives contain deictic meanings. According to Dr. Robert Owens, “deictic terms are linguistic elements that must be interpreted from the perspective of the speaker in order to be understood as the speaker intended” (2014).

This is based on the *speaker principle*, meaning the referential point changes as the speaker switches (Owens, 2014).

This is also based on the *distance principle*, in which the referents are distinguished by their distance from the speaker (Owens, 2014).

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* *Figure 1* outlines this distance principle, along with the correct singular and plural forms of demonstratives used based on proximity.

Figure 1 (Ecparent, 2017).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Near** | **Far** |
| **Singular** | This | That |
| **Plural** | These | Those |

* According to González-Peña and colleagues, the acquisition of demonstratives in the English language typically does not occur before the fiftieth word and are more frequent at the two-word utterance stage (2020).

In this study it was found that most of the English and Spanish speaking children produced at least one demonstrative from eighteen months and all of them did by twenty-four months (González-Peña et al., 2020).

It is interesting to note that the frequency of demonstratives is higher in English than in Spanish. In English, the demonstratives, *this* and *that* are among the five most frequent words in a child’s lexicon. However, in Spanish, the same words were the eleventh and thirteenth most frequent words (González-Peña et al., 2020).

Methods



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It is important to note that a child’s ability to introduce and maintain referents in a narrative gradually develops during early school years (Owens, 2014).

* Kindergarteners are more likely to correctly introduce referents when they are retelling a recently heard fictional story as opposed to when they are formulating a story themselves from knowledge unknown by the listener (Owens, 2014).
* According to Dr. Robert Owens, after age nine, children begin to introduce characters in a simple story similarly to adults, however, the ability to introduce referents continues to develop after nine years of age (2014).
* Demonstratives are typically explained based on the near/far distinction, singular versus plural number, and the pronominal versus adjectival form (Celce-Murcia, 1996).

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* It is important to consider how reinforcement through repetition of the child’s utterance may impact the understanding of demonstratives.
	+ - * + Imagine a child and their caregiver are sitting across from each other with three dolls placed in varying distances from the child. The child states, “I want this baby,” (while gesturing to the doll close to them, but further from the caregiver). If the caregiver reinforces the child by saying, “this one,” the child will be unable to distinguish between the different demonstratives used based on proximity to the speaker. However, if the caregiver states, “that one,” based on their own proximity to the referent, the child will be provided with a model as to how the demonstrative adjusts to the speaker’s distance to the object (González-Peña et al., 2020).

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* When practicing demonstratives in extended written discourse, there are some variations in the conventions for the use of demonstratives (Celce-Murcia, 1996).
	+ - * + In expository writing, the demonstratives *this* and *these* imply that the reader has access to the referent. When these demonstratives are used in this context, the topic will persist (Celce-Murcia, 1996). In the example, “*these are the ingredients you will need,”* the referent of the ingredients will be further discussed as indicated by the demonstrative used.
				+ The use of *that* and *those* in the same context also provides access to the referent and signals the topic has been terminated (celcer-Murcia, 1996). In the example, “*That is how you make banana pancakes,”* the topic of cooking pancakes is known to be completed as the demonstrative *that* was used.
* According to Celce-Murcia (1996), providing students with a written paragraph that contains blank spaces where demonstratives belong is beneficial as they are able to fill in the correct demonstrative based on the topic beginning or ending along with plural or singular forms.

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Books

[*Those Darn Squirrels*](https://www.amazon.com/Those-Darn-Squirrels-Adam-Rubin/dp/0547576811), written by Adam Rubin. This book is recommended for children in preschool- third grade.

[*Those Shoes*](https://www.amazon.com/Those-Shoes-Maribeth-Boelts/dp/0763642843)*,* written by Maribeth Boelts. This book is recommended for children in kindergarten- third grade.

[*That’s Not My Brother!*](https://www.amazon.com/Thats-Brother-Gatefold-Picture-Book/dp/1407508733) written by Peter Bently. This book is recommended for children in kindergarten- first grade.

[*The House That Jack Built*](https://www.amazon.com/House-That-Jack-Built/dp/037583530X)*,* written by J.P. Miller. This book is recommended for children in preschool- second grade.

Games and Activities

Songs:

* [This, That, These, Those Song](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkpSsdQCaKY)

Minimal pair sentences:

* + Provide your students with two minimal pair sentences that contain demonstratives (i.e., *Can you take this bag?* Can you take that bag?).

Printables:

* + [Determiners Demonstratives Worksheet](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Determiners-Demonstratives-Worksheets-Distance-Learning-1689516?st=b1e3918723373d4d8666aa4c4065d76b)
	+ [Demonstrative Pronoun Task Cards](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Demonstrative-Pronouns-Task-Cards-1860463?st=b1e3918723373d4d8666aa4c4065d76b)
	+ [Determiners: Articles and Demonstrative Task Cards and PowerPoint](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Determiners-Articles-and-Demonstratives-Center-Activities-1654900?st=b1e3918723373d4d8666aa4c4065d76b)



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Websites

* [*This* That These Those,](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBVXUsEVCH8) a YouTube video
* [Agendaweb.org](https://agendaweb.org/grammar/demonstratives-exercises.html), a website that contains many exercises and quizzes to practice using “this,” “that,” “these,” and “those.”
* [Hit the English books](https://sites.google.com/view/hit-the-english-books/a-z-grammar/demonstrative-pronouns-this-that-these-those), a website that provides exercises and activities to practice the use of demonstrative pronouns

This is especially useful to implement during teletherapy

* [ISL Collective](https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/search/demonstratives) is a website that contains many worksheets and printables that can be used to teach demonstratives

Please visit [our Pinterest page](https://www.pinterest.com/sugarlanguage/demonstratives/) for additional resources and activities:

Pinterest Q&A:

What is Pinterest? Pinterest is a social media platform that serves as an electronic bulletin board. Many SLPs use it as a way to electronically “bookmark” (i.e., save) activities for future sessions.

How much does it cost? It’s free! However, you must create an account in order to access the SUGAR Language boards or use the website in general.

How do I use it? Please check-out the following link for an in-depth explanation of all things [Pinterest.](https://www.lifewire.com/how-to-use-pinterest-3486578)

**References**

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Owens, R. E., Jr. (2014). *Language disorders: A functional approach to assessment and*

*intervention* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Rowley, A. (2018). Grammar Review Packet. *CSD 240 Language Development Course Pack,* (pp. 167-189). The College of Saint Rose