On Contrasting Expressions of Spatial Deixis
in Croatian and English

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This paper deals with some of the problems connected with contrasting expressions of spatial deixis in Croatian and English. The Croatian sentential demonstratives *evo, eto, eno* are analysed and contrasted with their English equivalents. Special emphasis is placed on their most frequent, i.e. prototypical uses.

Observations are also made on the standard data used in contrastive analysis, and on the importance of including spoken language in contrastive projects.

1. This paper presents an attempt to deal with some of the complexities connected with contrasting expressions of spatial deixis in Croatian and English. Our interest in the phenomenon of deixis, more specifically spatial deixis, has arisen from research on other topics of contrastive analysis within the framework of the Yugoslav Serbo-Croatian – English Project (YSCECP) and (to a lesser extent) the Zagreb English – Serbo-Croatian Contrastive Project (ZESCCP).[1]

Although the main objective of the YSCECP was the "examination of all systemic differences and similarities that exist between Serbo-Croatian and English at all levels of linguistic description" (Filipović 1985a:10), more than fifteen years of work by numerous researchers was primarily directed towards contrasting morphology and syntax. This research resulted in numerous publications and culminated in the monograph entitled *Chapters in Serbo-Croatian – English Contrastive Grammar* (Filipović 1985b), the basis for a contrastive grammar of the two languages.

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1. Both projects were centered at the Institute of Linguistics, University of Zagreb, with Professor Rudolf Filipović as Project Director. For an overview of the history of the YSCECP, and more specifically the theoretical and methodological considerations it was grounded on, see Filipović (1985a:9–36).

2. However, a small group of researchers directed their attention to areas of contrastive analysis other than morphology and syntax, i.e., lexical contrastive analysis, pragmatics, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis.[2]

Work on these topics meant a departure from the standard basic data used in the above mentioned projects, namely, the translation equivalents of the Zagreb Version of the Brown Corpus and standard grammars of both languages.[3] Instead, data was collected on the basis of recordings of naturally occurring spoken language, interviews, elicitations, etc. The collected data was not only necessary for the analysis of speech acts, "routine formulas" in Coulmas's (1981) terminology, systems of address, etc., but also proved interesting in making us focus on other linguistic expressions predominately found in face-to-face interaction.

3. The analysis of the spoken language opens up the possibility of viewing linguistic elements or expressions that rarely appear in written texts, or lose some of their dominant features when written down. Such expressions are predominately connected with the situation of utterance and are called deictic elements, deixis being the Greek word for indicating or pointing.

The importance of deixis in language, and especially its inseverable ties with the situation of utterance, were recognized and theoretically developed by Bühler in his classic *Sprachtheorie* (1934). However, it was not until the sixties and seventies that the phenomenon of deixis truly began to draw the attention of linguists,[4] attention possibly long overdue since deixis presents a particularly interesting phenomenon in the sense that it can be seen as the meeting place of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects of language.

Deictic expressions crucially depend on where, when, and by whom they are used, and broadly speaking include, typically, pronouns, demonstratives, verbs of motion like *come* and *go* (Fillmore 1971), adverbs of place, definite articles, etc. Corresponding to the socio-spatio-temporal aspects of the speech event, the following kinds of deictic expressions are traditionally distinguished: *personal deixis*, such as 'I' and 'you', *spatial deixis* such as 'here' and 'there', *temporal deixis*, such as 'now', 'today' and 'yesterday'. More recent research also recognizes *social deixis* and *discourse deixis*.[5]

Fillmore (1982:35) points out, quite rightly, that there are two general ways in which we can approach the phenomenon of deixis:

> "... first, in terms of the manner in which the socio-spatio-temporal anchoring of a communication act motivates the form, or provides material for the interpretation, of the utterance that manifests that act; and second, in terms of the grammatical and lexical systems in the language which serve to signal or reflect such anchorings."

2. See for instance Bićanić and Žic Fuchs (1981) and Žic Fuchs (1990).
3. On primary data for the YSCECP, as well as other contrastive projects see Filipović (1984).
4. We are particularly referring to the work of Fillmore (1971, 1975, 1976) and Lyons (1977). Publications dating from the seventies are listed because they summarize and systematize previous work of both authors.
5. For an overview of *social* and *discourse deixis* see Levinson (1983).

Thus Fillmore's distinction indicates that the analysis of deixis may be centered on the concrete appearance of various deictic expressions in the sense that we specify the speaker, orientation of the speaker's body, etc., in specific acts of utterance, or that it may be directed towards sets of words or grammatical categories, viewed as parts of the linguistic system. When contrasting languages, the above distinction is especially useful because it not only offers two possible approaches but also indicates the possibility of combining them.

4. We began focusing on the phenomenon of spatial deixis after noticing the amazingly high frequency of the Croatian word *evo* in our recorded material, *evo* being the approximate equivalent of *here* in English.

Although it is a recognized fact that standard grammars do not as a rule provide satisfactory descriptions of deictic systems, it is still interesting to see how grammars of Croatian or Serbo-Croatian deal with *evo*, or more precisely with the three member paradigmatic set *evo, eto, eno*. Brabec *et al.* (1965) categorize them as *adverbs*, adding, however, that they are a segment apart because they do not correspond to the standard division of adverbs into place, time, manner and cause adverbs. They also state that *evo, eto, eno* are followed by nouns or pronouns in the nominative or genitive case. Maretić (1931) sees them as *interjections*, while Barić *et al.* (1979) do not mention them at all. Stevanović (1966) calls them *particles* and points out that they are used as follows: *evo* is used for indicating that which is close to the speaker, *eto* is used for indicating that which is closer to the person being addressed, or slightly removed from the speaker, and *eno* for that which is removed from both the speaker and the person being spoken to.

The above is an indication that *evo, eto, eno* is a three element paradigmatic set which obviously resists easy classification into standard grammatical categories.

4.1. The following examples in Croatian, and their corresponding English glosses, are listed as illustrations of actual usages in specific acts of utterance:

I. Person A appears in the doorway and person B says:

> "Evo ga konačno"
> 'Here he is at last'

II. Person A says:

> "Dodaj mi pepeljaru, molim te"
> 'Pass the ashtray please'

and B answers while passing the ashtray:

> "Evo"
> 'Here'

III. Person A gives person B a stack of paper and says:

> "Evo ti Branko"
> 'Here Branko'

Analysis of numerous examples such as these above, indicate that *evo*, or rather *evo, eto, eno* correspond to *here* and *there* in English. The first noticable difference is that Croatian reflects a three-way contrast

evo	[Proximal]	
	'close to the speaker'	
eto	[Medial]	
	'close to the hearer'	
eno	[Distal]	
	'remote both from speaker and hearer'	

while English shows a two-way contrast. Fillmore (1982:48) symbolizes the English two-way contrast as

here	[+ Proximal]	– 'relatively close to the Speaker'
there	[– Proximal]	– 'relatively remote from the Speaker'.

Although we are clearly dealing with demonstratives, and demonstratives with a high frequency of usage at that, it is interesting to notice that neither *evo, eto, eno* nor *here* and *there* are mentioned in the chapter entitled "The English Demonstratives and their Serbo-Croatian Equivalents" (Spalatin 1985:117) in the above mentioned *Chapters in Serbo-Croatian – English Contrastive Grammar*. This fact can at least partly be explained by the data used in contrastive projects, namely translational equivalents of written language sentences and standard grammars, both of which fail to provide an adequate analytical framework for the analysis of deictic phenomena.

5. The fact that we are faced with a three-way contrast in Croatian and a two-way contrast in English is interesting in itself. However, investigation of the actual usage of *evo, eto, eno* indicates that, apparently, the Croatian set is not as stable as may be expected, or that it is undergoing some changes.

As already mentioned, *evo* appeared extremely frequently in our data. On the other hand *eto* was drastically less frequent, while *eno* was registered only a few times in all of our recorded material.

This prompted us to interview 40 speakers of Croatian as to when and how they use *evo, eto, eno*, and expose them to different elicitation contexts, contexts that prompted them to use these demonstratives.[6] It should also be stressed that all our informants were residents of the city of Zagreb. We emphasize this fact because of possible specific

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6. Neither interviews nor set up elicitation contexts are ideal ways of collecting data. This especially applies to elicitation contexts since they are very difficult to organize properly. However, they were the only methods possible for confirming or disproving conclusions drawn from the recordings.

differences that may occur as regional variants. Namely, the linguistic situation in Zagreb is characterized on one hand by the Croatian standard and on the other by a specific kind of 'Kajkavian' urban dialect.[7] Thus, what we call the Zagreb Standard here is the result of intermeshing of Standard Croatian and urban 'Kajkavian'. Similar situations can be found in other regions in which 'Štokavian' is not the autochthonous dialect. Facts such as these should, in our opinion, be taken into consideration in contrastive analysis, since differences are bound to appear in linguistically complex regions – something that applies to the entire area in which Croatian is spoken. In the long run, such variations may affect the proclaimed, normative standard.

6. The analysis of the actual usage of *evo, eto, eno* enabled us to notice a number of interesting points. First, as far as *eto* and *eno* are concerned, it seems that speakers experience uncertainty in their usage, i. e., they do not distinguish readily between the *medial* and *distal* contrasts. Since this contrast is apparently no longer as stable as it used to be, *eto* and *eno* are used for [– Proximal] very much like *there* in English, *eto* being the form more frequently used.[8] Whether this reduction will prove to be a general tendency in the language, it is impossible to say. However, it was a constant feature in the analysis of our data.

7. Every individual usage of *evo, eto, eno* in concrete speech situations can be described at great length, thus providing many nuances of variation. However, such an approach, while descriptively interesting, would not in itself necessarily provide answers as to what are the most frequent and most prototypical features that characterize these demonstratives. On the other hand, analysis of a great number of individual cases can be seen as productive in that it enables us to filter out what is truly prototypical or most frequent.[9]

Keeping the above in mind, the next question that crops up is what are in fact *evo, eto, eno* (and especially *evo*) syntactically and semantically speaking. And secondly, how do they relate to their apparent English equivalents *here* and *there*?

The data analysed shows that *evo, eto, eno,* frequently appear as single word sentences:

        Evo!   Eto!   Eno!

or *demonstrative + pronoun* or *noun* as in

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7. Traditionally Croatian is classified into three major dialects – 'Štokavian' (which serves as the basis of the standard language), 'Čakavian' and 'Kajkavian'. The names of the dialects are based on the forms of the interrogative-relative 'what', i.e. 'što', 'ča' and 'kaj'. For a description of Zagreb urban speech see Magner (1966).

8. Apparently something similar is happening in Welsh, in which the three-way contrast *dyma, dyna, dacw* is "loosing" its third element *dacw*. I am indebted to Ranko Matasović, Linguistics Department, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, for drawing my attention to the similar phenomenon in Welsh.

9. We are using the term *prototypical* in the sense it is used in present-day cognitive linguistics. The relation between prototypicality and frequency is explained best by Geeraerts (1988:221–22):
"Some kinds of usage are not prototypical because they are more frequent, they are more frequent because they are prototypical".

Evo ga!	Evo ti!	Evo Pere!
'Here he is'	'Here you are'	'Here is Pero'

thus confirming that syntactically speaking we are dealing with *sentential demonstratives*. Fillmore (1982:47) states that sentential demonstratives have a 'presentative function' and that sentences such as the above approximately mean 'Behold!' or 'Look at this!'. This holds true for many examples found in our data, especially for *evo* when it stands either alone or with a pronoun or noun, and the context of utterance indicates that the speaker is 'presenting' a certain person or object. The complete paraphrase in such cases would be something like:

Evo ga   —   'Look, here he is.'

However, adhering to the principle of frequency, *evo* appears just as frequently accompanying concrete, physical gestures and movements as in situations in which one person actually gives (not just 'points') something to another person. Then, apart from the one word sentence *Evo!*, we find *Evo ti!* The complete paraphrase for both sentences would be something like: *Here, take this.*

This difference in usage, i.e., the difference between 'presenting' or 'pointing' in one case and actually 'giving' in the other, also shows syntactic differences. Namely, *evo* is followed by the genitive or nominative case in its 'presenting' or 'pointing' function, as in:

Evo ga	—	evo + genitive
Evo Pere	—	evo + genitive
Evo knjiga	—	evo + nominative.[10]

In cases when we are dealing with actual 'giving', *evo* is followed by a pronoun or noun in the dative case, as in:

Evo ti	—	evo + dative
Evo ti knjiga	—	evo + dative + nominative
'Here, take this book'		

These two usages or functions were the most frequent in our data, and because of this they may be considered to be the prototypical functions of *evo*. That we can in reality talk about two different functions is confirmed by their semantic and syntactic differences, and not only by their different 'gestural' manifestations. What is more important, our analysis shows that the genitive and dative are most frequently used and not the nominative and genitive as claimed in some grammars.

10. The majority of examples we found in our data had a pronoun or noun in the genitive case following *evo*. There were examples such as *Evo knjiga* (noun in nominative) and it is interesting to note that speakers of 'Štokavian' considered such usage to be sub-standard.

7.1. A few words should be said about another usage of *evo*, a usage which may appear confusing at first glance. We are referring to the cases when *evo* is used in the sense of 'Look!', 'Behold!' for indicating something very far away, i.e., distal. In such cases

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Evo ga — *There* he is

</div>

evo does not adhere to the [+ Proximal] feature. The explanation for this not infrequent usage lies in our opinion in the semantics of *evo*, or more precisely, in the semantics of 'Look'. 'Look' may be said to indicate or point to things not just close to the speaker but also things that are more remote. This does not hold for the 'giving' option, where [+ Proximal] is a necessary and constant feature.

When a speaker says 'Evo ga!' and is referring to a person far off, or just entering his visual field, then such utterances usually have an additional feature of 'surprise' or 'expectation'. A typical example would be when one is waiting for someone and then sees him, or when one sees in the distance a person that one has not seen in a long time. Usages such as these can at least partialy explain why *evo, eto, eno* are classified as interjections in some grammars.

8. As far as *eto* and *eno* are concerned, the already mentioned "loosening" of the *medial* and *distal* distinction has resulted in both being used for [– Proximal], i.e., relatively remote from the speaker. The higher frequency of *eto* can in part be ascribed to its appearance in expressions that verbally signal the end of some activity, or the end of an explanation, or a 'monologue'. In other words, *eto* can indicate finality as in

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"Eto, gotovo je" — 'There, it's finished'

"Eto, to je kraj priče" — 'There, that's the end of the story'

</div>

or simply

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"Eto" — 'There'.

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9. *Here* and *there* are prototypically *demonstrative adverbs* having the locative function (Fillmore 1982:47). In Croatian, the locative function can be expressed by two sets of demonstrative adverbs – *ovdje-ondje* and *tu-tamo*.[11] The Croatian adverbs function very much like *here* and *there* in that they correlate in distance features:

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ovdje tu	[+ Proximal]	–	'relatively close to the speaker'
ondje tamo	[– Proximal]	–	'relatively remote from the speaker'

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11. The two sets *ovdje-ondje* and *tu-tamo* differ in some respects, however these differences are not relevant for the present analysis.

These demonstrative adverbs in both languages also coincide in having both the *gestural* and *symbolic* usage as defined by Levinson (1983:65):

"Terms used in the gestural deictic way can only be interpreted with reference to an audio-visual- -tactile, and in general a physical, monitoring of the speech event... In contrast, symbolic usages of deictic terms require for their interpretation only knowledge... of the basic spatio-temporal para- meters of the speech event..."

The following examples illustrate this:

Gestural	Put it *here*	Stavi to *ovdje*
		Stavi to *tu*
Symbolic	I've lived *here* all my life	*Ovdje* sam provela cijeli svoj život
	John is *here*	Pero je *ovdje*

The symbolic and gestural usages mentioned and illustrated above become more interesting when we compare them with the possibilities that *evo, eto, eno* offer. These sentential demonstratives have without a doubt gestural usages, in fact we could say that they have a wider range of prototypical gestural usages, as can be seen in section 7. However, they cannot have symbolic usages, for it is impossible to use them symbolically in utterances:

* Evo sam provela cijeli svoj život.

* Pero je evo.

This contrast enables us to underline some points more clearly. *Evo, eto, eno*, and especially *evo* are prototypically gestural deictics,[12] and what is more *evo* has two gestural usages: the 'presenting' or 'pointing' one and the 'giving' one. On the other hand, they cannot be used symbolically, while *here* and *there* can have both the gestural and the symbolic function in English. The true equivalents of *here* and *there* are thus *ovdje-ondje* and *tu-tamo*, while on the other hand *here* and *there* may be said to be the most frequent equivalents of *evo* – here and *eto, eno* – there, although not the only possible ones. This can be seen from the following example:

Person A says	"Dinner is ready"
B says	"Evo me"
	'Coming'

Namely, since *evo, eto, eno* are sentential demonstratives, they can represent many varied "embedded sentences", thus opening up room for other possible equivalents.

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12. It should be stressed that we are referring only to deictic usage, and not to possible non-deictic usage.

10. The above analysis has tried to deal with some of the manifold complexities of contrasting expressions of spatial deixis. As is always the case when trying to deal with the phenomenon of deixis, one feels that only the surface has been scratched. Regardless of the fact that many aspects of this problem have been left to future analyses, in conclusion two points should be emphasized. First, concrete data should be used to a greater extent, not only because it can confirm intuitive judgements, but also because it can uncover facets that may otherwise remain unnoticed. Second, the notion of prototype enables us to concentrate on what is most typical and most frequent, thus avoiding the pitfalls of descriptive listings. Possibly it will be the notion of prototype, as well as other theoretical constructs within the framework of cognitive linguistics, that will in the future provide the basis for a theory of deixis.

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O KONTRASTIRANJU PROSTORNIH DEIKTIKA U HRVATSKOM I ENGLESKOM JEZIKU

U ovome se radu govori o problemima kontrastiranja prostornih deiktika u hrvatskom i engleskom jeziku. Analizirane su najfrekventnije, tj. prototipične upotrebe rečeničnih demonstrativa *evo, eto, eno* u hrvatskom i njihovi engleski ekvivalenti. Dotaknut je i problem jezične građe u kontrastivnim projektima, odnosno ograničenja koja proizlaze iz ne-uključivanja govorenog jezika.