Verb Semantics and Argument Realization in Pre-modern Japanese

1 January 2009 – 30 June 2014

Funded by the

Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK

People

VSARPJ Project members

Bjarke Frellesvig (Oxford)
Peter Sells (York)

Mary Dalrymple (Oxford)
Stephen Wright Horn (Oxford)
Kerri L Russell (Oxford)
Daniel Trott (Oxford)
Zixi You (Oxford)

Janick Wrona

VSARPJ External project members

Anton Antonov (INALCO / CRLAO, Paris
Satoshi Kinsui (Osaka)
Tomohide Kinuhata (Fukuoka)
Yasuhiro Kondo (Aoyama Gakuin)
Masayoshi Shibatani (Rice)
Akira Watanabe (Tokyo)
John Whitman (NINJAL / Cornell)
Yuko Yanagida (Tsukuba)

Until his passing on 25 February 2009, S.-Y. Kuroda, Professor Emeritus and Research Professor of Linguistics at UCSD, was an external member of the research team.
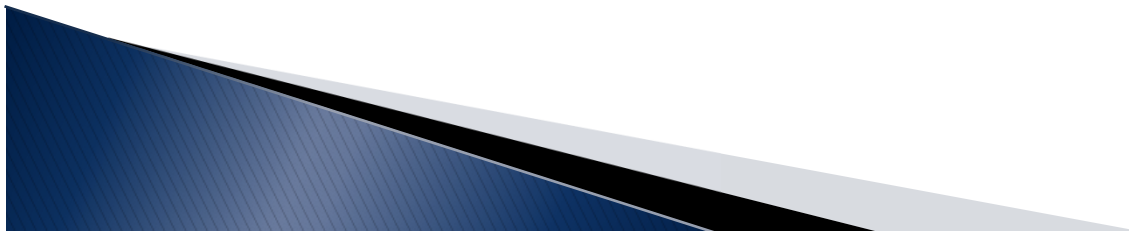
PROJECT MEETINGS

19–21 January 2010 (Oxford)

29–30 September 2010 (Oxford)

31July – 1 August 2011 (Osaka)

30–31 July 2012 (NINJAL)
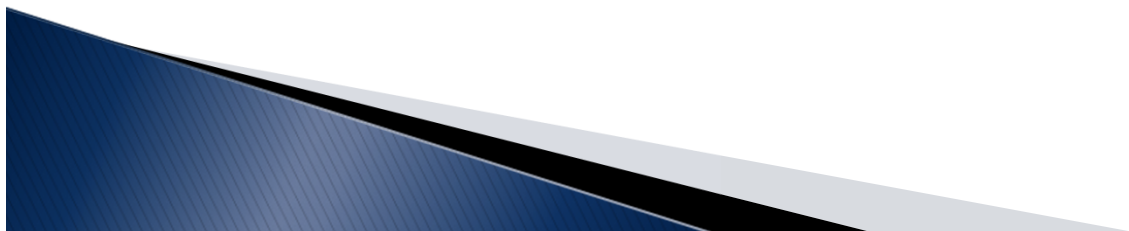
18 May 2014 (NINJAL)

1st Meeting
19–21 January 2010

1st Meeting
19–21 January 2010

Our first project workshop was held at Oxford. This was the first opportunity for the external members and other invited colleagues to see a small sample of the corpus (MYS Book 4), how grammatical and lexical features are marked up, and the searchability of grammatical features.

1ˢᵗ Meeting
19–21 January 2010

Participants

- **VSARPJ project members:** Bjarke Frellesvig, Peter Sells, Stephen Wright Horn, Kerri L Russell, Daniel Trott, Janick Wrona, and Zixi You
- **VSARPJ external project members:** Anton Antonov, Satoshi Kinsui, Tomohide Kinuhata, Masayoshi Shibatani, Akira Watanabe, John Whitman, and Yuko Yanagida

- **Others:** Oana David, Naoko Hosokawa, Yuhki King, Daniel Millichip, Jenny Moore, Muneto Ozaki, Thomas Pellard.

2nd Meeting
29–30 September 2010

2nd Meeting
29–30 September 2010

Our second project workshop was held at Oxford before the start of the JK20 Conference. This workshop focused on various methods of searching and extracting data from the corpus and how to best classify arguments.

2ⁿᵈ Meeting
29–30 September 2010

Participants

- ◦ **VSARPJ project members**: Bjarke Frellesvig, Peter Sells, Stephen Wright Horn, Kerri L Russell, and Zixi You
- ◦ **VSARPJ external project members**: Anton Antonov, Mary Dalrymple, Satoshi Kinsui, Tomohide Kinuhata, Masayoshi Shibatani, Akira Watanabe, John Whitman, and Yuko Yanagida

- ◦ **Students**: Benjamin Cagan, Scott Hale, Judy Kroo, Wenchao Li, Katarina Pedersen, and Tohru Seraku, and Linda Lanz
- ◦ **Special guests**: Taro Kageyama, Beth Levin

2nd Meeting
29–30 September 2010

It was at this workshop that Akira Watanabe was so excited about syntax that instead of drinking his pint of beer, he spilled it all over Yuko Yanagida.
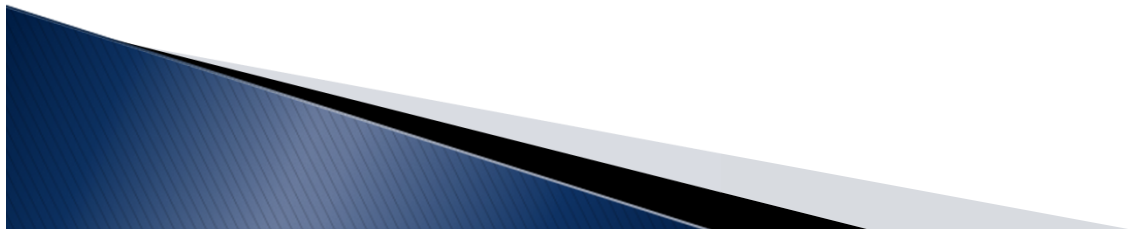
3rd Meeting
31 July – 1 August 2011

3rd Meeting
31 July – 1 August 2011

The first joint Oxford-NINJAL workshop was held at Osaka University from 31 July – 1 August. Presentations were given on both the NINJAL and VSARPJ corpora.

3rd Meeting
31 July – 1 August 2011

Participants

- **VSARPJ project members**: Bjarke Frellesvig, Peter Sells, Stephen Wright Horn, and Kerri L Russell
- **VSARPJ external project members**: Anton Antonov, Satoshi Kinsui, Tomohide Kinuhata, Yasuhiro Kondo, Akira Watanabe, John Whitman, and Yuko Yanagida
- **NINJAL project members**: Toshinobu Ogiso, Tetsuya Sunaga, Makiro Tanaka, and Hirofumi Yamamoto

- **Guests**: Wes Jacobsen, Sven Osterkamp, Thomas Pellard, and Alexander Vovin
- **Students**: Miho Iwata, Mariko Fujimoto, Yuta Mori, Ichiha Yamamoto, Mika Sakai, and Hiroshi Kadota

4th Meeting
30–31 July 2012

4th Meeting
30-31 July 2012

The fourth project meeting was held at NINJAL on 30 July, before the

通時コーパスプロジェクト・オックスフォード大VSARPJプロジェクト合同シンポジウム: 通時コーパスと日本語史研究
NINJAL Diachronic Corpus Project – Oxford VSARPJ Project Joint Symposium: Corpus Based Studies of Japanese Language History

which took place on 31 July and where several members of the VSARPJ project presented research based on the OCOJ.

4th Meeting
30–31 July 2012

Participants

- **VSARPJ project members**: Bjarke Frellesvig, Peter Sells, Stephen Wright Horn, Kerri L Russell, and Dan Trott
- **VSARPJ external project members**: Satoshi Kinsui, Tomohide Kinuhata, Masayoshi Shibatani, Akira Watanabe, John Whitman, and Yuko Yanagida
- **NINJAL project members**: Yasuhiro Kondo, Toshinobu Ogiso, Tetsuya Sunaga, Makiro Tanaka

- **Guest:** Shin-Sook Kim

4th Meeting
30–31 July 2012

It was at this meeting that a waitress spilled a tray of drinks all over Shin-Sook Kim.

4th Meeting
30–31 July 2012

It was at this meeting that a waitress spilled a tray of drinks all over Shin-Sook Kim.

We have observed a pattern of drinks being spilt over participants every other meeting, and hope this means there will be no drink spillage at this final project meeting.
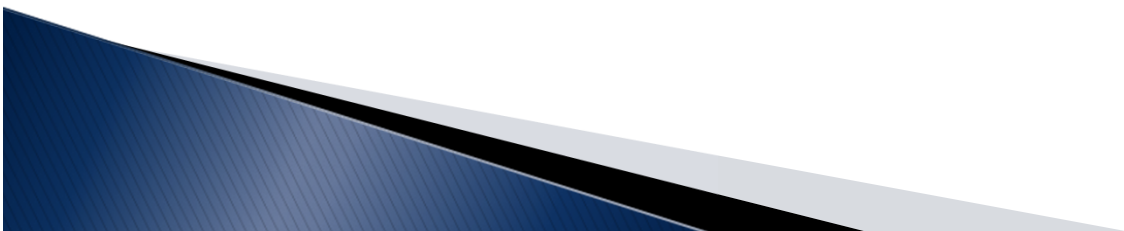
5th Meeting
18 May 2014

Talks

Talks

As part of the project we have presented many talks over the years showcasing research projects based on the OCOJ.

Talks

2009   Oslo, NINJAL

2010   SOAS, Bochum, Paris

2011   NINJAL, Hiroshima, Osaka, Tallinn, Reykjavik

2012   York, Stuttgart, Osaka, NINJAL, London

2013   Kyoto, NINJAL, Oslo, Brussels, Kobe

2014   NINJAL, Oslo, Konstanz

Publications

Participation
&
collaboration

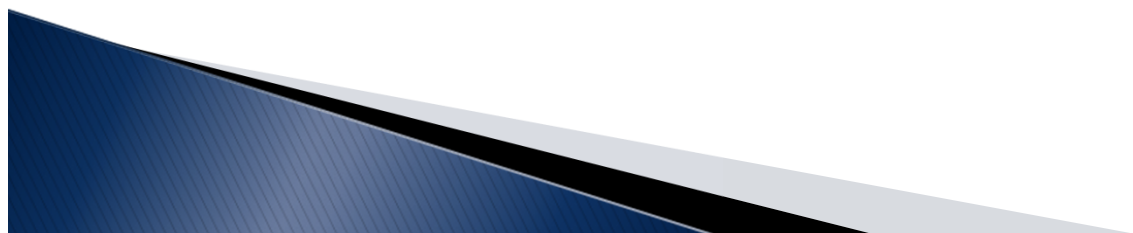# Participation/collaboration

NINJAL

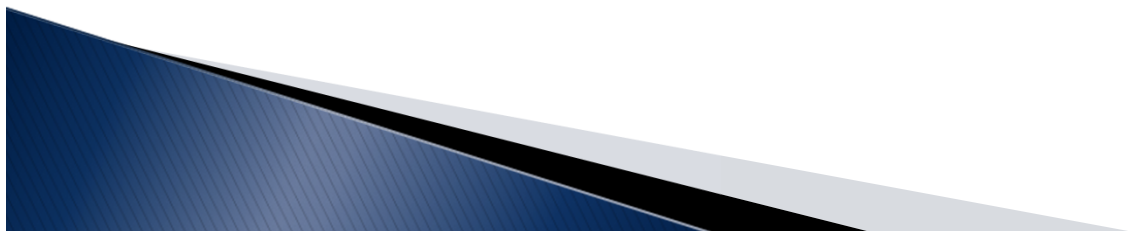# Participation/collaboration

NINJAL
Diachronic Corpus project

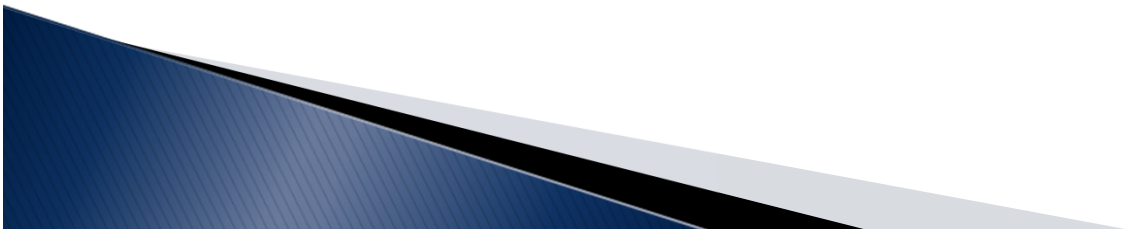# Participation/collaboration

‣ Study of the History of the Japanese Language Using Statistics and Machine-Learning

‣ The Japanese Lexicon: A Rendaku Encyclopedia

‣ A Diachronic Contrastive Study of Japanese Interrogatives

Participation/collaboration

- Senmyō project (Tsukuba)

- HiCor Network (Oxford)

Dissertations

based on the VSARPJ / OCOJ

Dissertations based on the OCOJ

DPhil
- Trott, Daniel. *Tense and Aspect in Old Japanese*. Completed 2014.

- You, Zixi. *Split Intransitivity in Old Japanese*. Submitted 2013.

- Mann, Laurence. *New Directions in* Engishiki Norito *Studies* (working title). In progress.

MA
- Kitahara, Chiho. *Complex Predicates in Historical Japanese – Analysis of Motion Verbs come/go in Old Japanese*. Completed 2011. (SOAS)

- Mæhlum, Petter. *Plant names in Old Japanese*. In progress, University of Oslo.

BA
- Millichip, Daniel. *Senmyō: A translation and commentary*. Completed 2012.

Tense and Aspect in Old Japanese
Daniel Trott

Tense and Aspect in Old Japanese
Daniel Trott

▸ I investigated ten constructions:
  ◦ *-yer-, -(i)te ar-, -(i)n- ~ -(i)te-, -(i)ki, -(i)kyer-, -(i)-wor-, -(i)tutu ar-, -(i)te wor-, -(i)-wi-*, and unmarked predicates

▸ With the Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese I could:
  ◦ search for *all* instances of a particular construction
  ◦ obtain quantitative data easily

▸ This allowed me to exploit the explanatory possibilities of an exemplar-based approach:
  ◦ In the exemplar-based model of meaning, the relative frequency of functions is important
  ◦ I could operate as if the relative frequencies of functions found in the OCOJ reflected the relative frequencies of functions encountered by an OJ speaker during his or her lifetime
  ◦ Therefore I could take the OCOJ as in some sense equivalent to the mental record of OJ utterances to which (according to the exemplar model) every OJ speaker has access
  ◦ I did not need to resort to simplified 'basic meanings' of constructions

Findings #1: Indirective -(i)kyer-

▸ Using the OCOJ and recent typological work, I confirmed and refined the traditional analysis of *-(i)kyer-*
  ◦ It denotes mostly non-firsthand past and mirative/emphatic

▸ Its evidential functions:
  ◦ It is used to denote *inference*, *hearsay*, and *'unusual events'*
  ◦ It is not in clear opposition to *-(i)ki*, but *-(i)ki* usually denotes firsthand events

▸ Its mirative and emphatic functions:
  ◦ 'Mirative' is an appropriate term for many of its functions
  ◦ Much of the time, however, it is broadly emphatic

▸ Its origin:
  ◦ Both functions probably arose from a perfect function, not the mirative function from the non-firsthand past function
  ◦ *-(i)kyer-* probably began as a resultative construction

Findings #2:
Perfective *-(i)n-* ~ *-(i)te-*

▸ A major function of *-(i)n-* (almost 60% of attestations) is to denote *result states*
  - This interpretation seems to be called for in many poems
  - Sometimes co-occurring adverbials demand it
  - It is the best explanation for the very high frequency of *-(i)n-* with Indirective *-(i)kyer-*

▸ This led me to a refinement of Washio's model of the origins and distribution of *-(i)n-* ~ *-(i)te-*
  - They arose from *completive* constructions formed with the verbs *in-* 'go away' and *ute-* 'throw away' in prototypically *mutative* and *transitive* environments respectively
  - They spread through the lexicon to less prototypical environments, broadening their meaning to perfective
  - This shows that split auxiliary systems can arise from completive constructions as well as from resultative constructions
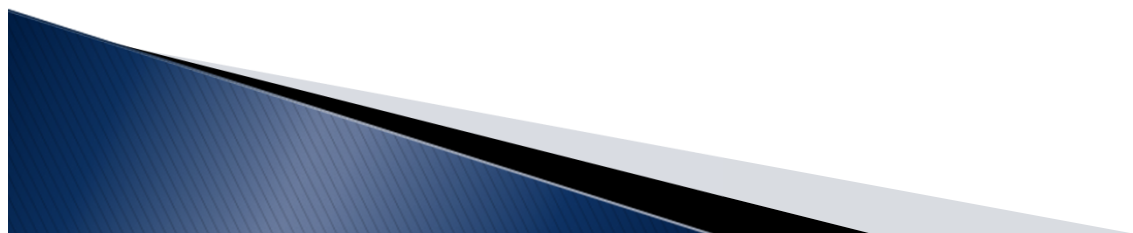
Findings #3: Resultative constructions

▸ Resultative constructions seem to be pervasive in Japanese

▸ There are several constructions in OJ one of whose major functions is to denote result states:
  ◦ Stative *–yer–*, Periphrastic Stative *–(i)te ar–*, Perfective *–(i)n–*, Resultative *–(i)te wor–*

▸ There are several constructions in Old Japanese which seem to have originated as resultative constructions:
  ◦ Indirective *–(i)kyer–*, Past *–(i)ki*, Progressive *–(i)–wor–*

▸ Modern Japanese has continued to coin resultative constructions:
  ◦ *–(l)te i–*, *–(l)te ar–*

▸ Resultative constructions in Japanese can denote ongoing activities as well as result states
  ◦ Is this connected to their pervasiveness?
  ◦ Does this mean that the distinction between states and activities is vague in Japanese?

Findings #4: Nonpast

- Evidence was found for a zero-marked nonpast construction in Old Japanese
  - Zero-marked finite verb forms (Conclusive, Adnominal, etc.) do not appear with past time adverbials
  - All cases of zero-marked forms referring to past events can be understood as *historical present* or *relative present*
  - 'Tense-neutral' analyses rely more on theoretical commitments than on linguistic data

- The aspectual function of zero-marked predicates is best characterized as *non-resultative*
  - The pervasiveness of resultative constructions in OJ and pre-OJ suggests (along with other considerations) that the resultative-non-resultative distinction was the first major aspectual distinction made in Japanese
  - A case can be made for resultative-non-resultative being the most basic aspectual distinction, both historically and cognitively

Split Intransitivity in Old Japanese
Zixi You

Split Intransitivity in Old Japanese
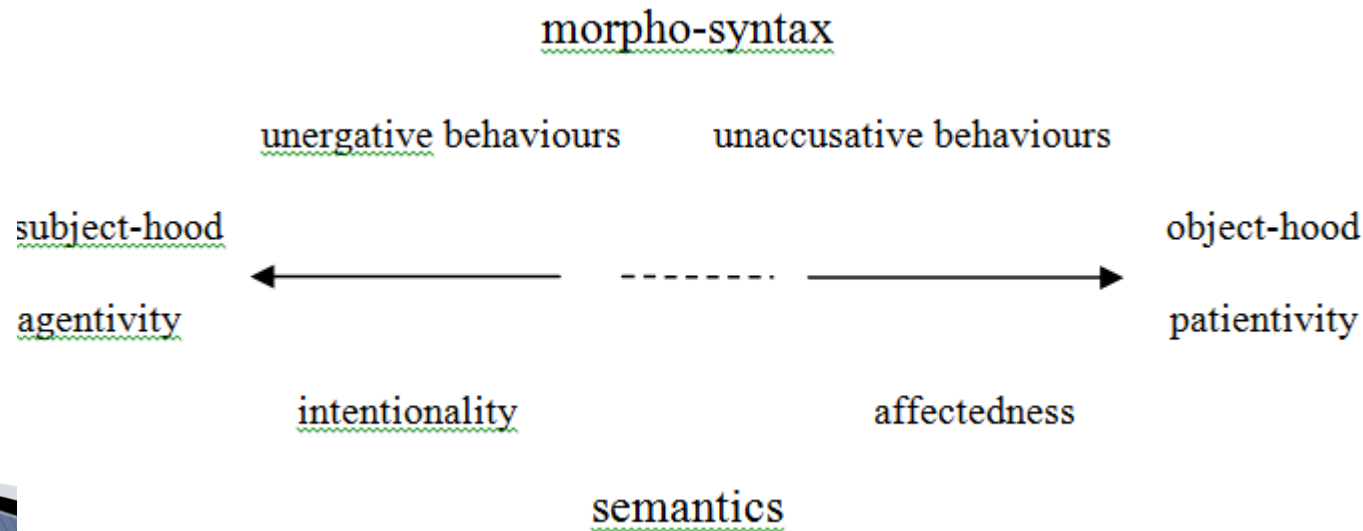## Zixi You

Morpho-syntactically, SI in OJ has found to have the following manifestations and co-relates:

- the selection of the perfective auxiliaries *-(i)n-* and *-(i)te-*

- the compatibility of N+V compounds

- the selection of the verbal prefixes *i-* and *sa-(ta-)*

- the possibility of getting involved in resultative constructions, VP-preposing and (*wo...*) *se-* constructions

- the combination patterns of V1+V2 compounds

Split Intransitivity in Old Japanese
Zixi You

Semantically, two factors, **intentionality** and **affectedness**, are found to be the most crucial among several other seemingly relevant factors (e.g. agentivity, telicity, animacy, intention, control and volition).

morpho-syntax

unergative behaviours	unaccusative behaviours

subject-hood

agentivity

object-hood

patientivity

intentionality

affectedness

semantics

Split Intransitivity in Old Japanese
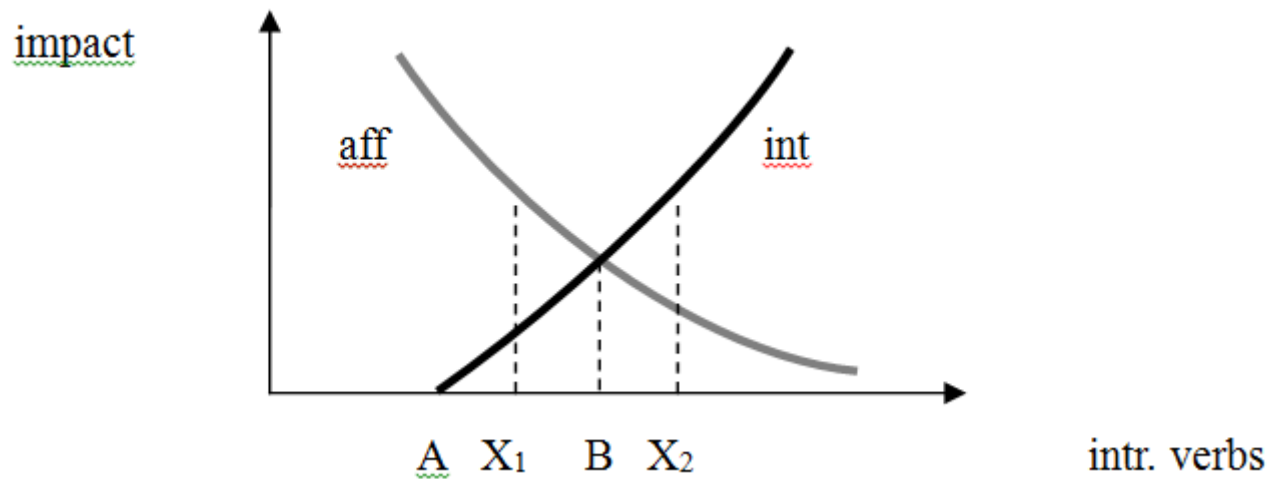## Zixi You

Furthermore, this study on OJ has also found out that

- ◦ 1) the variation is gradient

- ◦ 2) the semantic factors delimitating unergatives/unaccusatives are better viewed hierarchically. (I have made proposals of 'Intentionality Hierarchy' and 'Group of Affectedness Hierarchies'.)

Split Intransitivity in Old Japanese
Zixi You

Moreover, this study has emphasized the understanding of the interaction between semantic factors of SI, and proposed basic and complex models of the interaction between intentionality and affectedness for OJ.

Split Intransitivity in Old Japanese
Zixi You

In addition, the thesis included the following information in appendixes which contribute to the understanding of OJ verbs:
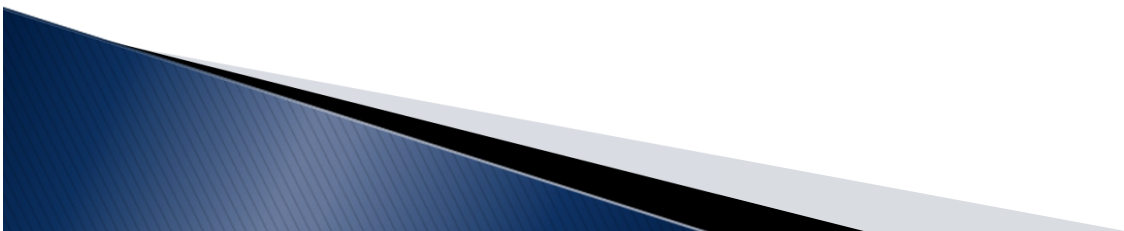
- core unaccusatives/unergatives in OJ

- Exhaustive lists of
  - ✕ intr. verbs combined with the perfective aux. in OJ
  - ✕ intr. verbs combined with verbal prefixes in OJ
  - ✕ N+V compounds in OJ
  - ✕ V+V compounds in OJ

- comprehensive semantic analysis of OJ intransitive verbs attested in OCOJ

Planned activities between now and the end of June

Planned activities between now and the end of June

- The Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese and Digital Humanities in Oxford

- Old Japanese in Action

The Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese and Digital Humanities in Oxford

27 June 2014

We are planning a digital humanities event in Oxford to both mark the end of our AHRC project (VSARPJ) and the subsequent development of a major digital humanities resource, the Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese (OCOJ).

This will be an opportunity for showcasing the OCOJ and presentation of other Digital Humanities projects based in Oxford.

Old Japanese in Action

13 June 2014

Old Japanese in Action

Old Japanese in Action is a half-day event which in an interactive and engaging way will introduce school children between the age of 13 and 15 from *Oxford Spires Academy* to some of the literature and history from 8th century Japan and which will include the children enacting and performing some of these texts under the guidance of staff from the *Creation Theatre company*.

Old Japanese in Action

Our aim is to introduce students to a different and interesting culture through interactive work with these important Japanese texts, and also to share some of the specialized research work we do at the University of Oxford within Japanese studies. The texts we will use for this event will include epic poetry and folk tales in poetic form and historical texts from the *Man'yōshū* (万葉集), *Senmyō* (続日本紀宣命), and the *Kojiki kayō* (古事記歌謡). We will be working through translations of the texts into English.

Old Japanese in Action

The event will begin with a lecture about ancient Japan and ancient Japanese language, as well as the texts and literature we will be using.

This will be followed by a sample performance of a short text from Old Japan, created for this occasion by the Creation Theatre company.

After that, the students will break out in groups and create their own theatre performance of an Old Japanese text, under the direction of the Creation Theatre Team. In order to do so the children will have to think about the form and content of the texts they are working with, in a creative way, and to engage deeply with the texts. It is surely the first time for all of them to read or know about Old Japanese poetry and literature.

Old Japanese in Action

Finally, each group will perform their selected text for everybody attending in the school. In this way, *Old Japanese in Action* will teach the school children about the literature, history and culture of early Japan and it will also bring to life for them some of the literature from that time, in an interesting way which we believe is a new approach to introducing Japanese culture to children outside of Japan.

THE END