

An Analysis of the Use of Demonstratives in Argumentative Discourse by Chinese EFL Learners

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Abstract—The present study aims to investigate the use of demonstratives in argumentative writing by Chinese EFL learners. A corpus-based study was conducted. In this study, demonstratives *this*, *that*, *these*, *those*, as well as *it* were tagged and analyzed. By the quantitative and qualitative analysis, the study shows the general features and typical errors of learners in using demonstratives. Some pedagogical suggestions are raised as well.

Index Terms—demonstratives, argumentative writing, corpus, EFL writing

I. INTRODUCTION

Demonstratives in English generally refers to *this*, *these*, *that*, and *those*. “The Grammar Book” explains that demonstrative determiners vary along two dimensions: proximity (*this* vs. *that*; *these* vs. *those*) and number (*this* vs. *these*; *that* vs. *those*) (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999). The above grammatical account of demonstratives constitutes the explanation about demonstratives in most ESL/EFL teaching practice and materials compilation (Lenko-Szymanska, 2004). However, extensive studies on demonstrative reference provide evidence that its use is far more complicated, especially at the discourse level. Choosing a proper demonstrative is related to genre (spoken and written), the speaker’s intention, and the larger discourse environment in which the demonstrative is used (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Petch-Tyson, 2000). To ESL/EFL learners the proper use of English demonstratives may remain a problem due to the lack of explicit instruction based on discourse and rhetorical analysis and a simplistic reliance on the learners’ intuition in deciding which demonstratives to use. Cross-linguistic comparison has showed evidence that ESL/EFL learners demonstrate a different pattern in their use of demonstratives; the underuse, overuse, and inappropriate use of certain forms have been revealed in learners of English (Lenko-Szymanska, 2004; Petch-Tyson, 2000; Wang and Sun, 2006). Therefore a reductionist approach to teaching English demonstratives may not be the best approach in EFL classes.

In this paper, I looked into the use of demonstratives in argumentative writing by Chinese EFL learners. The data were composed of 17 argumentative essays that second-year EFL students wrote for the writing part of a compulsory English language course *New Standard College English (Reading and Writing)* offered in Shandong University in China. Besides demonstratives *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*, I included pronoun *it* in my analysis, for the reason that independent pronoun *it* also functions as demonstratives (McCarthy, 1994; Strauss, 2002). The quantitative and qualitative analyses of learners’ use of demonstratives showed that the learners in this study had a good command of English demonstratives and are able to use them for discourse purposes in building up cohesion. In the mean time, the analyses reveal some problems of learners in using demonstratives, which showed the necessity of addressing demonstratives explicitly in EFL classes. Some pedagogical suggestions are raised as well.

II. GRAMMATICAL CONSTRUCTS AND RELATED STUDIES

A. Grammatical Accounts of Demonstrative Reference

Halliday and Hasan categorized the use of English demonstratives into “three systematic distinctions: (1) between ‘near’ (*this*, *these*) and ‘not near’ (*that*, *those*); (2) between ‘singular’ (*this*, *that*) and ‘plural’ (*these*, *those*); (3) between Modifier (*this*, etc, plus nouns, eg: *this tree is an oak*) and Head (*this*, etc, without nouns, eg: *this is an oak*)” (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, P. 60). By ‘nearness’ in the first distinction, it means that *this* implies something the speaker mentioned, some event closer in time to the speaker, or some shared common interest with the speaker. In contrast, *that* refers to something said by the interlocutor, an event associated with a past-time referent, and something unrelated to the speaker. This contrast can be observed in sentence (1). In the second distinction, a demonstrative adjective is found to be applicable to any class of noun, whereas a demonstrative pronoun is restricted in its reference to human nouns. Another important feature of demonstratives is that when *this* and *that* are used as a demonstrative pronoun, they can refer to “extended text, including text as ‘fact’” (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, P. 66). Sentence (2) illustrates the “text reference” feature of *that*. In extended text reference, *that* is always anaphoric (prior mention); *this* may be either

anaphoric or cataphoric (subsequent mention) (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).

(1) A: I like apples, and I like bananas. *These* are my favorites.

B: *Those* are my favorites too.

(2) A: I left my umbrella in the classroom.

B: *That* was careless.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's explanation about the meaning of demonstratives in "The Grammar Book" (1999) is based on the proximity/distance distinction as well. They explained that the nearness or distance as conveyed by *this*, *these*, *that*, *those* "could be spatial, temporal (this = now vs. that = then), psychological (this = more preferred vs. that = less preferred), or simply sequential (this = first mention vs. that = second mention)" (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999, P. 307). The proximal/distant contrast is shown in sentences (3) to (6).

(3) spatial: I like *this* restaurant than *that* one over there.

(4) temporal: I like *this* movie better than *that* movie I watched last month.

(5) psychological: I like *this* course better, so I didn't choose *that* one.

(6) sequential: *This* dress is more expensive than *that* one.

It has been noted that there are different patterns of using demonstratives in spoken and written English. Based on an extensive analysis of spoken data, Strauss (1993) proposed that situational uses of demonstratives should be distinguished from textual and cataphoric uses. More importantly, pronoun *it* should be included in the analysis of demonstrative reference to provide an accurate account for the spoken data. Strauss found that *that/those* and *it* were used mainly with anaphoric textual reference, and *this/these* were used anaphorically only 51% because *this/these* are also used cataphorically, exophorically and nonreferentially (as cited from Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999).

McCarthy (1994) made distinctions between different functions of demonstrative *it*, *this*, and *that* in written discourse. His hypothesis is that "(1) *It* is the unmarked reference item and refers to current entities or foci of attention. (2) *This* signals a shift of entity or focus of attention to a new focus. (3) *That* signals reference across entities or foci of attention, that is, to a topical entity which is not the current one" (P. 273). In a word, *it* carries on a focus under discussion, whereas *this* and *that* introduce and indicate a shift of focus in discourse. The choice of demonstratives is based on the larger discourse segments and environment in which the demonstratives are used, and is a reflection of the way the writer structures their arguments (McCarthy, 1994).

B. *Studies of Demonstrative Use by ESL/EFL Learners*

Studies on the use of demonstrative reference by ESL/EFL learners showed that learners' pattern of demonstratives differs from that of native speakers. Petch-Tyson (2000) conducted a corpus-based comparison of native English speakers and learners of English with Dutch, French, Finnish, and Swedish L1 backgrounds in their use of demonstratives in argumentative writing. It was found that the EFL groups in general used demonstratives less frequently than the native writers and they were not as successful as their native-speaking counterparts in using demonstrative anaphors to make situation reference, which were shown in cases of unsuccessful reference, underuse of proximal demonstratives *this/these*, overuse of *that*, and failure to use retrospective labels properly in situation reference. Petch-Tyson suggested that in order to produce effective argumentative writing the lexical and rhetorical features of demonstratives should be addressed.

Lenko-Szymanska (2004) conducted a similar corpus-based analysis of the pattern of demonstratives as anaphora markers in Polish advanced learners' English, as compared to the native counterparts. The results showed that Polish advanced learners of English overused demonstratives in argumentative writing, especially the distal forms *that/those*. Learners also showed an overuse of *those* as a determiner and an underuse of *those* a pronoun. In Wang and Sun (2006) study of comparing the use of demonstratives by Chinese learners of English and native English speakers in argumentative writing, they found that Chinese learners of English had the tendency of underusing demonstratives in general but overusing the distal demonstrative *that*, which to some extent lessened the strength of their arguments. Their use of demonstratives as situation reference was also found unclear within the context.

III. THE STUDY

A. *Data*

In this paper, I looked into the use of demonstratives in argumentative writing by Chinese second-year EFL learners majoring in different fields. The data used in this study were collected in the writing part of a compulsory English language course *New Standard College English (Reading and Writing)* in Shandong University. The students in this study were college students of non-English majors, aging from 18 to 20.

The data used in this study were the first major essay that students wrote in the course. The writing task was an argumentative essay on Wal-Mart controversies. Students were asked to take a position on the issue, and present evidence and support for their arguments by incorporating different resources. Students went through a process of composing thesis statement, outline, draft one, draft two, and the final essay. The essays collected for the present purposes were the final version of the essay. Altogether 17 essays (19,811 tokens) were used for the present analysis.

B. *Data Analysis and Procedures*

Instances of *this*, *these*, *that*, *those*, and *it* were manually elicited from the essays. All instances of *this*, *these*, *those*, and *it* were included in the present study. Since *that* can function both as a singular demonstrative and a complementizer, the present study only included instances of *that* as singular demonstratives. Considering the fact that students incorporated different sources as support, instances of demonstratives in quotes were excluded.

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted on the data. For quantitative analysis, the use of *this*, *these*, *that*, *those*, and *it* were categorized into three textual subcategories: anaphoric, cataphoric, and non-phoric uses. Anaphoric use refers to demonstratives as backward pointing in the text, cataphoric use is forward pointing in the text, and non-phoric use is to refer to an item that has not been referred to within the actual text (Strauss, 2002). Besides, *this/these*, *that/those* are counted respectively in their use of demonstrative adjectives and demonstrative pronouns. By conducting a qualitative analysis, the general features of using demonstratives in argumentative writing by these ESL students were identified, and the typical errors in using demonstratives were discussed.

IV. RESULT

A. Quantitative Analysis

Tab. I shows the overall frequencies of the demonstratives. It can be seen that *it* is more frequently used (48%) than *this/ these* (37%), and *that/ those* (15%). It is out of my surprise to find that *it* is the most frequent used demonstrative because it is commonly believed that *this/ these*, and *that/ those* are the generic demonstratives. However this finding echoes what was reported by Strauss (2002) on spoken discourse data of native American English speakers. It suggests that in ESL teaching, it may be necessary to include *it* in the explanation of demonstrative reference. Another interesting finding is that *this/these* compose 37% of the total, and is used more than twice as many as *that/those*. According to Lenko-Szymanska (2004) and Wang (2006), the use of *this/these* indicates a more native-like pattern. If their interpretations are correct, the findings here could be an indication that the students under discussion demonstrate a good command of demonstratives *this/these* and *that/those*.

TABLE I
FREQUENCIES OF DEMONSTRATIVES IN THEIR ANAPHORIC, CATAPHORIC AND NON-PHORIC

	Total number (%)	Anaphoric	Cataphoric	Non-phoric
<i>this / these</i>	150 (37%)	141 (94%)	5 (3%)	4 (3%)
<i>that / those</i>	60 (15%)	48 (80%)	12 (20%)	0 (0%)
<i>it</i>	193 (48%)	149 (77%)	44 (23%)	0 (0%)

Tab. I also shows the respective frequencies of demonstratives in their anaphoric, cataphoric, and non-phoric uses. Generally speaking anaphoric use is the most frequently used function of the demonstratives. It is in line with the genre of the data, i.e. written discourse. For argumentative writing, it is necessary to apply demonstrative devices to create cohesion and coherence within the text. Anaphoric demonstrative, by referring to a proposition, a situation, a topic, or an entity that have been mentioned in the previous discourse, is the best device of forming cohesion within a written text (Petch-Tyson, 2000). Students' proper use of the anaphoric demonstrative suggests a basic understanding of English demonstratives. There are instances of cataphoric demonstratives, especially in cases of *that/those* and *it*. A close look into the data reveals that the cataphoric uses of *that/those* and *it* are mostly idiomatic expressions. In sentence (7), the second *those* is used as a pronoun and followed by an attributive clause explaining what "those enemies" refer to. The pattern is frequent in the data. According to Wang (2006), it shows a native-like pattern of using demonstratives, because American students like to use *those* in "those + who" pattern indicating "the people who". The first *it* in sentence (8) is a pronoun that introduces the real subject of the clause starting with the complementizer *that* "that Wal-Mart is destroying some local jobs". Idiomatic uses of cataphoric *it* are frequent in the data; it showed a good command of idiomatic expressions by the students.

(7) Due to its success, it brought a lot of enemies against it. Those enemies are mostly *those* who are running out of business because of the existence of Wal-Mart.

(8) *It's* true that Wal-Mart is destroying some local jobs, yet it is creating more job opportunities, cheaper products for the consumers and donations that help raise the standards of living of the area.

Tab. II shows the frequencies of demonstratives *this/ these* and *that/ those* when they are used together with a NP (noun phrase) or as a pronoun. It can be seen that *this/ these* and *that/ those* are more used together with a NP as demonstrative adjectives. Compared to what have been reported by Petch-Lyon (2000) and Wang (2006) on the overuse of *that* as demonstrative pronouns by Polish and Chinese learners of English, the learners in this study demonstrated a more balanced use of *this/ these* and *that/those* as demonstrative adjectives.

TABLE II
FREQUENCIES OF DEMONSTRATIVES ADJECTIVES AND DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

	Demonstrative adj. (%)	Demonstrative pron. (%)
<i>this / these</i>	96 (64%)	54 (36%)
<i>that / those</i>	38 (63%)	22 (37%)

B. Qualitative Analysis

General features of using demonstratives

this / these

In the data *this* is used most often as situation reference or text reference (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Learners use *this* to refer to the previously mentioned and described proposition and situation. At a psychological level, the proposition or situation may be positive and closer to the author's own position and arguments, as in excerpt (9). Sometimes the propositions can be less desirable and in distance far from the author's own position, as in excerpt (10). This is in contrast to the dominant analysis of *this/these* as being proximal demonstratives (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Lenko-Szymanska, 2004). It seems that *this* is mostly used to frame the arguments by stringing together the text and creating a natural flow of arguments and reasoning.

(9) In March 2005, Wal-Mart was ordered by court to pay an amount of \$11 million for hiring of illegal immigrants as janitor in its stores all over United State (Greenhouse, 2005). *This* kind of settlement is just not server enough to stop Wal-Mart from hiring more illegal immigrant for cheap labor under the shadow of the law.

(10) In the video 'Is Wal-Mart beneficial for America,' it describes 'Rubbermaid' as if this company was a sacrifice of Wal-Mart's. Specifically speaking, as the cost of rubber raised, 'Rubbermaid' broke down because Wal-Mart refused to sell their products as price went up. However, looking at *this* issue from a different perspective, it was the Rubbermaid organization, which was at fault, depending completely upon another business when the company should have had its own competitiveness, was inappropriate.

In contrast to *this* as a text referent to frame the author's arguments, the plural form *these* is more used to refer to an entity or topic with a specific referent, as is shown in excerpt (11).

(11) Many would have to be thrown into the streets and this would not only be the 1.9million people working. Myriad of *these* employees are parents who are also responsible for the daily needs of their family.

that / those

Categorized as distal demonstrative, *that* is documented as establishing 'a sense of distance', which could be spatial, temporal, psychological, or simply sequential (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999, P. 307). The data in this study showed some tendencies of *that* as a distal demonstrative. *those* was observed to have a similar function, but indicates a more specific referent than *that*.

The learners in this study used *that* to refer to something further, less desirable, or simply present a neutral position when they state a fact or something less desirable to create a psychological distance. The author of excerpt (12) takes a position that Wal-Mart treats its associates unfairly. Women discrimination in salary treatment is one of the major aspects that the author develops to prove his arguments. In an example he used, after presenting the actual wages the woman associates were paid, the author followed up with demonstrative *that* commenting on the fact that "that was before tax". Here, the anaphoric *that* has the connotation of 'even that amount of money', indicating this is a fact undesired by the author. A simple use of demonstrative *that* gives the notion the author does not agree with Wal-Mart's unfair treatment to its woman associates. The use of *that* in excerpt (13) shows a neutral position of the author. It simply describes a situation. With the use of *that* the author creates a psychological distance from the statement.

(12) Her wages is ..., and *that* was before tax.

(13) Although so many criticisms were made about Wal-Mart and tried to put its name down, Wal-Mart moved on with its strict business mind and strategy. Business world is tough. Whoever comes up with better idea and is willing to sacrifice their time and ability can survive. This means *that* company has to constantly update itself so that consumers would not get bored and lose their interest.

That is also used to indicate a physical distance in written texts. It creates a conceptual map about the locations of the topics. The author of excerpt (14) commented on the effects of having a Wal-Mart upon the retailers and community. When referring to those suppliers who may follow Wal-Mart's step, the author used *that* indicating a physical distance between the remote and rural area where Wal-Mart usually opens up.

(14) Knowing that there will be many potential consumers in *that* area, suppliers will try to sell things near Wal-Mart as well, trying to free ride the market power. As a result, the community in *that* local area can grow due to sigma effect.

That is found to indicate sequential distance as well, i.e. second mentioning of the entity, topic, or proposition. In excerpt (15), the author used *these* several times to create a sense of suspense in her introduction paragraph. After having prompted her readers with a series of questions about the giant store, the author provided the answer. In giving the answer, she shifted from demonstrative *these* to *that*, indicating the store has been already mentioned in the context, and here when referring to it, it is a second/third mention.

(15) Have you seen the familiar big stores when you are travelling out of the hometown? Are you surprised that you can discover *these* stores every hole and corner even outside the USA? Are you curious about *these* stores? Wal-Mart, *that* is the Wal-Mart!

it

In comparison to the use of *this/these* and *that/those*, students' use of demonstrative *it* is straightforward. *It* is mainly used in two occasions: one as pronoun referring to a specific referent in second mention, usually an entity or organization; the other as idiomatic expressions.

It as object reference refers to a specific referent, neutral in a sense that *it* is used to introduce a fact or an example. It could be followed by either positive evidence or negative evidence, but *it* is seldom followed by a comment. Excerpts

(16), (17), and (18) respectively showed how *it* is used in presenting neutral, favorable, and undesirable positions.

(16) Wal-Mart is now the largest retail store in united State. *It* has come a long way from being in the bottom of its retail market to finally reach to top.

(17) Even though in some cases people would prefer shopping elsewhere than Wal-Mart, which would decrease the revenue generated to Wal-Mart, yet *it* benefits consumers as well as the economy overall. *It* benefits consumers because they would have more options to choose from, all with high quality goods and services and pleasing prices.

(18) Yet, *it* has often been criticized for its harsh labor practice it employ in order to be the most dominant store in the U.S. and World market and also to meet the everyday demand from its buyers.

The use of *it* in idiomatic expressions and sentence patterns indicates students' mastery of the idiomatic expressions. The following are some examples.

(19) *It's* reported that time record from 25,000 employees in July 2000 found 1,371 cases of minors working during school hours and at night.

20) *It* may be hard for a company the size of Wal-Mart to pay notice to all its employees.

(21) *It* is true that Wal-Mart provides convenient and cheap goods to people but it also provides inconvenient services to the employees.

(22) Is *it* worth to buy from Wal-Mart while Wal-Mart does not treat his workers properly?

Learners Errors in using demonstratives

Unclear referents

One of the biggest problems among the learners in this study is unclear referents of demonstratives. In excerpt (23), judging from the text, the second *it* should refer to Wal-Mart, but from the immediate discourse environment, it is hard to tell whether *it* refers to Wal-Mart or not. In excerpt (24), the author describes the situations of the Wal-Mart workers overseas. He mentioned the long hour shift, low wages, and lack of health insurance. At the end of the excerpt, the student uses a demonstrative *this* to summarize that "this is the situation of foreign workers face, but Wal-Mart has done virtually nothing to improve the situation". By using *this*, the student's intention is to refer to the poor treatments of oversea workers in different aspects as mentioned above. However, a mere use of *this* cannot signal clearly the more comprehensive referent, which may cause comprehension problems to the readers.

(23) In the frontline video "Is Wal-Mart good for America?", Gary Gereffi has reported that Wal-Mart is the dominant company for many United States suppliers. *It* requires that prices go down from year to year. If they cannot meet Wal-Mart prices, *it* will go offshore and *those* suppliers will go out of businesses.

(24) What's more, Wal-Mart's way to speed up the production time is to impose wage differential base on the time taken for production. The chance of such inhuman practices happening in an American factory is slim to none. However, because of the influences the Wal-Mart has on the Chinese suppliers; they can demand almost anything they want out of the workers. Such practice is further demonstrate when "Workers making toys for Wal-Mart in China's Guangdong Province reported that they would have to meet a quota of painting 8,900 toy pieces in an eight hour shift in order to earn the stated wage of \$3.45 a day. If they failed to meet that quota, the factory would only pay them \$1.23 for a day's work" ("The real fact about Wal-Mart", 2005). In addition to the long hour shift, according to Simon's report "The survey of 16 Wal-Mart suppliers found that some pay as little as half the minimum daily wage, provide no health insurance or require mandatory overtime. One company provided only one restroom for its 2,000 employees" (Simons, 2007). *This* is the situation of foreign workers face, but Wal-Mart has done virtually nothing to improve the situation.

Overuse of a certain demonstrative

The overuse of a certain referent form is observed in the essays. In excerpt (25), the author uses demonstrative *it* four times, both as cataphoric *it* and anaphoric *it*. It runs the risk of perplexing the readers because when the same demonstrative is overused within a sentence, it may cause misunderstanding. Excerpt (26) reveals another problem. The demonstrative *this* in the sentence is redundant in that it does not contribute to the meaning construction or discourse cohesion. In excerpt (27), the referent of demonstrative *this* is not clearly stated in the sentence. As readers, it is hard to find a clear referent of *this* in the specific sentence. What's more, the second *this* does not have a specific referent. It is not clearly stated whether it refers to the first sentence, the second sentence, or the whole situation.

(25) To sum up, Wal-Mart is already in such a large scale that *it* is quite difficult to absorb the fact how *it* has done all of this mainly through its pricing technique and how *it* has over-taken the grocery markets and how *it* has sold \$244.5 billion worth of goods last year.

(26) Wal-Mart imports all of its goods from developing nations because of their cheap rates. *This* Wal-Mart china trade is so colossal that it cannot be discontinued easily by both the ends.

(27) Many would have to be thrown into the streets and *this* would not only be the 1.9million people working.

Myriad of *these* employees are parents who are also responsible for the daily needs of their family. *This* shows how Wal-Mart has taken the responsibility to take care of the lives of millions of people in the US.

Inconsistencies in the use of this and that

Inconsistencies in the use of demonstrative *this* and *that* are found in the data. In excerpt (28), the author mainly uses *this* to frame and foreground his narration and argument. The use of "this fact" and "these people" are appropriate in the context. However, the abrupt shift from referring to the same group of people by *these* to *those* seems unjustified. It gives the readers an impression of inconsistency and a sudden break of discourse flow. Excerpt (29) is by the same

author. Here he used *those* to refer to ‘people who get promoted based on the years of service’, but right after it, he used *this* to refer to the proposition, stating that it does not apply to women. The argument is confusing due to the inconsistent use of *this/these* and *that/those*. Excerpt (30) reveals a similar problem in using *these* and *those*. Since the topic is Wal-Mart, the author refers to the small retailers as *those*, but when referring to them for the second time in the same sentence, she shifted to *these*, which seems to break her own rule of using demonstratives.

(28) China has billion of peoples and millions of them are unemployed. So they are willing to work for any kind of wage they can get. Because of *this* fact, Wal-Mart use a little of its billion of revenues to hire *these* people way under the average worker’s wage. The wage they pay to *those* workers is not even 10% of what they pay for American workers. *This* strategy further increases the profit to spending ratio.

(29) The first and for-most sign of discrimination is the denial of any kind of promotion even if women have worked as hard, maybe even harder than their male counterparts. But the reality is that those man will get promote based how years of service and sales they achieve, but this is not the same standard for women.

(30) Compared with *those* “poor” small retailers who work on the main street but lost their business life finally (Sarah Anderson, 1994, p. 21), Wal-Mart shows a much firmer spirit of competition than *these* small retailers.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS TO EFL TEACHING

The qualitative and quantitative analyses showed that the learners in this study have a good command of English demonstratives. The analyses haven’t shown the typical patterns of using demonstratives by ESL/EFL learners as reported by Petch-Tyson (2000), Lenko-Szymanska (2004), and Wang and Sun (2006). Still it is important to note that the learners have some problems in using English demonstrative properly. Therefore, the uses of demonstratives in written discourse may need to be explicitly addressed in ESL teaching. Specifically, the learner errors, such as unclear referents, overuse of a certain demonstrative, and the inconsistencies in using *this* and *that*, are worthy of formal instructions. A close discourse and textual analysis which focuses on demonstrative choices within context to build up cohesion and avoid redundancy may be needed in ESL classes. A comparison of the English speakers’ use of demonstratives and learners’ use of demonstratives may be helpful for students to understand the finer meaning differences between demonstratives. In terms of ESL writing classes, activities such as peer review or peer proofreading may provide the student writers with a better sense of audience and an enhanced awareness of using demonstratives clearly and accurately.

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