

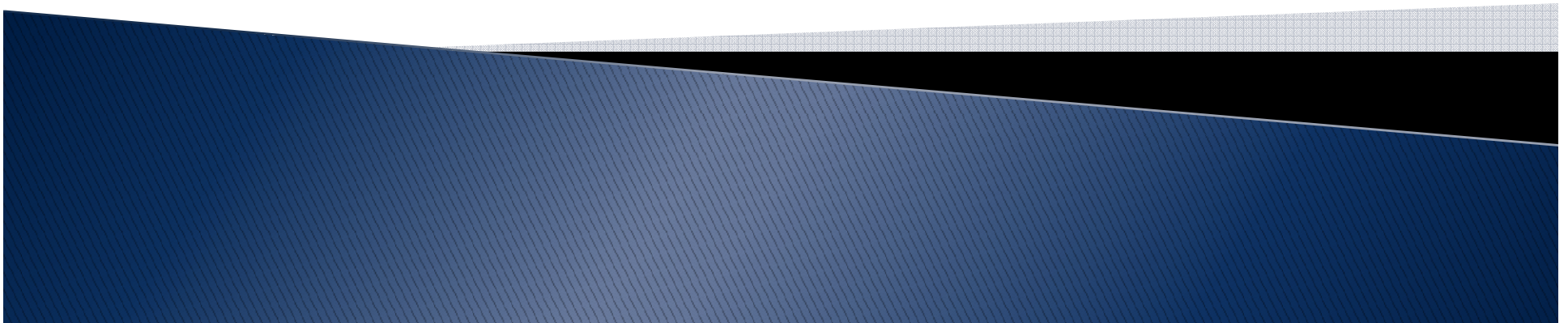
Research Centre for Japanese Language and Linguistics
University of Oxford
Premodern Japanese Syntax Research Group

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Some thoughts on relative clauses in ancient Japan

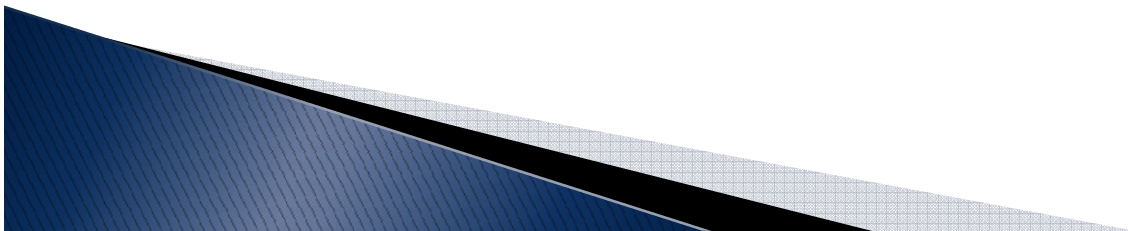
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Ancient Japan – Origins and Formation (23–24 January, 2009)



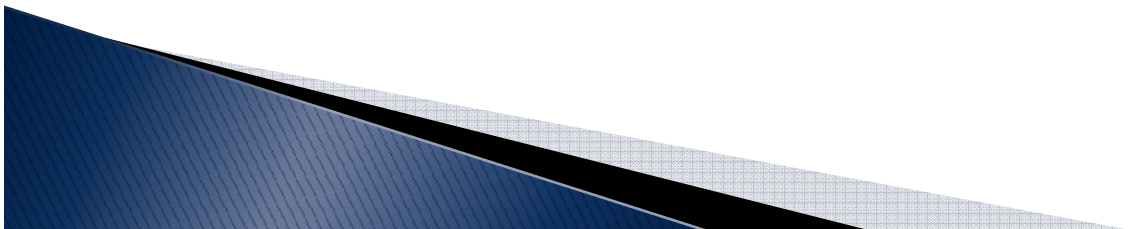
Types of relative clauses in Old Japanese

- ▶ Prenominal relative clauses
- ▶ Stacked prenominal relative clauses
- ▶ Headless relative clauses
- ▶ 2-headed relative clauses
- ▶ Circumnominal relative clauses
- ▶ Adjectival root–Noun compounds



Examples

- ▶ [[naka-zari-si] tori] mo ki-naki-*nu* (M 1.16)
- ▶ [[sirwo-ki], [kurwo-ki] uma]
- ▶ [*kanasi-ki*] *ga kwoma pa tagu-tomo* (M 14.3451)
- ▶ [[kaze maziri ame *puru ywo no* ame maziri yuki *puru*] *ywo*] *pa* (M 5.892)
- ▶ [*imo* *ga ipi-si*] *wo oki-te* (M 20.4429)
- ▶ *nigi-tape ara-tape* (N)



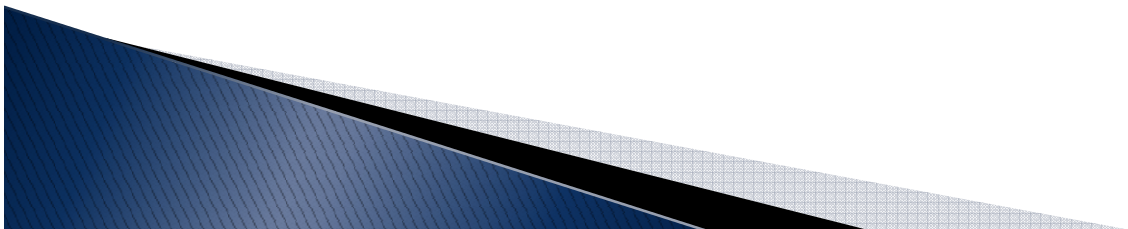
The typological profile of OJ and beyond

VERB PATTERNER	OBJECT PATTERNER	EXAMPLE
verb	object	<i>ate + the sandwich</i>
verb	subject	<i>(there) entered + a tall man</i>
adposition	NP	<i>on + the table</i>
copula verb	predicate	<i>is + a teacher</i>
'want'	VP	<i>wants + to see Mary</i>
tense/aspect auxiliary verb	VP	<i>has + eaten dinner</i>
negative auxiliary	VP	cf. 7 in §4.2
complementizer	S	<i>that + John is sick</i>
question particle	S	cf. 8 in §4.4.
adverbial subordinator	S	<i>because + Bob has left</i>
article	N'	<i>the + tall man</i>
plural word	N'	cf. 9 in §4.7
noun	genitive	<i>father + of John</i>
noun	relative clause	<i>movies + that we saw</i>
adjective	standard of comparison	<i>taller + than Bob</i>
verb	PP	<i>slept + on the floor</i>
verb	manner adverb	<i>ran + slowly</i>

TABLE 39. Complete list of correlation pairs.

Some typology and statistics

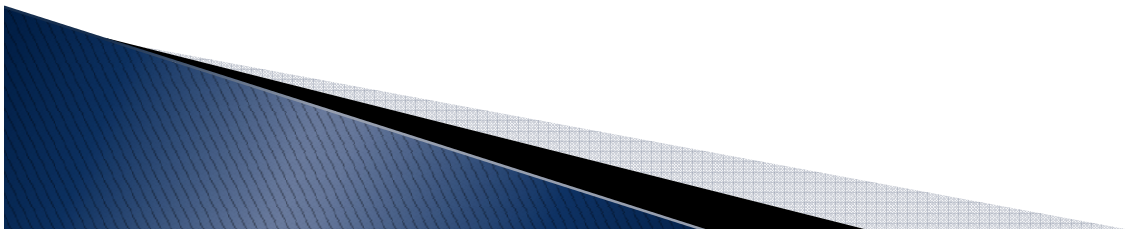
- ▶ If VO then NRel
- ▶ If OV then RelN or NRel
- ▶ But:
 - If RelN, then SOV
- ▶ Circumnominal relative clauses are overwhelmingly found in SOV languages, often with or as a secondary strategy

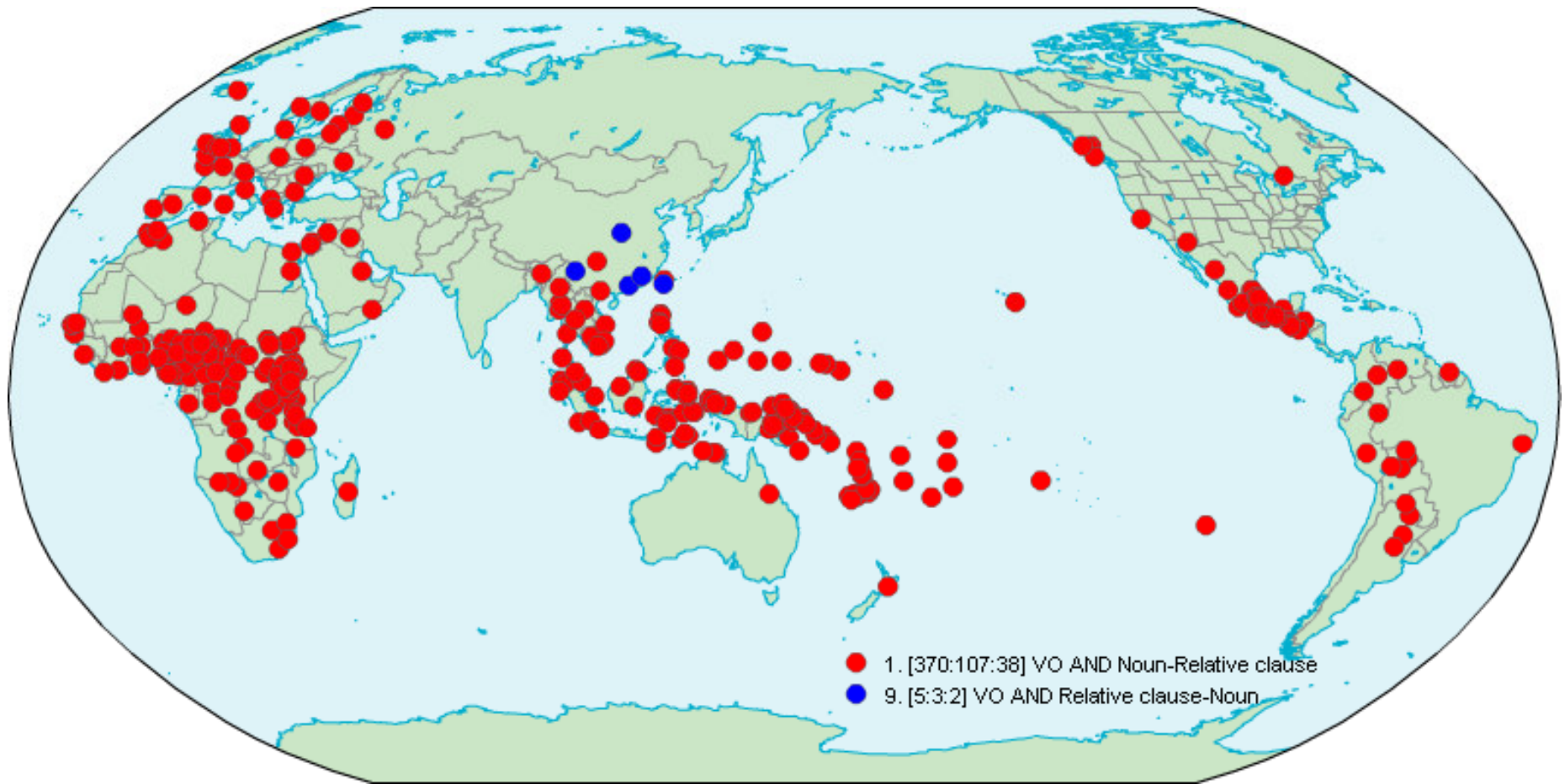


Some typology and statistics

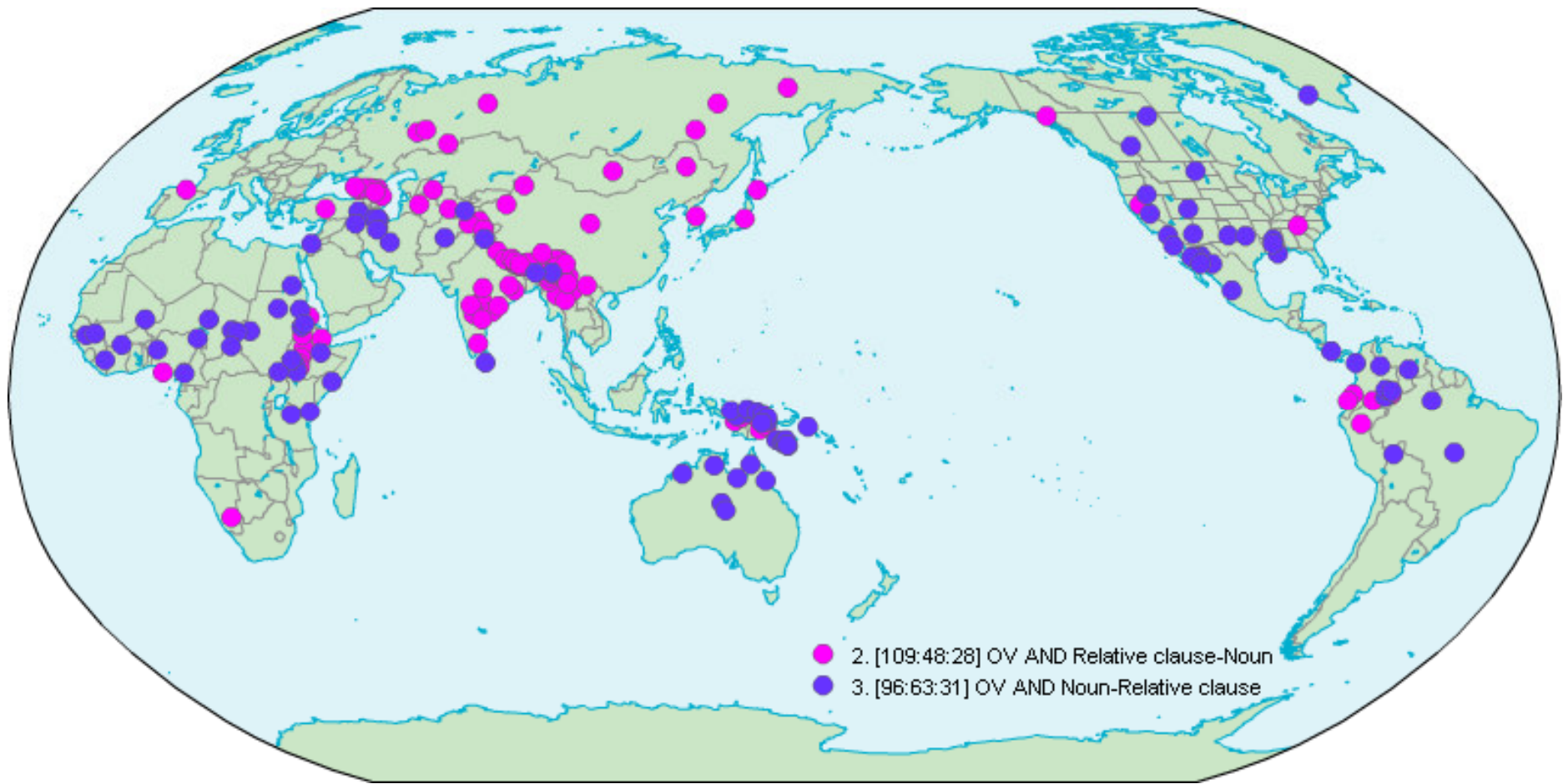
	AFRICA	EURASIA	SEASIA&OC	AUS-NEWGUI	NAMER	SAMER	TOTAL
OV&ReIN	5	11	2	2	3	3	26
OV&NRel	9	5	2	6	12	3	37
VO&ReIN	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
VO&NRel	21	8	12	3	11	5	60

TABLE 2. Order of noun and relative clause.





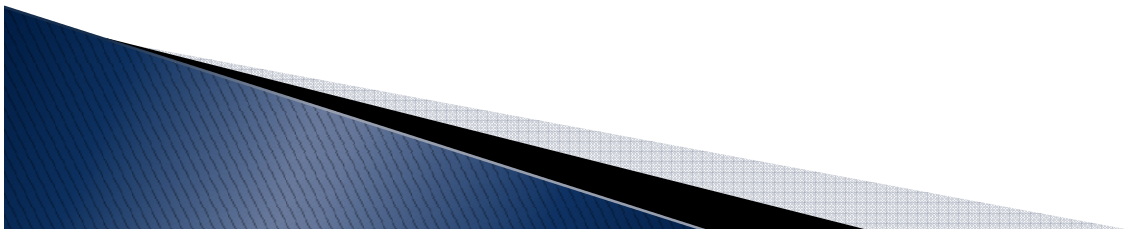
From Dryer (2005)



From Dryer (2005)

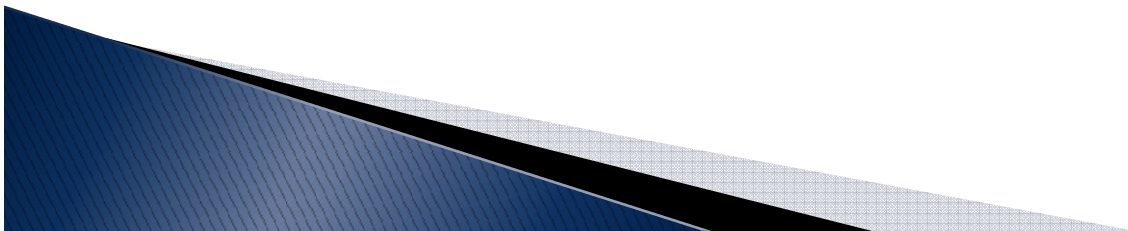
Prenominal relative clauses in Japanese

- ▶ They must be of some antiquity:
 - The only true productive means of constructing relative clauses in OJ
 - There are large numbers of prenominal relative clauses in OJ (although many of them involve 之 which is a linking element in Chinese)
 - They are probably not merely nominalization constructions, i.e. N–N constructions as suggested by Simpson (2003)



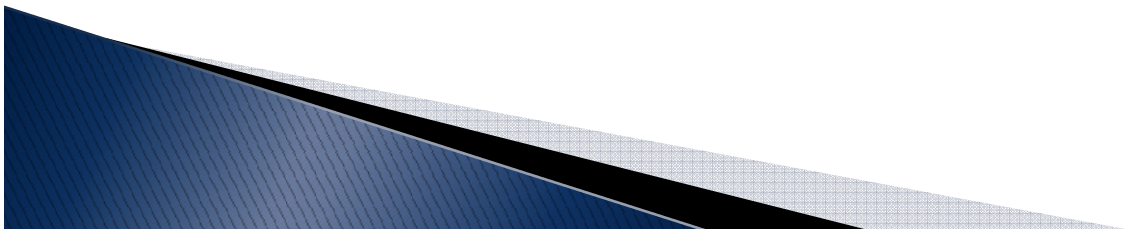
Prenominal relative clauses

- ▶ However:
 - The reconstruction of a PJ Adnominal form has been contested by Frellesvig drawing on evidence from phonology, morpho-syntax and dialects
- ▶ In spite of this, it is the only reconstructable RC type that is widely distributed.



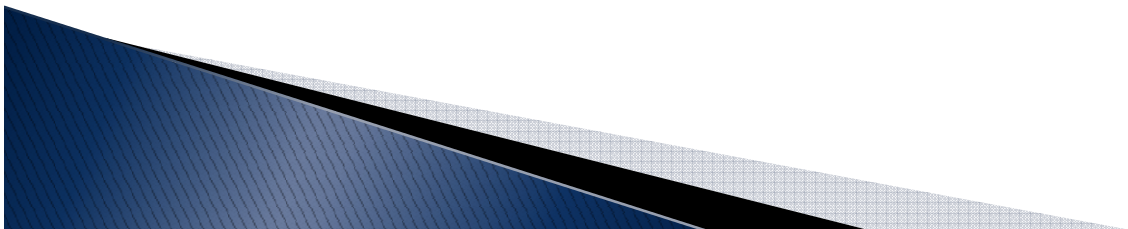
Stacked prenominal RCs

- ▶ The variant with 2 Adnominals is rare
- ▶ They are fairly limited in OJ and onwards
- ▶ This could be due to:
 - Genre
 - Language
- ▶ They are a subtype of prenominal relative clauses and hence also ancient



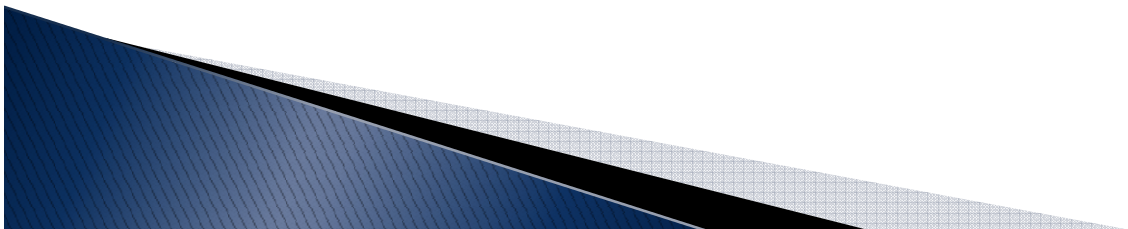
Headless RCs

- ▶ Headless RCs are rare in OJ
- ▶ They are only attested with adjectives
- ▶ They are all found in book 14 of *Man'yôshû*
 - Dialect area B and unknown province
- ▶ It would be odd if they did not exist as a subtype of prenominal RCs, but we cannot know.



Circumnominal relative clauses in Japanese

- ▶ They are recent innovations in OJ because:
 - Only 5 certain examples in the corpus
 - They do not follow the accessibility hierarchy (mainly genitives)
 - They only get more numerous in EMJ
- ▶ They are *not* postnominal relative clauses as some *kokugogakushas* have claimed



On the order of N and Rel

Statement 1:

Japanese has always had prenominal relative clauses.

Statement 2:

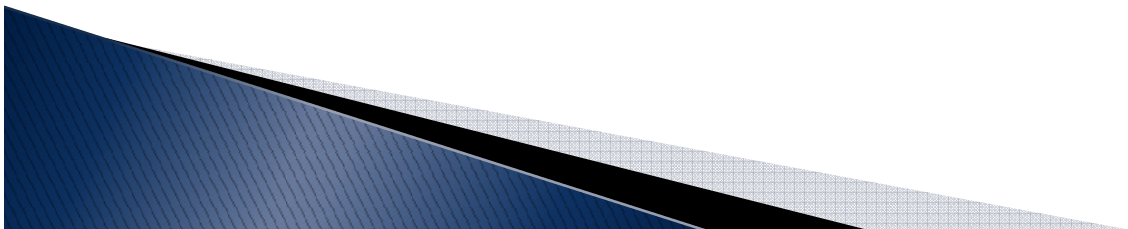
Japanese probably always had stacked prenominal RCs as a subtype

Statement 3:

We cannot know if Japanese has always had headless RCs

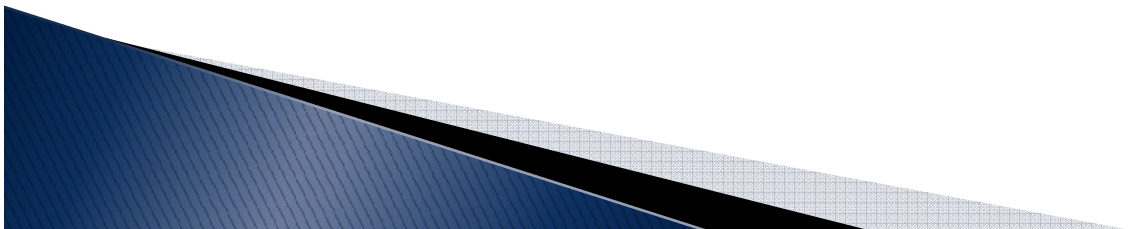
Statement 4:

Japanese have not always had circumnominal relative clauses.



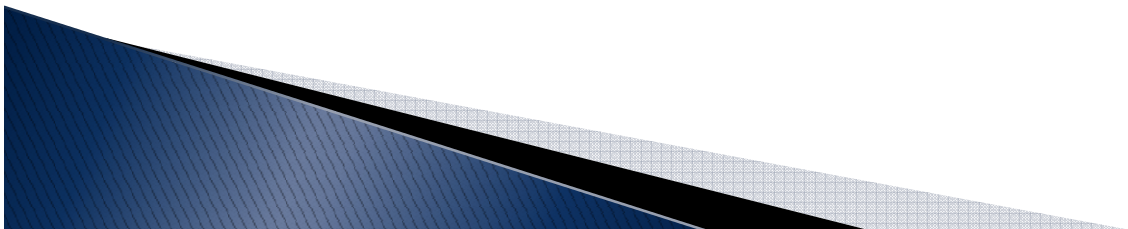
2-headed RCs

- ▶ 2-headed RCs are very rare typologically
- ▶ In OJ they are limited to *Norito* (cf. Kaiser (1991) who calls them 'bookish')
- ▶ The RC tends to be an adjectival root rather than a sentential RC
- ▶ They serve no clear function
- ▶ They should be distinguished from coordinative constructions like *the fish with the wide fin the fish with the narrow fin*



Adjective + Noun compounds

- ▶ Adjectival root+noun compounds are found mainly in *Norito*.
- ▶ It has been proposed that roots of adjectives are quite nouny, so these constructions are really more like N+N compounds
- ▶ There are no cases of verb root+noun constructions, so it was probably limited to adjectival roots
- ▶ Thus they were of limited function

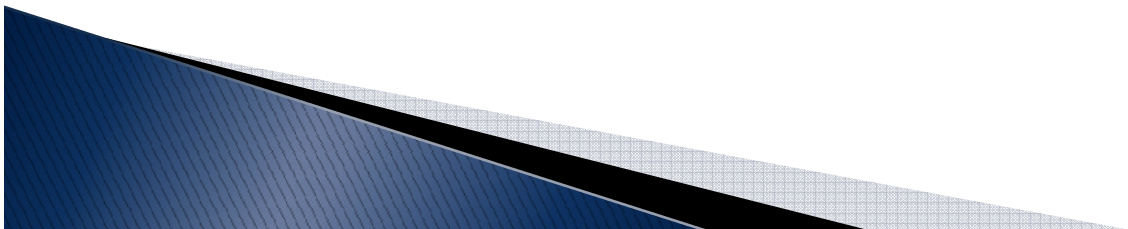


Statement 5

2-headed relative clauses are probably not ancient; they serve no clear function and are limited to a certain register

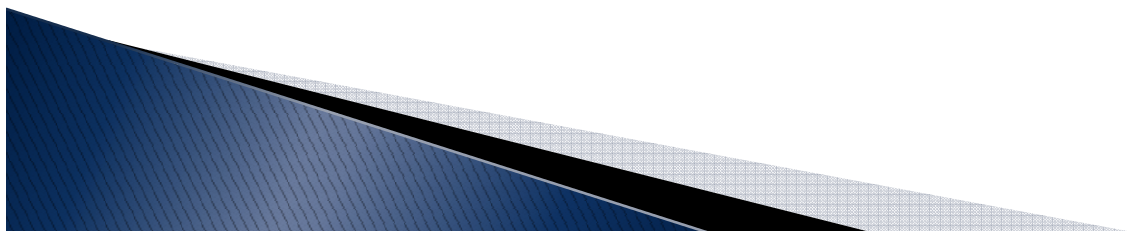
Statement 6

Adjectival root+noun compounds are of limited distribution and function, but they could have competed with true RCs for a subset of constructions



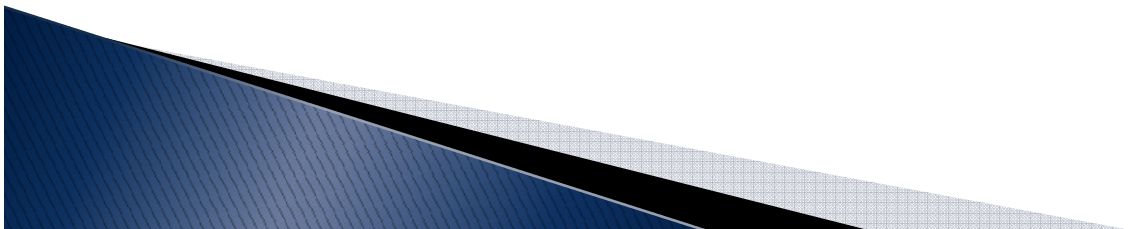
Interim summary of RC types

	Ancient Japanese	OJ
Prenominal RCs	+	+
Stacked prenominal RCs	+	+
Headless RCs	-	+
2-headed RCs	-	+
Circumnominal RC	-	+
Adjectival root + noun	+	+



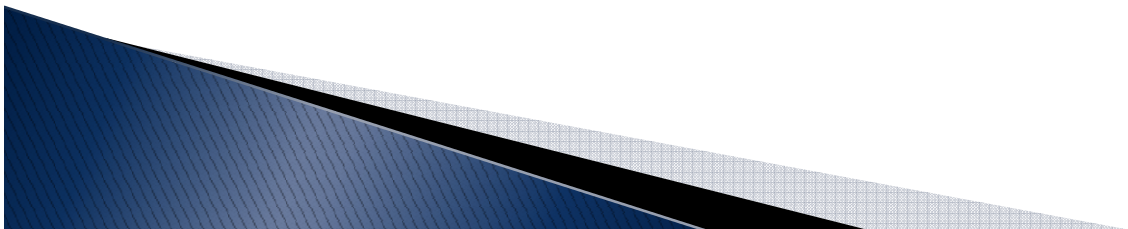
What was "before"?

- ▶ Can we say something about the origin of prenominal RCs?
- ▶ Can we say something about CRCs



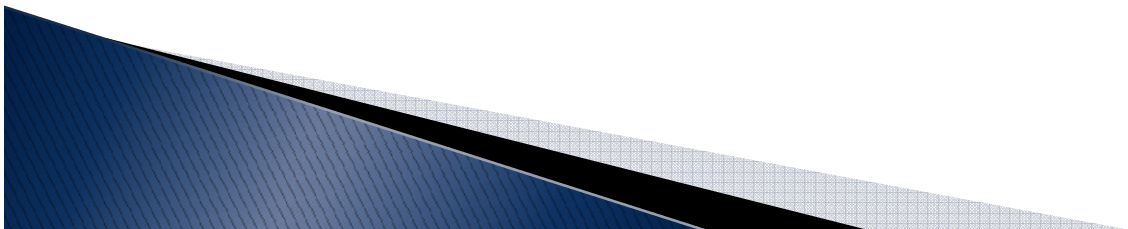
Prenominal RCs

- ▶ Did prenominal relative clauses develop from 2-headed ones (cf. Kaiser 1991)?
- ▶ Are prenominal relative clauses nominalizations that are juxtaposed to the head noun (cf. Simpson 2003)?
- ▶ Were prenominal relative clauses once infinite and related to the Adjectival root + N type?



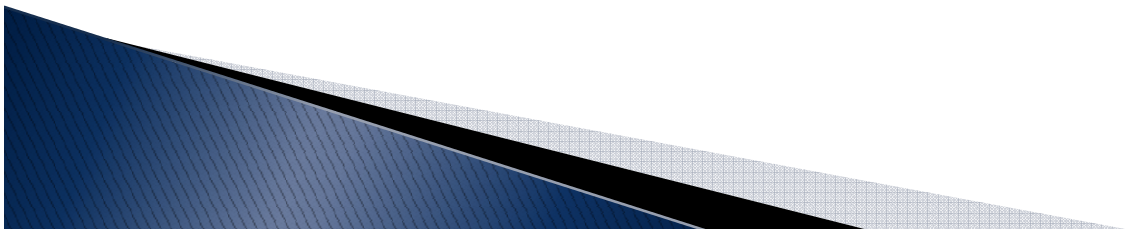
2-headed monsters

- ▶ Possible advantages:
 - Seems appealing from an early generative perspective
 - Would at least partially solve the connectivity problem (Bianchi 2002)
 - Easy to 'explain' how gapped prenominal RCs developed from 2-headed ones
 - Equally easy to 'explain' CRCs developed from 2-headed ones (cf. Kaiser 1991)



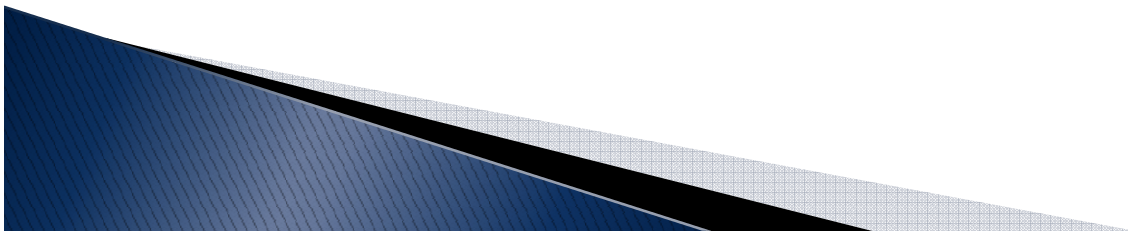
2-headed monsters

- ▶ Arguments against 2-headed RCs as "primitive":
 - The 2-headed structure has long since been dropped in generative syntax (not to mention the level of representation)
 - 2-headed RCs seem to be less clause-like and more compound-like
 - They are only found in a limited part of the OJ corpus
 - Would only solve the connectivity problem to some extent
 - Typologically unrecorded



2-headed monsters

- ▶ 2-headed could equally well have developed into circumnominal relative clauses by dropping the external head
- ▶ The same counter-arguments as with prenominal relative clauses apply

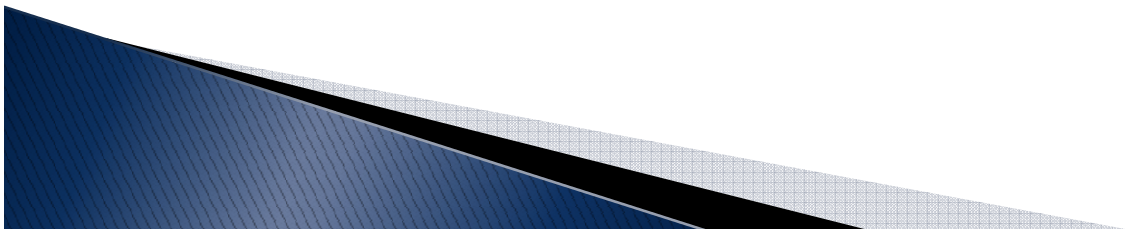


Statement 7

2-headed RCs did not develop into prenominal RCs

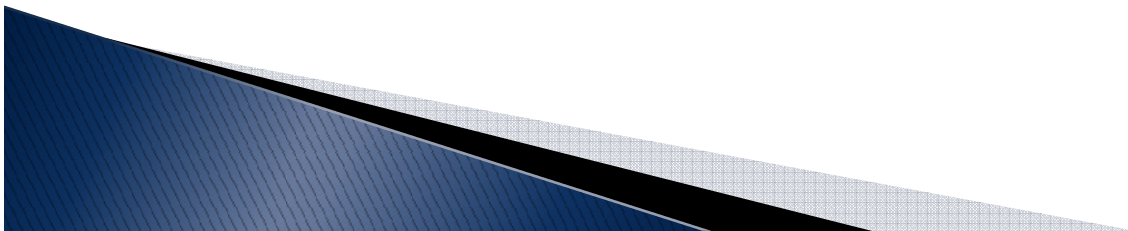
Statement 8

2-headed RCs did not develop into circumnominal RCs



The nominalization hypothesis

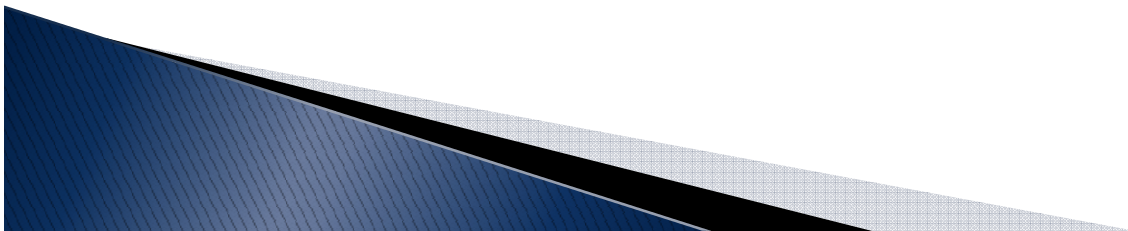
- ▶ First proposed by Konoshima (1962)
- ▶ Re-suggested by Simpson & Wu to fit a larger areal pattern of N+N juxtaposition to construct relative constructions (Tibetan,)
- ▶ This relates more to the functional side of the development of prenominal RCs than the morphosyntactic development



The nominalization hypothesis

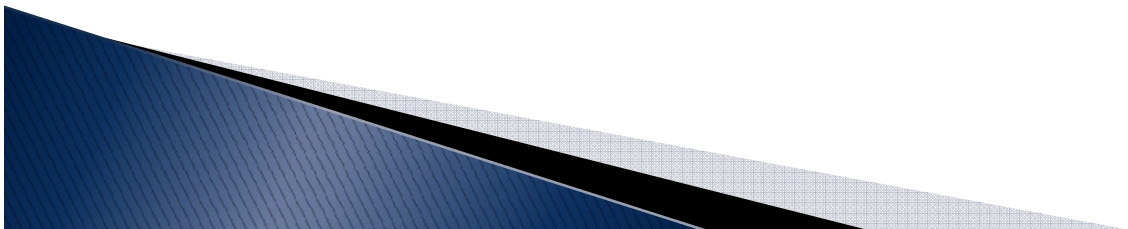
▶ Counterarguments:

- Nominalization using the Adnominal form is an OJ innovation
- The Nominal form was used for nominalization
- Headless relatives are rare and limited in distribution
- Syntactic juxtaposition is rare in Japanese (but recall coordinative structures of the type *the fish with the wide fin the fish with the narrow fin*)



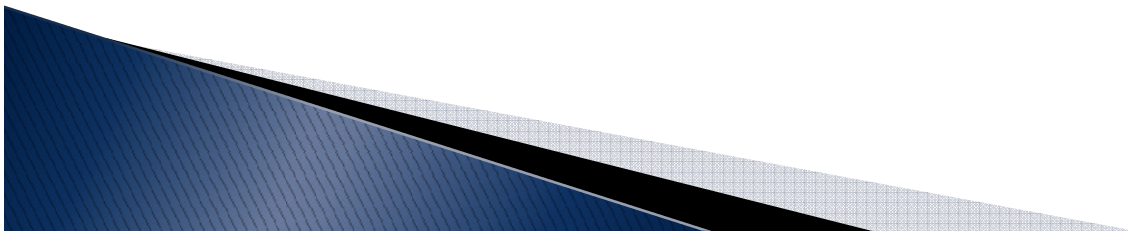
Infinite origin?

- ▶ Is the adjectival root + noun type RC a relict from a more common type of RC?
- ▶ Ohno 1978[1953] has been suggested that genitive *rwo* ~ *ru* is related to the PJ Adnominal **ru*.
- ▶ So relative clauses would have had the structure [Infinitive + genitive] head noun]



Infinite origin?

- ▶ They would not have resembled the Adjectival root + noun type since there is a genitive
- ▶ Not possible to have tense–aspect–mood
- ▶ A closer look at the Vovin–type RCs is needed

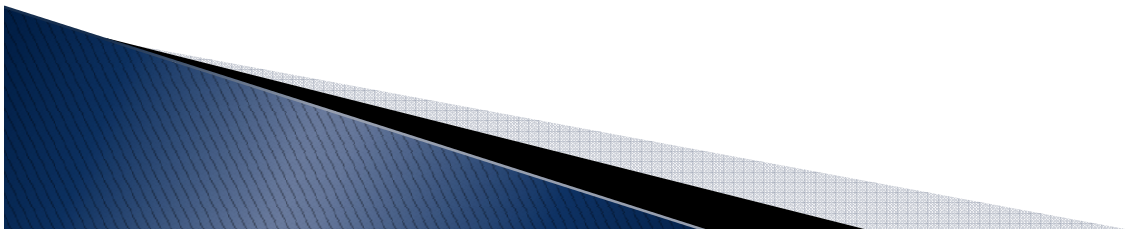


Statement 9

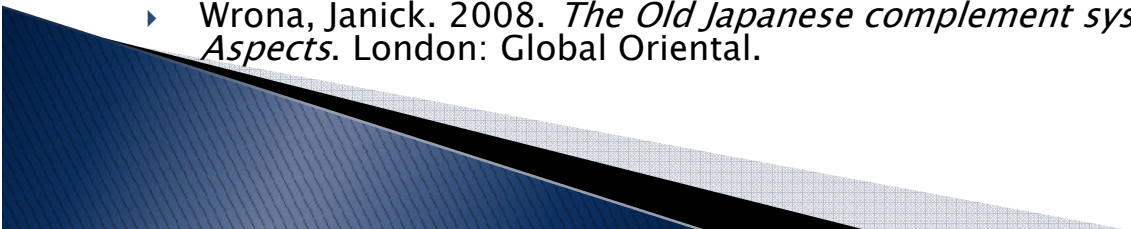
Prenominal RCs did not develop from juxtaposing a nominalized clause to a head noun

Statement 10

Prenominal RCs did not develop from infinite relative clauses



References

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 - ▶ Simpson, Andrew. 2003. On the re-analysis of nominalizers in Chinese, Japanese and Korean. In *Functional structure(s), form, and interpretation : perspectives from East Asian languages*, eds. Yen-hui Audrey Li and Andrew Simpson. London: RoutledgeCurzon.
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Questions and Comments Welcome

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