

Determiners in Wooi

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Like most (all?) WNG languages, Wooi has a fairly complex system of determiners that is morphologically closely intertwined with deictics and directionals. While for some of the deictic and directional formatives meaning, function and morphological structure are reasonably clear, others pose challenges on all levels of analysis, apart from their obligatory phrase-final position.

The paper focuses on *ne*, *pa* and *vaw* (basic non-singular forms) which appear to be most determiner-like though *ne* and *pa* also carry deictic features, tentatively proximal and distal, respectively. One problem pertains to the fact that there is also a 'regular' set of demonstratives, i.e. *ni*, *ya* and *wa*, which may co-occur with *ne* and *pa*. *vaw*, on the other hand, cannot be combined with the regular demonstratives, but may be combined with *ne*. In addition to typical distance parameters (close to speaker, close to hearer, far), visibility also appears to play a role.

With few exceptions, all Wooi NPs are marked by at least of these formatives. That is, bare NPs are possible only in a few contexts, all involving non-specificity or genericity. In some instances, numerals may replace the determiners, but they may also co-occur with them.