The purpose of this paper is to argue that the treatments of indexicals (or demonstrative expressions) by R. Montague, D. Kaplan, J. W. Perry and K. J. Barwise are inadequate and to sketch a better one by means of a serious clarification of the basic notions of formal semantics: “possible world”, “situation”, “reference”, etc. The clarification attempted by the author turns on the way an interpreted language is supposed to be applied to the world. It is this application problem that prompts the reference to "small worlds" in the title.

The paper relies upon much previous work by this author, a sound knowledge of which is required to gain the most benefit from the paper and to grasp its scope fully.

Jaime Nubiola (Pamplona)