On the use of the demonstratives *this*/*that*/*these*/*those* by Greek students of English

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Abstract
Greek students’ work in English at an advanced level reveals mistakes in the use of the demonstratives *this*/*these*/*that*/*those*. In this paper we investigate the areas in which these mistakes are made and attempt to account for their occurrence. To this end we will discuss the results from an elicitation test including various cases of the use of the above demonstratives and examples from students’ essays. We claim that although these students have been taught English for six to seven years on average, they still make some mistakes in this area both because it is often neglected in the EFL curriculum and because, to a certain extent, they differ from native speakers of English in the way they experience the notion of distance/proximity related with the use of the specific forms.

1. Introduction
The use of the demonstratives *this*/*these*/*that*/*those* is considered a simple matter. This view would seem to be condoned by coursebook writers also, who deal with them only in the very early stages of learning English as a foreign language. Teaching of these items consists mainly of showing their differences by pointing at things, or people near the teacher or far from the teacher, with the aid of coursebooks which provide relevant examples including adverbials of place (e.g. “here”/ “over there” etc.) often accompanied by pictures. In more communicatively oriented EFL materials, students first see these forms and practise them in short dialogues, e.g. introductions (“Hello, Neville! Neville, *this* is Miss Baker”), telephone conversations (e.g. “Jane: *This* is 372 4679. Hello?” – “Tom: *Is that* Jane?”) etc., where distance and proximity are implied by the context. At the same time in the first units of beginners’ books we find instances of the demonstrative “that” in sentences like “That’s good”, “That’s right”, “That’s all right” which are meant to be learned as fixed expressions. This is where the story of the teaching of these demonstratives usually ends and students are usually left on their own to learn the rest of their uses. However, although the demonstratives under discussion are among the most common words in the English language, there is evidence that even the most advanced EFL learners have not completely mastered their uses.

* I would like to thank my colleagues Ed Joycey and in particular Carol Everhard for their very useful comments.
2. Identification of the problem / The first data

I, as all teachers, am aware that there are certain types of language problems students may have which are not easy to detect. So although I had come across some instances of the wrong use of demonstratives, I thought that this concerned a very limited number of students and that it was due to occasional carelessness on their part. What makes things more difficult here is that students probably follow an avoidance strategy with respect to the employment of that/those (the 'remote' forms) as reference devices because they feel insecure about the difference(s) between this/these (the 'near' forms). Finally since it is a matter in most cases of choosing between only two contrasting forms ('near'/ 'remote'), there is a 50% chance of using them correctly anyway.

Instances of misuse in this area were collected from the work of second year students within the context of the course Writing II (Argumentative Essays) at the Department of English, Aristotle University. These students have been taught English for at least six to seven years on average before entering the university and have also completed a first year writing course. In both courses they have to produce a lot of written work in the form of paragraphs and essays. Thus our discussion concerns advanced EFL students.

Here are some examples from second year students' written work.

[1] On the other hand, being a teenager has not only positive aspects. In some cases, we could say that those* (=αυτό) positive aspects have their negative side as well.

[2] There are students who claim that they can combine both studies and a job but I think these (=αυτοί) are very few. Those* (=αυτοί) students see that they have set aside some priorities...

[3] We were all taken by surprise when we saw all these* (=εξείρα) flowers, all those (=εξείρα) books filled with words of sympathy... (referring to Lady Diana's death)

[4] This (=Αυτό) advertisement... is quite humorous and that* (=αυτό) makes it easy to read.

[5] They work long hours and get low wages. This (=αυτό) means physical and psychological exhaustion. Apart from that* (=αυτό), we should consider the fact that...

[6] If they are lucky enough to be studying in their home town, it is a big advantage. But not many students have that* (=αυτό) advantage... In this (=αυτό) case I think it is wise for students to take up paid employment.

[7] In conclusion, students are able to work as long as they choose appropriate jobs. That* (=αυτό) means...

[8] (Analysing a car advertisement.) As far as the effectiveness of that* (=αυτό) article is concerned, it could be claimed that this (=αυτό) advertisement as a whole... The writer of this (=αυτό)
article... describes that* (=autó) model.... Reading that* (=autó) specific advertisement.

This/that and their plural forms can both be used in anaphoric reference (Quirk et al 1972, Leech and Svartvik 1975; Halliday and Hasan 1976 etc.) but this is commoner in formal English and “When you use this or these, you are linking yourself with the thing you are referring to. In contrast, when you use that or those, you are distancing yourself slightly from the thing you are referring to.” (Sinclair et al 1990:387) Also “that those are used to refer to something outside the text, i.e. the thing itself rather than the writer’s account of it” (Hawkins, Taylor, Mackin, 1973:18).

The examples given raise some interesting questions such as:

What were the students’ criteria regarding the choice between near and remote forms? In all cases the demonstratives are used to refer to something already mentioned in the text. In [2] “those” could mean that the student distances him/herself from the specific group of students s/he is referring to. However in the preceding sentence s/he uses “these” for the same referent. Notice how inconsistent in their use of demonstratives students are in utterances 3, 5 and 8. In 4, 5 and 7 the ‘remote’ forms would be acceptable in spoken but not in written English, therefore are they due to ignorance of the specific rule (levels of formality)? Finally could any of these cases of misuse be attributed to NL interference?

In Greek “There are three demonstratives: autós, toítos and eixeíos... They may function either as emphatic third-person pronouns (‘he’, ‘she’, ‘it’ etc.) or as determiners (‘this’, ‘that’) modifying a noun (which must preceded by the definite article)... In modern usage toítos tends to be used only when emphasizing the closeness of the item to the speaker... while autós may be used either to indicate proximity or as an all-purpose demonstrative without distinguishing between proximity and distance, eixeíos continuing to be used for items distant from hearer and speaker.” (Holton, Mackridge and Philippaki-Warburton, 1997:317, emphasis mine)

Also “Eixeíos-η-ο (that) and their plural forms (those) are used in anaphoric reference whereas autós-η-ο (this) and their plural forms are used both in anaphoric and cataphoric reference. Toítos-η-ο and their plural forms are generally used in cataphoric reference but it can occur in anaphoric reference as well.” (Tzartzanos 1945, 2nd edition 1989:140).

In example 3, in Greek, “flowers” would be modified by the ‘remote’ form eixeíα (those) and in all other examples the equivalent Greek demonstratives would be the ‘near’ forms. Thus it seems that none of the erroneous uses here can be attributed to NL interference.

The more aware I became of this problem, the more instances of misuse I noticed in my students’ written work. When a student handed in an essay with mistakes of this type (see Appendix I), I typed the essay leaving gaps in the place of all instances of this/these/that/those in it and administered it as a test to the same group of students, 22 present at that
time. Test 1 results showed that a significant number of students were inconsistent in their use of demonstratives. In a classroom discussion which involved the right answers to the test and rules of usage, many students admitted that they had never been taught how to use the specific demonstratives in discourse reference.

Intrigued by Test 1 results and the discussion with my students, I decided to investigate the matter further to find out how much the students knew about the various uses of these demonstratives. So I devised a second test (see Appendix 2) with items from various sources, i.e. grammar books, plays, TV. The test consisted of two exercises: in the first one the students had to complete the gaps using this that these those. In the second one they had to underline the demonstrative they thought was more appropriate. In both exercises they were also instructed that if they thought more than one choice was possible, they should indicate so. Test 2 was administered to three groups of first year students (93) in the same department and contained examples of many uses of the demonstratives in discussion, i.e. anaphoric/cataphoric reference in combination with present/past tense - distance/proximity in space, comparison with a standard norm, that in advertisements, that in derogatory use, that in fixed expressions, this in narrations etc. The same test was taken by 39 native speakers too (20 English, 11 American, 4 Irish and 4 Scottish). After getting the results, I discarded the items in which native speakers thought both near and distant forms could be used. Also I decided not to take into consideration some items which, on second thoughts, I found unsuccessful for various reasons.

2.1. Test 2 Results
2.1.1. Anaphoric reference
Both this and that can refer to something mentioned before. According to Halliday and Hasan (op. cit.) the choice depends on various factors, such as style, variety, time reference, whether people refer to their own words or to someone else’s. “But the criteria may conflict, precisely because the notion of proximity has various interpretations.” So it is only “tendencies” one can talk about here.

With respect to the following utterances

[9] Who said that (=αυτό?)
[10] I couldn’t afford to learn it,” said the Mock Turtle with a sigh. “I only took the regular course.”
   “What was that (=αυτό?)?” inquired Alice.
   “No, thanks.”
   “I’m glad you said that (=αυτό). We haven’t got a drink in the house.
[12] “I’m very happy in this marriage, Dad.”

1 Contrary to expectations, no dialectal differences were found in the use of the demonstratives discussed.
"I’m so glad to hear that (=auto)."

Results were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Anaphoric reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>[9]</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>[10]</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[11]</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[12]</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus it seems that, in general, native speakers regard something said by one’s interlocutor as distant, regardless of present/past. This is not the case with students, however, as in [12] 50% of them used near or both near and remote forms. It is also important to notice the percentage at which each student varied his/her choice of demonstratives between the different items:

Inconsistency between
[9] and [10]: 41%
[9] and [11]: 48.4%
[10] and [11]: 32%
[9] and [12]: 52%
[10] and [11]: 55.5%
[11] and [12]: 34%

In [13] and [14] below

[13] "I can give you an appointment at 10.30
"That (=Auto) will be fine."
[14] "Shall I see you again?"
"That (=Auto) would be pleasant."

Results were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
<th>Anaphoric reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[13]</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[14]</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also 37 students (40.2%) differentiated between [13] and [14].

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2 Ss stands for “Students”, NS for “native speakers”.
3 “Deviant” from native speakers’ use.

[15] I put my arms around her. “Thanks Ollie”. Those (ουτω/ωθείων) were her last words.

Results were

Table 3 Anaphoric reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>these</th>
<th></th>
<th>those</th>
<th></th>
<th>both</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>native speakers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both forms are grammatically correct but the fact that obviously the speaker died after she said those words, made the majority of native speakers use the ‘remote’ form. On the other hand, most Greek students preferred the ‘near’ form. In Greek both forms could be acceptable but the majority would use δοῦ (these). Is this a case of NL influence or the fact that meaning was not taken into account by the students?

2.1.2. Cataphoric reference

“Only this can be used in forward reference” (Alexander 1988:323). In the following utterances

[16] This (=ουτω) should interest you, if you’re keen on boxing. The world heavy weight championship will be held in Chicago and some of your favourite athletes will be there.

[17] I don’t know how to tell you this (=το/ουτω), but John was running down the road and a car hit him.

[18] Well, you might not believe this (=το/ουτω), but I don’t drink very much these days and I have cut down on smoking.

[19] I can tell you this (=τοιτο/ουτω) much: he won’t try it again.

Results were

Table 4 Cataphoric reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>this</th>
<th></th>
<th>that*</th>
<th></th>
<th>this(that*)</th>
<th></th>
<th>Wrong forms</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Ss</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>Ss</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>[17]</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[18]</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>37.6</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that in [19] 76.3% of the students used that very probably due to the word much which follows the demonstrative, thus proving that correct use does not necessarily mean correct rule formation. More

4 See relevant discussion in Gas and Selinker 1993 p.72
important, there was a 53.76% inconsistency in the way each student used the demonstratives with respect to utterances [16],[17],[18]. These mistakes cannot be attributed to NL influence since in Greek also, only the ‘near’ forms are used in cataphoric reference. A plausible explanation is that most students have never been taught that only this these are used in cataphoric reference and they have made their own inferences which are not right to a certain extent. In this case the majority of students seem to believe that there is a rule according to which “before ‘much’ that should be used”.

2.1.3. That in derogatory reference

“That Those can imply emotive rejection” (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1976:107). “...they can be used to indicate disapproval.”(Woods & McLeod, 1990:171). In the following utterances

[20] Why did she marry that (=αυτήν, idiot?  
[21] I don’t want to bump into that (=αυτήν) awful woman again.  
[22] Tell him to stop that (αυτό) shouting.

Results were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
<th>That in derogatory reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[20]</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[21]</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[22]</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here we see a progressive increase in wrong use between items [20] to [22], with a particularly dramatic increase between items [21] and [22]. Also there was a 35% inconsistency per student in their answers between [20] and [21]. The dramatic increase in ‘near’ forms in [22] can lead us to the conclusion that the choice made by a significant number of students depended simply on whether they felt the modified noun was near the speaker or distant from the speaker. On the other hand, none of the native speakers used this in [20] or [21].

In Greek (Tsartzanos op. cit.) the same function can be fulfilled by αυτός (this), so if there was any NL influence here, students would have used this to a much greater degree. Therefore a reasonable conclusion would be that many students are not aware of the specific use of that.

2.1.4. That in cataphoric reference

The term is taken from Alexander 1988.
There is only one exception to the rule that “only this can be used in cataphoric reference”. “In an ironic context that can be used cataphorically” (Quirk et al, 1972: 702). In the following utterance

[23] I like that (=αυτό). Bob goes away with my girlfriend, smashes up my car and then expects me to pay for the repairs.

Results were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6</th>
<th>That in cataphoric reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>Ss</td>
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<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[23]</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Either most students are not aware of the specific use of that or NL influence is at work in this case.

2.1.5. That in exophoric reference (advertisements)

That is used in advertisements exophorically, to “point to common shared knowledge” (Alexander op.cit.). In the following utterances

[25] Fresco gives you that (=αυτό/αυτό) great feeling of clean air and open space.

Results were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7</th>
<th>That in exophoric reference (advertisements)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>Ss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[24]</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[25]</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also there was 37% inconsistency per student between their answers in [24] and [25]. The two native speakers who accepted both forms in [25] said that they did so because here the demonstrative is modifying something positive. However, this does not seem to be the reason why the students thought there was a difference between the two items since about 50% of them switched from this in [24] to that or this/that in [25]. In Greek it is the definite article which usually fulfills the same function.

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6 This item was not included in Test 2 when it was administered to one of the groups, hence the smaller number of students here.

7 Also one native speaker pointed out that before the word "really" only this would be used in [25] i.e. "Fresco gives you this really great feeling..."
thought that in the rare cases where a demonstrative would appear to be similar in use it would be the 'remote' form έξωτος. However, I was surprised to see the 'near' form κυτάς instead, in the only advertisement I was able to find with a demonstrative in exophoric reference. Thus it seems that both 'near' and 'remote' forms are used in Greek in such cases.

Therefore many students are probably not aware of the specific use of that in advertisements or and more generally of the use of demonstratives in exophoric reference.

2.1.6. That in comparison with a definite norm

"Than that" and "as that" are used when "a comparison is made between an object and a definite standard or 'norm' understood in context." (Leech and Svartvik, 1975:105). Students are supposed to learn these as fixed expressions. However with respect to (the utterances below)

[26] "He's a billionaire, you know."
   "Really? Is he as rich as that (=τόος)?"
[27] "$500? It cost a lot more than that (=τόος)?"
[28] "Jack must be six foot tall."
   "No, he's taller than that (=τόος)."

Results were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8</th>
<th>That in comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SS NS</td>
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<td>56 39</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>61 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>70 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not only did a significant number of students not use that in each utterance but also there was 43% inconsistency in the way each student used it. In addition, quite unexpectedly, there was a total number of 33 plural forms. In Greek there are no equivalent expressions with demonstratives so the choice between the forms in discussion has nothing to do with NL influence. In [26] those who used plural probably refer to 'a group of billionaires', in [27] to the '$500' and in [28] to the 'six foot' as standards of comparison. Native speakers used that in all utterances.

2.1.7. This in narration

In informal English "This sometimes replaces a/an to make a story sound more amusing or interesting and to show that the narrator will explain more" (Alexander op.cit.). "It is this assumption of shared interest and attention which lies behind the use of the 'near' forms this and these in conversational narrative..." (Halliday and Hasan 77:61) With regard to

[29]
"Please tell us a story, Lina!"
"Well, there was this (αυτός) Frenchman who went to a cricket match..."

Results were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9</th>
<th>This in narrations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>[29]</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All native speakers used this. A significant number of Greek students, however, did not do so. Since in Greek the indefinite article is used in similar cases, wrong use cannot be attributed to NL influence. I think that mistakes here are due to the fact that the choice of some students depended on their notion of spatial proximity, i.e. that the narrator is referring to someone far from everybody involved in the situation.

2.1.8. Spatial reference
One thing the students are certainly taught is the use of demonstratives in spatial deixis. Also, in this case, there are no differences between NL/TL use. Thus no mistakes were expected here. With respect to the following utterances:

[30] Why am I living in this (αυτής) country?
[31] Isn’t this (αυτός) weather great?
[32] Ugh - these (αυτές) potatoes taste burnt!
[33] Did you hear that (εκείνης/της) rain in the night?

Results were

<table>
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<th>Table 10*</th>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>[30]</td>
<td>3*</td>
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<td>[31]</td>
<td>12*</td>
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<tr>
<td>[32]</td>
<td>7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[33]</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unexpectedly a few mistakes appeared here too, which, I believe, were mostly due to carelessness or misunderstanding of the context. For example, although a little far-fetched, in [31] one could say that weather if s/he is watching another geographical area on a screen. There was no misunderstanding on the part of the native speakers though.

*Here 'remote'/near forms are used instead of the specific demonstratives to include mistakes made by students with respect to number, i.e. this instead of these etc.
2.1.9. Those as relative antecedent
"Those appears as a relative antecedent and it cannot contrast with these" (Leech & Svartvik op.cit.). No mistakes were anticipated with respect to [30] and [31] below:

[34] Those (-Εξελώναι/Αντων) who wish to go may do so quietly.
[35] He admired those (-εξελώναι/Αντων) who danced well.
Results were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>NS</th>
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<th>NS</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contrary to expectations, mistakes, although few, were made here too. Also notice that 15 students (16.3%) differentiated between [34] and [35].

2.1.10. Singular versus plural
"Although 'this' and 'that' are singular pronouns, you can use them to refer back to a number of things or facts that have just been mentioned, instead of using a plural pronoun." (Sinclair et al 1990:387). In the following utterance:

[36] Later, computer systems were brought into play to draw up attack strategies; later yet, they found themselves riding along in aircraft, submarines, and tanks. All _________ had its beneficial effects.

(=Όλα αυτά)

40% of the students in the first group to which Test 2 was administered used plural forms although it was obvious they should have used a singular form because of the possessive pronoun its in the sentence. Before administering Test 2 to the two other groups, I changed it into:

[36a]...All _________ had many beneficial effects. (=Όλα αυτά)

This time results were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 Also 5 students used singular forms (this/that) here.
Also in the following item

[37] He had played rugby at school, had been in the army and had briefly been a professional footballer. _______ was/were thought to be in his favour when the job came up later.

Αυτά μέτρησαν υπέρ του...

Results were

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<tr>
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<td>Ss</td>
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<td>32.8</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>74.3</td>
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</table>

In general, Greek students tend to use the plural form of demonstratives when reference is made to more than one thing, which can be reasonably attributed to NL influence.

3. Conclusion

Test results verified that a significant number of advanced EFL learners have not mastered all uses of the demonstratives this/that. Some mistakes can be explained with recourse to the NL but, I believe most are due to teacher/coursebook input, or rather, lack of it. At early stages Greek EFL learners are taught that this and that are equivalent to ἄδδος and ἄδαξτο respectively. However this is true only to a certain extent and it may work against learning other uses of these forms, as "similarities may obscure for the learner the fact that there is something to learn" (Ringbom 1987 cit. in Gass and Selinker 1993). It seems that mere exposure to related material, where there is high frequency of these forms is not enough for students to sort out their various functions, so there is need for pedagogical intervention. Input in the form of teaching programs with explicit metalinguistic statements about the use of the specific demonstratives is necessary. For example, it is important to draw the students’ attention to the main difference between ‘near’ and ‘remote’ forms in the two languages, i.e. the fact that in English “...it is usual for ‘that’ to be more inclusive; it tends to become the unmarked term of the pair” (Halliday 1985:292) whereas in Greek the same function is fulfilled by αὐτός ...“ an all-purpose demonstrative without distinguishing between proximity and distance...” (Holton, Mackridge and Philippaki-Warburton 1997:317).

Thus in spoken English the ‘remote’ form is preferred to refer to something mentioned both by the previous speaker or to one’s own words whereas in Greek the ‘near’ form is used. Also it is equally

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10 When [37a] was administered to another group of 3rd year students changed into:

"He had played... _______ counted in his favour when the job came up later."

66% of the students used plural forms.
important to stress similarities in the use of these forms in the two languages as in some cases it may be true that "when great similarities exist, the learner may doubt that these similarities are real" (Gass and Selinker 1993:90). For example, although only the 'near' forms are used both in NL and TL in cataphoric reference, it was shown that this does not work as a facilitating factor.

One final point: although I have been teaching English for eighteen years to all ages and all levels, I have come across only two coursebooks (both designed for E.S.P. courses) with some theory and exercises concerning the use of the specific demonstratives in discourse reference. Also there are very few grammar books with satisfactory treatment of all uses of this/that. Thus teachers are not fully to blame if they neglect to teach them. Furthermore, I was not surprised to hear nonnative teachers of English admitting that they themselves had problems with 'usage' of these forms. As for native teachers of English, although, naturally, they made no mistakes, it is doubtful whether all of them are aware of all rules governing 'use' of these forms as, for example, in the case of that in cataphoric reference which can be found only in a note in "A Grammar of Contemporary English", a book probably used only by linguists. Clearly, both native and non-native teachers need further enlightenment in order to be able to appreciate the problems that students have in this area and be able to deal with them effectively.

References
APPENDIX 1

Could you comment on the use of this/that/these/those in this student’s essay? Would you have written any of these differently? If so, please state which ones. Thank you.

Advantages and disadvantages of being a teenager
Many people believe that one’s best time of life is (1) that of his/her being a teenager. Actually, there are many reasons for someone to support (2) this idea and (3) that’s why most people tend to do (4) that.

First of all, when you are a teenager, your whole life is in front of you. You have the great opportunity to make dreams and have ideals. (5) That is because you have not been disappointed from life and its problems yet. You see endless opportunities in your future and you make several plans.

During (6) this period of life - (7) that one of being a teenager - your personality takes its final shape. (8) This is very important as it is going to determine your behaviour and your relationships with others in the future. You begin to feel independent for the first time and (9) this is the feeling that makes you responsible.

Furthermore, as a teenager, you broaden your horizons and you are interested in your future studies, education and career. (11) This is the best time to learn things about specific and more general subjects and to acquire knowledge about life in general.

As a teenager, you do not blindly accept the opinions and ideas of others. You start to ask questions, to doubt about things that surround you, and, finally, you do have a more critical spirit. (12) This aspect of a teenager’s character is positive unless it does not become exaggerating.

Finally, when you are a teenager, you inevitably become more mature and you start to create strong relationships with people of the opposite sex and in general with other people.

From all (13) these, it is easy to admit that being a teenager has really many advantages and (14) that’s why people in their majority never forget about it, even when they get old.

On the other hand, being a teenager has not only positive aspects. In some cases, we could say that (15) those positive aspects have their negative side as well.

So teenagers are not as independent as they would like to be and (16) that is because they do not have their own money and they are still under parental control. As a result, they tend to become aggressive in order to be free and independent personalities.

They also feel that no one understands the problems they are going through and they get closed in themselves. They still try to find their identity.

Furthermore, teenagers are characterised by feelings of insecurity about their future, especially nowadays. Jobs are not easily found and our world is too antagonistic. (17) This seems too cruel to young people who are still romantic and optimistic. (18) This feeling of insecurity gives them the first “sample” of failure and disappointment in their life. (19) This can also lead to lack of self-confidence and, in some cases, to anti-social behaviour as a way of showing their disapproval of the social system.
Most teenagers are oversensitive about their appearance and some flaws in it may have serious effects in their psychology. They are highly impressionable and tend to forget more important things in life. Immaturity has great responsibility for (20) that.

People of (21) that age usually act without considering the consequences of their behaviour. They are often falsely optimistic and (22) this leads them to failure and disappointment. As they are immature, they cannot resolve problems without conflict and they cannot admit that they are wrong in some cases. All (23) these things make them aggressive, unwilling to compromise with their parents' opinions and, in some cases, anti-social people.

To conclude, being a teenager is a combination of good and bad things, of pleasures and problems. We could not be able to imagine (24) this period of one's life without both of (25) these positive and negative aspects. It is exactly (26) this contradictory combination that makes (27) this period of life unforgettable and - why not - the best time in most people's life.

APPENDIX 2

Complete the gaps using the words this / that / these / those. When you think more than one choice is possible, write down both.

1. There's a lot of material there. You can use some of ___________.
2. The concert began with his Second Piano Sonata. ___________ is a work that has usually been considered as fundamentally negative.
3. There were only strangers around to observe him, and not many of ___________.
4. "I'll think about it mother." ___________ statement was the end of most of their discussions.
5. Why am I living in ___________ country?
6. Ugh - ___________ potatoes taste burnt!
7. What was ___________ noise?
8. Come ___________ way, please.
9. Why did she marry ___________ idiot?
10. Isn't ___________ weather great?
11. Did you hear ___________ rain in the night?
12. Tell her to stop ___________ shouting.
13. ___________ was a nice meal - thanks.
14. Who said ___________?
15. I like ___________. Bob goes away with my girlfriend, smashes up my car and then expects me to pay for the repairs.
16. He had played rugby at school, had been in the army and had briefly been a professional footballer. ___________ was/were thought to be in his favour when the job came up later.
17. I put my arms around her. "Thanks, Ollie." ___________ were his last words.
18. "You're the new doctor, aren't you?" - "How do you know ___________?"
19. Later, computer systems were brought into play to draw up attack strategies; later yet, they found themselves riding along in aircraft, submarines, and tanks. All ___________ had many beneficial effects.
20. "She's a billionaire, you know." "Really? Is she as rich as ___________?"
21. "You claim you know this man's identity?" "I do."
22. ___________ who wish to go may do so quietly.
"I broke my leg and my sister's house burnt down."
"When did happen?"
"Please tell us a story, Lina!"
"Well, there was Frenchman who went to a cricket match..."
"$500? It cost a lot more than!"
"Tom's essays are better than of the other boys."
"I'll arrive on the 2nd. is, on Friday.
"Jack must be six foot tall."
"No, he's taller than "
"Wonderdrug prevents sinking feeling. (advertisement)"
"I can't walk far. Let's take a taxi.
"I know you are tired and all, but we've got to pay them a visit.
"Does it really cost much?"
"Let's go now. I don't want to bump into awful woman again!"
"is how you do it. Press that button...
"(on the phone)""Is you, Elsa?"
"He admired who danced well."
"should interest you, if you're still keen on boxing. The world
weight championship will be held in Chicago and some of your favourite athletes
will be there.
"I don't know how to tell you, but John was running down
the road and a car hit him.
"I hear that you dislike his latest novel. I read his first novel. was very boring too.
"There were two thousand people in the theatre. I didn't expect it to be
full.
"Fresca gives you great feeling of clean air and open spaces.
(advertisement)"
"Well, you might not believe, but I don't drink very much
these days and I have cut down on smoking.
"I can tell you much: he won't try it again.
"I couldn't afford to learn it," said the Mock Turtle with a sigh. "I only took
the regular course."
"What was?" inquired Alice.
"We sat talking about the other.
"When you are a teenager, your whole life is ahead of you. You can make
dreams and have ideals. is because you have not been
disappointed from life and its problems yet.
"On the other hand, being a teenager has not only positive aspects. In some
cases, we could say that positive aspects have a
negative side as well.
"In his latest article he is dealing with the issue of illegal adoptions."
"Again?"
"Well, it's stories like which have made him famous, you
know."

In the following sentences, underline the forms in italics you think are more
appropriate. If you think both forms are acceptable, underline them both.
There seems to have been a great deal of sheer carelessness. *This is That’s what* I can’t understand.

“It’s a difficult habit to break, isn’t it?”

*This is That’s it.*

“I’m very happy in this marriage, Dad”

“I’m so glad to hear *this that*.”

“How did you manage with the new drugs I gave you?”

*These Those* new drugs upset me.”

Do you want to know the woman who designed it? *This That* was Mary Smith.

“I can give you an appointment at 10.30.”

*This will That’ll be fine.*

I was *this that* annoyed, I could have screamed.

“Football is my sport.”

*This is That’s a nice game.*

“Would you like something? An aperitif, anything like *this that*?”

“No, thanks”

“I’m glad you said *this that*. We haven’t got a drink in the house.”

I’m sorry I have offended you. *These Those* highly spiced tales aren’t for the ears of the elderly. I apologize.

“Shall I see you again?”

*This That* would be pleasant.

“There seems to be a lot of indifference on their part.”

“Yes, *this is that’s what I can’t understand.*”

I sympathize with *these those* who suffer.

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