

Research Centre for Japanese Language and Linguistics  
University of Oxford

オックスフォード大学 日本語研究センター  
[www.orinst.ox.ac.uk/research/jap-ling/](http://www.orinst.ox.ac.uk/research/jap-ling/)

# Mysteries of Verb Verb complexes in Old Japanese

Bjarke FRELLESVIG  
ビャーク・フレレスビグ

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## **Background**

Old Japanese; the Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese  
Verb Verb complexes in Modern Japanese

## **Verb Verb complexes in Old Japanese**

Overview

Mysteries: V1 auxiliary verbs

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# Old Japanese

Old Japanese (OJ) 700 - 800

Early Middle Japanese (EMJ) 800 - 1200

Late Middle Japanese (LMJ) 1200 - 1600

Modern Japanese (NJ) 1600 -

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## The Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese

A comprehensive, heavily annotated, digital corpus of  
all extant texts in Japanese from the Old Japanese  
period

url: <http://vsarpj.orinst.ox.ac.uk/corpus/>

**Annotation, Translations, Dictionary**

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## Verb Verb complexes in Modern Japanese

Cf. the position paper for this  
conference

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## V V complexes in Modern Japanese

**Type 1. Lexical thematic compound verbs,**

e.g. *aruki-tukareru* (“walk-get.tired”) ‘get tired from walking’

**Type 2. Lexical aspectual compound verbs,**

e.g. *ami-ageru* (“knit-accomplish”) ‘finish knitting’

**Type 3. Syntactic compound verbs,**

e.g. *hataraki-tuzukeru* (“work-continue”) ‘keep on working’

**Type 4. Syntactic complex verbs,**

e.g. *yonde simau* (“reading put.away”) ‘finish reading’

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## V V complexes in Modern Japanese

### I V1 manner $V1_{(manner)} - V2$

1. Lexical thematic compound verbs, e.g. *aruki-tukareru* 'get tired from walking'

V1 modifies V2, mainly in terms of manner

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

### II V2 auxiliary verb $V1 - V2_{(aktionsart)}$

2. Lexical aspectual compound verbs, e.g. *ami-ageru* 'finish knitting'

3. Syntactic compound verbs, e.g. *hataraki-tuzukeru* 'keep on working'

4. Syntactic complex verbs, e.g. *yonde simau* 'finish reading'

V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure

V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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## Verb Verb complexes in Old Japanese

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## V V complexes in Old Japanese

### Morphophonology

**VV** (root compounding; more prevalent in pre-OJ)  
Cf. Frellesvig & Whitman forthcoming.

**ViV**

**Vte V** (very few constructions in OJ; more later)

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## OJ Vte V

Very few **Vte V** (= NJ Type 4) forms in OJ:

*Vte ar*      STATIVE      (*ar* 'exist, be')

*Vtutu ar*    STATIVE

*Vte wor*    RESULTATIVE    (*wor* 'be sitting')

(cf. Trott 2013)

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*Vi V* complexes in OJ

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*Vi V* complexes in OJ

Structural ambiguity  
of surface *Vi V*

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## *Vi V* complexes in OJ

### Structural ambiguity of surface *Vi V*

Biclausal

[ [ ... *Vi* ] *V* ]

*V V* complex

[ ... *Vi V* ]

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## sasi watari

泉河乃

idumi no kapa no

Izumi GEN river GEN

速 瀬

payaki se wo

GEN fast rapids ACC

竿 刺 渡

sawo sasi watari

pole plunge.in cross

(MYS.13.3240)

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## Biclausal

[ [ ...Vi ] V ]

泉河乃                      速    瀬                      竿    刺    渡  
 [ idumi no kapa no    payaki se wo                      [ sawo sasi ] watari ]  
 Izumi GEN river GEN fast rapids ACC                      pole plunge.in    cross

“Cross the fast rapids of the Izumi River, plunging in a pole”  
 (MYS.13.3240)

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## pumi watari

狭穂河乃                      小石                      踐    渡  
 sapogapa no                      koisi                      pumi    watari  
 Saogawa GEN                      pebble                      step    cross

(MYS 4.525)

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**Biclausal**

[[ ...Vi ] V ]

狭穂河乃	小石	踐	渡
[ [ sapogapa no	koisi	pumi ]	watari ]
Saogawa GEN	pebble	step	cross

“Cross by stepping on the pebbles in the Saogawa River”  
(MYS 4.525)

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**pumi kwoye**

安之比奇能	八 峯	布美 越
asipikwi no	yatu wo	pumi kwoye
EPITHET	eight hill	step cross

(MYS 19.4164)

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## V V complex

[... *Vi V* ]

安之比奇能

[ asipikwi no

EPITHET

八 峯

yatu wo

eight hill

布美 越

pumi kwoye ]

step cross

“Cross many mountains on foot”

(MYS 19.4164)

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## kwopwi wataru

忌忌 伎美 爾

yuyusiki kimi ni

awesome lord DAT

故非 和多流 香母

kwopwi wataru kamo

yearn cross EMPH

(MYS.15.3603)

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## V V complex

[... *Vi* V ]

忌忌 伎美 爾      故非 和多流 香母  
 [ *yuyusiki kimi ni*      *kwopwi wataru kamo* ]  
 awesome lord DAT      yearn cross EMPH

“I will *continue to yearn* for you, my awesome lord!”  
 (MYS.15.3603)

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## *Vi* V complex verb types in OJ

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## Vi V complex verb types in OJ

I      V1 manner                      V1<sub>(manner)</sub> V2

Lexical thematic complex verbs, e.g. *pumi kwoye* “cross by foot”

V1 modifies V2, mainly in terms of manner

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

II      V2 auxiliary verb                      V1 V2<sub>(aktionsart)</sub>

Non-lexical complex verbs, e.g. *kwopwi watar* “continue to yearn”

V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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## Vi V complexes in OJ

### Wordhood

OJ *Vi V* have *less lexical integrity* than NJ *Vi-V* complexes

(fairly free separability of V1 and V2 by particles;

CAUSATIVE/PASSIVE interpolation between V1 and V2 possible)

OJ *Vi V* exhibit more *transitivity harmony violations* than NJ

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## *Vi V* complexes in OJ

### Wordhood

Thus, OJ *Vi V* are best treated as **complex verbs**, rather than compound verbs; and, it is for OJ not possible to draw as clear distinctions as between the NJ Types 2-4.

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## V V complexes in Modern Japanese

**I**      V1 manner                      V1<sub>(manner)</sub> V2

1. Lexical thematic compound verbs, e.g. *aruki-tukareru* ‘get tired from walking’

V1 modifies V2, mainly in terms of manner

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

**II**      V2 auxiliary verb                      V1 V2<sub>(aktionsart)</sub>

2. Lexical aspectual compound verbs, e.g. *ami-ageru* ‘finish knitting’

3. Syntactic compound verbs, e.g. *hataraki-tuzukeru* ‘keep on working’

4. Syntactic complex verbs, e.g. *yonde simau* ‘finish reading’

V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure

V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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## Vi V complex verb types in OJ

### I V1 manner V1<sub>(manner)</sub> V2

**Lexical thematic complex verbs**, e.g. *pumi kwoye* “cross by foot”

V1 modifies V2, mainly in terms of manner

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

### II V2 auxiliary verb V1 V2<sub>(aktionsart)</sub>

**Non-lexical complex verbs**, e.g. *kwopwi watar* “continue to yearn”

V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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## Some V2 auxiliary verbs in Old Japanese

**Progressive:** *wor* (‘be sitting’)

**Explorative:** *mi* (‘see’)

**Reciprocal:** *ap* (‘meet’)

**Adventive:** *ko* (‘come’)

**Inceptive:** *some* (‘begin’); *ide* (‘go out’); *kake* (‘hang up’)

**Potential:** *e* (‘get’); *kane* (‘fail’); *kate* (‘prevail’)

**Continuative:** *yuk* (‘go’); *tug* (‘convey’); *topor* (‘pass through’);  
*watar* (‘go across’)

**Social deixis:** *imas* (‘be’); *itadak* (‘receive’); *matur* (‘offer’);  
*myes* (‘see’); *tamap* (‘give’); *tamape* (‘receive’)

**Degree:** *kwos* ‘put over’; *kwoye* ‘go over’; *masar* ‘exceed’;  
*sugus* ‘put beyond’; *sugwi* ‘go beyond’; *tar* ‘suffice’

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## V2 auxiliary verb *ko* (*ki*) Adventive ('come')

筑波嶺乃	吉久乎見者	長氣尔
tukupane no	yokyeku wo mireba	nagaki ke ni
Tsukuba.Peak GEN	goodness ACC look.when	long days for

念積夾之	憂者	息沼
omopi tumi kosi	urepe pa	yami-nu
think pile came	sadness TOP	stop-PERF

“When I look at how fine Tsukuba Peak is, the despondency that for long days I **came** to **feel**, has stopped.” (MYS.9.1757)

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## V V complexes

**I**      **V1 manner**                      **V1<sub>(manner)</sub> V2**

V1 modifies V2, mainly in terms of manner

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

**II**      **V2 auxiliary verb**                      **V1 V2<sub>(aktionsart)</sub>**

V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure

V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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One more (mysterious?)  
type in Old Japanese

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One more (mysterious?)  
type in Old Japanese

V1 auxiliary

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## Vi V complexes in OJ

### I V1 manner V1<sub>(manner)</sub> V2

V1 modifies V2, mainly in terms of manner

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

### III V2 auxiliary verb V1 V2<sub>(aktionsart)</sub>

V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure

V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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## Vi V complexes in OJ

### I V1 manner V1<sub>(manner)</sub> V2

V1 modifies V2, mainly in terms of manner

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment

### II V1 auxiliary verb V1<sub>(aktionsart)</sub> V2

V1 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure

### III V2 auxiliary verb V1 V2<sub>(aktionsart)</sub>

V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure

V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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## V1 auxiliary verb

V1<sub>(aktionsart)</sub> V2

V1 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure

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## V1 auxiliary verb

*ar* Iterative/Stative ('be, exist')

*e* Potential ('get')

*ap* Reciprocal/Proximative ('meet')

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### V1 auxiliary verb

#### *ar* Iterative/Stative ('be, exist')

之麻豆多比      伊己芸和多利弓      安里米具利  
 sima-dutapi      i-kogi watarite      *ari meguri*  
 island-pass.along      PFX-row crossing      be go.around

“I *keep going around and around* the islands, crossing by  
 boat between them”

(MYS 20.4408)

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### V1 auxiliary verb

#### *ap* Reciprocal/Proximative ('meet')

相 飲      酒  
*api nomamu*      ki  
 meet will.drink *saké*

“The *saké* we will *drink together*”

(MYS 19.4264)

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## Other V1 auxiliary verbs

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### V1 auxiliary verb *ko* (*ki*) Adventive ('come')

安之比奇能	夜麻	伎敞奈里低
asipikwi no	yama	<i>ki pyenarite</i>
EPITHET	mountain	come be.between

“The mountains having *come between* us”  
(MYS 17.3981)

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## V2 auxiliary verb *ko* (*ki*) Adventive ('come')

筑波嶺乃	吉久乎見者	長氣尔
tukupane no	yokyeku wo mireba	nagaki ke ni
Tsukuba.Peak GEN	goodness ACC look.when	long days for

念積夾之	憂者	息沼
omopi tumi kosi	urepe pa	yami-nu
think pile came	sadness TOP	stop-PERF

“When I look at how fine Tsukuba Peak is, the despondency that for long days I **came** to **feel**, has stopped.” (MYS.9.1757)

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## V1 auxiliary verb *sik* Continuative ('extend, stretch')

春 之 雨 者	弥布落尔
paru no ame pa	iya siki puru ni
spring GEN rain TOP	more.and.more extend fall although

“Although the spring rain **keeps falling**”  
(MYS 4.786)

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## Some OJ V1 auxiliary verbs

**ari** Iterative/Stative ('be, exist'), **e** Potential ('get'), **api**  
Reciprocal/Proximative ('meet')

**ape** Additive ('join, vt. '), **ide** Elative ('emerge, go out'),  
**ko** Adventive ('come'), **sik** Exhaustive/Continuative  
( 'stretch, extend'), **tat** Inceptive ('stand up, set out'),  
**topor** Permeative ('pass through'), **tug** Contiguative  
( 'pass on')

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## Old Japanese

V1 auxiliary (fewer)

*ki* VERB

V2 auxiliary (more)

VERB *ki*

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## Old Japanese

V1 auxiliary (fewer)

*ki* VERB

V2 auxiliary (more)

VERB *ki*

## Modern Japanese

V2 auxiliary

VERB *ki*

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## Mysteries

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# Mysteries

Or: questions

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Where did the V1 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?

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Where did the V1 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?

Where did it go?

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Where did the V1 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?

Where did it go?

Where does the V2 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?

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Where did the V1 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?  
Where did it go?

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Where did the V1 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?  
Where did it go?

It may reflect an older word order.

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Where did the V1 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?  
Where did it go?

It may reflect an older word order.

“the last stages of transition from a SVO to  
a SOV language”  
Vovin 2009:589.

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Where does the V2 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?

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Where does the V2 auxiliary verb construction  
come from?

It may come from *in situ* reanalysis of  
a V2 in a clause sequence

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Where does the V2 auxiliary verb construction  
come from?

It may come from *in situ* reanalysis of  
a V2 in a clause sequence

[ [ ... V1 ] V2 ]

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Where does the V2 auxiliary verb construction  
come from?

It may come from *in situ* reanalysis of  
a V2 in a clause sequence

$[[ \dots V1 ] V2 ] > [ \dots V1 V2 ]$

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Where does the V2 auxiliary verb construction  
come from?

It may come from *in situ* reanalysis of  
a V2 in a clause sequence

$[[ \dots V1 ] V2 ] > [ \dots V1 V2 ]$

- (1)  $[[ \dots V1 ] V2 ]$ , where V2 is a clausal complement taking  
verb.

AND/OR

- (2) Semantic bleaching and grammaticalization of V2 in  
 $[[ \dots V1 ] V2 ]$

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## Unrelated (partly competing) hypotheses about V1 and V2 auxiliaries

The V1 auxiliary verb construction reflects an older SVO word order and is the SVO stage origin of V2 auxiliaries.

The V2 auxiliary verb construction comes from *in situ* reanalysis of a V2 in a clause sequence.

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## An alternative hypothesis about the origin in Japanese of V1 and V2 auxiliaries

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## Vi V complex verb types in OJ

- I V1 manner**  $V1_{(\text{manner})} V2$   
 V1 modifies V2, mainly in terms of manner  
 V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment
- II V1 auxiliary verb**  $V1_{(\text{aktionsart})} V2$   
 V1 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings  
 V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure
- III V2 auxiliary verb**  $V1 V2_{(\text{aktionsart})}$   
 V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure  
 V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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1. Categorical reinterpretation: lexical to grammatical  
 (from 'manner' to '*aktionsart*')

$V1(\text{manner}) > V1(\text{aktionsart}) \text{ auxiliary}$

2. Structurally motivated shift in surface position:  
 from preverbal to postverbal auxiliary.

$V1 \text{ auxiliary} > V2 \text{ auxiliary}$

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# Categorial reinterpretation: lexical to grammatical

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## Categorial reinterpretation: lexical to grammatical

**V1(manner)**

Adverbial  
'manner'  
modification

&gt;

**V1(aktionsart) auxiliary**

Grammatical  
'*aktionsart*'  
augmentation

***ki* VERB**

'to VERB, coming/  
having come'

***ki* VERB**

'come to VERB'

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**Categorial reinterpretation:  
lexical to grammatical**  
**Abductive innovation**

**V1(manner)**

Adverbial  
'manner'  
modification

>

**V1(aktionsart) auxiliary**

Grammatical  
'aktionsart'  
augmentation

***ki* VERB**

'to VERB, coming/  
having come'

***ki* VERB**

'come to VERB'

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*Aktionsart*

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*Aktionsart*

‘(grammatical) **manner** of  
**action**’

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Structurally motivated shift  
in surface position

from preverbal to postverbal  
auxiliary

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## Structurally motivated shift in surface position: from preverbal to postverbal auxiliary

V1 auxiliary  
Preverbal

>

V2 auxiliary  
Postverbal

*ki* VERB

VERB *ki*

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## Structurally motivated shift in surface position: from preverbal to postverbal auxiliary

### Deductive innovation

V1 auxiliary  
Preverbal

>

V2 auxiliary  
Postverbal

*ki* VERB

VERB *ki*

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## Old Japanese

V1 auxiliary (fewer)

*ki* VERB

V2 auxiliary (more)

VERB *ki*

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## Old Japanese

V1 auxiliary (fewer)

*ki* VERB

V2 auxiliary (more)

VERB *ki*

## Modern Japanese

V2 auxiliary

VERB *ki*

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## Preverbal to postverbal

### Prohibitive *na*

from preverbal adverb

to postverbal grammatical particle

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## Preverbal to postverbal

### Old Japanese

Preverbal prohibitive      **na naki** (so)

Postverbal prohibitive      **naku na**

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## Preverbal to postverbal

### Old Japanese

Preverbal prohibitive      **na naki (so)**

Postverbal prohibitive      **naku na**

### Modern Japanese

Postverbal prohibitive      **naku na**

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## The Prohibitive

### 1. Abductive innovation (reanalysis)

Categorial reinterpretation: lexical to grammatical  
from adverb to grammatical particle

### 2. Deductive innovation (realization)

Structurally motivated shift in surface position:  
from preverbal to postverbal.

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# Summary

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# Summary

## V1 auxiliary verbs in OJ

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## Vi V complex verb types in OJ

### I V1 manner V1<sub>(manner)</sub> V2

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### III V2 auxiliary verb V1 V2<sub>(aktionsart)</sub>

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V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure

V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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Where did the V1 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?

Where did it go?

Where does the V2 auxiliary verb  
construction come from?

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1. Categorical reinterpretation: lexical to grammatical  
(‘manner’ to ‘*aktionsart*’)

Abductive innovation

V1(manner) > V1(aktionsart) auxiliary

2. Structurally/typologically motivated shift in position:  
from preverbal to postverbal auxiliary.

Deductive innovation

V1 auxiliary > V2 auxiliary

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## Vi V complex verb types in OJ

- I V1 manner**  $V1_{(\text{manner})}$  **V2**  
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 V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure and case assignment
- II V1 auxiliary verb**  $V1_{(\text{aktionsart})}$  **V2**  
 V1 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings  
 V2 is the primary determinant of argument structure
- III V2 auxiliary verb** **V1**  $V2_{(\text{aktionsart})}$   
 V1 is the primary determinant of argument structure  
 V2 is grammatical(ized) and augments the lexical meaning of V1 in terms of *aktionsart* meanings

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