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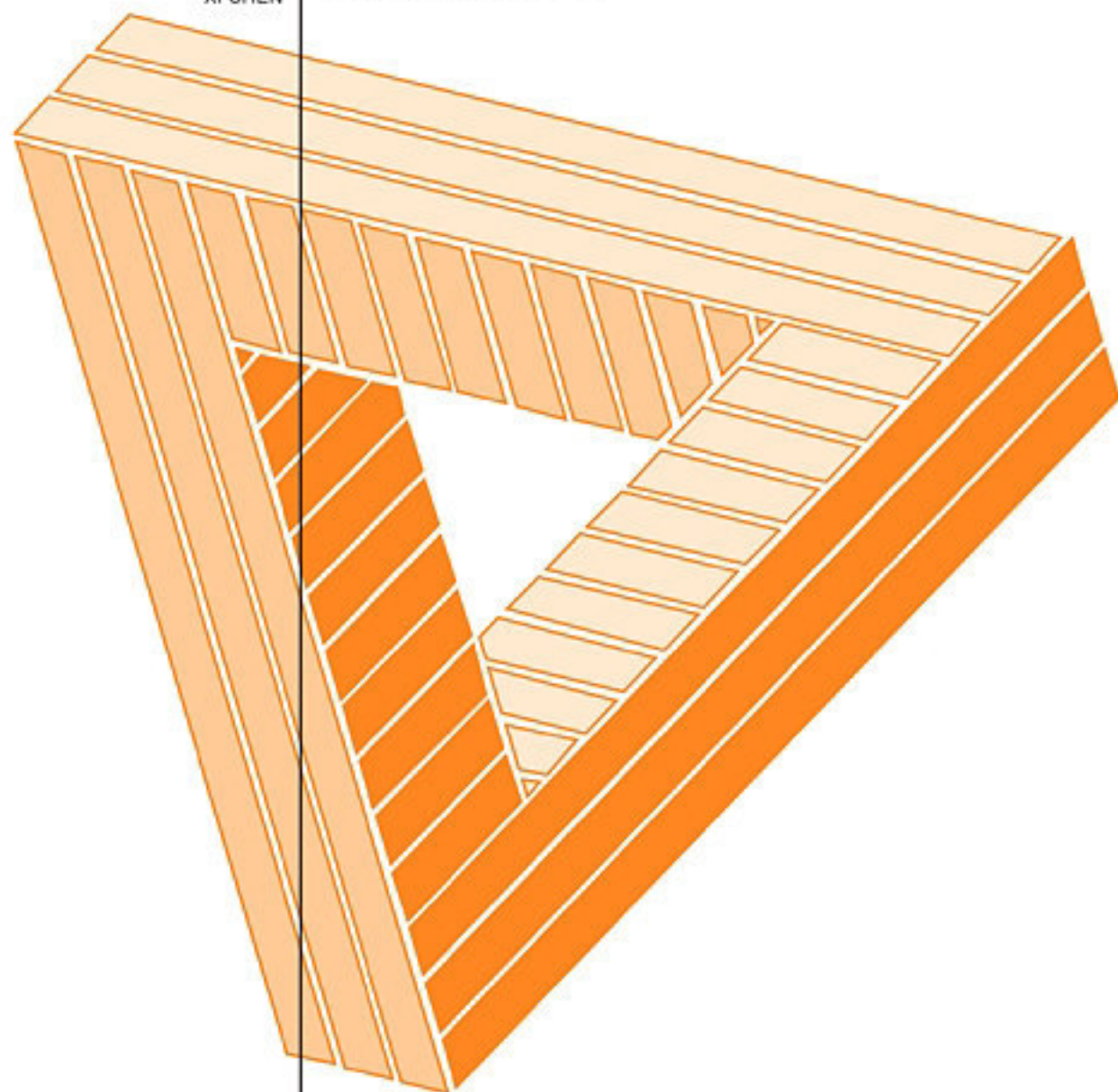
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Phrasal alternation and Kerinci demonstrative (*i)neh*: Implications for spatial and socio-interactional deixis

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ABSTRACT

Demonstratives are ubiquitous in the world's languages, but their range of extended functions often vary in interesting ways from one language to another. In this paper, we focus on the proximal demonstrative (*i)neh* 'this' in Kerinci Malay to trace its uses beyond the referential domain. More specifically, we examine the extension of (*i)neh* from its basic spatial deictic uses as a demonstrative pronominal and adnominal (i.e. determiner) within the referential domain to its more abstract and socio-interactional uses within the non-referential domain. Among these extended uses are: (i) lexicalized expressions (e.g. enumerating device *ineh*, attention-getting device (*i)neh*, and temporal adverbial *inin neh* 'now'), (ii) discourse-framing expressions (e.g. topic marker and subordinate clause marker), and (iii) pragmaticalized epistemic stance expressions (e.g. utterance-final stance particle). Of special typological significance is the availability of a morphophonological and morphosyntactic mechanism in Kerinci Malay known as 'phrasal alternation' that distinguishes between Oblique and Absolute forms, which can be used to help disambiguate between referential and non-referential (including stance-marking) uses of demonstratives such as (*i)neh*. Findings from this study have implications for our understanding of how the human mind tracks shifts in deictic uses.

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1. Introduction

Deictic elements such as demonstratives play a crucial role in interpersonal communication. Previous studies have shown that demonstratives are used not only as 'pointers' to locate and identify referents in the discourse but also often as engagement devices for interlocutors to manage their interpersonal relationships (Evans, Bergqvist & San Roque, 2018a, b). Which means, demonstratives often extend their deictic functions from the spatial domain to the socio-interactional domain. This phenomenon is attested in a wide range of language families, among them Austronesian (e.g. Nagaya, 2011b on Tagalog), Papuan (e.g. Kratochvíl, 2011; Schapper and San Roque, 2011 on Timor-Alor-Pantar languages), Tai-Kadai (e.g. Iwasaki and Dechapraturumwan, 2022 on Thai), Niger–Congo (e.g. Mwinlaaru and Yap, 2021 on Dagaare), *inter alia*.

These spatial and socio-interactional deictic uses of demonstratives are frequently discussed in terms of joint attention and engagement among discourse participants (e.g. Hanks, 1990, 2009; Enfield, 2003, 2018; Evans et al., 2018a, b; González

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¹ <https://myweb.cuhk.edu.cn/foonghayap/Home/Index>.

Pérez, 2023). The term ‘engagement’, introduced in Evans et al. (2018b), is largely synonymous with the notion ‘intersubjectivity’ that is much discussed in grammaticalization studies (e.g. Traugott, 1995, 2010) and discourse studies (in particular interactional linguistic analysis research; see, for example, Couper-Kuhlen and Selting, 2001; Du Bois, 2007, *inter alia*), in that both involve the speakers’ attentiveness to the addressees’ epistemic stances as well as their own. Along with evidentiality markers and epistemic modals, among other linguistic resources (e.g. Heritage, 2012), demonstratives figure prominently in studies on epistemic stance (e.g. Enfield, 2003; Evans et al., 2018a, b; Khachaturyan, 2020; González Pérez, 2023). For example, demonstratives are often used to signal whether either the speaker or the addressee has primary access to the knowledge encoded in a given utterance, or whether such knowledge is shared by both interlocutors. As noted in Stivers et al. (2011), such issues concerning epistemic access is also closely linked to issues of epistemic rights and responsibilities. This line of research resonates intimately with what Kamio (1997) refers to as ‘territories of information’, or what Evans et al. (2018a, b) refer to as ‘epistemic authority’, and more recently with what González Pérez (2023) refers to as ‘spheres of interest’ (see also Enfield, 2003 for earlier discussions on the use of demonstratives to identify referents in both physical and interactional space).

To illustrate how demonstratives are used as epistemic devices, we turn to some examples from Mon-Khmer languages. As noted in Burenhult’s (2003) analysis of demonstratives in Jahai, spoken in peninsular Malaysia, proximal *tēh* can be used to signal that the object of attention and evaluation is accessible (in the sense of being ‘perceptible, reachable, approachable, etc.’) to the speaker (see also Evans et al., 2018a: 129), while medial *ton* is used instead when the speaker wishes to signal that the object being referred to is familiar and accessible to the addressee. When different demonstratives are recruited to express different epistemic stances, different interpersonal pragmatic readings emerge. As noted in Adachi (2021), in conversational Vietnamese, proximal demonstrative *đây* typically signals a speaker-centered utterance and often conveys the speaker’s subjective evaluation and emotion, whereas medial demonstrative *đấy* signals instead an addressee-oriented utterance and is often used to express positive politeness and solidarity, while distal demonstrative *kia* often signals epistemic asymmetry between interlocutors and is often used to express the speaker’s counter-expectation.

Similar deployments of demonstratives beyond their spatial deictic functions are cross-linguistically robust. To further illustrate, in Mano, a Mande branch of the Niger–Congo language family spoken in Guinea, demonstrative *tôô* is used when a referent is construed as new information for the addressee, while demonstrative *wē* or *yā* is used instead when the referent is construed to be mutually familiar to both speaker and hearer (Khachaturyan, 2020). Recent studies, as illustrated in Khachaturyan’s study on Mano, also highlight that demonstratives are not constrained to signal only deictic information related to joint attention and engagement but, as espoused earlier in Clark et al. (1983), demonstratives also frequently interact with non-deictic information related to ‘common ground’, i.e., shared interactional history and cultural knowledge (see also Hanks, 1990, 1992).

An important question, then, is *how* demonstratives come to extend their use from spatial deixis to socio-interactional deixis. Research studies focusing on the relationship between deixis and social cognition highlight that demonstratives can develop into engagement systems through a process of semantic and syntactic scope expansion, a process that Evans et al. (2018b: 141) refer to as “upscoping”, whereby demonstratives are used not only to denote first order ontological entities (e.g. people, places and things) but also more abstract second and third order ontological entities such as events, situations, concepts and, crucially for our present study, epistemic stances as well. Demonstratives in Abui, a Papuan language, provide clear evidence of such scope expansions (Kratochvíl, 2011; also cited in Evans et al., 2018a; Yap et al., 2011). This view, which highlights scope expansion as a robust cognitive principle that paves the way for syntactic structures to interface with context-dependent pragmatic interpretations,¹ is strongly supported by crosslinguistic findings from grammaticalization and pragmaticization studies (e.g. Himmelmann, 1996; Diessel, 1999; Tao, 1999; Kratochvíl, 2011; Nagaya, 2011a; Schapper and San Roque, 2011; Mwinlaaru and Yap, 2017, 2021; Iwasaki and Dechapratumwan, 2022). This ‘upscoping’ phenomenon is also discussed in terms of ‘raising’ in formal syntactic studies. As Evans et al. (2018b: 161) point out, the contrast between proximal and medial demonstratives, with speaker and addressee as two different but sometimes convergent “anchor-points” (as in the case of mutually shared epistemic perspectives), provide “an ideal semantic affordance for the extension into the more general management of epistemic gradients between speaker and hearer”. In other words, languages often deploy their demonstratives (along with other deictic devices) to serve a range of epistemic stance indicators for discourse participants to negotiate their epistemic and interpersonal relationships.

A follow-up question is *how exactly* ‘upscoping’ comes about. Previous studies have shown that semantic and syntactic ‘detachment’ often plays a crucial role in the rise of epistemic stance markers (see, for example, Thompson and Mulac (1991) and Kärkkäinen (2003) on the development of epistemic stance markers such as *I think*, where the subjective use of a mental/psych verb and the first-person subject can be detached to form an epistemic adverbial).² In the case of demonstratives, Evans et al. identify ‘detachment’ as a process whereby demonstratives (as well as other determiners) can “escape from the noun

¹ Heine et al. (1991) similarly refer to this phenomenon of semantic and syntactic extensions that give rise to pragmatic markers as ‘context-induced reinterpretation’.

² See also Endo (2010) and Lim (2011) on the Mandarin Chinese equivalent *wo jude* ‘I think’; other studies highlighting the rise of epistemic stance markers via semantic and syntactic detachment include Yap, Chor and Wang (2012) and Yang and Yap (2015) on Mandarin Chinese *kongpa* ‘probably <(I’m) afraid>’ and Englebretson (2003) on colloquial Indonesian stance markers such as *rupanya* ‘it seems, it appears’ and *agaknya* ‘probably (<I guess> or ‘one would guess’).

phrase” (citing Epps, 2009) and thereby “take scope over a clause as stance markers” (2018b: 165), as seen in the Abui demonstratives discussed in Kratochvil (2011).

The aim of this present study is to further investigate if there is linguistic evidence that the human mind registers the semantic and syntactic detachment that gives rise to epistemic stance expressions. Our attempt to address this research question is made possible because Kerinci Malay (henceforth Kerinci) has a typologically rare phrasal alternation system that can distinguish between referential and non-referential uses of postnominal determiners (e.g. proximal and distal demonstratives *ineh* ‘this’ and *itoh* ‘that’, and also third person pronoun *nyo*). In this paper, we will focus on the proximal demonstrative (*i)neh* ‘this’ to provide a clearer picture of how native speakers of Kerinci disambiguate between the basic spatial deictic uses of (*i)neh* (which are referential in nature) and its extended and more abstract epistemic stance uses (which are non-referential).

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents a grammatical sketch of Kerinci, with special attention to the phenomenon of ‘phrasal alternation’. This involves the use of Oblique vs. Absolute forms that differ in terms of morphophonological and morphosyntactic characteristics. Such a system allows speakers to distinguish between referential and non-referential uses of postnominal determiners in Kerinci. Section 3 describes the data and methodology of this study. Section 4 identifies the referential and non-referential (including epistemic stance) uses of proximal demonstrative (*i)neh* in Kerinci in terms of their morphophonological and morphosyntactic characteristics. Section 5 analyzes the usage frequency distribution of (*i)neh*. This quantitative analysis will help determine whether the presence of Oblique forms correlate with referential uses of (*i)neh*, while the Absolute forms correlate with its non-referential uses. Section 6 concludes by highlighting the significance of the phrasal alternation test for understanding how the human mind tracks shifts in deictic uses.

2. Background on Kerinci and its phrasal alternation system

Kerinci belongs to the Malayic subgroup within the Western Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian language family (cf. Dyen, 1965; Blust, 1981, 1988; Nothofer, 1988; Adelaar, 1992). Kerinci varieties are spoken in the western part of Sumatra, Indonesia. In Kerinci, each village has its own dialect even though there is no clear boundary between villages. There are about 80 dialects spoken in the Kerinci region (Usman, 1988). This estimation was based on geographical boundaries among villages in the 1980s. The dialect that we are analyzing is called Pondok Tinggi, named after the village where it is spoken. However, we will refer to it as Kerinci in this paper. As of 2015, the number of residents was 16,820 people.³ Since ethnicity has never been surveyed, the number of native speakers is not known.

Kerinci is spoken in a very heavy language contact situation. The highest prestige language is Indonesian,⁴ which is spoken at school, in offices and on formal occasions. Parents have started to speak Indonesian at home as well, since it is considered to symbolize modernity. The second most preferred language is Minangkabau. It is the trade language which is spoken in the city center. Almost all Kerinci people can speak Minangkabau.⁵ The lowest prestige language is the local Kerinci varieties. According to a recent study, the Pondok Tinggi variety is now endangered since the younger generation does not speak it anymore (Ernanda, 2015).

Kerinci exhibits both VOS and SVO word configurations, the latter influenced by the national language, Bahasa Indonesia. According to naturalistic data, however, VOS is the dominant word order (Ernanda, 2017). Word stress is always on the final syllable (Steinhauer, 2002). Gender and tense are not marked.

Kerinci exhibits a relatively rare morphophonological and morphosyntactic phenomenon termed *phrasal alternation* (Ernanda, 2017). As its name suggests, phrasal alternation occurs at the phrasal level (e.g. nominal phrases, verbal phrases, adjectival phrases, numeral phrases, etc.). Essentially, the language displays two forms differing in the shape of their final syllable rimes for almost all lexical items, except for certain classes of words such as pronouns, inalienable nouns, loan words, and function words. Crucially, for the purposes of our present paper, although the phenomenon does not apply to function words such as (*i)neh*, they do apply to many lexical items preceding such function words. The two alternating phrasal forms are labeled *Absolute* and *Oblique* (Steinhauer and Usman, 1978; Prentice and Usman, 1978; Mckinnon, 2011; Ernanda, 2015, 2021).

The terms *Absolute* and *Oblique* in this paper are language-specific notions which refer to the phrasal alternation phenomenon in Kerinci. Thus, the terms *Absolute* and *Oblique* in this paper should not be confused with the terms *absolute case* and *oblique case* used in crosslinguistic descriptions (see, for example, Comrie, 1989; Payne, 1997; Dixon, 2012). Table 1 shows the Absolute and Oblique forms in Kerinci that correspond to non-alternating counterparts in the standard language, Bahasa Indonesia.

³ This figure was provided by an official at the Subdistrict Office in Pondok Tinggi during a fieldwork interview in July, 2015.

⁴ Indonesian with Kerinci accent.

⁵ Minangkabau people generally do not speak Kerinci. This could partly be because the phrasal alternation in Kerinci is rather challenging to acquire.

Table 1

Absolute and Oblique forms in Kerinci.

Bahasa Indonesia	Final rime	Kerinci	
		Absolute	Oblique
<i>coba</i> 'to try'	*a	<i>cubea</i>	<i>cubo</i>
<i>tangga</i> 'ladder'	*a	<i>tanggao</i>	<i>tanggo</i>
<i>beli</i> 'to buy'	*i	<i>beloi</i>	<i>beli</i>
<i>membeli</i> 'to buy'	*i	<i>melai</i>	<i>melei</i>
<i>bulu</i> 'fur'	*u	<i>buleu</i>	<i>bulu</i>
<i>sapu</i> 'broom'	*u	<i>sapau</i>	<i>sapou</i>

In the Kerinci examples in this paper, lexical items are marked with 'A' (for Absolute) and 'O' (for Oblique). Below is an illustration of the use of the phrasal alternation in noun phrases. On its own, the noun *umah* 'house' in (1a) occurs in the Absolute form; this form is the default form and has a generic reading. In a noun phrase, the head noun is often restricted by its postnominal modifier(s). The restricting element can be another noun such as *kayau* 'wood' as in (1b), an adjective such as *gedua* 'big' as in (1c), a possessor such as *nyo* 'his/her' as in (1d), a demonstrative such as *itoh* 'that' as in (1e), etc. This restricting element, either covert or overt, triggers the Oblique form *umoh* for the head noun 'house' (instead of the Absolute form *umah*). When the restricting element is elided, the head noun which is left as the final element of the specific and identifiable referent retains the Oblique (O) form, as shown in (1b') and (1c'). The restricting element in final position typically takes the Absolute form, as in the case of *kayau* (wood.A) in (1b) and *gedua* (big.A) in (1c). However, as noted earlier and illustrated here in (1d) and (1e), function words such as determiners *nyo* 'his/her' and *itoh* 'that' do not alternate.

- (1) a. *umah*
house.A
'a house'
- b. *umoh* *kayau*
house.O wood.A
'a wooden house'
- b'. *umoh* *kayau* (*itoh*)
house.O wood.O that
'the wooden house'
- c. *umoh* *gedua*
house.O big.A
'a big house'
- c'. *umoh* *gedon* (*itoh*)
house.O big.O that
'the big house'
- d. *umoh* *nyo*
house.O 3SG
'her/his house'
- e. *umoh* *itoh*
house.O that
'that house'

Below are some instances of the phrasal alternation for verbal constructions. Example (2a) is an active voice construction. Followed by its patient *mijua* 'table', the verb *nukun* 'hit' occurs in the Oblique form. When the verb is restricted by a covert patient, it still appears in the Oblique form (2b). In passive constructions, the verb occurs in the Absolute form *tukau* 'hit' when the agent is not specified, either because it is unimportant or unknown, as in (3a). When the verb is restricted by an overt or covert agent, the latter retrievable either from prior discourse or shared knowledge, the verb *tukun* 'hit' takes the Oblique form, as in (3b) and (3c) respectively.

- (2) a. *nyo* *nukun* *mijua*
3SG ACT.hit.O table.A
'S/he hit a table.'
- b. *nyo* *nukun*
3SG ACT.hit.O
'S/he hit [it].'
- (3) a. *mijua* *di-tukau*
table.A PASS-hit.A
'A table was hit.'
- b. *mijua* *di-tukun* *nyo*
table.A PASS-hit.O 3SG
'A table was hit by her/him.'
- c. *mijua* *di-tukun*
table.A PASS-hit.O
'A table was hit (by her/him).'

The phrasal alternation occurs in almost all constructions. A more detailed study on phrasal alternation in Kerinci is presented elsewhere (Ernanda, 2017). In the sections that follow, we will examine the use of this phrasal alternation system within the (*i*)*neh* constructions in Kerinci to better understand how (*i*)*neh* extends beyond its basic spatial deictic uses to signal the speaker's epistemic stance. More specifically, we will address the following research questions:

- (1) What are the referential and non-referential uses associated with proximal demonstrative (*i*)*neh* in Kerinci?
- (2) How are these referential and non-referential uses of (*i*)*neh* constructions in Kerinci distinguished via the phrasal alternation system available within the language?
- (3) What does the phrasal alternation system reveal about the semantic and syntactic scope extensions of proximal demonstrative (*i*)*neh* in Kerinci?
- (4) What is the significance of this phrasal alternation test for our understanding of the cognitive dichotomy (if any) between spatial and socio-interactional deixis in Kerinci and potentially other languages as well?

3. Data and methodology

Our analysis is based on data from a corpus comprising 7.5 hours of free conversations among Kerinci native speakers collected by the first author during fieldwork in the village of Pondok Tinggi in the Jambi province of Sumatra, Indonesia in 2014. Informed consent was obtained from each participant prior to each data recording session. The researcher generally assumed the role of passive observer but at times participated in the conversation to prompt new topics when there were periods of silence.

Topics covered in these free conversations include traditional festivals, rice-planting techniques, life experiences, educational issues, government policies, etc. The recordings were transcribed using ELAN, glossed using FLE_X, and translated into English. Pseudonyms are used in all the data transcripts. Excerpts with proximal demonstrative (*i*)*neh* were extracted from the Kerinci conversational transcripts for both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Contextual discourse analysis was adopted to identify the range of functions of (*i*)*neh* constructions in terms of their referential and non-referential uses. Each of these functions was characterized in terms of its phrasal alternation pattern—specifically, whether an Oblique or Absolute form precedes demonstrative (*i*)*neh*. Usage frequency analysis was used to gauge the distribution of each (*i*)*neh* function to obtain a clearer picture of the extent of grammaticalization and pragmaticization of (*i*)*neh* construction in Kerinci conversational discourse. The usage frequency data also provide crucial information on whether there is a correlation between phrasal alternation forms (Oblique vs. Absolute) and basic (i.e. spatial deictic) vs. extended (i.e. socio-interactional deictic) uses of (*i*)*neh* constructions.

4. Analysis of referential and non-referential uses of (*i*)*neh* in Kerinci

In this section, we examine a wide range of (*i*)*neh* constructions, starting with the pronominal and determiner uses within the referential domain (§4.1) and then extending further to more abstract deictic functions in non-referential contexts (§4.2). These referential and non-referential uses of (*i*)*neh* will be examined in terms of their morphophonological and morpho-syntactic characteristics, i.e. the presence of Oblique vs. Absolute forms within the phrasal alternation system of Kerinci.

4.1. Uses of (*i*)*neh* in the referential domain

Within the referential domain, the demonstrative has been found to serve as both a pronoun and a determiner in most of the known languages of the world (Diesel, 1999). In the subsections below, we examine how proximal demonstrative (*i*)*neh* realizes these two functions in Kerinci. This will pave the way for us to subsequently trace its extended uses within the non-referential domain.

4.1.1. Pronominal use

For pronominal use, Kerinci speakers tend to deploy the full form *ineh* more frequently than the reduced form *neh* (see §5 for a more detailed discussion). The use of *ineh* as a pronominal is often accompanied by a gesture. For example, in (4) below, the speaker simultaneously uses a thumbs-up gesture. There is also an intonation break between *utak* 'brain' and the demonstrative *ineh* 'this'. The presence of the intonation break between two words serves an important function in Kerinci in that it helps to determine the syntactic relation and semantic interpretation (see Aijmer, 2002 for a similar test in English). Note that Kerinci, like many other Austronesian languages, is a copula-less language. The intonation break between *utak* and *ineh* in (4) indicates the presence of a subject *utak* 'brain' and a pronominal predicate *ineh* 'this', hence yielding the utterance '(His) brain was *this*', with the thumbs-up gesture indicating that the speaker's intended meaning is '(His) brain was a good one'.

- (4) *utak ineh gambua ilauk, ena ukiran andae*
 brain.A INEH draw.A good.A make carving able.A
 Lit. '[His] brain was this, [his] drawing was good, [he] could do carving.'
 'His brain was brilliant, his drawing was good, he could do carving.'

In example (4) above, we see an exophoric (i.e. situational) use of demonstrative pronoun *ineh*. Of crucial importance to the indexical function of *ineh* in this particular context is the speaker's use of an accompanying thumbs-up gesture, which has significant meaning in communication (Kelly et al., 1999).⁶ A thumbs-up is a well-known conventionalized symbol that denotes good quality. The combination of a thumbs-up gesture with *ineh* expresses that the person who is being discussed in the conversation possesses a good brain or is brilliant.

In (5), we have another example involving the combination of a gesture and demonstrative pronoun *ineh*. The speaker rubs his thumb against his index finger and middle finger, a gesture that is used cross-culturally to refer to money (Armstrong and Wagner, 2003), while saying *ineh idia* 'this [=money], not have/not exist' to mean that his family did not have the financial means to support him through college/university.

- (5) *ayoh malindan neh pinta, ineh idia*
 uncle.O PN NEH smart, INEH not.have
 Lit. 'Uncle Malindan was smart [but] this [he] does not have.'
 'Uncle Malindan was smart but he had no money.'

With or without a gesture, as a pronoun, the demonstrative is often used as an indexical to refer to a person, a thing or a location. In (6), the full form *ineh* is used to substitute for the third person pronoun *nyo* 'he'.

- (6) *sengko uha, ineh idia ngansou gawe*
 assume.O people.A INEH NEG ACT.gradually.O work.O
 Lit. '(According to) people's assumption, this does not do [his] job bit by bit.'
 '(According to) people's assumption, he does not do his job bit by bit.'

The following example displays the use of demonstrative (*i*)*neh* to express an inanimate entity, in this case, insulin leaves. Although the full form *ineh* is preferred for pronouns, the reduced form *neh* can also be used, as shown in (7).

- (7) *ndok nalok neh kok tanoh baheu*
 want ACT.search NEH at Tanoh Baheu
 Lit. '[If you] want to search for this, [go] to Tanoh Baheu'
 'If you want to search for insulin leaves, go to Tanoh Baheu.'

Demonstrative *ineh* can also be used as a pronoun for locations, as shown in (8). In this context, the speaker uses the proximal demonstrative *ineh* 'this' in the locative sense with the meaning 'here' to refer to the village Pondok Tinggi, which is also the location where the speaker and hearer are having the conversation. In this example, we see demonstrative pronoun *ineh* being used anaphorically as an endophoric referent-tracking device.

- (8) *lahai ka pundaik bot ineh tinggai*
 run.A to Pondok.A because INEH high.A
 Lit. '[They] ran to Pondok because this is high.'
 'They ran here because this place is high ground.'

4.1.2. Determiner use

Within the referential domain, proximal demonstrative (*i*)*neh* can also be used grammatically as a determiner to mark definiteness. As a postnominal determiner occupying the rightmost position within a noun phrase, (*i*)*neh* triggers its preceding element to occur in the Oblique form. In (9), we see determiner *ineh* triggering the preceding head noun to take the Oblique form *kakei* 'leg' (instead of the Absolute form *kakai*). In (10), determiner (*i*)*neh* triggers the Oblique form for its adjectival modifier *nek* 'small.O' (and not the Absolute form *naek* 'small.A').

- (9) *kakei ineh lah sakaik*
 leg.O INEH PERF hurt.A
 'This leg hurts.'
- (10) *kakei nek ineh lah sakaik*
 leg.O small.O INEH PERF hurt.A
 'This small leg hurts.'

⁶ Previous studies have shown that there is a strong relationship between gesture and language, with gesture being a significant communicative strategy in social interaction (e.g. Haviland, 2003; Kendon, 2004; Wilkins, 2003; Fricke, 2014; *inter alia*).

An inherent and shared characteristic of deictic elements such as demonstrative (*i)neh*, whether as pronominal or determiner, is its [+definiteness] feature. This feature is essential to its indexical function as a referent-tracking device, both for exophoric and endophoric reference. As noted earlier, in Kerinci, the demonstrative does not alternate between Oblique and Absolute forms; however, as the rightmost element, postnominal determiner (*i)neh* triggers the Oblique form in its preceding element(s).

4.2. Uses of (*i)neh* in the non-referential domain

In our database, the functions of proximal demonstrative (*i)neh* in Kerinci within the non-referential domain fall into three major categories: (i) lexicalized expressions, (ii) discourse-framing expressions, and (iii) pragmaticalized expressions. In this section, we examine how (*i)neh* is used in these non-referential domains.

4.2.1. Lexicalized expressions

Three types of lexicalized (*i)neh* expressions were identified in our Kerinci conversational database. These are the enumerating device *ineh* (§4.2.1.1), the attention-getting device (*i)neh* (§4.2.1.2), and the temporal adverbial *inin neh* ‘now’ (§4.2.1.3). We will now focus on the functions, along with the morphophonological and morphosyntactic characteristics, of these lexicalized (*i)neh* expressions, as well as consider their possible derivations.

4.2.1.1. Enumerative *ineh* ‘then (there be)’. An enumerating device is used to list or to name an element one by one. Kerinci uses the proximal demonstrative *ineh* (‘this’) for this purpose, as illustrated in (11) below.⁷ In this excerpt, the speaker is talking about a local traditional ceremony which is held every five years. In this ceremony, people prepare colorful decorations and dress festively to enliven the occasion. The speaker, an old lady, is listing what the locals usually have during this ceremony, and she often enumerates the items using *ineh*, for example *ineh setelan* ‘then (there are) suits’ in line 003 and *ineh umbul–umbul* ‘then (there are) banners’ in line 005. This enumerative reading emerges via the use of existential ‘there be’ (<‘that be’) *ineh*.

- (11) 001 *kamai kan lah kuwak kamai samao*
 1PL.EXCL PRT PERF often 1PL.EXCL follow
 ‘I’ve often joined (the ceremony).’
- 002 *aju-aju aduak, aju adot kitao*
 RED.shirt.O custom.A shirt.O custom.O 1PL.INCL.POSS
 ‘(There are) traditional dresses, our traditional dresses.’
- 003 *ineh setelan, jilbab, setelan abua, baju setelan*
 INEH suit, veil suit red.A shirt suit
 ‘then (there are) suits–veils, red suits, suit attire.’
- 004 *bandiro nitoh lao*
 flag.O like.that also
 ‘The flags are like that (i.e. colorful) too.’
- 005 *ineh umbul-umbul*
 INEH RED.banner
 ‘then (there are) banners (as well).’

As an enumerating device, *ineh* can also occur in constructions that express an event. In example (12), the speaker relates an unpleasant experience when she was young and worked as a farmer. She describes how she got home from work one evening. She had to go home on foot and it was raining. To make matters worse, she had to carry a heavy rattan bag. The use of *ineh* (in the sense of ‘and then’) in this particular utterance allowed the speaker to extend the list of challenges she had to cope with.

- (12) *aloik toh jalon kakai, ujua-ujua lah, ineh ambau di-galoah*
 return.A TOH road.A leg.A RED.rain.A PRT INEH rattan.bag.A PASS-carry.A
 ‘When going back home, I had to go on foot, it was raining, and then there was a rattan bag to carry (lit. to be carried).’

The enumerating device *ineh* in the above example has the sense of a fuller construction such as *suduah toh ineh* ‘after that, this’ or ‘then, this’. In contemporary usage, the full construction *suduah toh ineh* can be used to extend a list, but more commonly *suduah toh* is often elided, leaving *ineh* alone to function as the enumerating device—often with the meaning simply reduced to ‘(and) then’. However, it is interesting to note that, as an enumerating device, *ineh* always takes the full form. This is consistent with its enumerating function, which is to introduce an additional item to the existing list, usually as new information in a highly salient fashion.

⁷ Interestingly, the distal demonstrative *itoh* (‘that’) cannot be used as an enumerating device.

4.2.1.2. *Attention-getting (i)neh* 'Look(!)'. The proximal demonstrative (*i)neh* can also function as a device to get the listener's attention. As noted in Aijmer (2002), attention-getting devices are often used to express a new idea in a conversation or to emphasize a particular point (Trillo, 1997). In Kerinci, both the full form *ineh* and the reduced form *neh* can be used for attention-getting purposes, as shown in (13) and (14), where it has the equivalent function of *Look(!)* in English.

(13) *ineh* *dusen* *lah* *ta-uwea*
INEH village.A already PERF-bring.A
'Look, the village has already been involved.'

(14) *neh* *idjia* *nyo* *lalau* *ntuk*
NEH NEG 3SG go.A seem
'Look! It seems s/he did not go.'

Attention-getting device *ineh* can be reduced to *neh*, and yet retain its prosodic salience. One source for its prosodic salience could be its source construction. It is likely that the attention-getting use of (*i)neh* is derived from the expression *kimok ineh* 'look at this'. When the verb *kimok* 'look' is elided, the deictic element (*i)neh* can still convey the same attention-getting function on its own, especially when accompanied by the speaker's illocutionary force as seen in (14).

4.2.1.3. *Temporal adverb inin neh* 'now'. Proximal demonstrative (*i)neh* in Kerinci can also form lexicalized expressions via a process of compounding, as seen in (15a) with the temporal adverb *inin neh* 'now' (lit. 'present time' + 'this'). Constructions without the demonstrative, such as (15b), are permissible but not preferred⁸.

- (15) a. *inin neh* *sa-taan* *ntok* *rayao* *aloik*
now NEH one-year.A before feast.day.A back.A
'Now, each year, before the (Idul Fitri)⁸ feast day, [she] comes back home'
- b. *?inin sa-taan ntok rayao aloik*
now one-year.A before feast.day.A back.A
'Now, each year, before the feast day, [she] comes back home.'

Inin refers to the speaker's speech time. In Kerinci, the time expression *inin* on its own is not sufficiently specified until it is modified by the proximal demonstrative *neh*. This proximal demonstrative determiner gives the utterance a definite reading. It marks the moment as the time when the speaker and the hearer share common ground through shared temporal reference.⁹

It is worth noting here an interesting difference between the enumerating and attention-getting uses of *ineh* and the temporal referencing function of the lexicalized adverbial *inin neh* 'now'. The former two lexicalized expressions are extensions from the pronominal use of (*i)neh*, while the latter is an extension from its determiner use that involves a shift from spatial deixis ('this (place), this one here') to temporal deixis ('this time, now').

Also worth noting is that none of the lexicalized (*i)neh* expressions alternate between Oblique and Absolute forms. Both enumerative *ineh* and attention-getting (*i)neh* constructions have no alternating forms because of their utterance-initial position (i.e. nothing precedes them and thus phrasal alternation is not triggered). In the case of temporal adverb *inin neh*, phrasal alternation also fails to apply since there are no alternating forms for temporal noun *inin* which precedes demonstrative *neh*.

4.2.2. Discourse-framing (*i)neh* expressions

The proximal demonstrative (*i)neh* is also frequently recruited for two major types of discourse-framing functions: topic marking and subordinate clause marking. As we shall see in the following subsections, the occurrence of demonstrative determiner (*i)neh* in postnominal position plays an important role in the rise of these two discourse-framing uses of (*i)neh*.

4.2.2.1. *From determiner to topic marker*. Kerinci is a topic-comment language. The relationship between the topic and comment is rather loose, with no agreement marking between the subject and the verb. When demonstrative (*i)neh* is used as a topic marker, it still remains within the referential domain as a determiner (i.e. definiteness and specificity marker) for the head noun in topic position, but it also serves a textual and hence non-referential function as well. As such, in topic position, demonstrative determiner (*i)neh* does more than signal definiteness. Together with its head noun, (*i)neh* also participates in setting up the mental stage for the addressee to attend to new or more elaborate upcoming information.¹⁰ In other words, (*i)neh* serves a dual function: it is still a referentiality marking device within the noun phrase (a textual and grammatical

⁸ The Idul Fitri feast day is the first day of Syawal when Muslims end the fasting month (Ramadan). In Indonesia, there is a week-long public holiday following Ramadan. This holiday is mainly used to celebrate Idul Fitri and visit family members in the hometown.

⁹ In English, one often needs to instantiate a noun using referentiality marking devices such as definite or indefinite articles, demonstrative determiners and possessive determiners. For example, we say *a/the/this book* and not just *book* on its own. Cognitive grammarians discuss this constraint in terms of 'groundedness' (e.g. Taylor, 2002); others discuss the phenomenon of definiteness in terms of finiteness (see Lyons, 1977).

¹⁰ Topic markers are often referred to as 'mental staging devices' in functional cognitive grammar (see Hinds, 1987).

function), but it also serves as a topic marking device to help prepare the mind of the addressee for upcoming information (an interpersonal/interactional and pragmatic function). This then paves the way for the extension of demonstrative (*i*)*neh* from referential to non-referential uses along the adnominal (i.e. determiner) pathway.¹¹

In topic position, the emergence of non-referential (e.g. grammatical and pragmatic) uses of (*i*)*neh* is often facilitated by the use of multiple referentiality marking devices. To illustrate, in (16), the referent *indouk* ‘mother.O’ is already specified by third person possessive determiner *nyo* ‘her’. The additional presence of demonstrative determiner *neh* following the specific referent *indouk nyo* ‘her mother’ serves to reinforce its definiteness reading, but at the same time the resulting redundancy paves the way for the reinterpretation of *neh* as a topic marker. In other words, because both *nyo* and *neh* in this context give a definite reading, *neh* has room to extend its semantic and syntactic scope beyond the referential domain to additionally serve as a discourse-level frame-setter or mental staging device to prepare the addressee for upcoming new information, or in interrogative contexts such as (16), for upcoming query for information.¹²

- (16) *tina ku indouk nyo neh po uha sapadik*
 remember 1SG mother.O 3SG NEH how.many people.A sibling
 ‘I was wondering, as for her mother, how many siblings (does she have)?’

As seen in the spectrogram in Fig. 1 below, there is a strikingly obvious intonation break between *neh* as a topic marker and the comment phrase following it.

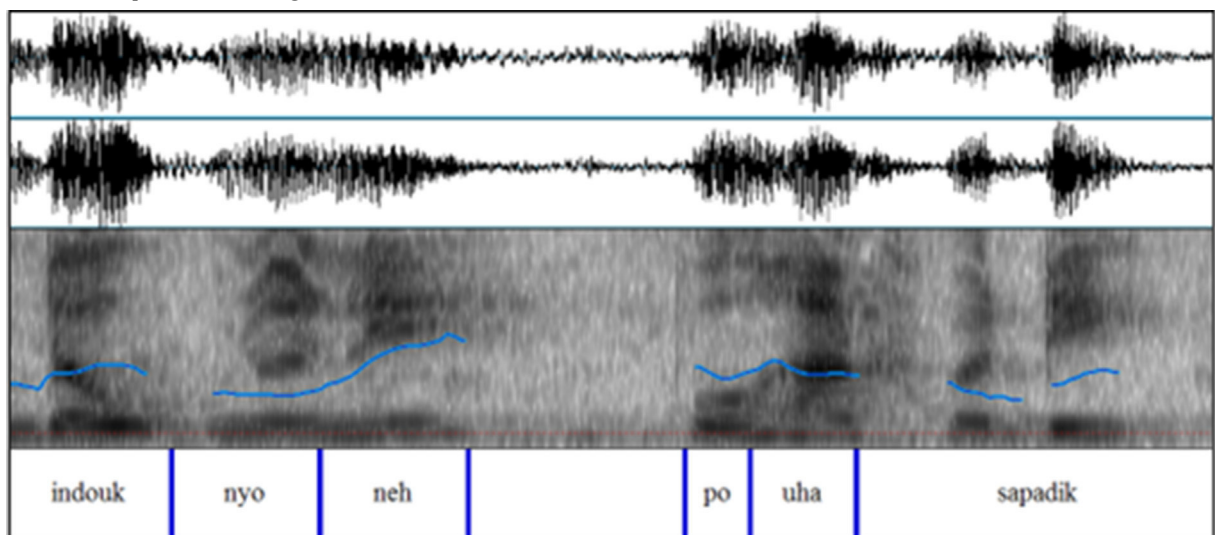


Fig. 1. Spectrogram of the topic marking function of (*i*)*neh*.

As noted earlier in Section 4.1.2 above, the determiner function usually requires a preceding noun or specifying element (e.g. adjective) to appear in the Oblique form, except in certain cases such as certain proper nouns and loan words that do not undergo phrasal alternation (and hence do not have Absolute vs. Oblique forms). In the case of topic constructions, however, we typically find nominals preceding the demonstrative determiner (*i*)*neh* appearing in the Absolute form, suggesting that the determiner has acquired an independent status as a topic marker.¹³ The nominal *ahei maih* ‘Thursday.A’ in topic position in (17) below is a case in point.

- (17) 001 *haa iyea lah ku atao,*
 INTJ yes PRT 1SG tell.A
 ‘So, I think “Yes!”’

¹¹ In his study on the grammaticalization of demonstratives in Panare, a Carib language spoken in Venezuela, Gildea (1993) found that the reason the non-verbal copula exhibits deixis is because it was historically a demonstrative pronoun that has been grammaticalized. He adds that as verbal auxiliaries, copulas mark the verb phrase in proximal and distal time. Similar observations about the diachronic link between demonstratives and copulas have also been observed for Dagaare, a Gur language spoken in West Africa (see Mwinlaaru and Yap, 2017). Kerinci differs in some ways from Panare in that it is a non-copula language. Whereas demonstratives in Panare develop tense marking functions through a pronominal pathway, demonstratives in Kerinci develop topic marking uses through an adnominal (i.e. determiner) pathway.

¹² Topic marking uses of (*i*)*neh* are also strongly associated with the left adjointed position and often also with intonation breaks.

¹³ Thai shows similarity to Kerinci regarding the syntactic position of the topic marker within a clause. A demonstrative functioning as a topic marker in Thai also follows a noun (Iwasaki and Dechapratumwan, 2022).

- 002 *ilauk* *gea* *ndo* *itoh*,
good.A also like that
'(Doing it) like that is good, too.'
- 003 *di* *suha-suha* *nya* *uha*,
so RED.one-people.A really people.A
'So, one by one ...'
- 004 *kantei* *tah* *adea* *lao* *gawe* *umuah*
friend.O not.know exist.A also work.O at.home.A
'perhaps one friend may have some work to do at home, too,'
- 005 *adi* *suha-suha* *woa* *kayao*
so RED.one-people.A just 2SG
'So you just (do the interview) one person at a time.'
- 006 *ahei* *maih* ***neh*** *diyea* *itoh*
day.O Thursday.A NEH 3SG that
'As for Thursday, that's her turn.'

In (17) above, the speaker is talking about a day, which is the following Thursday, when someone will do an interview. The topic *ahei maih* 'Thursday.A' in line 006 is followed by *neh*. The comment clause *diyea itoh* 'that's her (= her turn)' elaborates on the topic. *Neh* here no longer serves as a proximal demonstrative determiner ('this'); rather it assumes the role of topic marker to prepare the addressee for new upcoming information. Worth noting here is that when the Oblique form *meih* 'Thursday.O' is used, a demonstrative reading for *neh* will still be retained, yielding the more temporal adverbial sense of 'This Thursday'.¹⁴

In (18), we find (*i*)*neh* in line 005 being followed by interactional particle *kan*. In this example, the speaker is identifying a location that was occupied by the Japanese during the Second World War. The place *Kodim* is the topic in the speaker's narrative, and it is followed by *neh* as the topic marker.

- (18) 001 *memang* *bansuak* *parange* *jepua*
indeed vicious.A attitude Japan.A
'The attitude of the Japanese (soldiers) was indeed vicious.'
- 002 *nge* *ngaloh* *jepua* *itoh*.
NMLZ ACT.defeat.O Japan.A that
'The ones who defeated the Japanese'
- 003 *uha* *perang* *gerilya* *mala* *deak*
people.A war guerrilla evening.A TAG
'were people who engaged in guerrilla warfare in the evenings, weren't they?'
- 004 *asauk* *ka* *anau*.
enter.A to whatchamacallit.A
'(They) entered ... what was it called?'
- 005 *kodim* ***neh*** *kan* *nyo* *jepua* *alo* *nunggou*
kodim NEH PRT 3PL Japan.A all ACT.stay.O
'As for this (place) Kodim, right, they, the Japanese, all of them were occupying (it).'

Note that the proper noun *Kodim* in topic position is already inherently definite (line 005), so demonstrative determiner *neh* is free to serve as a topic marker. Equally worth noting is that the juncture between the topic and its comment clause also serves as an ideal location for the insertion of interactional particles. In (18), the presence of interactional particle *kan*, which is often used as a confirmation-seeking device to enhance solidarity between the speaker and the addressee, provides additional evidence that *neh* is being used as a topic marker with a juncture-marking function. Nevertheless, in the absence of phrasal alternation in the proper noun *Kodim*, we can still see traces of its determiner use (*Kodim neh* 'this (place) Kodim') within its topic marking context (*Kodim neh kan* ... 'As for this (place) Kodim, right, ...'). Constructions such as line 005, by virtue of their dual functions, are 'bridge' (i.e. intermediate) constructions in the semantic and syntactic scope expansion from demonstrative determiner to topic marker (*i*)*neh*.

In (19), the noun phrase *lek kitao* 'our party' in line 001 is accompanied by topic marker *neh*, with an interjection particle *waeh* 'wow!' inserted in the juncture preceding the comment clause. In addition to the intonation break characteristic of topic constructions, the presence of this interjection particle provides further evidence that the utterance-initial noun phrase *lek kitao* 'our party' is a topic, with *neh* as a topic marker. Note also that the first person possessive pronoun *kitao* 'our' already identifies the head noun *lek* 'feast.O' as a definite referent, thereby allowing determiner *neh* to be reinterpreted as a topic marker.

¹⁴ This *ahei maih neh* construction is expressed as a single intonation unit. Thus, a double topic reading is not possible for this example. In some contexts, for example when one is referring to a particular Thursday and pointing to the calendar, one could interpret it as a double topic construction in the sense of 'As for Thursday, this (particular day), that's her turn.'

- (19) 001 *lek kitao neh waeh*
 feast.O 1PL.INCL.POSS NEH INTJ
 'As for our feast, wow!'
- 002 *ku asao inggao kincei ineh*
 1SG feel.A jolly.A Kerinci.O INEH
 'I think this (place) Kerinci will be jolly.'
- 003 *gun ho*
 gong PRT
 '(The size of) the gong (is) wow!' [accompanied by a gesture of the speaker's two hands moving outwards away from each other to signal the huge size of the gong]

As a topic marker, (*i*)*neh* can co-occur with an emphatic marker *hē*, as seen in line 001 in (20). There is an intonation break between the emphatic marker *hē* and the predicate of the clause following it. As shown in the spectrogram in Fig. 2, *neh hē* is pronounced as a single intonation unit (line 001), with a pause of 0.46 s before the main clause resumes (line 002). The use of the Absolute form *sakula* 'school.A' signals that *neh* is not being used as a demonstrative determiner. Unlike the Oblique form *sakulo* 'school.O', a proximal demonstrative determiner reading of (*i*)*neh* 'this' is not available in (20).

- (20) 001 *anok nge temak sakula neh hē (0.46)*
 child.O REL graduate school.A NEH EMPH
 'As for (my) child, the one who graduated from school,'
- 002 *lahai kerjea di PT Sarang Burung*
 run.A work.A LOC PT Sarang Burung
 '(he) went off (and now) works at the Sarang Burung Company.'

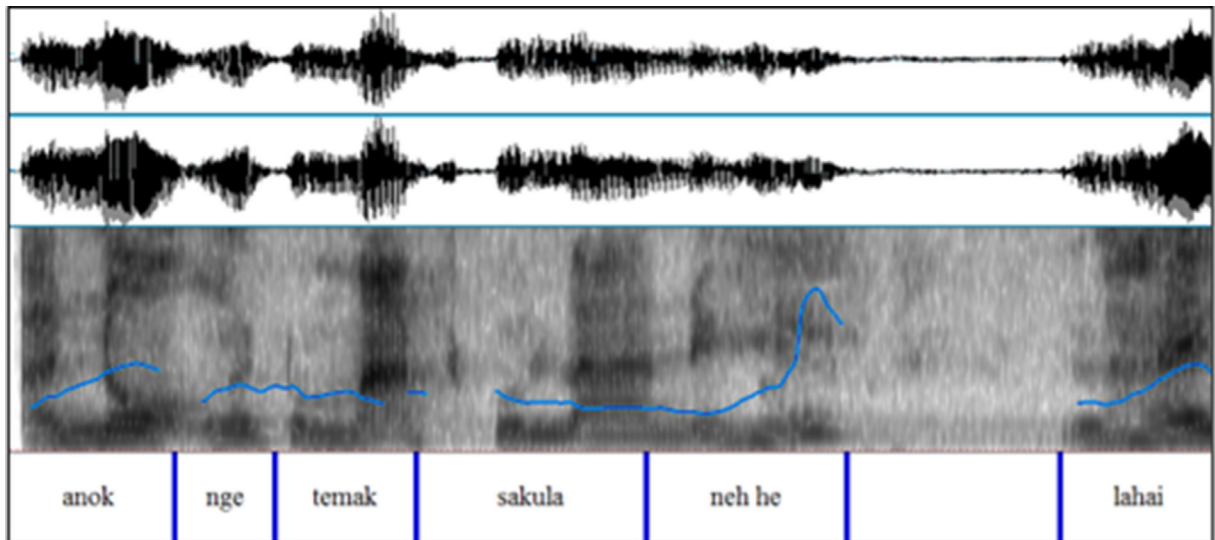


Fig. 2. Spectrogram of the emphatic topic marking function of *neh he*.

Topic marker (*i*)*neh* can also occur in a contrastive context, as seen in (21), where the speaker shows surprise at the unexpected difference in prices of broiler chickens in Palembang and Pondok Tinggi. The topic marker *neh* in line 002 identifies and highlights a locative referent 'here' (= Pondok Tinggi), in contrast to another location, Palembang.¹⁵

- (21) 001 *palimba duwo puluh tigea lei sa-kilo,*
 Palembang.A two.O ten.O three.A buy.O one-kilo
 'In Palembang, it is twenty-three (thousand rupiahs) for one kilo,'
- 002 *inei neh nge gek maha ikoik*
 here NEH NMLZ rather expensive.A little.A
 '(but) as for here, (the price is) rather a bit expensive (lit. 'the slightly rather expensive one').'

To briefly sum up our analysis on topic marking uses of (*i*)*neh*, one of the catalysts for the reinterpretation of demonstrative determiner (*i*)*neh* as topic marker (*i*)*neh* is functional redundancy. Both mark definiteness; however, while determiner (*i*)*neh*

¹⁵ Although *inei* 'here' in line 002 does not alternate, other locative nouns such as *Kincai* (the Absolute form for the locative noun referring to the region where Kerinci is spoken) can easily substitute for *inei* and thus unambiguously indicate the topic marking use of *neh* in constructions such as (21).

operates at the noun phrase level, topic marker (*i*)*neh* additionally operates at the discourse level as an addressee-engagement device. In (16) and (19), *indouk nyo* ‘her mother’ and *lek kitao* ‘our party’ are already definite by virtue of their possessive determiners *nyo* ‘her’ and *kitao* ‘our’, while in (17) and (18), *ahei maih* ‘Thursday’ and *Kodim* (the name of a place) are inherently definite by virtue of their being proper nouns. The additional presence of demonstrative determiner (*i*)*neh*, which reinforces a definiteness reading, creates a certain degree of redundancy that facilitates the emergence of topic marker (*i*)*neh*. Given that topic constructions often come with an intonation break between the topic and comment constituents, affective and inter-actational particles (e.g. *waeh*, *kan* and *hē*) are often found inserted at such junctures which immediately follow topic marker (*i*)*neh*, further making the topic constructions much more visible. It is also worth noting that the elements preceding topic marker (*i*)*neh* tend to take the Absolute form if they do alternate (see §5 for a statistical analysis), which suggests the fairly independent status of topic marker (*i*)*neh*. Extensions and decategorialization of demonstratives into topic markers have also been attested in other languages (see Vries, 1995 on Wambon and some other Papuan languages; also cited in Diessel, 1999).

4.2.2.2. From determiner to subordinate clause marker. In contexts such as (22), the whole conditional clause ending in *neh* (line 005) is used as a frame-setting device.¹⁶ These conditional constructions are often accompanied by clause-initial subordinator *kalo* ‘if’. The [(*kalo*) + conditional clause + *neh*] construction provides background information to set the frame or mental stage for upcoming information to be presented in the next clause. In such constructions, *neh* no longer functions as a demonstrative but serves as a marker of a subordinate clause that is semantically linked to an upcoming main clause. In other words, demonstrative determiner (*i*)*neh* is being used as subordinate clause marker (*i*)*neh*, often accompanied by phonological reduction as part of a grammaticalization process whereby demonstrative determiner (*i*)*neh* is ‘upscoped’ from a nominal phrase level involving first-order ontological entities to an event/situation clause level involving second-order ontological entities (a la Evans et al., 2018a; see also Yap et al., 2011).

- (22) 001 *piyao* *uha* *atao* *padi* *nona* *maya* *neh* *ilauk*,
 why people.A tell.A paddy.O nona maya this good.A
 ‘Why do people say the Nona Maya rice is good?’
- 002 *kamai* *subea* *melei*
 1PL.EXCL try.A ACT.buy.O
 ‘We tried and bought it.’
- 003 *sa-kalei* *tanak* *haa* *iduak*,
 one.time.O cook.A PRT NEG
 ‘(We) cooked it once, hmm no (way).’
- 004 *agok* *amba* *nasei*
 rather tasteless rice.O
 ‘Rather tasteless, (the Nona Maya) rice.’
- 005 *kalo* *solok* *putaih* ***neh***,
 if Solok Putaih.A NEH
 ‘If (speaking of) Solok Putaih (rice).’
- 006 *nasei* *nyo* *padoak* *manaih*
 cooked.rice.O 3SG excellent.A sweet.A
 ‘its cooked form is excellent, sweet.’

As shown in (23), without subordinator *kalo* ‘if’ to explicitly mark a conditional clause, *neh* can still be interpreted as a conditional subordinate clause marker. As pointed out in Haiman (1978), conditionals are also topics. In the case of Kerinci, we see evidence of the syncretism between conditionals and topics in the form of an extended use of demonstrative determiner (*i*)*neh*.

- (23) *manao* *uto* *ndok* *alo* *lempau* ***neh*** *jalon* *deboa*
 whoever car want go Lempau.A NEH road.O Deboa.A
 (i) ‘Any car that wants to go to Lempau, (there’s) Deboa Road.’
 (ii) ‘If any car wants to go to Lempau, (there’s) Deboa Road.’

Similar to constructions with topic marker (*i*)*neh*, often there is an intonation break immediately after subordinate clause marker (*i*)*neh*. This juncture helps to separate the discourse-framing subordinate clause from the upcoming main clause. As seen in Fig. 3 below, the spectrogram for example (23) reveals a clear intonation break in the pitch contour between subordinate clause marker *neh* and the upcoming main clause *jalon deboa* ‘(there’s) Deboa Road’.¹⁷

¹⁶ Iwasaki and Dechapraturmwan (2022) found this function in Thai and dub it as a ‘provisional topic’. This kind of function is also known as an ‘aboutness’ function in Japanese (Kuno, 1973; Reinhart, 1981; Saito, 1985).

¹⁷ The spectrogram also shows the speech waveform of a falling object in the room at the same point in time where we see the juncture (i.e. pause) between the subordinate conditional clause (*manao uto ndok alo ka lempau neh*) and the matrix clause (*jalon deboa*). The relevant evidence for the presence of a juncture in example (23), then, is the extended break in the pitch contour.

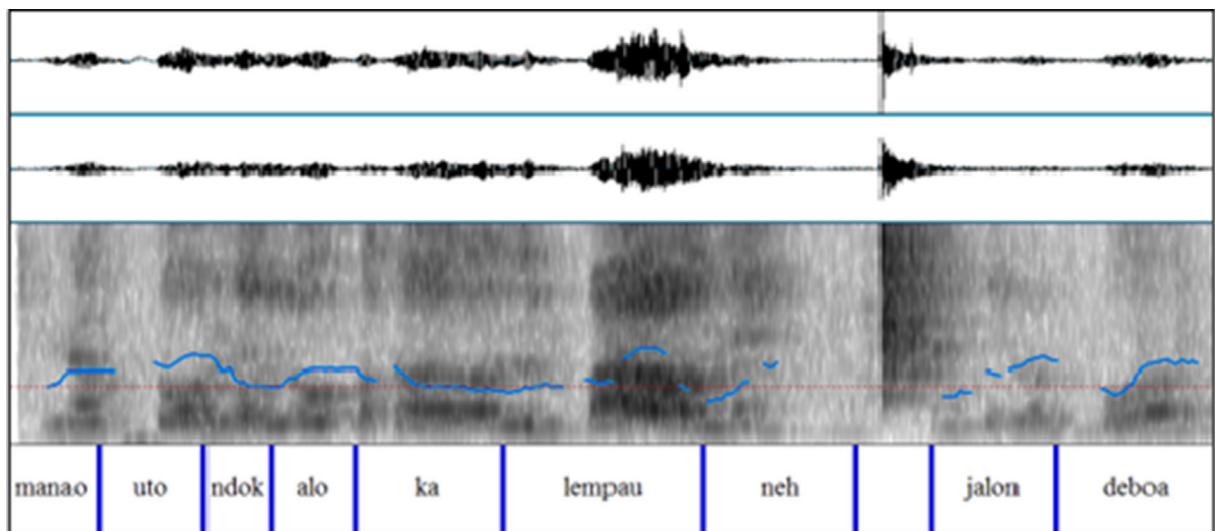


Fig. 3. Spectrogram of the subordinate clause marking function of *neh*.

4.2.3. Pragmatized *neh* expressions

Utterance-final stance particles, often also referred to in the literature as sentence-final particles (SFP), at first glance look like determiners.¹⁸ However, there exist some subtle differences between the two. Morphologically, both the full form *ineh* and the reduced form *neh* can occur as a determiner, whereas as an SFP it is typically only the reduced form *neh* that is used. Semantically and morphosyntactically, whereas the determiner operates at the noun phrase level within the referential domain, the SFP scopes over an entire proposition to reveal the speaker's evaluation of the proposition. It can also function as an interactional particle in interactive talk. In other words, SFP *neh* operates at the discourse level within the pragmatic domain, serving as a marker of the speaker's subjective and intersubjective (i.e. interpersonal) stance. When *neh* extends beyond the noun phrase (and hence beyond the referential domain into non-referential ones), the phrasal alternation rules no longer apply in the same way. Whereas the element preceding demonstrative determiner (*i*)*neh* generally takes the Oblique form, the element preceding SFP *neh* instead takes the Absolute form, for the simple reason that the mood particle *neh* scopes over whole propositions, whose last elements necessarily appear in the Absolute form in accordance with the phrasal alternation rules in Kerinci. It is worth noting that, prosodically, there is no intonation break before SFP *neh*, indicating that it forms a single intonation unit with its host proposition. In our database, there is no intonation break before all 60 tokens of SFP *neh*.

In (24), *neh* is used as an utterance-final particle (line 003), with both an emphatic reading and an addressee-engaging interpersonal function. It emphasizes the whole proposition preceding it, highlighting the space where the 'insulin' plant grows.¹⁹ At the same time, given its utterance-final position and hence its turn-transition potential in the conversation, *neh* can also function as an addressee-engaging device much like English *you see*, calling the addressee's attention to the proposition asserted by the speaker, and enhancing speaker-addressee solidarity at the same time.

- (24) 001 *nyo tumbauh kek selo-selo bayua*
 3SG grow.A at RED.interspace spinach.A
 'It grows between spinach,'
- 002 *kok ubi duduek,*
 at yam.O sit.A
 'close to yams.'
- 003 *haa toh nyo nyo tumbauh neh*
 INTJ TOH 3SG 3SG grow.A NEH
 'Huh, that's where it- it grows, you see.'

As noted earlier, whereas the elements preceding determiner (*i*)*neh* take the Oblique form, those preceding SFP *neh* take the Absolute form. This indicates the separate and independent grammatical status of *neh* as a stance marker, consistent with its emphatic (subjective) and addressee-engaging (intersubjective) functions which, as seen in (24) above, scope over the entire proposition (*toh nyo nyo tumbauh* 'that's where it-it grows'). In terms of epistemic stance, the speaker uses a brisk

¹⁸ The use of demonstratives as SFPs has also been observed in other languages. Kratochvíl (2011) shows that demonstrative-based SFPs in Abui marks tense, evidentiality and assertion.

¹⁹ In Indonesia, it is common belief that the leaves of this particular plant can be used to cure diabetes, hence this plant is often referred to as the 'insulin plant'.

utterance-final *neh* to signal that he has epistemic authority over the information²⁰, but at the same time the speaker also treats the information as equally accessible to the addressee by using the proximal deixis inherent in *neh* to express a shared-interlocutor and solidarity-enhancing ‘you see’ (in the sense of ‘as you can realize, too’) reading.

Sometimes there are ambiguous cases, where either a determiner or SFP reading of (*i*)*neh* is possible. In (25), the speaker is explaining why she now does not hear too well, attributing the cause to her excessive use of pills for gout. Her use of *neh* in line 004 can be interpreted as a determiner use (*pel ubot asam urat neh* ‘these pills for gout’) or an SFP use (*makan pel ubot asam urat neh* ‘taking pills for gout, **you see**’). The lack of alternating forms for the compound word *asam urat* ‘gout’ also contributes to the ambiguity. Often, however, there are other cues that can help disambiguate between competing interpretations. In the case of (25), the use of the full form *ineh* would draw attention to the gout pills, while the use of the reduced form *neh* in utterance-final position would more likely draw attention to the speaker’s effort to align with the addressee.

- (25) 001 *pendengaran toh agok lahai ikoik*
hearing that rather run.A slight.A
‘(My) hearing (is) rather bad (lit. ‘veers off course a little bit’).’
- 002 *ntah dek banyuak makan ubuak*
not.know because many.A eat.O medicine.A
‘(I) don’t know (if it’s) because (I) have taken too much medication.’
- 003 *ubot kakai neh uleu deak*
medicine.O leg.A NEH in.the.past TAG
‘Pills for the legs, in the past, right?’
- 004 *makan pel ubot asam urat neh*
ACT.eat.O pill medicine.O gout NEH
(i) ‘Taking **these** pills for gout.’
(ii) ‘Taking pills for gout, **you see**.’

In many instances, however, alternating forms are available for the elements immediately preceding *neh* in utterance-final position, and this allows us to clearly disambiguate between determiner and SFP uses of *neh*. The contrast between these two uses is highlighted in (26) below. In (26a), the speaker’s use of the Absolute form *anau* immediately before SFP *neh* yields a broad-scope reading. The Absolute form signals a complete proposition (*itoh nanteik anau* ‘there we were, waiting for whatchamacallit’), with *neh* functioning as an utterance-final attitudinal marker that reveals the speaker’s assertive assessment of the proposition, as well as the speaker’s solidarity-enhancing move toward the addressee. The Oblique form *anou* in (26b), on the other hand, has a different interpretation, one with a narrow-scope reading that scopes over a general noun *anou* ‘thing’, which is made definite and specific by postnominal demonstrative determiner *neh* ‘this’.

- (26) a. *itoh nanteik anau neh*
that ACT.wait.O thingy.A NEH
‘There (we were), waiting for whatchamacallit, **you know**.’
- b. *itoh nanteik anou neh*
that ACT.wait.O thing.O NEH
‘There (we were), waiting for **this** thing.’

To briefly sum up our observations thus far, the phrasal alternation system in Kerinci is often useful in helping to distinguish between the basic and extended functions of (*i*)*neh* constructions. Essentially, Oblique forms preceding (*i*)*neh* indicate referential uses, while Absolute forms preceding (*i*)*neh* indicate non-referential uses, including utterance-final interactional particles that mark speaker epistemic stance. Fig. 4 below summarizes the range of referential and non-referential uses of (*i*)*neh* constructions found in our Kerinci conversational database. Our analysis reveals two major pathways for the extended uses of (*i*)*neh*. The pronominal (*i*)*neh* pathway gives rise to lexicalized expressions that serve enumerative, attention-getting and temporal adverbial functions. The determiner (*i*)*neh* pathway, on the other hand, contributes to the topic marking and subordinate clause marking functions, and also to the utterance-final epistemic stance marking functions as well. Our analysis further reveals that the phrasal alternation test does not apply to the lexicalized expressions. On the other hand, the phrasal alternation test is useful in distinguishing the pragmaticalized (*i*)*neh* expressions along the determiner (*i*)*neh* pathway, with the caveat that the immediately preceding elements have alternable Oblique and Absolute forms.

²⁰ A different intonation pattern associated with utterance-final *neh* would yield a different interpretation. For example, an undulating (rise-fall-rise) intonation would yield a confirmation-seeking and shared epistemic stance instead. This would then be straightway compatible with (and thus reinforce) the affiliative and solidarity-enhancing stance that can readily arise from an inclusive reading of proximal *neh*.

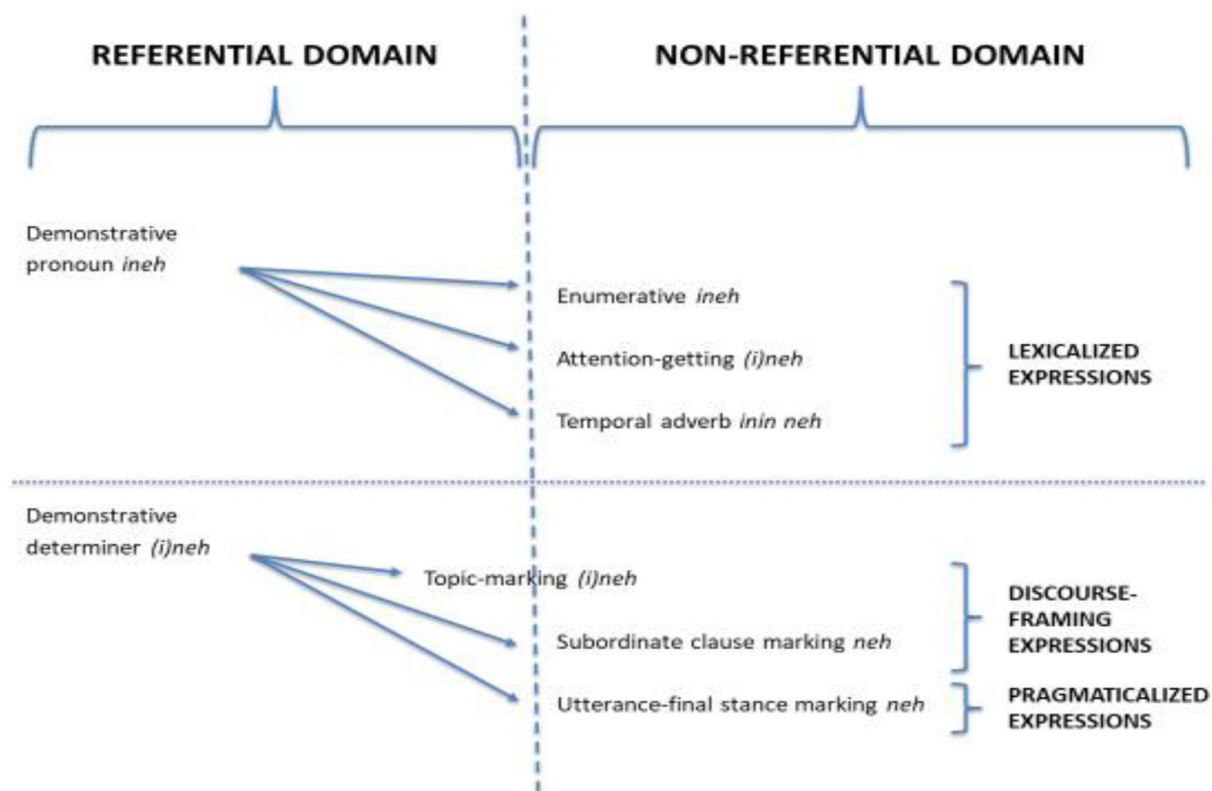


Fig. 4. Referential and extended non-referential uses of (i)neh in Kerinci.

5. Usage frequency distribution of (i)neh constructions in Kerinci

In this section, we examine the usage frequency distribution of (i)neh constructions to identify correlational patterns (if any) that may further shed light on the mechanism(s) by which (i)neh extends from its basic spatial deictic function as a ‘pointing device’ within the referential domain to serve a wide range of non-referential functions that include epistemic stance marking.

5.1. Usage frequency distribution of ineh and neh

We first examine the usage frequency distribution of (i)neh constructions to determine whether there is any correlation between form and function—more specifically, whether referential uses are more strongly associated with the full form *ineh* and non-referential uses with the reduced form *neh*. As shown in Table 2, the reduced form *neh* is used much more frequently than the full form *ineh* (216 tokens vs. 52 tokens respectively, approximately in the ratio 4:1). The full form *ineh* is mainly used referentially as a pronoun (38 out of 52 tokens, 73 % of the time), while the reduced form *neh* is used for a wide range of functions within both referential and non-referential domains.²¹

Within the referential domain, unlike its pronominal counterpart, determiner (i)neh reveals a strong bias for the reduced form *neh* in a ratio of about 12:1 (23 *neh* tokens vs. 2 *ineh* tokens). Among the extended functions within the non-referential domain, lexicalized (i)neh expressions from the pronominal pathway can be influenced by their source constructions. For example, enumerative *ineh* ‘then (there be)’, which is derived from *suduah toh ineh* (‘after that, this’), occurs only in the full form. Attention-getting device (i)neh ‘Look(!)’ is rather impartial to either the full or reduced form. The number of tokens for these two lexicalized (i)neh expressions is very small, so the question of whether the full form *ineh* or the reduced form *neh* is favored for each of these functions need to be further addressed in future using a larger dataset. The temporal adverbial *inin neh*, on the other hand, clearly favors the reduced form *neh*. This may partly be due to its determiner status within its source construction; it is also possible that the morphosyntactic mechanism of word-compounding itself that induces a preference

²¹ An anonymous reviewer has pointed out that “This would be expected if the reduced form is a clitic and the full form is particularly associated with contrast/focus. Maybe the distinction is linked to information structure rather than referential vs. non-referential uses per se.” We leave this possibility open for further discussion.

for the reduced form. The results, not surprisingly show a 14:0 ratio in favor of the reduced form *neh* for temporal adverbial *inin neh*.

More interesting for our present analysis is the strong bias for the reduced form *neh* among the discourse-framing and pragmaticalized uses of (*i*)*neh*. Topic marking (*i*)*neh* favors the reduced form in the ratio of 15:1 (75 *neh* tokens vs. 5 *ineh* tokens), while subordinate clause marking (*i*)*neh* shows an even stronger bias in the ratio of 33:1 (32 *neh* tokens vs. 1 *ineh* token). Utterance-final interactional particle (or SFP) *neh* occurs only in the reduced form (all 60 tokens). These results show a very strong correlation between form and function, where non-referential uses of (*i*)*neh*, particularly those that extend from the determiner use, tend to favor the reduced form *neh*. This is consistent with crosslinguistic observations that phonological reduction often accompanies semantic generalization (e.g. Hopper and Traugott, 2012).

Table 2

Usage frequency of full vs. reduced forms of (*i*)*neh* constructions by function.

Functions of (<i>i</i>) <i>neh</i>	Usage frequency by form				Usage frequency by function	
	Full form <i>ineh</i>		Reduced form <i>neh</i>			
Referential domain						
Demonstrative pronoun	38	(14.2 %)	9	(3.4 %)	47	(17.5 %)
Demonstrative determiner	2	(0.7 %)	23	(8.6 %)	25	(9.3 %)
Non-referential domain						
Lexicalized expressions:						
Enumerative	4	(1.5 %)	0	(0.0 %)	4	(1.5 %)
Attention-getting	2	(0.7 %)	2	(0.7 %)	4	(1.5 %)
Temporal adverb <i>inin neh</i>	0	(0.0 %)	14	(5.2 %)	14	(5.2 %)
Discourse-framing expressions:						
Topic marker (for person, thing, location)	3	(1.1 %)	35	(13.1 %)	38	(14.2 %)
Topic marker (for time)	2	(0.7 %)	32	(11.9 %)	34	(12.7 %)
Topic marker <i>neh he</i> (with emphatic function)	0	(0.0 %)	8	(3.0 %)	8	(3.0 %)
Subordinate clause marker (with <i>kalo</i> 'if')	1	(0.4 %)	31	(11.6 %)	32	(11.9 %)
Subordinate clause marker (without <i>kalo</i> 'if')	0	(0.0 %)	2	(0.7 %)	2	(0.7 %)
Pragmaticalized expressions:						
Utterance final stance particle	0	(0.0 %)	60	(22.4 %)	60	(22.4 %)
Total no. of tokens (N = 268)	52	(19.3 %)	216	(80.6 %)	268	(99.9 %)

5.2. Phrasal alternation test for referential vs. non-referential uses of (*i*)*neh*

As previously mentioned in Section 2, most words in Kerinci are realized in two forms: Absolute and Oblique forms. Although a demonstrative in Kerinci has no alternating form, it does trigger an Oblique form in its preceding element(s) when used as a determiner. But as the determiner acquires new functions beyond the referential domain, there is evidence that the erstwhile demonstrative no longer retains the potential to trigger the Oblique form in its preceding element(s). As such, the phrasal alternation system in Kerinci provides us with a morphophonological and morphosyntactic means to disambiguate between referential and non-referential uses. In this section, we will examine how well this test works within our dataset comprising of 268 (*i*)*neh* tokens culled from conversational data in Kerinci.

As we have seen in Table 2 above, we have already analyzed the usage frequency of the full vs. reduced forms of (*i*)*neh* for each referential and non-referential function. For each of these functions, we now further analyze the usage frequency of their immediately preceding element in terms of their morphophonological and morphosyntactic properties, whether Absolute, Oblique, or Non-Alternating. We use the symbol 'n/a' when phrasal alternation does not apply. Our findings are reported in Table 3.

The results indicate that all the elements immediately preceding determiner (*i*)*neh* in our database occur in the Oblique form (25 out of 25 tokens, i.e. 100 %), clearly indicating that the demonstrative is part of the nominal phrase, and hence is well within the referential domain. The extended uses of (*i*)*neh*, on the other hand, are instead often immediately preceded by elements in the Absolute form. Some of their immediately preceding elements (69 tokens) do not have alternating forms, but for those with alternating forms (106 tokens), the immediately preceding elements consistently take the Absolute form. This holds for topic marker (*i*)*neh*, subordinate clause marker *neh* and utterance-final mood particle *neh*. These results indicate that the phrasal alternation system in Kerinci could prove to be a fairly reliable morphophonological and morphosyntactic mechanism to distinguish between referential and non-referential uses of (*i*)*neh* constructions.

Table 3Usage frequency of Oblique Oblique vs. Absolute forms of final elements preceding *(i)neh* in Kerinci.

Functions of <i>(i)neh</i>	Phrasal alternating form of preceding element (where the Oblique/Absolute distinction holds*)		Non-alternating preceding elements
	Oblique form	Absolute form	
Referential domain			
Demonstrative pronoun	n/a	n/a	47
Demonstrative determiner	25 (100 %)	0	0
Non-referential domain			
Lexicalized expressions:			
Enumerative	n/a	n/a	4
Attention-getting	n/a	n/a	4
Temporal adverbial	n/a	n/a	14
Discourse-framing expressions:			
Topic marker (for person, thing, location)	0	24 (100 %)	14
Topic marker (for time)	0	22 (100 %)	12
Topic marker <i>neh he</i> (with focus function)	0	7 (100 %)	1
Subordinate clause marker (with <i>kalo</i> 'if')	0	21 (100 %)	11
Subordinate clause marker (without <i>kalo</i> 'if')	0	0	2
Pragmatized expressions:			
Utterance final stance particle (SFP)	0	32 (100 %)	28
Total no. of tokens (N = 268)	25	106	137

Note: Non-alternating forms include proper nouns, loan words and function words, among others.

6. Discussion and conclusion

In this paper, we have traced how the proximal demonstrative *(i)neh* in Kerinci has expanded from referential to non-referential uses. More specifically, we have shown that *(i)neh* is used not only referentially as a pronoun and determiner with exophoric and endophoric reference-tracking functions, but it is also used non-referentially as lexicalized expressions with enumerative, attention-getting and temporal referencing functions. It is used with even higher frequency as a topic marker and a subordinate clause marker with discourse-framing functions, and is also highly productive as an utterance-final interactional particle.

Given the multiple functions served by *(i)neh*, an interesting question that arises is how speakers disambiguate the intended use of this versatile indexical based on its context of use. In this paper, we have shown that Kerinci has a special morphophonological and morphosyntactic mechanism known as 'phrasal alternation' that can disambiguate between the referential and non-referential uses of its proximal demonstrative *(i)neh*. This phrasal alternation test does not apply to pronominal uses of *(i)neh*, given that *(i)neh* inherently signals definite and hence easily identifiable referents. However, the test is useful and works well in differentiating among its determiner uses. Basically, most words in Kerinci have two alternating forms: an Oblique form and an Absolute form. When a word immediately preceding *(i)neh* takes the Oblique form, it signals that *(i)neh* is the final element in its phrasal constituent. This means that *(i)neh* in this context is being used as a determiner within a nominal (and hence referential) construction. On the other hand, when the word immediately preceding *(i)neh* takes the Absolute form, it signals that *(i)neh* now has extended beyond its determiner function to serve a discourse-framing function (e.g. topic or subordinate clause marking) or a pragmatic function (e.g. an interactional particle expressing the speaker's stance in relation to the content of his/her utterance).

This shift from the referential to non-referential uses is reminiscent of what Heine et al. (2017; see also Heine, 2023) refer to as cooptation, a process whereby a construction extends beyond the level of sentence grammar (e.g. to serve referential functions in the case of *(i)neh*) to the level of discourse (e.g. where *(i)neh* as seen in this study is used as a socio-interactional particle). This process of semantic and morphosyntactic expansions, which gives rise to epistemic stance marking uses in the case of *(i)neh*, is compatible with what Evans et al. (2018b) refer to as 'upscoping'. What we see is a development in which deictic expressions such as demonstratives can orient one's attention not only in physical space but also in socio-interactional space. The phrasal alternation phenomenon in Kerinci — manifested in the form of morphophonological and morphosyntactic contrasts (via Oblique vs. Absolute forms) — provides evidence that the human mind is attentive to the distinction between concrete, referential expressions vs. abstract non-referential ones. An important contribution of this line of research is the evidence it provides to show that the human mind keeps track of changes as language users shift their use of deictic elements from one cognitive domain to another — for example, from the spatial and more concrete referential domain to the relational as well as more abstract textual (e.g. discourse-framing) and pragmatic (e.g. socio-interactional) domains. Future studies can further investigate whether the phrasal alternation phenomenon is also robust for other types of deictic elements, such as distal demonstrative *(i)toh* 'that' and possessive pronoun *=nyo* in Kerinci. Crosslinguistically, future studies can further investigate whether other types of phrasal alternation strategies—for example, metathesis or tone differences—can also differentiate between referential and non-referential constructions. This new line of investigation can contribute to a more comprehensive picture of how language use reflects robust tendencies in which the human mind recruits lexical and grammatical resources for discursive and pragmatic uses.

Abbreviations

1=First person; 2=Second person; 3=Third person; A=Absolute form; ACT=Active; EMPH=Emphatic marker; EXCL=Exclusive; INCL=Inclusive; INTJ=Interjection; *Lit.*=Literal meaning; LOC=Locative; NEG=Negative; NMLZ=Nominalizer; O=Oblique form; PASS=Passive; PERF=Perfect; PL=Plural; PN=Proper name; POSS=Possessive; PRT=Particle; RED=Reduplication; REL=Relative clause marker; SFP=Sentence final particle; SG= Singular; TAG=Tag question; TOP=Topic

Credit authorship contribution statement

Ernanda: Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Software, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.
Foong Ha YAP: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Declaration of competing interest

This paper entitled “Phrasal alternation and Kerinci demonstrative (*i)neh*: Implications for spatial and socio-interactional deixis” is an original paper and has not been published anywhere. We, the authors, Ernanda and Foong Ha YAP have no conflicts of interest.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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