Pragmatics 1
A melamed [Hebrew teacher] discovering that he had left his comfortable slippers back in the house, sent a student after them with a note for his wife. The note read: "Send me your slippers with this boy". When the student asked why he had written "your" slippers, the melamed answered: "Yold! If I wrote ‘my’ slippers, she would read ‘my’ slippers and would send her slippers. What could I do with her slippers? So I wrote ‘your’ slippers, she'll read ‘your’ slippers and send me mine".

(Rosten, 1968: 443-4)
Albert Einstein was a scientist

Is a fact: true or false.

I am a scientist

Depends on who the speaker, i.e. "I" is.

"I" is a deictic expression.
DEIXIS
Pragmatics - Deixis


Also:

Fillmore (1971) Towards a theory of deixis. The PCCLLU Papers (Department of Linguistics, University of Hawaii), 3.4, 219-41


deixis

Ancient Greek

δεῖξις
deîxis

calling, pointing, showing, indicating, displaying, demonstrating, or referencing
deixis

• refers to the phenomenon wherein understanding the meaning of certain words and phrases in an utterance requires contextual information

• words are deictic if their semantic meaning is fixed but their denotational meaning varies depending on time and/or place

deixis

is a technical term...for one of the most basic things we do with utterances...[, namely,] ‘pointing’ via language.

Yule (1996: 9)
Deictic expressions

also: indexicals/indexical signs
deictic expressions

grammatical features tied directly to the circumstances of utterance (Levinson1983: 54)

e.g.

demonstratives \((this, that)\)
1st/2nd person pronouns \((I, me, we us, you)\)
tense \((present, past, future)\)
specific time and place adverbs \((now, then, soon, here)\)
deictic expressions

- language features that refer to the who, where and when of language. Words such as “you, here, now”...describe the speaker's position in space and time

- words whose "meanings change...depending on the time or space in which they are uttered"
  http://www.putlearningfirst.com/language/11disc/deixis.html

- expressions whose interpretation depends on the context, the speaker's intention, and that express relative distance (Yule 1996: 16)
Interpretation of deictic expressions

• depends on speaker and hearer sharing same context
• have their most basic use in face-to-face interaction
• most basic distinction:
  proximal terms (near speaker): this, here, now
  distal terms (away from speaker): that, there, then

(Yule 19976: 9)
Distance

proximal
distal

Discourse participants

Speaker

Addressee

Other
The deictic centre

the speaker’s location

e.g. now = some point or period in time with the time of the speaker’s utterance as it’s reference point
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3 main types of deixis

• **person:**
  
  *I, you, jien, int*

• **spatial/place:**
  
  *here, there, hawn, hemm, come, go, bring, take, ejja, mur, ġib, ħu, this, that, dan. dak*

• **temporal/time:**
  
  *now, then, tomorrow, next week, tense, issa, imbagħad, ghada, il-ġimgħa d-dieħla*
3 main types of deixis

• **person**: e.g. *I, you*
  the role of participants in the speech event in which utterance is delivered

• **spatial/place**: e.g. *here, there, come, go*
  the encoding of spatial locations relative to the location of the participants in the speech event

• **temporal/time**: e.g. *now, then, tomorrow, tense*
  the encoding of temporal points and spans relative to the time at which an utterance was spoken

(Levinson 1983: 62)
Other types of deixis

• discourse/text deixis

• empathetic deixis

• social deixis

(Levinson 1983: 62-3)
Some people find it hard to understand. This is because...

Cruuuunch...this is the noise it made.

moreover, besides, anyway, well

the encoding of reference to portions of the unfolding discourse in which the utterance is located

(Levinson 1983: 62)
emphatic deixis

Use of deictic expressions to show empathy:

*I hate that!*
social deixis

honorifics

e.g. _tu_ informal 'you'
    _Lei_ formal 'you'

the encoding of social distinctions that are relative
to participant roles

(Levinson 1983: 63)
Honorifics in Japanese

suffixes for addressing or referring to people, e.g. –san, as in Ray-san, Fabri-san.

• San: most common honorific; a title of respect similar to the English Mr, Miss, Mrs, Ms.
• Chan: a diminutive suffix; expresses that the speaker finds a person endearing. Using chan with a superior's name is rude.
• Kun: used by persons of senior status in addressing or referring to those of junior status, or by anyone when addressing or referring to male children or male teenagers.
• Sama: a more respectful version of san; used to refer to people much higher in rank than oneself, toward one's customers, and sometimes toward people one greatly admires.
• Senpai: used to address or refer to one's senior colleagues in a school, company, sports club, or other group.
• Sensei: (literally meaning "former-born") used to refer to or address teachers, doctors, politicians, lawyers, and other authority figures. It is used to show respect to someone who has achieved a certain level of mastery in an art form or some other skill, and is also applied to novelists, poets, painters, and other artists.
• Shi: is used in formal writing, and sometimes in very formal speech, for referring to a person who is unfamiliar to the speaker, typically a person known through publications whom the speaker has never actually met.

Person deixis
person deixis

tripartite system:

speaker = \( I \)
addressee = \( you \)
other = \( he, she, it \)
Status

indicate higher/lower status relation between speaker and addressee

T/V distinction:
French: *du, vous*
Italian: *tu, Lei*
German: *du, Sie*
Spanish: *tú, Usted*

honorifics fall under social deixis
Status

Speaker with higher social status, older, more powerful uses *tu, du*, etc. with addressee of lower social status, younger, less powerful

Speaker with lower social status, younger, less powerful uses *vous, lei*, etc. with addressee of higher social status, older, more powerful
Status

Question of what happens when e.g. speaker is of higher social rank but younger

Clusivity

1st person plural: *we*
grammaticalised in/exclusivity:

inclusive (includes addressee: Me and you and, perhaps others )
exclusive (excludes addressee: me and others but not you)

common feature in Australian and Austraonesian languages;
also found in eastern, southern, and southwestern Asia, America, some creoles
Fijian

exclusive  
keimami

inclusive  
keda

**Fijian**: an Austronesian language of the Malayo-Polynesian family; spoken in Fiji, 450,000 first-language speakers
Chechan: a member of the Northeast Caucasian language; spoken by more than 1.5 million people, mostly in Chechnya

Examples:

- **Chechan**
  - singular: *so*
  - exclusive: *txo*
  - inclusive: *vai*
Tok Pisin

singular  *mi*

exclusive  *i-pela*

inclusive  *yu-mi* (*mi* = I, *yu* = you)/ *yu-mi-pela*.

**Tok Pisin:** a creole spoken throughout Papua New Guinea; an official language of Papua New Guinea; between 5 and 6 million use Tok Pisin to some degree.
examples

Mandarin Chinese
exclusive  wǒmen
(cmp. singular wǒ ‘I’)
inclusive  zánmen

Mandarin: a group of related Chinese dialects spoken across most of northern and south-western China.
Hadza
inclusive ’one-be’e
(cmp. ono/one- ‘I’)
exclusive ’oo-be’e

Hadza: an isolate spoken by fewer than a thousand Hadza people along the shores of Lake Eyasi in Tanzania, the last full-time hunter-gatherers in Africa.

http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/12/hadza/hadza-map
Malecite-Passamaquoddy

verb ‘have’

singular  $n$-tíhin (first person prefix $n$-)
exclusive  $n$-tíhin-èn (first person $n$- + plural suffix -èn)
inclusive  $k$-tíhin-èn (inclusive prefix $k$- + plural -èn)

‘I/we have it’

Malecite-Passamaquoddy

Endangered Algonquian language, consisting of two major dialects: Malecite, mainly spoken in New Brunswick, Canada, and Passamaquoddy in Maine, US. Only 1500 speakers of both dialects altogether.
Spatial deixis

Indication of the relative location of people and things
spatial deixis

Basic distinction in modern English/Maltese:
here, there, hawn, hemm

Indication of movement towards/away from:
old English
hither (to this place), thence (from that place)

Maltese:
’l hawn, ’l hinn (’l hemm)
Japanese – this/that

- **sore/sono** (e.g. *that is a student/that student*)
  
  that, near addressee
  
  OR something just mentioned or you know about

- **are/ano** (e.g. *that is a student/that student*)
  
  that, distant from speaker and addressee
  
  OR something we both know about

- **kore/kono** (e.g. *this is a student/this student*)
  
  this, near speaker
Japanese – this/that

Speaker:

X kore

Addressee:

X sore

X are
Japanese – this/that

near speaker, away from addressee
Japanese – this/that

near addressee, away from speaker
Japanese – this/that

away from speaker, away from addressee
Demonstratives in Samal

Samal are an indigenous ethnic group in the Philippines

4-way distinction

• close to speaker
• close to addressee
• close to audience (members of conversational group)
• close to persons present but outside of conversational group that consists of speaker addressee and audience

(Levinson 1983: 81)
Spatial deixis in verbs

English

come, bring

in the direction of the speaker

go, take

away from the speaker

Displacement: *come to my office tomorrow*
The Chinantec languages belong to the Chinantecan branch of the Oto-Manguean family. Tone language spoken in Oaxaca and Veracruz, Mexico. There are about 14 mutually-unintelligible varieties of Chinantec.
Temporal deixis
temporal deixis

depend for their interpretation on knowing the relevant utterance time (Yule 1996: 14)

e.g.

now: time coinciding with speaker utterance
then: past and future time relative to speaker's present time

yesterday, tomorrow, tonight, tomorrow, next year, last month
temporal deixis

tense:

simple present: proximal
I work here

simple past: distal
I worked there
temporal deixis

If I had a yacht, ...

use of past because yu do not have a yacht and having a yacht isa 'distant dream'