



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAII®  
MĀNOA

## Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures

# Dissertation Defense

## Interactional Functions of Demonstratives in Korean and Japanese Conversation

**Speaker:** Ok-sim Kim, PhD Candidate in Korean Linguistics

**Date:** August 11, 2017 (Friday)

**Time:** 9:00 am-11:00 am

**Location:** Moore Hall 258

### Abstract

This study explores the use of Korean and Japanese demonstratives in casual speech, focusing on their interactional functions. Taking as a framework Strauss's (2002) concept of focus, which suggests that the primary functions of demonstratives are related to the addressee's attention to the referent, this study explores how Korean and Japanese speakers employ demonstratives to draw the addressee's attention more or less emphatically. The study also investigates factors that affect the choice of demonstrative and emphasizes the intertwined nature of grammar and human interaction. For comparative analysis, all demonstrative forms found in my data were divided into four reference types, exophoric, anaphoric, cataphoric, and nonphoric, and these reference types are further divided according to morphosyntactic category when necessary. The study's findings suggest that the choice of demonstrative is not determined solely by the degree of attention the speaker wishes to elicit, but influenced by other factors that emerge in the course of interaction. The interactional meaning of each demonstrative has various sources, including the form's anaphoric function, the speaker's emotional stance, the speaker's reliance on the addressee while searching for a referent (i.e., interpersonal involvement), and socially motivated factors, as well as the morphosyntactic categories of the demonstrative forms, which vary by language. This study proposes a modified concept of focus for Korean and Japanese demonstratives, in which the degree of focus is gradient. It further suggests that politeness is an important factor for choosing a demonstrative in Korean while reliance on the addressee is an important factor in Japanese. This study provides information of potential importance for further crosslinguistic research on the use of demonstratives in various contexts and for various social functions.