

RESEARCH

Something visible in Japanese

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A number of languages of the world show a striking change in word order when what is modified is an indefinite pronoun: the modifier necessarily appears postnominally (e.g. *something visible* vs. **visible something*). English and French are examples of this ordering pattern. Japanese, a head-final language with exclusively prenominal modifiers, nevertheless exhibits the same order as English and French when indeterminate phrases (indefinite pronouns) are modified. I argue that although the modifier in such structures may appear to be a postnominal modifier of the preceding indeterminate phrase, it is actually a prenominal modifier of the following light noun *n*. I further propose that the English/French-type construction has the same underlying structure as the Japanese-type construction and that apparent differences follow from a difference in the composition of so-called indefinite pronouns: an indeterminate system versus a light-noun system.

Keywords: indefinite pronouns; adjectives; light nouns; DPs; indeterminates; linkers

1 Introduction

A number of languages of the world show a striking change in word order when what is modified is an indefinite pronoun: adjectives necessarily appear postnominally and cannot appear prenominally (see Emonds 1985; Abney 1987; Hulk & Verheugd 1992; Kishimoto 2000; Larson & Marušič 2004; Leu 2005; Cardinaletti & Giusti 2006; Roehrs 2008; Marušič & Žaucer 2009; Cinque 2010, among others). Examples (1a) and (1b) show that the English adjective *interesting* must precede the ordinary noun *book*. On the other hand, examples (1c) and (1d) show that the same adjective must follow the indefinite pronoun *everything*.

In this article, for convenience, I will call syntactic constructions of the type seen in (1d), where an adjective follows an indefinite pronoun, *indefinite-pronoun structures*.¹

- (1) a. every interesting book
b. *every book interesting
c. *interesting everything
d. everything interesting

Adjectives also follow indefinite pronouns in French, Italian, Swiss German, Slovenian, and Chinese, as shown in (2) (the data are from Leu 2005 (French and Swiss German), Roehrs 2008 (Italian), Larson & Marušič 2004 (Slovenian), and Fen-fan Hsieh p.c. (Chinese)).

¹ The choice of term is irrelevant here. The phenomena in question are called *modified indefinite pronouns* in Leu (2005), *indefinite-pronoun constructions* in Roehrs (2008), and *indefinite-pronoun structures* in Larson & Marušič (2004).

- (2)
- a. *English*
something nice
 - b. *French*
quelque chose de beau
some thing *DE* nice
'something nice'
 - c. *Italian*
qualcosa di grande
something *DI* big
'something big'
 - d. *Swiss German*
öpis schöns
something nice
'something nice'
 - e. *Slovenian*
nekaj velikega
something big.GEN
'something big'
 - f. *Chinese*
shienme da de
something big *DE*
'something big'

In the literature, while indefinite-pronoun structures have often been studied in head-initial languages, they have not been described for Japanese, a head-final language with exclusively prenominal modifiers. Surprisingly, Japanese too exhibits the order in which a modifier follows an *indeterminate phrase* (the term I will use instead of *indefinite pronoun*).² Examples (3a)–(7a) illustrate this with five different existential indeterminate phrases (existential quantifiers).³

- (3) 'Someone'
- a. **Dareka** himasoonā hito-o yoboo.
someone free-looking LN-ACC invite
'Let's invite someone who looks free.'
 - b. Himasoonā **dareka**-o yoboo.
free-looking someone-ACC invite
'Let's invite someone who looks free.'
- (4) 'Something'
- a. **Nanika** karai no-o tabe-tai.
something spicy LN-ACC eat-want
'I want to eat something spicy.'

² In this article, I will eventually demonstrate that the "indefinite pronouns" in (3a)–(7a) are not syntactically nominal but rather QPs. Although it has been customary in the literature to call them indefinite pronouns (Takahashi 2002; Shimoyama 2008; Kuroda 2013, among others), I will use the term *indeterminate phrase* to refer to a phrase consisting of an indeterminate and a quantificational particle.

³ Prenominal modification (the (b) examples) sounds better if the indeterminate phrase is interpreted as specific (see Nishigauchi 1990 and Hirose & Suzuki 2009). I suggest that when an indeterminate phrase is interpreted as specific and/or is directly modified, as in the (b) examples, it is a full-fledged DP, unlike the indeterminate phrase that appears in the (a) examples, which is a QP and is not directly modified. See Section 4 for relevant discussion.

For some reason that I do not understand, *doreka* (5b) does not readily accept a prenominal modifier. It might be due to its D-linked specificity.

- b. Karai **nanika-o** tabe-tai.
spicy something-ACC eat-want
'I want to eat something spicy.'
- (5) 'One (of them)'
a. **Doreka** karaku-nai no-o tabe-tai.
either spicy-not LN-ACC eat-want
'I want to eat one (of them) that is not spicy.'
b. ??Karai **doreka-o** tabe-tai.
spicy either-ACC eat-want
'I want to eat one (of them) that is spicy.'
- (6) 'Somewhere'
a. **Dokoka** tooi tokoro-e iki-tai.
someplace far.away LN-to go-want
'I want to go somewhere far away.'
b. Tooi **dokoka-e** iki-tai.
far.away someplace-to go-want
'I want to go somewhere far away.'
- (7) 'Sometime'
a. **Ituka** himana toki-ni aimasyoo.
sometime free LN-at meet
'Let's meet sometime when you are free.'
b. Himana **ituka-ni** aimasyoo.
free sometime-at meet
'Let's meet sometime when you are free.'

Note, as mentioned above, that postnominal modification is disallowed with ordinary noun phrases in Japanese:

- (8) a. *Kuruma **akai-o** katta.
car red-ACC bought
(Intended: 'I bought a red car.') (postnominal)
b. **Akai** kuruma-o katta.
red car-ACC bought
'I bought a red car.' (prenominal)

Likewise, replacing the indeterminate phrases in (3a)–(7a) with ordinary noun phrases, as in (9), again results in ungrammaticality. The exceptional "postnominal" word order is only allowed with indeterminate phrases.

- (9) a. **Nanika** karai no-o tabe-tai.
something spicy LN-ACC eat-want
'I want to eat something spicy.'
b. ***Tabemono/raamen** karai no-o tabe-tai.
food/ramen spicy LN-ACC eat-want
(Intended: 'I want to eat spicy food/ramen.')

Two main questions about indefinite-pronoun structures that need to be addressed are:

- (10) a. Why do modifiers appear to the right of indefinite pronouns/indeterminate phrases, while they are prenominal with ordinary nouns?
- b. What is the structure of the indefinite-pronoun structures?

It is important to observe that all the data above on indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese involve a light noun at the right periphery—*no* ‘thing’, *hito* ‘person’, *tokoro* ‘place’, *toki* ‘time’, etc.—which is obligatory. Thus, the key to understanding the word-order permutation is the syntax of light nouns. As I will lay out in the next section, some recent studies on indefinite-pronoun structures have tried to show that the apparently postnominal modifier is underlyingly a prenominal modifier of an invisible nominal (see Leu 2005; Roehrs 2008). I will argue that in Japanese, too, a modifier that follows an indeterminate phrase is actually a prenominal modifier of the following light noun.

- (11) A modifier that follows an indeterminate phrase in indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese does not modify it but modifies prenominally the light noun that appears at the end of the entire noun phrase.

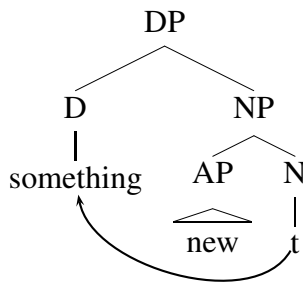
In this sense, Japanese provides visible evidence for a structure invisible in other languages, and our investigation reveals the existence of a universal light-noun structure in indefinite-pronoun structures.

Furthermore, I will show that indeterminate phrases in Japanese, when they occur in certain structures (including indefinite-pronoun structures), are not “nouns” syntactically. I will demonstrate that Japanese-type and English/French-type indefinite-pronoun structures have the same underlying structure and that syntactic differences follow from a difference in the composition of so-called indefinite pronouns: an indeterminate system versus a light-noun system.

2 Overview of previous approaches

Let us briefly review previous analyses proposed in the literature. Abney (1987) proposed that the postnominal position of the adjective in English indefinite-pronoun structures is derived from N raising to D:

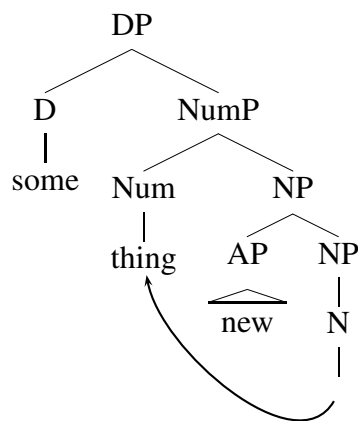
- (12) Abney (1987)



According to him, indefinite pronouns have some special property that obligatorily drives this head raising of an indefinite pronoun. On the other hand, ordinary nouns cannot raise to D. On the surface, the approach seems attractive, given that most (if not all) indefinite pronouns in English morphologically consist of a determiner *every/some/any* and a general noun *one/body/thing/place*.

However, Kishimoto (2000) argues against the raising-to-D analysis, because English does not have N-to-D raising, unlike Romance languages (see Longobardi 1994; Cinque 1995). Instead, Kishimoto (2000) proposes that what he calls a light noun raises only up to the Num head, passing an adjective:

(13) Kishimoto (2000)



These analyses were criticized by Leu (2005), however, who argues that they do not explain (i) the morphology *-s* exhibited by modifiers of (neuter) bare nouns in Swiss German and (ii) the appearance of *de* in French. The postnominal adjective in indefinite-pronoun structures in Swiss German in (14a)–(14c), just like a standard prenominal adjective, carries the inflection *-s*, but it is missing on the predicative adjective in (14d). This indicates that the apparent postnominal adjective in (14a)–(14c) is indeed a prenominal attributive adjective rather than a predicative adjective. Given the data above, Leu (2005) argues that there must be *something invisible* that the adjective modifies prenominally.

(14) *Swiss German* (Leu 2005)

- a. öper luschtig-s
someone funny-S
'someone funny'
- b. öpis luschtig-s
something funny-S
'something funny'
- c. nöimä luschtig-s
somewhere funny-S
'somewhere funny'
- d. Das isch luschtig (*-s).
this is funny-S
'This is funny.'

Similarly, in French, whereas adjectives can be postnominal or prenominal for ordinary nouns, as shown in (15a) and (15b), in indefinite-pronoun structures they must follow the indefinite pronoun, as shown in (15a). Leu (2005) claims that the appearance of *de* in the indefinite-pronoun structure in (15c) constitutes evidence for an invisible nominal, because *de* introduces nominal projections, as shown in (15d).

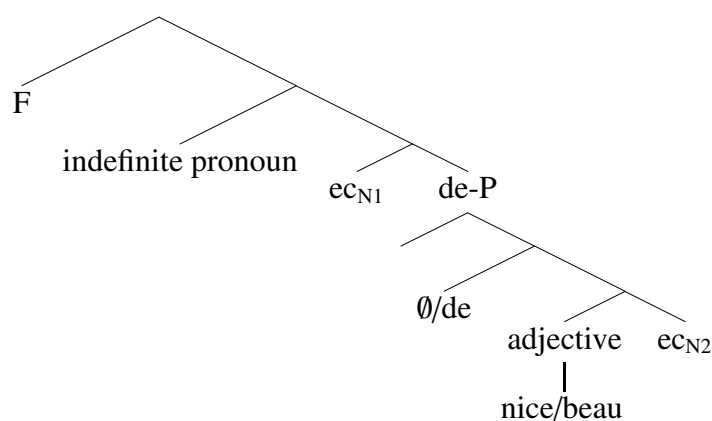
(15) *French* (Leu 2005)

- a. un (*de) beau film
a DE beautiful film
'a beautiful movie'
- b. un film (*de) magnifique
a film DE magnificent
'a magnificent movie'

- c. quelque chose de beau
 some thing *DE* nice
 ‘something nice’
- d. trois kilos de bois
 three kilos *DE* wood
 ‘three kilos of wood’

Thus, he proposes a binominal structure (16) for English and French, although its details are not very clear from his representation (see also Marušič & Žaucer 2009 for a binominal structure in Slovenian indefinite-pronoun structures).

(16) Leu (2005)



Given that Kishimoto’s analysis does posit an underlying prenominal structure, Leu’s objection to it is not completely convincing. Furthermore, he leaves unanswered (see Leu 2005: 154) why the empty category *ec* cannot be lexically realized.

Larson & Marušič (2004) criticize the raising analyses of English indefinite-pronoun structures, arguing that the adjectives that appear with indefinite pronouns in English show all the hallmarks of postnominal adjectives. Their counterarguments to a raising analysis include: the impossibility of stacking of adjectives (17), differences in measure-adjective inflections (18), the ungrammaticality of exclusively prenominal adjectives (19), and semantic differences.

- (17) a. the explored navigable rivers
 b. *everything large heavy

- (18) a. a 23-inch-long rope
 b. anything 23 inches long

- (19) a. some live thing
 b. *something live

They suggest two possible analyses of indefinite-pronoun structures in English: one is that all adjectives are base generated postnominally, as in (20a) (with prenominal adjectives derived through AP raising), and the other is that both adjective positions are basic, as in (20b). Both analyses share the idea that adjectives in indefinite-pronoun structures are postnominal from the beginning.

- (20) Larson & Marušič (2004)
- a. [_{DP} D [_{NP} N AP]]
 - b. [_{DP} D (*AP) [_N Ø] (AP)]

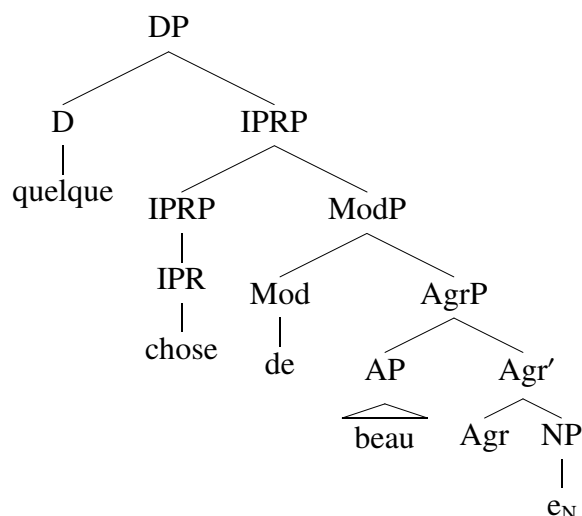
Their arguments against the prenominal analysis of indefinite-pronoun structures, however, seem to apply only to English, because Leu (2005) shows that there is much evidence for the prenominal status of adjectives in indefinite-pronoun structures in other languages. Furthermore, Roehrs (2008) presents evidence that adjectives in German indefinite-pronoun structures are prenominal.

Take adjective inflections. Notice that the adjective in the indefinite-pronoun structure in example (21d) behaves like the prenominal adjective in example (21a). Both of the adjectives in (21a) and (21d) require the inflection *-es*, while the postnominal adjective and the predicative adjective in examples (21b) and (21c) prohibit it.

- (21) German (Roehrs 2008: 6)
- a. ein wichtig*(es) Beweisstück
an important_{STRONG} exhibit
'an important exhibit'
 - b. das Beweisstück wichtig(*es) für die Verurteilung
the exhibit important for the sentencing
'the exhibit important for the sentencing'
 - c. Das Beweisstück ist wichtig(*es) für die Verurteilung.
the exhibit is important for the sentencing
'The exhibit is important for the sentencing.'
 - d. etwas Wichtig*(es)
something important_{STRONG}
'something important'

Thus, Roehrs (2008) proposes a binominal analysis of indefinite-pronoun structures, as illustrated in (22) with the French example from (15c). All the prenominal properties discussed above reduce to the posited NP structure, independent of the indefinite pronoun. Roehrs assumes that the light noun *chose* is located at the IPR (=“Indefinite Pronoun Restrictor”) head position and *de* at the Mod (=“Modifier”) head position.

- (22) Roehrs (2008)



Furthermore, he argues that the peculiarities of English indefinite-pronoun structures seen in (17)–(19) are nicely captured by allowing AP to replace the AgrP layer in (22), which explains the postnominal behaviors of adjectives.⁴ The success of his proposal depends on the extent to which the posited various functional heads are justified and on the extent to which the structure in (22) does not overgenerate ill-formed noun phrases generally.

In the sections that follow, I argue that Japanese indefinite-pronoun structures have a light-noun structure (nP) and a modifier is not a postnominal modifier of an indeterminate phrase (QP) but rather a prenominal modifier of a light noun. Importantly, the right-most nominal category is silent in English/French, but it is obligatorily overt in Japanese (and optionally so in Danish and German). Thus, Japanese provides visible evidence for the invisible lower nominal element that has been proposed by Leu (2005) and Roehrs (2008). As I will demonstrate, the apparent differences between Japanese and other languages stem from distinct mechanisms that compose so-called indefinite pronouns. The present detailed study contributes to understanding the principles and parameters involved in indefinite-pronoun structures, because there has not been extensive work on these phenomena in head-final languages.

3 Proposal: Something (in)visible

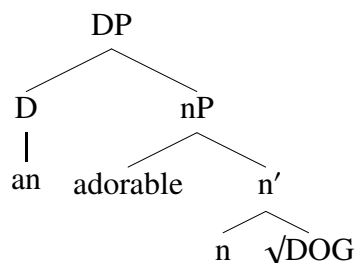
In this section, I will argue that indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese, like those in English/French, have a light-noun structure, but while the light noun appears together with a determiner-like element *some/quelque* in the French/English construction, the light noun and the indefinite pronoun are separated by a modifier in Japanese.

This necessitates articulation of the internal structure of “indefinite pronouns” in Japanese. Elaborating on the idea that so-called indefinite pronouns in Japanese are decomposed into indeterminates and particles (see Kuroda 1965), it will be shown that they are distinct from light nouns and that both are present in the syntax of indefinite-pronoun structures.

3.1 QP and light nouns

I propose that there is a functional projection n—light noun—within a noun-phrase structure (see Marantz 1997; Borer 2005a; b; 2013; 2014; Hiraiwa 2012; 2016; Belder & van Craenenbroeck 2015). Assuming that a root category is not a noun before it is merged with n, it is reasonable to think that restrictive modifiers are located in the nP domain.

(23) an adorable dog

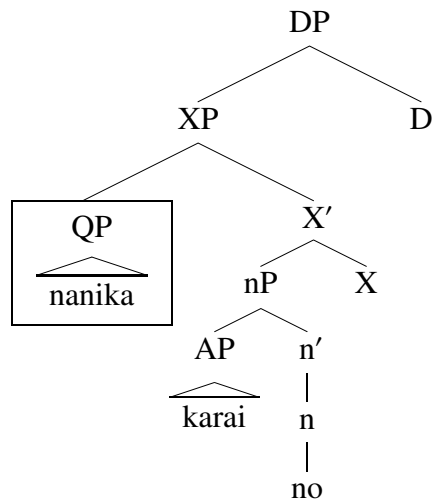


The tree in (24) gives the underlying structure of the indefinite-pronoun structures in (3a)–(7a). I propose that an indeterminate phrase QP is merged in the specifier of some functional phrase XP.⁵

⁴ Kayne (1994) argues for a different approach to French indefinite-pronoun structures. He proposes that the construction is underlyingly a relative clause headed by *de*, in which the indefinite pronoun raises.

⁵ In Section 4, I will suggest that this XP is a Linker Phrase (LkP) (Baker & Collins 2006; Larson & Yamakido 2008; Hiraiwa 2012).

(24) ‘something spicy’ in Japanese



Due to the lack of a root category in the complement of *n*, *n* is stranded. Assuming that the category-setting functional categories *n* and *v* are affixal and hence cannot be stranded (cf. Lasnik 1981; 1995; Abels 2001, among others), Japanese saves the structure by inserting a semantically appropriate light noun—*no*, *hito*, etc.—much like *do* support in English saves a stranded affix on T. The *n* head in Japanese indefinite-pronoun structures is always occupied by an overt element, as shown in (25a)–(25b), because the language does not have a null light noun or pro-form. This is evidenced by example (26b) (see Hiraiwa 2016). If there were a null light noun or pro-form, (26b) should be as grammatical as (26c).

- (25) a. ***Nanika** karai \emptyset -o tabe-tai.
 something spicy \emptyset -ACC eat-want
 ‘I want to eat something spicy.’
- b. **Nanika** karai no-o tabe-tai.
 something spicy LN-ACC eat-want
 ‘I want to eat something spicy.’
- (26) a. akai kuruma
 red car
 ‘a red car’
- b. *akai \emptyset
 red (car)
 ‘a red car’
- c. akai no
 red LN
 ‘a red one’

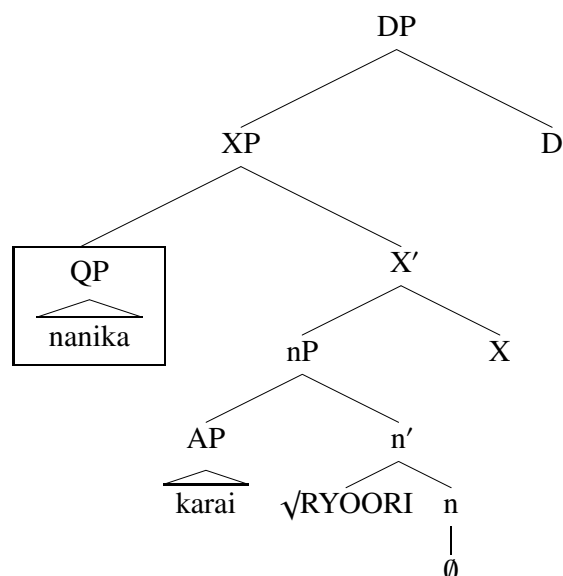
If a root category occupies the complement position of *n* (e.g. $\sqrt{\text{DOG}}$ in (23)), then, *nP* becomes “NP” (e.g. *dog*) in a traditional sense. In this case, *n* is not stranded, and it is morphologically realized as \emptyset . As the examples in (27) show, not only light nouns but also ordinary nouns can appear after the adjectives in indefinite-pronoun structures.

- (27) a. **Dareka** himana hito/gakusei-o sagasoo.
 someone free LN/student look.for
 ‘I will look for a person/student who is free.’

- b. **Nanika** karai mono/ryoori-ga tabe-tai.
something spicy LN/dish-NOM eat-want
'I want to eat a spicy thing/dish.'
- c. **Doreka** karai mono/ryoori-ga tabe-tai.
something spicy LN/dish-NOM eat-want
'I want to eat whichever spicy thing/dish.'
- d. **Dokoka** tooi tokoro/mati-e iki-tai.
someplace far.away LN/town-to go-want
'I want to go to a place/town far away.'
- e. **Ituka** himana toki/hi-ni aimasyoo.
sometime free LN/day-on meet
'Let's meet in your free time/on a day when you are free.'

Example (27b) with the ordinary noun is structurally represented as in (28).

(28) *The structure of (27b)*



Thus, the apparently postnominal modifier is actually a prenominal modifier of a light n in (24) and of an ordinary NP in (28).⁶

Two notes are in order here. First, light nouns are semantically light and often bound nouns in that they require a modifier (Kishimoto 2000; Hiraiwa 2012). Thus, they cannot be used on their own:

- (29) **Nanika** *(karai) no/mono-ga tabe-tai.
something spicy LN-NOM eat-want
'I want to eat something spicy.'

In contrast, ordinary nouns do not require a modifier, hence example (30) is grammatical with or without a modifier.⁷

- (30) **Nanika** (karai) ryoori-ga tabe-tai.
something spicy dish-NOM eat-want
'I want to eat a spicy dish.'

⁶ A relative clause can also appear in place of an adjective in indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese. This comes as no surprise given the syntactic similarity of adjectives and relative clauses in Japanese.

⁷ I thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out the example.

Second, it is interesting that Danish shows a parallel pattern with Japanese, as seen in (31): Roehrs (2008) observes that in Danish indefinite-pronoun structures, a noun phrase can optionally follow the adjective. Similarly, German allows an overt lower nominal element to surface if the adjective is weak, as shown in (32).

- (31) *Danish* (Roehrs 2008)
- a. **noget** stort
something big
'something big'
 - b. **noget** stort hus
something big house
'some big house'

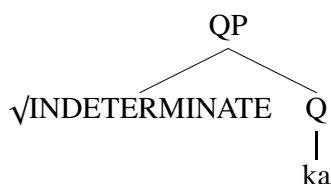
- (32) *German* (Roehrs 2008)
- a. ?**alles** interessante Zeug
every(thing) interesting stuff
'every interesting stuff'
 - b. **jeder** anwesende Mann
every(one) present man
'every present man'

It follows from the structures in (24) and (28) that so-called existential indefinite pronouns in Japanese are not built on light nouns. In fact, (33) shows how existential quantifiers in English and Japanese are composed: in English they contain the determiner *some* and what Kishimoto (2000) calls a light noun (or what Leu 2005 calls a restrictor), *one/body/thing/place/time*, while those in Japanese have nothing to do with light nouns but rather are built with the quantificational particle *ka* and an indeterminate (or informally, a *wh*-word), *dare/nani/dore/doko/itu*, as shown in (34). This is known as an indeterminate system (Kuroda 1965; Haspelmath 1997).⁸ The difference between English and Japanese is stated in (35).

- (33) *Existential indefinite pronouns in English and Japanese*

English	Japanese
some-one/some-body	dare-ka
some-thing	nani-ka/dore-ka
some-place	doko-ka
some-time	itu-ka

- (34) *The indeterminate system in Japanese*



- (35) Indefinite pronouns in English are based on light nouns, whereas those in Japanese are based on indeterminates.

⁸ I will come back to the syntactic status of QP in Section 4.

Now, as we have seen in the examples in (27), light nouns are exactly what we find at the right periphery of indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese, and they have nothing morphologically in common with the Japanese indefinite pronouns in (33), but they do resemble the light nouns found in the English indefinite pronouns:

(36) *Light nouns in English and Japanese* (Hiraiwa 2012; 2016)

English	Japanese
one/body	hito
thing	mono/koto/no
place	tokoro
time	toki

Thus, Japanese indefinite-pronoun structures provide visible evidence for the existence of a lower nominal element that an apparently postnominal adjective modifies prenominally, as Leu (2005) and Roehrs (2008) proposed.

3.2 Evidence for prenominal adjectives

If the proposed analysis is correct, Japanese provides a direct argument for the presence of a lower nominal element in indefinite-pronoun structures. It follows that a modifier that appears to the right of an indeterminate phrase is in fact a prenominal modifier of this overt light-noun element.

A couple of pieces of evidence provide support for this conclusion. First of all, as I have just shown, the very existence of the overt light noun provides the strongest evidence that the modifier in question is syntactically prenominal to it.

Second, there is a class of adjectives/predicates that can only be used with first-person subjects in the present tense (see Kuroda 1973; Nitta 1991; Tenny 2006; Nishigauchi 2014). The adjectival predicate *-tai* in example (37a) shows this person restriction, and hence the sentence is ungrammatical with second- and third-person subjects. This restriction is lifted, however, when *-tai* is used attributively, as shown in the relative-clause example in (37b).

- (37) a. {Watasi-wa/*Kimi-wa/*Ken-wa} biiru-ga nomi-tai.
 1SG-TOP/2SG-TOP/Ken-TOP beer-NOM drink-want
 ‘I/*you/*Ken want(s) to drink beer.’ (predicative)
- b. [[{Kimi-ga/Ken-ga} nomi-tai] biiru]-o mottekite.
 2SG-NOM/Ken-NOM drink-want beer-ACC bring.come
 ‘Bring the beer that you/Ken want(s) to drink.’ (attributive)

As expected, modifiers in indefinite-pronoun structures are immune to this person restriction, as illustrated in (38). Hence they are syntactically prenominal modifiers.

- (38) [Nanika {kimi-ga/Ken-ga} nomi-tai no]-o mottekite.
 something 2SG-NOM/Ken-NOM drink-want LN-ACC bring.come
 ‘Bring something you/Ken want(s) to drink.’

Finally, in indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese, adjectives always appear in an attributive/adnominal form. As example (39a) shows, the conclusive form *da* is required when the adjective is used predicatively (see Yamakido 2005). This contrasts with the

attributive form *na* when the adjective is used attributively, as shown in (39b). Given this contrast, example (39c) shows that the adjective in indefinite-pronoun structures is an attributive prenominal modifier of the following light noun.

- (39) a. Ano hako-wa tokubetu- $\{da/*na\}$.
 that box-TOP special-END/-ADN
 ‘That box is special.’ (predicative)
- b. tokubetu- $\{na/*da\}$ hako
 special-ADN/-END box
 ‘a special box’ (attributive)
- c. **nanika** tokubetu- $\{na/*-da\}$ no
 something special-ADN/-END LN
 ‘something special’

All of these pieces of evidence point to the conclusion that modifiers in indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese are prenominal modifiers of the light noun *n*.

3.3 Constituency

I have argued that an indeterminate phrase in a Japanese indefinite-pronoun structure is merged in the specifier of XP (see (24)).

There are at least three constituency test frames in Japanese: a pseudocleft frame, a genitive-case-marking frame, and a postposition frame. Let us examine the results of each test below.

Cleft constructions in Japanese allow for multiple foci, but crucially, pseudocleft constructions do not (see (40)). Thus, any phrase that appears in the focus position in pseudocleft constructions must form a syntactic constituent (see Hiraiwa & Ishihara 2012).

- (40) a. Boku-ga $e_i e_j$ tabeta no-wa sushi- o_i Ginza- de_j datta.
 1SG-NOM ate LN-TOP sushi-ACC Ginza-in COP
 ‘(Lit.) It was sushi, in Ginza, that I ate.’
- b. *Boku-ga $e_i e_j$ tabeta mono-wa sushi $_i$ Ginza $_j$ datta.
 1SG-NOM ate LN-TOP sushi Ginza COP
 ‘(Lit.) What I ate was sushi, at Ginza.’

Now, the grammaticality of (41) shows that the QP and the rest of the structure form a single constituent.

- (41) Boku-ga tabeta mono-wa [**nanika** karai no/mono] datta.
 1SG-NOM ate LN-TOP something spicy LN COP
 ‘What I ate was something spicy.’

Similarly, the entire indefinite-pronoun structure can be marked with the genitive case marker *no*, as shown in (42). This indicates that it forms a single constituent.

- (42) [[**Nanika** karai mono]-no nioi]-ga suru.
 something spicy LN-GEN smell-NOM do
 ‘It smells like something spicy.’

Finally, only a single constituent can appear as the complement of P in Japanese.

- (43) a. [[**Nanika** karai mono]-de niku-o itameta.
 something spicy LN-with meat-ACC stir.fried
 ‘I stir-fried beef with something spicy.’

To conclude, our evidence indicates that indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese have a light-noun structure and the light noun *n* and the indefinite pronoun (QP) are separated by a modifier, which directly modifies the former.

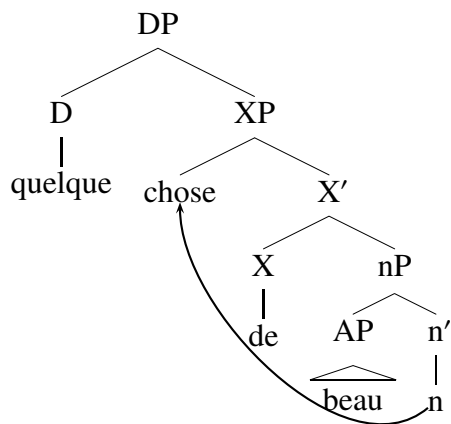
4 Pronouns and linkers

Now important questions to ask are (i) why the postadjectival light noun *n* is not realized in French and Italian, while it is obligatorily overt in Japanese, and (ii) what the nature of the element *de* in French (and similarly *di* in Italian) is, while a corresponding element is absent in Japanese. These are the differences that I will address in the final section of this article. They reduce to a difference in how indefinite pronouns are composed.

4.1 *n* movement in languages without an indeterminate system

Crucially, indefinite pronouns in French and Italian are not based on an indeterminate system (cf. (33) and (36)). That is, in languages without an indeterminate system like Japanese’s, indefinite pronouns are built from a determiner and a light noun (Kishimoto 2000; Leu 2005). For example, the light nouns *thing* in English and *chose* in French appear as part of the indefinite pronouns *something* and *quelque chose*. Assuming that the basic structure proposed in the preceding section for Japanese indefinite-pronoun structures is universal, it follows that a light noun itself undergoes movement leftward in indefinite-pronoun structures in English and French, leaving the original copy unpronounced for standard reasons. The derivation of the French example (2b) is represented in (44) (I will come back to the nature of X shortly, in the next subsection).

- (44) *French*



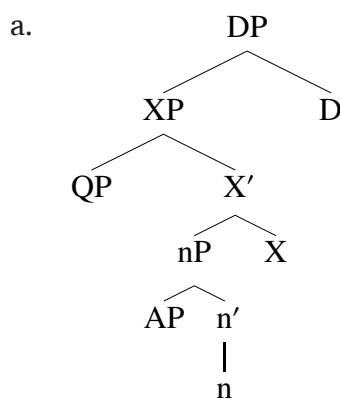
The different types of indefinite-pronoun structures reduce to what comes in the specifier of XP. As I have proposed, in Japanese-type indefinite-pronoun structures, an indeterminate phrase QP appears there. Recall that so-called indefinite pronouns in Japanese are based on an indeterminate system. Thus, an indeterminate phrase consists of an indeterminate and a quantificational particle, independent of a light noun. In contrast, in French-type indefinite-pronoun structures, an indefinite pronoun

consists of a light noun and a determiner D. Assuming a theory of head movement like that of Matushansky (2006), I propose that in languages without an indeterminate system, the light noun *n* moves to the specifier of XP and forms an indefinite pronoun with D.^{9,10}

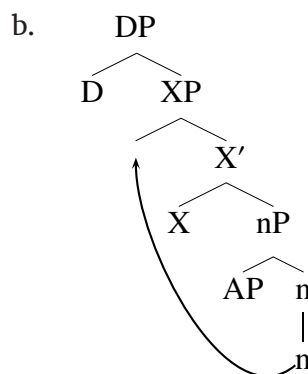
To summarize, indefinite-pronoun structures come at least in two kinds.

- (45) *Two types of indefinite-pronoun structures*
- An indefinite pronoun is externally merged in the specifier of XP as QP in languages whose indefinite pronouns are based on indeterminate pronouns (Japanese).
 - A light noun *n* is internally merged in the specifier of XP in languages whose indefinite pronouns are based on light nouns (English/French).

(46) *Japanese type*



English/French type



4.2 *X as linker*

Leu (2005) characterizes *de* in French as a partitive, but Roehrs (2008) observes that this is not quite right: in English and other languages, partitives are overt but never appear in indefinite-pronoun structures.

- (47) a. three kilos of wood
b. something (*of) new

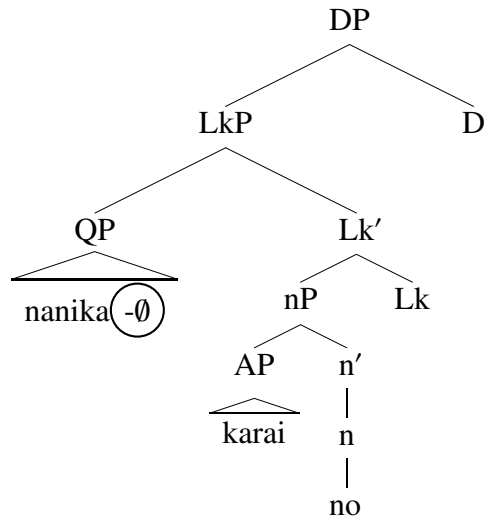
In light of the analysis I have proposed in this article, the most natural position for *de* (and *di* in Italian) is X. I suggest that this head X is a linker and is required by the light noun that is moved to its specifier (Baker & Collins 2006; Larson & Yamakido 2008; Larson 2009; Hiraiwa 2012).

This immediately raises a question: why doesn't a linker overtly appear in Japanese indefinite-pronoun structures?

⁹ Under a framework of labeling (Chomsky 2013; 2015), a pertinent idea about "head" movement has also been proposed in Donati & Cecchetto (2011; 2015): a head *what* that moves can count as either "a head" or "a phrase", giving rise to ambiguity (*I read what you read* vs. *I wonder what you read*). Thus, in (44), *chose* is moved to the edge of XP and "projects" an nP. See also Baker & Kramer (in press) for a theory of head movement.

¹⁰ Roehrs (2008) suggests that English differs from the other languages in that Mod merges with AP rather than a noun phrase. This explains why adjectives in English indefinite-pronoun structures exhibit properties of postnominal modifiers. If his analysis is correct, it can be translated into our analysis by replacing the nP in the complement of X with AP in (44).

(48) *Japanese*



The most important idea shared by the literature on linkers is that a linker is Case-related (see Baker & Collins 2006; Larson & Yamakido 2008; Larson 2009). From this viewpoint, it follows that a linker is missing in (48) because the indeterminate phrase in Japanese in indefinite-pronoun structures is not a “noun” but a QP, hence does not require case marking (see Hirose & Suzuki 2009 and Hiraiwa 2015; 2017). This is indeed what we are assuming in (34).

(49) QP is not a nominal category.
 $[_{QP} \sqrt{\text{INDETERMINATE}} [_{Q}]]$

If (49) is correct, indeterminate phrases, being nonnominal, are expected to appear bare, without case marking. This prediction is confirmed, as shown by the examples in (50) (Hasegawa 1991; Hiraiwa 2015).¹¹

- (50) a. **Dareka**(-ga) kita.
 someone-NOM came
 ‘Someone came.’
- b. Ken-ga **nanika**(-o) tabeta.
 Ken-TOP something-ACC ate
 ‘Ken ate something.’

Importantly, the absence of case marking on indeterminate phrases is never due to case drop. Case drop in Japanese is colloquial and is a main-clause phenomenon, hence it is excluded in embedded clauses like the one in (51a). By contrast, bare indeterminate phrases are perfectly fine in embedded clauses, as shown in (51b).

- (51) a. * $[_{\text{Ken-}\emptyset} \text{kita koto}]$ -wa himitu deatta.
 Ken came C-TOP secret COP
 ‘It was a secret that Ken came.’
- b. $[_{\text{Dareka-}\emptyset} \text{kita koto}]$ -wa himitu deatta.
 someone came C-TOP secret COP
 ‘It was a secret that someone came.’

¹¹ The optionality of case marking in (50a) and (50b) indicates that these existential indeterminate phrases are ambiguous between QP and DP.

Furthermore, indeterminate phrases appear following case-marked argument DPs:

- (52) a. Gausei-ga **dareka** kita.
 student-NOM someone came
 ‘A student came.’
 b. Ken-ga kudamono-o **nanika** tabeta.
 Ken-TOP fruit-ACC something ate
 ‘Ken ate some fruits.’

In fact, these indeterminate phrases behave similarly to caseless numerals and quantifiers.

- (53) a. Gausei-ga **huta-ri/minna** kita.
 student-NOM two-CL/all came
 ‘Two students/all the students came.’
 b. Ken-ga kudamono-o **huta-tu/minna** tabeta.
 Ken-TOP fruit-ACC two-CL/all ate
 ‘Ken ate two fruits/all the fruits.’

Given this, the absence of case marking on indeterminate phrases in indefinite-pronoun structures supports the conclusion. The ungrammaticality of (54c) and (54d) follows because the indeterminate phrase is a nonnominal QP and cannot be case marked.¹²

- (54) a. Boku-wa **nanika** karai no/mono-o tabe-tai.
 1SG-TOP something spicy LN-ACC eat-want
 ‘I want to eat something spicy.’
 b. Boku-wa karai no/mono-o **nanika** tabe-tai.
 1SG-TOP spicy LN-ACC something eat-want
 ‘I want to eat something spicy.’
 c. *Boku-wa **nanika-o** karai no/mono tabe-tai.
 d. *Boku-wa karai no/mono **nanika-o** tabe-tai.

¹² An anonymous reviewer asks an interesting question here. If a numeral-classifier combination such as *huta-tu* ‘two-CL’ is a QP, one may expect it to appear in the same position as an indeterminate phrase. But first of all, the numeral-classifier combination is not a QP. Our definition of QP is a phrase that is headed by a quantificational particle. Numeral-classifier constituents lack a quantificational particle. Rather, they consist of a numeral and a classifier, forming possibly a #P (see Watanabe 2006). Thus, they are not predicted to pattern with QPs.

Still, a sentence like the following seems fine at first sight.

- (i) [_{#P} San-nin] himasoona gakusee-o sagasiteimasu.
 three-CL free-looking person-ACC looking.for
 ‘I am looking for three free-looking students.’

But a pseudocleft test shows that the numeral-classifier combination *san-nin* is actually floated out of the entire DP.

- (ii) ?*Sagasiteiru hito-wa [_{#P} san-nin] himasoona gakusee desu.
 looking.for person-TOP three-CL free-looking student COP
 ‘What I am looking for are three free-looking students.’

Interestingly, it is possible to turn the numeral-classifier combination into a QP, by adding *nan* ‘what’ and a quantificational particle *ka* (see Hiraiwa 2018). And in that case, the sentence passes the pseudocleft test.

- (iii) Sagasiteiru hito-wa [_{QP} nan-nin-ka] himasoona gakusee desu.
 looking.for person-TOP what-CL-KA free-looking student COP
 ‘What I am looking for are some free-looking students.’

Thus, it seems that a QP is syntactically required in indefinite-pronoun structures, but I do not have any deeper explanation for this constraint.

In conclusion, we have firm evidence that QP is not a nominal category, and this explains why a linker does not appear in indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese. As we have seen in (50), however, existential indeterminate phrases such as *dareka* ‘someone’ and *nanika* ‘something’ are structurally ambiguous between DP and QP. Thus, the remaining question to answer is why a full-fledged DP cannot be merged in the specifier of LkP. The answer is straightforward. If it were a DP, its case would be left unvalued because the entire indefinite-pronoun structure (=DP) would be closer to a higher probe and would receive case valuation instead. In the next, final subsection, I will show that this line of reasoning is indeed correct.

4.3 Size matters: Varieties of indeterminate phrases

So far, we have only looked at existential indeterminate phrases (e.g. *dare-ka* ‘someone’, *nani-ka* ‘something’, etc.). But they are not the only kind of indeterminate phrases that can occur in indefinite-pronoun structures. In Japanese, there are two other kinds, NPIs and free-choice items, illustrated in (55) and (56). NPIs in Japanese are formed by combining an indeterminate with the particle *-mo*, instead of *-ka*, while free-choice items take the particle *-demo*.¹³

- (55) a. **Daremo** himasoona hito-o yobanakatta.
 anyone free.looking LN-ACC invited.NEG
 ‘I did not invite anyone who looked free.’ (NPI)
- b. **Nanimo** karai no-o tabenakatta.
 anything spicy LN-ACC ate.NEG
 ‘I did not eat anything spicy.’ (NPI)
- (56) a. **Daredemo** himasoona hito-o yoboo.
 anyone free.looking LN-ACC invite
 ‘Let’s invite anyone who looks free.’ (free choice)
- b. **Nandemo** karai no-o tabe-tai.
 anything spicy LN-ACC eat-want
 ‘I want to eat anything spicy.’ (free choice)

Not all indeterminate phrases are compatible with indefinite-pronoun structures, however. Universal quantifiers and *wh*-words are excluded, even though they are also indeterminate-based.¹⁴

- (57) a. ***Daremo** himasoona hito-o yonda.
 everyone free.looking LN-ACC invited
 ‘I invited everyone who looked free.’ (universal quantifier)
- b. ***Dare** himasoona hito-o yonda no?
 who free.looking LN-ACC invited Q
 ‘(Lit.) Who free did you invite?’ (*wh*-word)
- c. ***Nani** karai no-o tabe-tai no?
 what spicy LN-ACC eat-want Q
 ‘(Lit.) What spicy do you want to eat?’ (*wh*-word)

¹³ NPIs and universal quantifiers are morphologically identical. Takahashi (2002) observes, however, that they are phonologically distinct. The former is unaccented (*daremo*), while the latter is initial-accented (*dáremo*). I will assume this distinction even though I will not transcribe accents in each example. In some examples, the distinction is crucial (cf. (55a) vs. (57a) and (62a), among others).

¹⁴ A universal quantifier **nanimo* ‘everything’ does not exist in Japanese. See Hiraiwa (2017) for an explanation.

Significantly, there are two fundamental differences between those indeterminate phrases that can appear in indefinite-pronoun structures and those that cannot.

First, the first group of indeterminate phrases resist prenominal modification: compare (58)–(60) to (61).¹⁵

- (58) a. *Boku-wa himasoonā **dareka** yonda.
1SG-TOP free-looking someone invited.NEG
'I invited someone who looked free.' (existential)
- b. *Boku-wa karai **nanika** tabeta.
1SG-TOP spicy something ate
'I ate something spicy.' (existential)
- (59) a. *Himasoonā **daremo** yobanakatta.
free-looking anyone invited.NEG
'I did not invite anyone who looked free.' (NPI)
- b. Karai **nanimo** tabenakatta.
spicy anything ate.NEG
'I did not eat anything spicy.' (NPI)
- (60) a. *Himasoonā **daredemo** yoboo.
free-looking anyone invite
'Let's invite anyone/everyone who looks free.' (free choice)
- b. *Karai **nandemo** tabe-tai.
spicy anything eat-want
'I want to eat anything/everything spicy.' (free choice)
- (61) a. Himasoonā **daremo-o** yonda.
free-looking everyone-ACC invited
'I invited everyone who looked free.' (universal quantifier)
- b. Himasoonā **dare-o** yonda no?
free-looking who-ACC invited Q
'(Lit.) Who free did you invite?' (*wh*-word)

Second, the same group of indeterminate phrases are unique in that they can never be case marked: compare (62)–(63) to (64) (also recall (50)–(54)).

- (62) a. **Daremo**(*-o) yobanakatta.
anyone-ACC invited.NEG
'I did not invite anyone.' (NPI)
- b. **Nanimo**(*-o) tabenakatta.
anything-ACC ate.NEG
'I did not eat anything.' (NPI)

¹⁵ The absence of case marking on the indeterminate phrase in (58) is crucial. When case marked, as in the prenominal-modification examples in (3b)–(7b), existential quantifiers are likely to be full-fledged nouns (DPs). See Section 4.2. It is, then, predicted that the QP in indefinite-pronoun structures, being nonnominal, cannot take a prenominal modifier. This is in fact borne out (the observation is due to an anonymous reviewer):

(i) (*Yawarakai) **nanika** karai no-o tabe-tai.
soft something spicy LN-ACC eat-want
'I want to eat something (*soft and) spicy.'

- (63) a. **Daredemo**(*-o) yoboo.
 anyone-ACC invite
 ‘Let’s invite anyone.’ (free choice)
- b. **Nandemo**(*-o) tabe-tai.
 anything-ACC eat-want
 ‘I want to eat anything.’ (free choice)
- (64) a. **Daremo**-o yonda.
 everyone-ACC invited
 ‘I invited everyone who looked free.’ (universal quantifier)
- b. **Dare**-o yonda no?
 free-looking who-ACC invited Q
 ‘(Lit.) Who free did you invite?’ (*wh*-word)

Recall that the proposed analysis of indefinite-pronoun structures has a visible *n*, which is obligatorily case marked. Thus, it is predicted that an indeterminate phrase in the specifier of LkP cannot be a full-fledged DP. The above data confirm this. QPs, unlike DPs, are nonnominal and hence resist prenominal modification and case marking. Thus, only QPs (caseless existential quantifiers, NPIs, and free-choice items) are grammatical in indefinite-pronoun structures, and full-fledged DPs (universal quantifiers and *wh*-words) are excluded. This is summarized in (65).

(65) *QP and DP*

	structure	modification	case marking	indefinite-pronoun structure
DP	full-sized	ok	ok	*
QP	downsized	*	*	ok

To summarize the discussion in Section 4, QPs in indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese are not nominals, and this explains why no linkers appear on QPs. On the other hand, the appearance of linkers in French and Italian (*de* and *di*) shows that the indefinite pronouns in these languages are nominals that incorporate light nouns.

5 Conclusion

In this article, I have shown that Japanese indefinite-pronoun structures have light-noun syntax—a QP and a light noun. Thus, the present study supports Leu’s (2005) analysis of indefinite-pronoun structures, providing visible evidence for a syntactic head that is invisible in some other languages. To the extent that the proposed analysis is right, what are called “indefinite pronouns” are not syntactically uniform but come in (at least) two varieties, QP and DP; only the former is allowed in indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese.

I have mostly focused on the syntax of indefinite-pronoun structures in Japanese. Obviously, it still remains to be seen whether the syntax of indefinite-pronoun structures in all the other languages can be unified. I have suggested a formal way to understand parametric differences between Japanese and English/French indefinite-pronoun structures. Unification, ultimately, will require collaborative research by linguists working on various languages. I leave that for the future.

Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this article are as follows: ACC = accusative, ADN = adnominal, C = complementizer, CL = classifier, COP = copula, END = conclusive, GEN = genitive, LN = light noun, NOM = nominative, Q = Q complementizer, SG = singular, TOP = topic marker

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Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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