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Space and Attention in the Kyrgyz Demonstrative System

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Abstract. Based on novel empirical work on the Kyrgyz (Turkic) nine-term demonstrative system, this paper investigates the spatial uses of demonstratives and the relationship between demonstratives' attention-drawing and spatial denotations, which has been a fundamental question for the study of demonstrative semantic content (for an overview see Skilton 2019; Levinson 2018a). While Kyrgyz, similarly to Turkish (Küntay & Özyürek 2002, 2006), appears to have a specialized attention-drawing demonstrative indicating that attention-drawing and spatial denotations can be entirely distinct, careful elicitations reveal that attention drawing is derived from a (joint-attention) sociocentric distal meaning.

Keywords. demonstratives; exophoric demonstratives; anchoring; attention; Turkic; Kyrgyz

1. Introduction. This paper investigates the uncommonly large, nine-term demonstrative system in Kyrgyz,[1] with special attention to spatial demonstratives. Prior to our study, the complete list of demonstratives (henceforth, DEMs) in Kyrgyz was not known.[2] We used three different types of methodologies to elicit the Kyrgyz DEMs: (i) naturalistic elicitations, (ii) a corpus study based on the movie *Kök Börü* (2019), and (iii) directed elicitation based on the augmented version of the Wilkins Questionnaire (Wilkins 1999, 2018). The demonstrative system, as given in Table 1,[3] is the first comprehensive list of Kyrgyz DEMs. We are also the first to observe that there is almost a perfect split between spatial (exophoric) and anaphoric (endophoric)[4] demonstratives in Kyrgyz, with *bu(l)* being the only DEM that has both exophoric and endophoric uses. The exophoric-endophoric DEM split is not unique to Kyrgyz, it is also attested cross-linguistically,

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[1] Kyrgyz (kir) [qɯrɣɯz tili] is a Turkic language spoken mainly in Kyrgyzstan and in the neighboring countries by about 5,360,440 speakers (Eberhard et al. 2025).

[2] The following seven DEMs are mentioned in previous work such as Wurm (1949); Hebert & Poppe (1964); Qudaybergénov et al. (1980); Imart (1981); Somfai Kara (2003); Kirchner (2006); Toqtonalíyev et al. (2015); Johanson (2021); Karakoç & Kalieva (2022): *bu(l)*, *ufu(l)*, *oʃo(l)*, *al*, *tigi(l)*, *tetigi(l)*, *tee tetigi(l)*. Note that most of these sources do not mention all of these DEMs, only a partial list. In addition, they also mention some things we do not consider DEMs for the purposes of this study, e.g., *mɯna*, *tee*, *bajagɯ*, *ʤanagɯ*, *bereki*. These sources mention the following parameters that purportedly drive the distribution of Kyrgyz DEMs: (i) proximity to the speaker, interlocutor, or a 3rd party; (ii) visibility; (iii) immediate presence; (iv) concreteness; (v) precision, etc. Our contribution improves on these existing accounts by identifying the complete list of Kyrgyz DEMs and by carefully describing the distribution of spatial DEMs.

[3] The IPA transcriptions used throughout the paper follow the Kyrgyz Cyrillic orthography, and are not intended to capture pronunciation. The /l/ sound in parentheses may be pronounced or excluded, perhaps based on social or stylistic factors not investigated as part of this study.

[4] The DEMs we categorize as anaphoric can only be used when the referent has already been introduced to the common ground. However, this does not mean that these anaphoric DEMs completely lack spatial meaning. For instance, *ufu(l)* indexes referents within reaching distance of the speaker in contexts where the referent (or referent type) is established in the previous discourse and there is a choice between specific instantiations of that referent type (e.g., in a scenario where a customer states that they want to try on a shirt, and the shop assistant asks which one; the customer then points to a specific shirt (within reaching distance), where there are multiple shirt options near the speaker). *Oʃo(l)* is the speaker-distal form used in the same context. We leave the anaphoric DEMs for future research.

e.g., in Goemai (Chadic) (Hellwig 2018:134-135), in Chadic languages in general (Frajzyngier 1996), Tiriyó (Cariban) (Meira 2018), and in Cushillococha Ticuna (isolate) (Skilton 2019).

Spatial DEMs	Anaphoric DEMs
bu(l) ∼ *mɯnabu(l)*	*bu(l)*
aldagɯ	*ʊfu(l)*
tetigi(l)	*ofo(l)*
tee tetigi(l)	*tigi(l)*
	al

Table 1. A comprehensive list of spatial and anaphoric demonstratives in Kyrgyz

Given the data in Table 1, it is clear that the Kyrgyz demonstrative system is radically different from the better-studied three-term Turkish system, given in Table 2, which is often assumed to also hold in other Turkic languages (see the discussion in Johanson 2021:§24.4). The Turkish demonstrative system is traditionally assumed to be based on a three-way distance distinction: proximal, medial and distal (to the speaker).[5] However, Küntay & Özyürek (2006) show based on experimental data that the "medial" *şu* can index referents at any distance from the speaker, and propose that *şu* has no spatial specification. Instead, they argue that *şu* is a "pure" attention-establishing DEM; that is, its sole function is to draw the addressee's attention to the referent (at the time of the utterance the addressee is not attentive to the object).[6]

DEMs	Traditional label	Experimental data-based description
bu	proximal	SPKR-PROX, doesn't presuppose ADDR attention
şu	medial	no spatial content, establishes ADDR attention(?)
o	distal	SPKR-DIST, presupposes ADDR attention

Table 2. Turkish demonstratives

Although the Kyrgyz system includes more DEMs than Turkish, our investigation shows that, similarly to Turkish, addressee attention is a relevant condition for DEM use in Kyrgyz. Accordingly, the paper focuses on the four- or five-term spatial demonstrative system under two conditions: (i) joint attention (the addressee is attentive to the referent at the time of the utterance), and (ii) attention establishing (the addressee is not paying attention to the referent at the time of the utterance). We find that the DEM inventory is different under the joint-attention and the attention-establishing condition, as presented in Table 3.

Although cross-linguistically it is not unprecedented to use an entirely different DEM set under these two conditions (e.g., in Jahai (Burenhult 2018)), there are also many languages where the joint-attention DEM is syncretic with an attention-establishing DEM (but crucially with different spatial properties) (e.g., in Goemai (Hellwig 2018), Tzeltal (Brown & Levinson 2018) and Cushillococha Ticuna (Skilton 2019)). Table 3 clearly shows that Kyrgyz is like the latter group of languages in which the attention-establishing DEM is syncretic with a joint-attention

[5] All of these DEMs double as anaphoric demonstratives. Only their spatial, but not their anaphoric uses are represented in Table 2.

[6] Note that Peeters et al. (2014) conducted a controlled production experiment, where they could not confirm *şu*'s attention-establishing use. At this point, it remains to be seen what *şu*'s semantic content is.

Spatial DEMS Joint-attention condition	Spatial DEMS Attention-establishing condition
bu(l) ∼ *mɯnabu(l)*	*mɯnabu(l)*
aldagɯ	*tee tetigi(l)*
tetigi(l)	
tee tetigi(l)	

Table 3. Spatial demonstratives in Kyrgyz

DEM. The main goal of the paper is to investigate the spatial properties of Kyrgyz DEMs under the joint-attention and attention-establishing conditions, and to uncover the basis of syncretism between these two groups in Kyrgyz. In this way, this study contributes to a better understanding of attention-establishing DEMs cross-linguistically, and the novel Kyrgyz data shed light on the possible source of syncretism between joint-attention and attention-establishing DEMs.[7]

The paper first offers a detailed description of joint-attention spatial DEMs in §2, constituting the first detailed description of Kyrgyz spatial demonstratives. §3 and §4 turn to attention-establishing demonstratives, and questions concerning the relationship between the joint-attention and the attention-establishing use. §5 concludes.

2. Joint-attention spatial demonstratives. In this section, we discuss demonstratives, which are used in out-of-the-blue (non-anaphoric) contexts where the speaker (SPKR) and, crucially, the addressee (ADDR) is attentive to the referent at the time of the utterance. Our proposed characterization of joint-attention spatial DEMs is given in Table 4, and will be justified below.

	Egocentric	Sociocentric
Proximal	*bu(l)* ∼ *mɯnabu(l)*	*aldagɯ*
Distal	*tetigi(l)*	*tee tetigi(l)*

Table 4. Overview of spatial demonstratives under the joint-attention condition

2.1. PRELIMINARIES. Before turning to the Kyrgyz demonstratives, we need to elaborate on two relevant parameters characterizing Kyrgyz demonstratives (and demonstratives in general): (i) the proximal-distal distinction, and (ii) anchoring.

On the face of it, (exophoric) demonstratives seem to denote information about the distance of the referent to a speech participant or participants (the origo), i.e., whether the referent is proximal or distal to the relevant origo. However, the choice between, e.g., proximal and distal demonstratives has been shown to be heavily context and interaction-sensitive (Hanks 2005; Enfield 2003). In order to capture this, we adopt the concept of peripersonal space (Kemmerer 1999), which refers to the reaching distance of the origo. Notably, the peripersonal space is not a perimeter defined by a set measurement (e.g., 3 feet), rather it can be adjusted depending on the specific speech context. For instance, Coventry et al. (2008) show that when the origo uses a long tool to reach the referent, the proximal demonstrative is appropriate despite the referent not being within arm's reach. In sum, when we use the terms "proximal" and "distal," we mean that the referent is within or outside of the origo's (context-dependent) peripersonal space.

[7] For an overview on questions relating to attention management see Skilton (2019:§3.5, §5.4).

Another important dimension of the demonstratives' meaning is anchoring. This defines where the referent is relative to a speech participant or participants. Cross-linguistically, three possible anchors have been identified: (i) the speaker (egocentric), (ii) the addressee (altercentric), or (iii) the dyad of the speaker and the addressee (sociocentric) (for further discussion and cross-linguistic data see the various contributions in Levinson et al. (2018)).

While demonstratives in Kyrgyz may be used as determiners or pronouns, this study almost exclusively examines their determiner uses.

Finally, a few words about the methodology employed in this paper are due. The Kyrgyz language data in this article come from the second author, who was raised bilingual in Kyrgyz and Russian in Chüy Oblast', Kyrgyzstan, obtaining education in both languages through the post-secondary level, including in Kyrgyz linguistics, and now lives in the United States and uses English at work.

We used three different types of methodologies to elicit the Kyrgyz DEMs. (i) Naturalistic elicitations (collaborative work between the second and third authors): during elicitation sessions, the third author presented the second author with utterances in imaginary contexts devised to highlight certain aspects of deixis and anaphoricity. The second author determined how to best express each sentence in Kyrgyz and which demonstratives were felicitous in that context. A total of 34 situation-sentence-demonstrative matchings were judged to be felicitous. These sentences were then carefully annotated for features such as how the demonstratives' referent was present (physically, anaphorically, or shared real-world knowledge); exophoric/endophoric reference; the animacy and concreteness of the referent (person, place, thing, concept, etc.); distance from the speaker, their interlocutor(s), and a third party; and the visibility to each of those parties.

(ii) Corpus study (collaborative work between the second and fourth authors): the corpus work was conducted by analyzing all uses of of demonstratives in the first hour of the 2019 Kyrgyz movie *Kök börü*, which is about a player of the sport of the same name. The Kyrgyz dialogue was naturalistic and spanned a range of speech styles, from very colloquial to very formal; Russian and code-switching dialogue was also common. Besides the features annotated in the judgement work, as described above, we also annotated these data for whether a gesture was used with the utterance. A total of 64 instances of demonstratives were identified (not limited to determiner uses): 22 instances of *bu(l)*, 6 of *uʃu(l)*, 0 of *aldagɯ*, 19 of *oʃo(l)*, 13 of *al*, 2 of *tigi(l)*, and 3 *tetigi(l)*.

(iii) Directed elicitations based on the augmented version of the Wilkins Questionnaire (Wilkins 1999, 2018) (collaborative work between the first and second authors): during the elicitation sessions, the first author asked the second author to determine which demonstrative(s) can be used felicitously in each one of the 25 scenarios in the Wilkins Questionnaire (Wilkins 1999, 2018). For the majority of these, the second author set up the scenario in real life to be able to better judge the acceptability of the DEM. The frame sentences ("*Whose book is __ book?*," "*Ouch, __ shoulder / tooth is hurting!*," "*Is __ shoulder / tooth hurting?*, "*__ bug is bothering me.*" or "*Is __ bug bothering you?*") were carefully presented in an out-of-the-blue context. After the second author volunteered the most appropriate DEM, the first author asked her about the acceptability of *all* the other DEMs in the given context. We paid special attention to control for addressee attention: we strictly distinguished between scenarios where the addressee's attention was or was not on the referent at the time of the utterance. Additionally, we also designed new scenarios for eliciting sociocentric demonstratives (see §2.3) and attention-establishing uses of DEMs (§3).

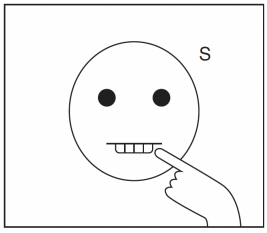
While the findings using each of these methodologies do not contradict one another, future

work should verify whether the generalisations we report hold for other speakers, as well as the extent of variation across dialects.

2.2. EGOCENTRIC DEMONSTRATIVES. We start our discussion with the egocentric (SPKR-anchored) proximal and distal DEMs *bu(l) ∼ mɯnabu(l)* and *tetigi(l)*; these have very similar (if not identical) distribution to spatial egocentric uses of English *this* and *that*.

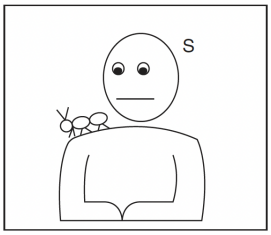
The SPKR-centered proximal *bu(l) ∼ mɯnabu(l)*[8] is used when (i) the referent is an inalienable part of the SPKR (shown in Figure (1)), (ii) located on the body of the SPKR (Figure (2)), (iii) is within reaching distance of the SPKR (Figure (3)). This pattern corresponds to other egocentric proximals' cross-linguistically.[9] In Figures (1)-(3), only *bu(l) ∼ mɯnabu(l)* is acceptable, other DEMs (*tetigi(l)*, *aldagɯ*, *tee tetigi(l)*) are judged infelicitous.

(1)



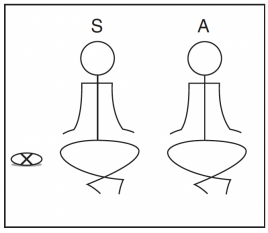
Inalienable part^{SPKR}
✓*bu(l) ∼ mɯnabu(l)*

(2)



On the SPKR's body
✓*bu(l) ∼ mɯnabu(l)*

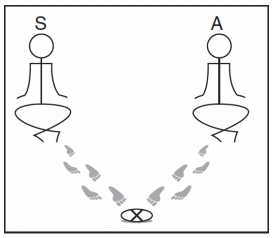
(3)



Reaching distance^{SPKR}
✓*bu(l) ∼ mɯnabu(l)*

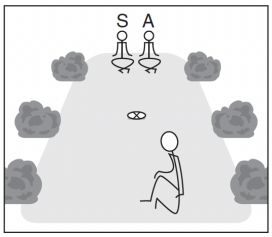
Turning to the SPKR-centered distal *tetigi(l)*, this DEM is felicitous whenever the referent is not within the SPKR's peripersonal space. Two possible such scenarios are given in Figures (4)-(5).[10] None of these contexts are compatible with the SPKR-PROX *bu(l) ∼ mɯnabu(l)*. Regardless of whether the object is relatively close (a few steps away, but not within reaching distance) to the speaker, as in (4), or father away, as in (5), *tetigi(l)* is appropriate.

(4)



Not reaching distance^{SPKR}
✓*tetigi(l)*

(5)



Not reaching distance^{SPKR}
✓*tetigi(l)*

In conclusion, *bu(l) ∼ mɯnabu(l)* and *tetigi(l)* are the SPKR-anchored proximal and distal demonstratives, shown in Table 5.

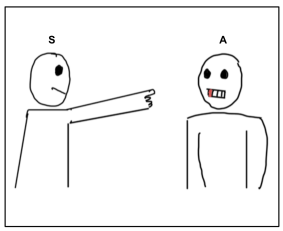
[8] We found no distributional difference between *bu(l)* and *mɯnabu(l)* under the joint-attention condition; they are the same for all the variables examined in this study.
[9] Figures (1)-(3) are illustrations coming from the Wilkins Questionnaire (scenarios 1, 3 and 6) (Wilkins 1999, 2018).
[10] Figures (4)-(5) are scenarios 12 and 14 in the Wilkins Questionnaire.

	Egocentric
Proximal	*bu(l)* ∼ *mɯnabu(l)*
Distal	*tetigi(l)*

Table 5. Egocentric (SPKR-anchored) demonstratives under the joint-attention condition

2.3. SOCIOCENTRIC DEMONSTRATIVES. This subsection turns to the remaining two spatial DEMs: *aldagɯ*[11] and *tee tetigi(l)*. If we only take into account the scenarios in the Wilkins Questionnaire, *aldagɯ* appears to be an ADDR-anchored proximal. It can be used when the referent is (not within reaching distance of the speaker and) (i) an inalienable part of the ADDR (Figure (6)), (ii) located on the ADDR's body (Figure (7)), or (iii) within reaching distance of the ADDR (Figure (8)).[12]

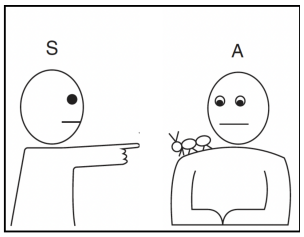
(6)



Inalienable part$^{\text{ADDR}}$

✓ *aldagɯ*; ✗ *tetigi(l)*; ✗ *tee tetigi(l)*

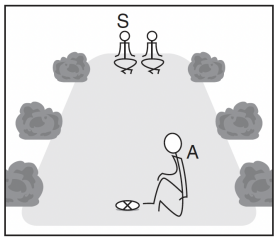
(7)



On the ADDR's body

✓ *aldagɯ*; ?? *tetigi(l)*; ✗ *tee tetigi(l)*

(8)

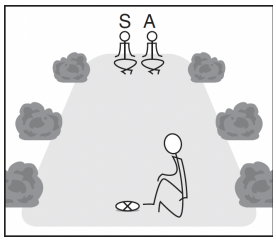


Reaching distance$^{\text{ADDR}}$

✓ *aldagɯ*; ? *tetigi(l)*; ✗ *tee tetigi(l)*

Additionally, *aldagɯ* is infelicitous when the referent is located not within reaching distance of the ADDR (or to be precise, farther away from both the SPKR and the ADDR, as we discuss momentarily). This is shown in Figures (9) and (10),[13] with which *aldagɯ* is incompatible. On the face of it, this would support the conclusion that *aldagɯ* is an ADDR-anchored proximal.

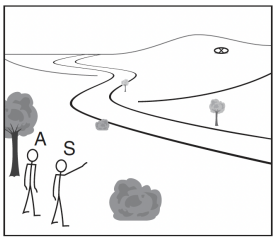
(9)



Not reaching distance$^{\text{SPKR,ADDR}}$

✗ *aldagɯ*, ✓ *tetigi(l)*, ✓ *tee tetigi(l)*

(10)



Not reaching distance$^{\text{SPKR,ADDR}}$

✗ *aldagɯ*, ✓ *tetigi(l)*, ✓ *tee tetigi(l)*

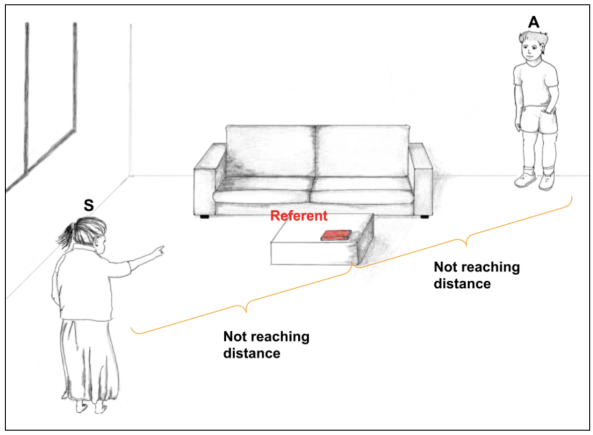
[11] The demonstrative *aldagɯ* is not mentioned in existing descriptions of the Kyrgyz demonstrative system (Wurm 1949; Hebert & Poppe 1964; Qudaybergénov et al. 1980; Imart 1981; Somfai Kara 2003; Kirchner 2006; Toqtonalíyev et al. 2015; Johanson 2021; Karakoç & Kalieva 2022), but is attested in modern usage, classic literature, and dictionaries (Judáxin 1965). To the best of our knowledge, this paper is the first that describes *aldagɯ* as a demonstrative.

[12] Figures (6)-(8) correspond to scenarios (modified) 2, (modified) 4 and 16 in the Wilkins Questionnaire.

[13] Figures (9) and (10) are scenarios 13 and 24 in the Wilkins Questionnaire.

However, additional data cast doubt on this preliminary conclusion. (11) depicts a scenario, which is not part of the Wilkins Questionnaire, and in which neither the SPKR nor the ADDR is within reaching distance to the referent (the book on the coffee table). If *aldagɯ* is a true ADDR-anchored proximal, we predict that it is infelicitous in this context. However, this is not borne out: *aldagɯ* is perfectly acceptable in (11). This indicates that *aldagɯ* is not an ADDR-centered proximal.

(11)



✓*aldagɯ*; ✓*tetigi(l)*; ✗ *tee tetigi(l)*

In (11) and also in (6)-(8), the referent indexed by *aldagɯ* is located within the shared space between the SPKR & ADDR. This phenomenon is known as "dyadic centering" or "sociocentric centering," and several languages have been identified that have sociocentric DEMs, e.g., spoken Brazilian Portuguese (Meira & Guirardello-Damian 2018), Goemai (Chadic) (Hellwig 2018), Dutch (Peeters et al. 2015), Cushillococha Ticuna (isolate) (Skilton 2019).[14] The sociocentric space is defined as "the smallest possible perimeter that encloses the peripersonal space of both SPKR and ADDR" (Skilton 2019:181-182).[15] Thus, the proposal is that *aldagɯ* is a sociocentric proximal, i.e., it can be used whenever the referent is located within the sociocentric space. This reinterpretation remains compatible with (6)-(10).

One might wonder what happens in contexts (1)-(3), where the object was located within the SPKR's peripersonal space. In theory, these referents are also located within the sociocentric space, therefore *aldagɯ* should be a felicitous DEM. However, this is not what we see: *aldagɯ* is inappropriate in (1)-(3). We take this not as a refutation of our proposal, rather a blocking (or ranking) effect dictated by the the use of the SPKR-centered PROX. We see cross-linguistically that SPKR-PROXs block any other DEMs from surfacing in contexts where they can occur (see Skilton 2019:210-211). That is, the fact that *aldagɯ* is infelicitous in contexts (1)-(3) does not

[14] Yucatec Maya (Mayan) had been argued to have a similar system (Hanks 1990), but more recent work by Bohnemeyer (2018) casts doubt on these claims.

[15] Skilton (2019) identifies two possible definitions (or maybe types) of sociocentric space, which she calls narrow and broad sociocentric space. The definition given in the main text corresponds to the narrow sociocentric space. Skilton defines the broad sociocentroc space the following way: "an actual built perimeter that fully encloses the SPKR and ADDR". Skilton (2019) shows that the Cushillococha Ticuna sociocentric proximals utilize the broad definition of sociocentric space. In contrast, our preliminary findings indicate that Kyrgyz *aldagɯ* refers to objects within the narrow sociocentric space. This point should be the topic of future studies.

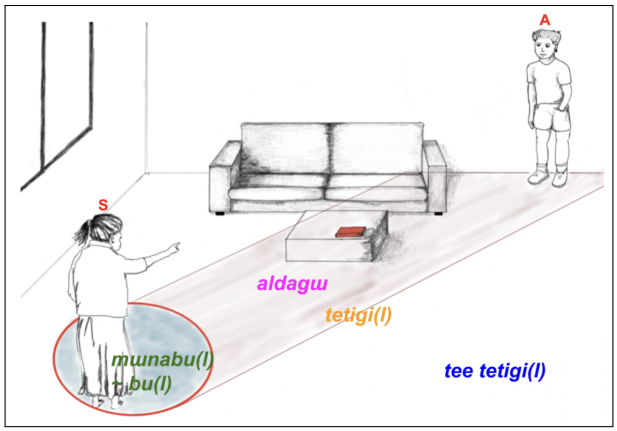
rebut our sociocentric propsal, rather it indicates that some additional factors are at play when the SPKR-PROX and some other DEM can (in theory) be used.

As a final point we note that the sociocentric proximal *aldagɯ* is expected to be infelicitous whenever the referent is located outside of the sociocentric space. This is borne out: *aldagɯ* cannot be used in (5)[16] or (9)-(10), where the object is not within the sociocentric space.

Lastly, we turn to *tee tetigi(l)*, which we identify as the sociocentric distal. Accordingly, this DEM can only be used when the referent is outside of the sociocentric space, as in (9)-(10). As expected, when the object is located within the SPKR and ADDR's shared space, as in (6)-(8) and (11), *tee tetigi(l)* is infelicitous.

In summary, Kyrgyz has a four-way distinction in its spatial DEM system under the joint attention condition, summarized in Table 4 and in (12). This four-way system includes proximal and distal DEMs anchored to the SPKR and to the SPKR and ADDR's shared space.[17]

(12)



3. Attention-establishing spatial demonstratives. This section shows that there is only a two-way contrast under the attention-establishing condition, as shown in Table 6. In attention-establishing contexts, the ADDR is perceivably not paying attention to the referent at the time of the utterance and the SPKR attempts to draw new attention to the object. We performed careful elicitation in small and large-scale contexts. In the small-scale context, the speaker played the role of a mother who is trying to get her child (the addressee), who is playing with a dinosaur toy, to pay attention to a ball (in various locations) by saying "*My child, play with ___ ball!*" The large-scale context

[16] *Aldagɯ* might or might not be felicitous in a context like (4) depending on how we set up this scenario in real life. Our main consultant (the second author) explains this the following way: imagine there is a straight line connecting the SPKR and the ADDR, defining the axis of their shared space. If the referent is located relatively close to this imaginary line, *aldagɯ* is acceptable, albeit somewhat less preferred than *tetigi(l)*. However, the farther away the object is, the less and less acceptable *aldagɯ* becomes.

[17] We note that the actual picture is a bit more complicated than depicted in (12), specifically in connection with the distribution of *aldagɯ*. (i) As mentioned in the main text, when the referent is located within the sociocentric space but is within reaching distance of the SPKR, *mɯnabu(l)* ~ *bu(l)* must be used. (ii) When the referent is located in the sociocentric space, but not within the SPKR's or ADDR's peripersonal space, both *aldagɯ* and *tetigi(l)* are felicitous (see (11)). (iii) Curiously, when the referent is located in the sociocentric space and is within the ADDR's peripersonal space (especially when it is an inalienable part of the ADDR), only *aldagɯ* is appropriate, *tetigi(l)* is infelicitous (see (6) and (7)). This latter point indicates that the ADDR is the more prominent participant in the dyadic relation. More work is needed to establish what drives these "blocking" effects.

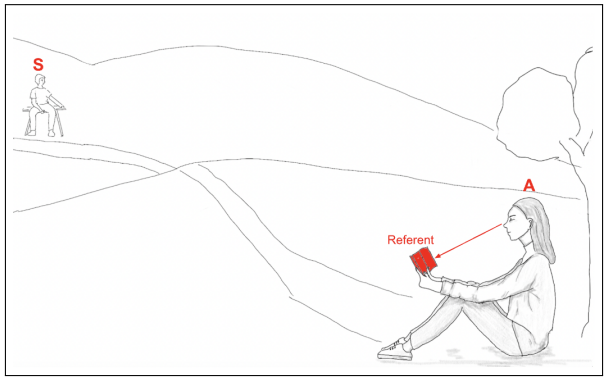
is illustrated in (13) and (14); here, the SPKR and the ADDR are in an open field about 150 feet apart. The referent is a book that the ADDR is either reading (joint-attention) or she is not attentive to it (she is focused on a bouquet of flowers, the book is in various locations in space). The SPKR (without any prior contextual mention of the book) says "*Whose book is ___ book?*"

Proximal^{SPKR}	*mɯnabu(l)*
Elsewhere	*tee tetigi(l)*

Table 6. Overview of spatial demonstratives under the attention-establishing condition

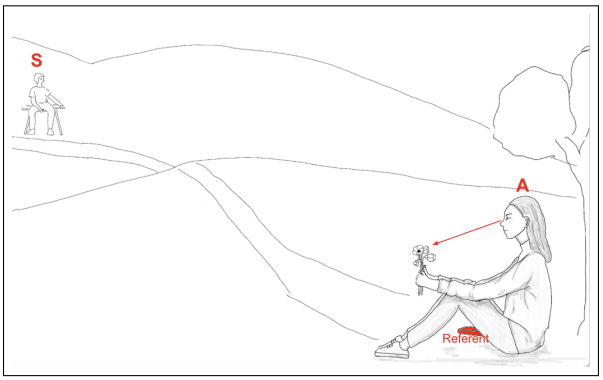
Perhaps unsurprisingly, when the referent is located in the SPKR's peripersonal space, *mɯnabu(l)* must be used. This is the very same pattern that we get in joint-attention contexts. However, we observe a sharp contrast between joint-attention and attention-establishing contexts when it comes to referents that are not within reaching distance of the SPKR. When the referent is located near the ADDR under the joint-attention condition, *aldagɯ* is the preferred DEM and *tee tetigi(l)* is strictly infelicitous. This is shown in (13), and also see (6)-(8) above. This is in sharp contrast with the attention-establishing context in (14). Here, the ADDR's attention is not on the referent (the book), which is right next to the ADDR, but on a bouquet of flowers. *Tee tetigi(l)* is the preferred DEM in this context.[18] We found that in every attention-establishing context where the referent is not within the SPKR's peripersonal space, *tee tetigi(l)* is the preferred DEM, defining a two-term system, as given in Table 6.

(13) Joint-attention condition



✗ *tee tetigi(l)*; ✓ *aldagɯ*

(14) Attention-establishing condition



✓ *tee tetigi(l)*; ? *aldagɯ*

4. Discussion. In many languages, the attention-establishing context licenses the use of a partially or entirely different DEM set than what we see in joint-attention scenarios: e.g., Turkish (Turkic) (Küntay & Özyürek 2002, 2006), Goemai (Chadic) (Hellwig 2018), Tzeltal (Mayan) (Brown & Levinson 2018), Tiriyó (Cariban) (Meira 2018), Jahai (Mon-Khmer) (Burenhult 2018), Yélî Dnye (Papuan) (Levinson 2018b), Cushillococha Ticuna (isolate) (Skilton 2019).

[18] It remains an open question whether *aldagɯ* (and in other spatial configurations *tetigi(l)*) can be used in attention-establishing contexts. It seems like these options are not straightforwardly rejected, but they are definitely not the preferred options. One possible explanation is that the SPKR could choose to present their utterance as if the ADDR were paying attention to the referent.

Given this widespread distribution, researchers have long considered attention management an important function of DEMs. However, analyses differ significantly when it comes to representing attention management in the grammar. There are two main approaches to attention management: (i) attention is built into the lexical semantics of DEMs (Burenhult 2018; Küntay & Özyürek 2002, 2006); i.e., the spatial and the attention-establishing functions are essentially distinct properties that DEMs may possess. Consequently, some DEMs can have both spatial and attention-establishing functions, while others may have either spatial or attention-establishing uses. That is, languages are predicted to have demonstratives with designated attention-managing function, without any spatial content. (ii) The second main approach to attention management is that attention is derivative of the general semantics (e.g., (spatial/general) feature(s)) of DEMs, but there is *no* independent [± attention] feature/property (Skilton 2019; Piwek et al. 2008). According to this second view, we expect some sort of correlation between the deictic content of the DEM and the attention-managing use. In a related vein, this analysis does not predict that languages have designated attention-managing DEMs.

Languages where the joint-attention and attention-establishing DEMs are clearly distinct, support the first analysis (Jahai (Burenhult 2018) appears to be one such language; it is an open question whether Turkish *şu* belongs here; see Küntay & Özyürek (2002, 2006), but cf. Peeters et al. (2014)). Languages in which attention-establishing DEMs are syncretic with joint-attention DEMs (with potentially different spatial use) corroborate the second hypothesis. Naturally, both hypotheses could be valid, with variation between languages in terms of how they encode attention. This paper does not take a position on such broader questions, we simply want to contribute to the typological literature on languages where joint-attention and attention-establishing DEMs are syncretic, as Kyrgyz is clearly such a language.

To summarize the facts introduced so far, Kyrgyz does not have designated attention-establishing DEMs whose sole function is to draw new attention to the referent without having any deictic content. Instead, two DEMs are used in attention-establishing contexts: *mɯnabu(l)* and *tee tetigi(l)*. These are syncretic with the joint-attention SPKR-PROX *mɯnabu(l)* and the SOCIO-DIST *tee tetigi(l)*, as shown in Table 7.

	Joint-attention		Attention-establishing
	Egocentric	Sociocentric	
Proximal	*bu(l)* ∼ ***mɯnabu(l)***	*aldagɯ*	***mɯnabu(l)***
Distal	*tetigi(l)*	***tee tetigi(l)***	***tee tetigi(l)***

Table 7. Summary of spatial demonstratives

That is, the attention-establishing demonstratives in Kyrgyz are syncretic with the joint-attention SPKR-PROX and the SOCIO-DIST DEMs. This is particularly noteworthy when we compare it with the cross-linguistically attested syncretism patterns. In languages where the attention-drawing demonstrative(s) is/are syncretic with a joint-attention DEM, we observe a very strong tendency for the joint-attention SPKR-PROX to "double" as an attention-drawing demonstrative. This is attested in Goemai (Hellwig 2018), Tzeltal (Brown & Levinson 2018) and Cushillococha Ticuna (Skilton 2019).[19] To our knowledge, other syncretism patterns have not been observed in

[19] Other languages might also belong here e.g., Tiriyó (Meira 2018:232-234, 236), but given the observational nature of the relevant data elicitations, it is harder to ascertain this.

the literature. Table 8 offers a summary of languages where a specific joint-attention DEM is also used in attention-establishing contexts. The table indicates the spatial characteristics (distance and anchoring) of the relevant syncretic demonstratives *under the joint-attention condition*.

	Egocentric	Sociocentric/Altercentric
Proximal	Goemai Tzeltal Cushillococha Ticuna **Kyrgyz: *mɯnabu(l)***	
Distal		**Kyrgyz: *tee tetigi(l)***

Table 8. Cross-linguistic syncretism patterns: which joint-attention DEMs can be used as an attention-establishing DEM

The first noteworthy observation is that Kyrgyz is a language where attention-establishing demonstratives also involve a deictic meaning component: *mɯnabu(l)* is the SPKR-PROX, *tee tetigi(l)* is the elsewhere form.[20]

Secondly, *tee tetigi(l)*'s syncretism pattern is particularly notable in cross-linguistic comparison. Under the joint-attention condition *tee tetigi(l)* is the SOCIO-DIST DEM, and this form "doubles" as an attention-establishing demonstrative. In this way, Kyrgyz is the first language in which this syncretism pattern (i.e., syncretism between the joint-attention SOCIO/ALT-DIST and an attention-establishing DEM) has been observed.

Tee tetigi(l)'s syncretism pattern receives a natural explanation if one posits that demonstratives encode the cognitive-perceptual accessibility of the referent (Piwek et al. 2008). This generalized accessibility may include spatial proximity, visual attention and cognitive saliency (e.g., if the referent was recently mentioned in the discourse).[21] One could model this with a [± ACCESSIBLE] feature, which is anchored to an origo (as discussed above, this can be the SPKR, ADDR or the sociocentric space). This way, we can model the Kyrgyz exophoric demonstrative lexemes the following way, given in Table 9.

	Egocentric	Sociocentric
[+ ACCESSIBLE]	*bu(l)* ∼ *mɯnabu(l)*	*aldagɯ*
[– ACCESSIBLE]	*tetigi(l)*	*tee tetigi(l)*

Table 9. Features of exophoric Kyrgyz demonstratives

Importantly, *tee tetigi(l)* bears the [– ACCESSIBLE^{SOC}] feature under this account. That is, it can index (i) a referent that is *spatially inaccessible* with respect to the shared space of the SPKR

[20] One could take the attention-establishing *tee tetigi(l)* as a SPKR-DIST. While this is possible, we refrain from this characterization because under the joint-attention condition *tee tetigi(l)* is clearly a **SOCIO**-DIST. For this reason, in this paper we take the attention-establishing *tee tetigi(l)* to be the elsewhere form.

[21] We are non-committal with respect to whether all DEMs (in all languages) encode each one of these different types of accessibility. Skilton (2019) convincingly argues that the exophoric-endophoric lexical split in DEMs indicates that anaphoricity cannot be modeled by this generalized notion of accessibility (at least in the relevant languages). As shown above, Kyrgyz is a language in which we observe the exophoric-endophoric lexical split. This suggests that anaphoricity is not part of general accessibility in this language. However, this does not exclude the possibility that generalized accessibility exists in the language, although it only encompasses spatial proximity and visual attention.

and ADDR (the usage discussed in connection with (9) and (10)), or (ii) a referent that is at the time of the utterance *inaccessible through attention* to the dyad of the SPKR+ADDR, where the ADDR is the more prominent participant (see the discussion in fn. 17, especially with respect to point (iii)). In effect, this latter states "(look at) referent X which is not accessible to you at the moment (through attention)." In sum, our main argument is that the underspecification between spatial and attentional (in)accessibility is the reason why we observe syncretism between the spatial SOCIO-DIST *tee tetigi(l)* and the attention-establishing *tee tetigi(l)*.[22] This, in turn, supports theories that posit that demonstratives have (some type of) generalized [± ACCESSIBLE] property, which we model as a feature.

5. Conclusions. This paper investigated the exophoric demonstrative system in Kyrgyz based on novel elicitation and corpus data. Our study establishes that the Kyrgyz four- or five-term spatial demonstrative system contains egocentric and sociocentric proximal and diastal demonstratives under the joint-attention condition. However, we find a two-term system under the attention-establishing condition, where *tee tetigi(l)* (the joint attention SOCIO-DIST demonstrative) is used everywhere except when the referent is located within the speaker's peripersonal space. In this way, Kyrgyz is a language in which the SOCIO-DIST demonstrative is syncretic with an attention-establishing demonstrative. Finally, we hypothesized that this syncretism arises because DEMs bear a generalized cognitive-perceptual accessibility feature.

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[22] We do not have a fully worked-out analysis for the attention-establishing *mɯnabu(l)* in SPKR-PROX spatial contexts. A possible analysis would say that *mɯnabu(l)* bears [+ACCESSIBLE^{EGO}], and it can be used in attention-establishing contexts for the same reason as in Goemai, Tzeltal and Ticuna (see in particular Skilton 2019).

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