

Esa Ogui viene con todo. Demonstrative + Proper Name in Mexico City Spanish: An Interactional Approach.

This paper investigates the distribution and interpretative properties of Proper Names (PNs) modified by demonstratives in Mexico City Spanish (e.g., *Esta Mariana, Esa Margarita*).

Assuming the standard thesis that PNs are rigid designators (Kripke 1980) and that PNs in Spanish move to D (Longobardi 1994), the co-occurrence of a demonstrative, whose canonical function is domain restriction or deictic selection of a referent, is unexpected. Unlike other languages such as Catalan or Greek, where the determiner acts as a syntactic legitimizer of the argument (Bernstein 1993), Spanish allows bare PNs in argument position (1), suggesting that the demonstrative in (2) does not satisfy a formal syntactic requirement but rather makes an additional semantic contribution.

However, existing approaches focusing on referent disambiguation or the presupposition of non-uniqueness (Polakof 2025) incorrectly predict that (2) should be infelicitous if the referent is unique in the context, which does not hold for the variety of Spanish under study.

(1) *Margarita me dijo que no viniera.* (2) *Esta Margarita me dijo que no viniera.*

Since reference is not restricted, this paper focuses on establishing the semantic contribution of these categories and how they integrate with the proper name. In formal terms, the syntax projected by Demonstrative (*este/ese*) + Proper Name constructions is analyzed.

The distribution and interpretation of Demonstrative + PN constructions in Mexico City Spanish rule out purely syntactic or referential disambiguation approaches. Contra the syntactic legitimizer hypothesis (Bernstein 1993), the full grammaticality of bare PNs in argument position (*Eustaquia me dijo que viniera...*) confirms that the demonstrative does not satisfy a structural requirement. If it were a syntactic requirement, its presence should not impose felicity restrictions on use; however, with new referents, it leads to the unacceptability of the sequence. This provides evidence that the demonstrative contributes a meaning of familiarity rather than mere formal legitimization.

Consider the scenario in (3):

(3) **Context:** Aldo has just met a girl named Eustaquia on the subway. Subsequently, Aldo talks to Fer, who does not know said person nor knows of the previous encounter. Aldo: # *Ay, esta Eustaquia me dijo que odia la línea tres.*

The sentence in (3) is unacceptable given that the proper name's referent is not familiar to the addressee. Since it is not a shared referent, the use of the demonstrative results in unacceptability.

Likewise, the data present evidence against the hypothesis of the presupposition of non-uniqueness of the referent (Polakoff 2025). If the demonstrative operated as a selection mechanism amidst ambiguity, its use should be blocked when the referent is unique. Nevertheless, the construction is licit even in contexts where the set of referents shared by speaker and addressee contains a single element.

(4) **Context:** Aldo and Fer know, each on their own, several people named Mariana. However, in their shared social circle, there is only one unique Mariana (i.e., the intersection of their knowledge contains a single referent with that name). Aldo: *Eso es lo que dice esta Mariana*. Fer: *Tienes razón*.

The acceptability of (4) provides evidence that the demonstrative does not select an entity among several but signals the relevance of a referent already identified in the Common Ground.

Following the Interactional Spine model (Wiltschko 2021), it is proposed that the demonstrative contributes a familiarity feature located in the syntactic layer corresponding to the Common Ground of the speaker and addressee. In this work, it will also be maintained that the familiarity analysis holds for both *este* + PN and *ese* + PN, with the difference that the latter presents a syntactic distribution restricted to exclamative statements like (5) and constructions with possessives like (6), where evaluative content is additionally encoded.

(5) *¡Ay, esa Margarita!* (6) *¡Esa mi Eustaquia!*

Finally, it will be argued that, analogously to the meaning of familiarity contributed by the definite article in *El/La* + PN constructions (Oggiani & Aguilar Guevara 2024), the demonstrative is responsible for encoding said instruction in *Dem* + PN variants.

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