

The Restructuring of the Japanese Pronominal System

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It is widely claimed that Japanese lacks personal pronouns in the strict sense (cf. Fukui 1995). Old Japanese (OJ, 8th century), however, had unmistakable personal pronouns with many of the properties found in Indo-European languages – for example, the personal pronominal system included both strong and deficient pronouns in the sense of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999).

(1) Tripartite Pronominal Systems in OJ (8th century)

	clitics	weak pronouns	strong pronouns
1st person	<i>(w)a</i>		<i>(w)a-re</i>
2nd person	<i>na</i>		<i>na-re</i>
Demonstrative		<i>si/so/ko</i>	<i>so-re/ko-re</i>

The deficient pronouns, both clitics and weak, - were all lost in Early Middle Japanese (EMJ). Strong pronouns such as *ware* ‘first person’ remained, but I claim that these pronouns underwent an internal structural change. Specifically, I claim that loss of the deficient pronouns was accompanied by loss of AgrP within the extended nominal structure of the remaining pronouns. Ultimately, these pronouns are reanalyzed with the same formal structure as demonstratives.

Researchers have postulated a number of functional categories in the extended nominal projection (cf. Cardinaletti and Starke (1999), Giusti (2001), Roberts and Roussou (2003), Kawashima (1994), Watanabe (2006), among many others). From a synchronic standpoint, I provide support for the claim that there are two functional projections in demonstratives, Determiner Phrase (DP) and Number Phrase (NumP), based on an analysis of the plural marker *-ra* in Modern Japanese. The basic facts are the following: pronouns (2a) and demonstratives (2b) in Modern Japanese can precede *-ra* with an NP complement.

- (2) a. [Kimi*(-ra)/kare*(-ra) gakusei] ga sono heya o tukatte yoi.
 2P-Plural/3P-Plural student Nom that room Acc use fine
 ‘It is fine that you students use that room.’
- b. [Kore*(-ra)/sore-*(ra) sigen gomi] wa siyakusyo ni motte itte kudasai.
 this-Plural/that-Plural resource trash Top city hall to bring go please
 ‘Please take this recyclable trash to the city hall.’

These facts are parallel to the argument in Abney (1987) that in English expressions like “we the students” the pronoun occurs in the D head that takes the NP complement. I show that assuming the two nominal functional categories D and Num provides a structural account not only of facts like those in (2), but of the two kinds of demonstratives distinguished as *a*-type and *so*-type demonstrative by Hoji (1989) and Hoji, Kinsui, Takubo and Ueyama (2003).

Returning to the diachronic restructuring of the Japanese pronominal system, I follow Roberts & Roussou (2003) in hypothesizing that while demonstratives contain NumberP, personal pronouns contain AgrP, where Agr is specified for language-specific phi-features, including person, number and gender features. An important feature of OJ strong pronouns is they do not appear with the plural form *-ra*, that is, **ware-ra*, nor with the genitive case *ga*, **ware-ga* (cf. Frellesvig 2010). I argue that OJ strong pronouns are compositionally derived by movement: *-re* originates in D, while *wa/na*, the spellout of agreement, moves from inside NP/VP and adjoins to D to check its [definite] feature, resulting in the order *wa/na=re*. I

present empirical evidence that the plural suffix *-ra* and genitive *ga* originate in the lowest nominal functional category, so that movement of *wa/na* over *-ra* or *ga* to D violates the HMC. This accounts for the non-occurrence of *ware-ra* and *ware ga* in OJ. Both *ware-ra* and *ware-ga*, however, begin to emerge in EMJ after *ware* comes to be base-generated in D following the loss of AgrP. Thus the loss of AgrP results in the wholesale restructuring of the pronominal system, with the consequence that in later stages of the language all pronouns have the same internal structure as demonstratives.

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