A NOTE ON ON VERB/OBJECT ORDER AND HEAD/RELATIVE CLAUSE ORDER*

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That some typological relation exists between the order of the object with respect to the verb and the order of the relative clause (RC) with respect to its Head is known since Greenberg (1963). While VO languages (SVO, VSO and VOS) have postnominal RCs, prenominal RCs are found almost exclusively in OV languages.¹ In other words:

(1) a VO ⊃ NRel
  b RelN ⊃ OV

These implications cannot be strengthened by adding NRel ⊃ VO and OV ⊃ RelN, because OV languages seem to show no clear preference for either a pre- or postnominal positioning of their RCs. This appears most clearly from Dryer’s (1992a) 543-language sample:

(2) Order of Relative clause and Head and the VO/OV distinction (source: Dryer 1992a,86)²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NRel</th>
<th>RelN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OV</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VO</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dryer’s conclusion that Verb/Object order and Head/RC order do not form a correlation pair in the same sense as Verb/Object and Adposition/Object do is very widely shared. See, among others, Hawkins (1994, 265,273);³ Croft and Deligianni (2001,3); Diessel (2001,446); Song (2001,244); Rijkhoff (2002,307).⁴

¹ Cf. Downing (1977,164; 1978,383,391f), Keenan (1985,143f). Hawkins (1990,256) explicitly states: “If a language has VO, then it has NRel” (but see fn.4 below).

² The numbers here refer to genera, not languages. Also see Dryer (2003) for similar figures within a somewhat expanded sample.

³ Cf. also Hawkins (1990, 241) where it is said that “44% of verb-final languages have postnominal relatives in the sample of Hawkins (1983)”.

⁴ Rijkhoff (2002,307) also states that, for his sample, “the correlation is stronger in the group of VO-languages than in the OV-languages. Thirteen OV-languages have RelN order and eight have NRel order; in the group of VO-languages, on the other hand, eleven languages have NRel order, whereas only two have RelN order: Ngiti and Tsou.”. However, Ngiti is a somewhat unusual SVO language (the SVO order systematically alternates with SAuxOV; it has postpositions; the genitive precedes the N – Kutsch Lojenga 1994). Kutsch Lojenga (1987 /2003), in fact, explicitly argues for the verb final character of the language.

Dryer (2000) states that “RelN order in VO languages is exceedingly rare crosslinguistically; the only attested instances are Bai and the Chinese languages, both Sino-Tibetan” (p.26). Mallinson and Blake (1981,285) in their 150-language sample found only one other VO language with exclusively prenominal RCs, Palauan (Malayo-Polynesian – Austronesian). For VO languages that have both pre- and postnominal RCs, see Mallinson and Blake (1981,285), Comrie (1981,141), and Keenan (1985,144), among others.
The mere numbers, however, may conceal the existence of a significant generalization relating the order of the verb and its complements to the order of the Head and the RC.

In their chapter 5 ("Relative Clauses", pp.261-371), Mallinson and Blake (1981) list the 150 languages of their sample according to subject/verb/object order, and according to whether they display RC-Head order, Head-RC order, or both. The numerical results largely confirm (ante litteram) Dryer’s results in showing no clear tendency for OV languages (especially if languages with exclusive NRel and those with both NRel and RelN as alternative options are added together):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>NRel</th>
<th>RelN</th>
<th>both NRel and RelN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OV</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VO</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, more telling than the actual numbers is to observe from their table which OV languages allow only the RelN order and which allow the NRel order as the exclusive or as an alternative order. The former group (Ainu, Amharic, Basque, Burmese, Burushaski, Chibcha, Fore, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Mongolian, Piro, Sherpa, Sinhala, Sri Lanka Malay, Sri Lanka Portuguese, Tamil, Telugu) appears to contain languages corresponding to Greenberg’s (1963,79) “rigid” type; the latter group (Adyghe, Fur, Galla (Oromo), Hindi, Hittite, Hottentot (Nama), Kanuri, Khamti, Marathi, Nubian, Quechua, Rashad, Sandawe, (Classical) Tibetan, Tigre, Turkish) appears to contain languages corresponding to his “non rigid type”.

Assuming this generalization to be essentially right, one could propose the following correlations:

1. If VO then NRel
2. If “rigid” OV, then RelN
3. If “non-rigid” OV, then NRel or both NRel and RelN

Even if possibly correct, such a statement would, however, fail to expose what is at the basis of these correlations. We submit that the correlation between V/O order, and the order of RCs and

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5 Each of the 150 languages of table 4 ("Word Order and Head/RC Order") appears in the following format (taking Turkish, an SOV language, with both pre- and (in the more literary register) postnominal RCs, as an example):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Word Order</th>
<th>RC-Head</th>
<th>Head-RC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>SOV</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 Greenberg’s (1963) 30-language sample also showed (albeit in a weaker form) that OV languages are compatible with both RelN and NRel (cf. fn.1).

7 While Schwartz (1971,141), Gragg (1972,159) and Hawkins (1983,320; 1994,316) classify Amharic as only having prenominal RCs (see also Givón 1975, 97-98), Mallinson and Blake (1981,276,288) actually classify it as having both pre- and postnominal RCs. Girma Demeke, however, confirms to me that RCs are exclusively prenominal in Modern Amharic (and, incidentally, that complement clauses are also strictly preverbal, which will be relevant for the proposal below). Also see Tremblay and Kabbaj (1990,167f) and Demeke (2001). The source of the inconsistency may be the fact that Amharic “until fairly recently, apparently had VSO word-order and postnominal relatives” (Downing 1978,393, based on Hudson 1972).

8 Greenberg (1963) puts Turkish in the “rigid” subtype of SOV languages (namely those “in which the verb is always at the end”, p.79), noting however that it exceptionally allows certain phrases to follow the verb (see his fn.10). Limited exceptions to absolute verb-finality are also found in other languages often categorized as “rigid” SOV languages (e.g., the Dravidian – see fn.10, below). To judge from his Universal 7, “non rigid” SOV languages are for Greenberg those that allow adverbial modifiers to follow the verb (presumably, adverbial PPs and clauses). Close to Greenberg’s original sense, here we take the term “rigid SOV languages” to refer to those languages where nothing can follow the V (except perhaps as an afterthought), and the term “non-rigid SOV languages” to refer to those languages where various things but lexical NP objects can follow the V (complement and adverbial PPs, complement and adverbial subordinate clauses).

9 Later in the chapter (p.299), Mallinson and Blake hint themselves at this possible generalization: “SOV languages are only clearcut RC-Head languages if they are rigidly SOV (Korean, Mongolian and Japanese are strong examples of this), whereas languages which are not rigidly SOV may also allow the order Head-RC”. See the Appendix II of Cinque (2005) for further evidence in favour of this generalization, which we will try to relate to a property of the subordinator introducing both relative and complement/adverbial clauses.
their Heads is intimately related to the order of complement and adjunct subordinate clauses w.r.t. the verb. In VO languages subordinate clauses follow the V, as they can, typically, in “non-rigid” OV languages (cf. Dryer 1980, 130, 172). In the same languages, RCs follow the Head. Subordinate clauses, however, do not ordinarily follow the V in “rigid” OV languages, which are more strictly V-final.10 In the same languages, RCs do not follow their Head, either. The generalization could be phrased more perspicuously as follows:

(4)a In the general case, OV languages that do not allow postverbal subordinate clauses (“rigid” OV languages) do not allow postnominal RCs.

b In the general case, OV languages that allow postverbal subordinate clauses (“non rigid” OV languages) also allow postnominal RCs

If this generalization survives further scrutiny, then there may be a genuine correlation between V/(clausal) O order in the sentence and N/RC order in the DP.11

From the languages in the two Appendices below, which includes the OV languages of Mallinson and Blake’s own sample and a number of other OV languages, it appears that the generalization is basically correct.

Generalization (4) says that in those OV languages in which there can be a post-Head clause in the sentence ([..V Clause..]) there can be a post-Head RC in the nominal phrase ([..N RC..]).

In turn, the possibility for a clause to follow the V or the N seems to some extent related to the presence of initial complementizers. While preverbal and prenominal (finite) clauses have final rather than initial complementizers ([..[Clause-..COMP] V/N], postverbal and postnominal (finite) clauses have initial rather than final complementizers ([V/N [[Clause..COMP]..]]).

Hawkins (1990, 256) notes that VO languages are exclusively Comp initial, while OV languages are either Comp initial or Comp final (see also Dryer 1992a, sections 4.3 and 4.5, 1992b; Diessel 2001):

(5) VO languages s[S Comp S] only

OV languages s[S Comp S] or s[S Comp]

In the light of what we just observed about V/O order and RC/Head order, the double possibility in complementizer positioning of OV languages, vs. the single possibility of VO languages, leads us to expect that s[S Comp] will be found preverbally in “rigid” OV languages and s[S Comp] will be found postverbally in both VO and “non-rigid” OV languages. This appears confirmed by the following passage from Hawkins (1994): “[..] grammars that would potentially generate D [i.e., Comp S V] seem to have an extraposition rule converting D into A [i.e., V Comp S] [..]. This is true for Persian and for German. It is also true for the finite S’ structures of Yaqui and Turkish (cf. Dryer 1980). Moreover, in all the languages mentioned, Extraposition is obligatory in this environment, with the result that these languages exhibit a “left-right asymmetry” [..]: a rightward

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11 Dryer (1992a, 87), despite the observed skewed preference for NRel across VO and OV languages, suggests that the pair N and relative clause is after all still a correlation pair with V/O order, proposing that what ties the V/O order to the N/RC order is his Branching Direction Theory, whereby “verb patterners are non-phrasal (non-branching, lexical) categories and object patterners are phrasal (branching) categories” (p.89). This requires one to ignore the phrasal (branching) character of the relative clause Head overtly visible in such cases as the interesting book about Gandhi that we read (cf. Kayne 1994, 154 fn13). That the RC Head is the whole branching constituent [interesting book [about [Gandhi]]] is indicated by the fact that the missing object within the relative clause is understood as “(an) interesting book about Gandhi”. This may generalize to all “verb-patterners”, including “verbs”, which also appear to be “branching” in certain cases (e.g. in their relation to adpositions [[V O] PP] vs. [PP [ O V]]), as Dryer himself notes. Perhaps the relevant notion of Head is not head in the X-bar sense (an X°), but an (extended) projection of the lexical head (N,V,etc.) of a phrase (DP, VP, etc.).
skewing for sentential direct objects, even in languages that are SOV for non-sentential objects [...]." (pp.263-64). Bayer (2001), noting that “Indo-Aryan languages with Dravidian contact often show a dual system of sentential complementation with clause-initial complementizers for clauses in post-verbal position and clause-final complementizers for clauses mainly in pre-verbal position” (p.11), makes the important observation that the initial and final complementizers are lexically different, and cannot be used interchangeably (i.e. “the lexical choice of the complementizer goes hand in hand with word order”, p.15). The so-called ‘quotative’ complementizers, which derive from verbs of saying, are necessarily final. The necessarily initial complementizers, instead, appear to have originated in noun-modifying clauses as relative pronouns (p.18ff). More important than their origin, though, is the fact, pointed out by Bayer, that they are differently specialized w.r.t the types of clauses they select, and seem to enter different structures. Observing that with postverbal clauses introduced by an initial complementizer there can be a nominal correlate “in the expected position to the left of the verb” (p.21) (cf.(6) from Bengali (Bangla) = his ex. (10)), Bayer suggests that perhaps they always do, and that when nothing appears one should posit an unpronounced nominal correlate:

(6) chele-Ta e kOtha jane na *(je) baba aS–be boy-CL this story knows not (that) father come-will ‘The boy does not know it that his father will come

This conjecture appears to be supported by the fact that postverbal finite clauses with initial complementizers (as opposed to preverbal ones with final complementizers) behave the same way as “extraposed” relative clauses and “extraposed” clausal complements of N(P)s. They are “frozen” in place; e.g. they cannot be topicalized (cf. Bayer 2001,18ff).

12 These are robust tendencies rather than absolute rules. Although it is generally stated that there are no languages with prenominal RCs that have an initial finite complementizer (e.g., Andrews 1975,44; Downing 1978,394), some in fact exist. See below the cases of Galla (Oromo) in (10), Silli Greek in (11), and Tigre in (12). Though rare, the counterpart with preverbal complement clauses ([clause COMP…..] V]) also exists. See, e.g., (i), from Oromo (Owens 1985,146, cited in Julien 2001,55):

(i) joollée [akka I-t' hin-séenne] d’ólk-i children that it-to Neg-enter prevent-IPR ‘Prevent the children from entering it’

One also finds the converse (postverbal and postnominal finite clauses with final complementizers: {[V/N [clause ...... COMP]}]. Postverbal finite complement clauses with final complementizers are found, among others, in Lakota (Siouan – Dryer 1980,132), Ngiti (Nilo-Saharan - Kutsch Lojenga 1994, 395), Telugu and Malayalam (Dravidian - Bayer 2001,fn.11), Dhivehi (Indo-Aryan – Cain and Gair 2000,37) and Santali (Munda – see the Appendix II of Cinque 2004). Postverbal adverbial clauses with final subordinators are found, among others, in Yagya (Peba-Yaguan – Dryer 1992b,62), Malayalam (deaccented, Jayaseelan p.c.) and Gapapaiwa, Nama, Teribe and Tol (see the Appendix II of Cinque 2004). Postnominal RCs with final complementizers are found, among others, in Slave (Athapaskan – Rice 1989,chapter 47; Dryer 2003,31); Lendu (Nilo-Saharan - Kutsch Lojenga 1987/2003,9); Teribe (Chibchan - see the Appendix II of Cinque 2005).

13 An identical situation is found in Uzbek (Turkic), where the quotative complementizer deb (lit. ‘saying’) is necessarily clause final (in preverbal position), as opposed to the necessarily clause initial complementizer ki (in postverbal position). See (i) and (ii), from Noonan (1985,85):

(i) Men bilamen ki bu ɔ dam joja-ni əĝirɔdi I know-1sg comp this man chicken-obj stole-3sg ‘I know that this man stole the chicken’

(Extraposition obligatory with this sort of s-like complement)

(ii) Xotin bu ɔ dam joja-ni əğirladi deb dedi woman this man chicken-obj stole-3sg saying said ‘The woman said that this man stole the chicken’

(Extraposition not possible with this sort of s-like complement)

14 This nominal correlate can be either a simple pronoun, or a demonstrative, or a general DP like “this talk, story, etc.” (Bayer 1999,fn.51; 2001,21).

15 Bayer (2001,21) also notes that the Bengali complementizer je, which is homophonous to the relative pronoun, cannot be missing in the presence of an overt correlate.
What all of this suggests is that to be clause initial is possibly a property of those complementizers that are nominal in character; i.e., that appear with RCs, with complements of Ns, and nominalized clausal complements of verbs.\footnote{Kayne (2003, sections 4.6, 4.7) makes the suggestion that (most) finite clausal complements of verbs need to be nominalized to be licensed as arguments of a verb.}

What is crucial from the present perspective is that such “initial” complementizers/subordinators turn out to be a feature of VO and “non rigid” OV languages.

To judge from Diessel (2001), a similar pattern is displayed by adverbial clauses: “While adverbial clause constructions that tend to precede the main clause/predicate only occur in OV languages in my sample, adverbial clauses that are commonly pre- and postposed occur in both VO languages and a significant minority of OV languages. If we look at the latter more closely, we find that (almost) all of them are marked by an initial conjunction or adverb, while adverbial clauses that usually precede the main clause/predicate always include a final subordinator (i.e., a final conjunction, adverb, or suffix). There is thus a strong correlation between the ordering of main clause/predicate and adverbial clause and the position of the subordinator in the subordinate clause: adverbial clauses including a final subordinator tend to precede the main clause/predicate, whereas adverbial clauses that are marked by an initial subordinator are commonly found in both initial and final position regardless of the order of verb and object.” (p.434). Also see Dryer (1992a, §4.5).

Once again, the postverbal positioning of the adverbial clause in VO and, we take, “non rigid” OV languages appears to be a function of the initial subordinator/complementizer.

To summarize, we have suggested that, in OV languages, 1) the presence of prenominal RCs correlates with the presence of preverbal complement and adverbial clauses; 2) conversely, the presence of postnominal RCs correlates with the presence of postverbal complement and adverbial clauses\footnote{There are, however, (limited) cases of mismatch. So, for example, Slave (Athapaskan) has preverbal subordinate clauses (Rice 1989, chapt.42), but postnominal RCs (Rice 1989,chapt.47; Dryer 2003,31). Conversely, Lendu and Ngiti (Nilo-Saharan) have postverbal finite complement clauses (Ngiti with a final complementizer), yet only prenominal RCs (Lendu with a final invariable relative complementizer). See Kutsch Lojenga (1987/2003,9; 1994, 395). Even some Dravidian “rigid” OV languages (Telugu and Malayalam) appear to allow deaccented postverbal complement and adverbial clauses (with a final complementizer) (Bayer 2001,fn.11; and Jayaseelan, p.c.), yet, only have preverbal (participial) RCs. Lezgian (Nakho-Daghestanian) also has (some) postverbal finite complement clauses, arguably of Persian origin (Haspelmath 1993, chapter 20,§7), yet only prenominal participial RCs (chapter 19). Dhivehi (OV; Indo-Aryan – Cain and Gair 2000) also appears (cf. their ex.(110), p.37) to have postverbal complement clauses (with a final complementizer), but only prenominal, participial, relative clauses (“perhaps as a result of Dravidian influence”, p.35). Rigid SOV Korean appears to allow (albeit only rarely) also postnominal RCs (cf. Rijkhoff 2002,209).}; and 3) the two correlations are related to the presence, in the three types of clauses, of final and initial complementizers, respectively. The latter claim is supported by the languages in the Appendix II of Cinque (2005) only partially. Of the 46 OV languages with postnominal RCs and postverbal complement and adverbial clauses considered there, only 13 (Brahui, Galla (Oromo), Georgian, Hindi, Hittite, Marathi, Pashto, Persian, Pima Bajo, Svan, Tüne, Turkish, Zazaki) have an initial complementizer in the three types of clauses; 8 (Bagri, Bangla, Gapapaiwa, Latin, Santali, Somali, Xakas, Yaqui) have an initial complementizer in two of the three types of clauses; 2 (Hopí and Teribe) have a final complementizer in two of the three types of clauses; 9 (Ala’ala, Coahuilteco, Evenki,Nama, Sandawe, Sentani, Shipibo-Konibo, Tol, West Greenlandic) show a (mainly final) complementizer for only one of the three types of clauses (the adverbial clause); 2 (Godoberi, Santali) show a final complementizer only for complement clauses; 9 (Desano, Eudeve, Kabardian, Kairiru, Manam, Northern Paiute, Quechua, Skou, Wichita) do not show any complementizer for any of the three types of clauses; and 3 (Canela-Crahô, Kuku Yalanji, Pech) have a final complementizer for all three types of clauses.

Despite this less than perfect correlation between the postverbal/postnominal positioning of the clause and the presence of a clause initial complementizer (which may in part depend on the limited character of the sample), we take the correlation to be real; and to follow from a property, recently

**Initial complementizers.** On the basis of various considerations, Kayne suggests that clauses are generated in their argument or adjunct position without a complementizer. They then move to their licensing position,\(^{18}\) to the left of which an overt complementizer is subsequently inserted. Exemplifying with German:\(^{19}\)

\[(7)\]

(a) [nicht [VP [IP Fritz Maria kennt] [NP(es)]] glaubt] \(
\)  
(b) [[DP [IP Fritz Maria kennt] [NP(es)]] [nicht [VP t glaubt]]] \(
\)  
(c) [[IP Fritz Maria kennt] C [[DP t [NP(es)]] [nicht [VP t glaubt]]]] \(
\)  
(d) (Weil Hans) [daß [[IP Fritz Maria kennt] C [[DP t [NP(es)]] [nicht [VP t glaubt]]]]] \(
\)

\(\text{(Because H.) that F. knows M. it does not believe}\)

The property, here relevant, that complementizers have (in VO languages, and in many OV languages; i.e. those of the “non-rigid” type) is that of attracting to their left everything that follows their clausal complement, hence turning (7)d into (8)

\[(8)\]

(Weil Hans) (es) nicht glaubt daß [er Maria kennt] t .. 'As he doesn’t think that he knows M.'

with the consequence that both the complementizer and the clause “end up” after the matrix verb.\(^{20}\) This movement could be thought of as a kind of ‘intraposition’, the “antisymmetric” analogue of the ‘extraposition’ operation that in earlier stages of the theory was assumed to derive (the string of words in) (8) from (the string of words in) (7)d (Kayne 1994). If we take the overt (and abstract) complementizers of RCs to have essentially the same attraction property (as in fact Kayne 2000a, 318f himself suggests), then the similarity in post-“Head” positioning of the clause in the sentence and in the nominal phrase (i.e., the generalization noted above) can be captured:\(^{21}\)

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\(^{18}\) I.e., to the specifier of a higher functional head (indicated with C in (7)), much like direct object DPs move to their licensing position of Case (from a position adjacent to the verb to a position which can be separated from it by adjuncts less closely related to the verb): Er hat _wen_ zum Mittagessen _t_ eingeladen ‘he has invited someone for lunch’.

\(^{19}\) In line with Bayer (1996,1999,2001), and Kayne (2003) (cf. also Stowell 1981), I will assume that the object argument IP, except perhaps for the IP complement of verbs of saying, is in fact an adjunct to an overt, or covert, nominal head.

\(^{20}\) This attraction may well be obligatory even in German, despite the fact that a sentence like Weil Hans daß er Maria kennt nicht glaubt...is also possible. As Josef Bayer pointed out to me (p.c.), such a sentence and Weil Hans nicht glaubt daß er Maria kennt... do not mean the same. In the former glauben denotes a belief, whereas in the latter it is a plain propositional attitude verb, like meinen (which in fact can only enter the latter structure).

\(^{21}\) The Head (expensive book) may be preceded by an unpronounced SUCH, the Head counterpart of which. “Head” here should be taken as in fn.11, not in its X-bar sense (non-phrasal category). In fact, in a way parallel to what is noted for RC “Heads” there, also the verbal “Head” preceding subordinate clauses appears to be phrasal (it can be accompanied by various other complements and adjuncts, which also precede the subordinate clause. Cf. I [convinced Bill that he should try]. As implicit in (9), we take the RC to be base-generated in prenominal position (for which see Cinque 2003), though nothing crucial depends on that assumption. In (9), the “matching”, rather than the “raising”, option is illustrated.

Also note that in a relative clause given that part of the “complement” is attracted to the left of that (i.e., the constituent which matches the Head), the further attraction of the Head must be effected by an abstract head merged higher, with the same attraction properties (what we indicated as X in (9)). It remains to be seen if the derivation of complement clauses is in fact closer still to that of a relative clause, in that it is an instance of hidden relativization (something like: Hans doesn’t believe ([THE STORY [ACCORDING TO WHICH STORY [that Fritz knows Maria]]]).
As noted, such “initial” complementizers turn out to be a feature of VO and “non-rigid” OV languages.

The case of initial complementizers in pre-Head position, as in (7d) above, is apparently rather marked. We interpret it as arising from the attraction of IP by a non-pronounced lower complementizer (the C of (7)d and (9)d), and from the (marked) property that the higher overt complementizer has of attracting nothing.22

Though again quite rare, the case of initial complementizers in finite RCs also seems to exist. It is generally stated, or assumed, that there are no languages with prenominal RCs that have an initial finite complementizer (e.g., Andrews 1975,44; Downing 1978,394). Yet, Galla (Oromo) (Cushitic), Silli Greek (which is spoken in Asia Minor, and on which Turkish may have played a role), and Tigre (Ethio-Semitic), appear to be three such languages. See (10)-(12):23

(10) [kan [kalësa gale]] namtičča an arge (Galla (Oromo) - Mallinson and Blake 1981,289)
   Rel yesterday arrived(finite) man-def I saw
   ‘I saw the man that arrived yesterday’

(11) [kiát [íra ]] perí (Silli Greek - Song 2001,256)
   Comp saw-I boy
   ‘The boy that I saw’

(12) [la [zet fæggdr mɔnna]] ’ɔkɔl (Tigre - Palmer 1961,27f)
   Rel marker oil it-comes from-it crop
   ‘the crop from which oil comes’

Although they are quite common in preverbal position (as well as in postverbal position) in VO languages, subordinator-initial adjunct clauses normally occur postverbally in OV languages, though some exceptions exist. See, e.g., (13).

(13) [kawu [nji yakin-da-ro ]] bɔr  bukin (Kanuri - Hutchison 1976,141)24
    before water drink.1sg.impf-det-dat meal eat.1sg.impf
    ‘I will eat before I drink water

In (“rigid”) OV languages instead one typically finds in preverbal position subordinator-final adjunct clauses. See the quote from Diessel (2001) above and Dryer (1992a, §4.5).

Final complementizers. It is tempting to take the “final” complementizers typical of “rigid” OV languages to be the spell out of the lower C of (7) and (9); the one which attracts the “complement” IP or the relative IP (and which is ordinarily not spelled out in VO and “non-rigid” OV languages).

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22 Merge of C and X of (3) above VP yields relative clause extraposition (cf. Kayne 2000a,318f). As Kayne notes, this may turn out to be the only option available.
23 Galla (Oromo) and Tigre also allow postnominal RCs.
See the case of complement clauses in (14), the case of relative clauses in (15) and the case of adjunct clauses in (16):25

   T. topic Z. nom. mad is Comp thought
   “Taroo thought that Ziroo is mad”

b mene [[Madhu se bethane] ke liye] kaha (Hindi – Singh 1977,204)
   I M. to sit for said
   ‘I asked Madhu to sit down’

c Chele-Ta [[or baba aS- be] bole] Sune-che (Bangla – Bayer 1996,255)26
   boy-CLF his father come-FUT Comp hear-PST3
   ‘The boy has heard that his father will come’

   pig food 3sg give Comp farmer 1sg see
   ‘I saw the farmer who gave food to the pig’

   child buy.PrC Comp banana ripen.P Neg
   ‘The bananas which the child is buying are not ripe’

   3Pl song sing Cont.Past while I turn come-Past
   ‘While they were singing, I returned’

b [[ enu-nege-pi ] tawa] tarep war-an (Daga – Thompson and Longacre 1985,188)
   spear-me-3sg MEDIAL lest dance get-1sg PAST
   ‘Lest he spear me, I dance about’

In this respect, “rigid” OV languages would lack the higher complementizers of VO languages (the one that attracts VP in the case of complement and adjunct clauses and the ones that attract the relative pronoun and the Head NP in the case of relative clauses). Alternatively, they would have unpronounced ones which fail to attract any material. The existence of languages with postverbal or postnominal (“extraposed”) complement or relative clauses with final complementizers appears to support the second alternative. In these languages, we may assume that the higher unpronounced complementizers retain the property of attracting the VP, or the relative pronoun and the RC Head. See (18),(19), and (20):28

(18)a cu-te i-mạ amji jarēn C [[cu-mạ akēn] na] (Canela-Crahô - Popjes and Popjes 1986,165)
   3-Past 1-Tempry self told 3-Temp 2-like subord
   ‘He told me that he likes you’

25 On the apparent relative paucity of finite clauses preceding the complementizer in OV languages, see the discussion in Kayne (2003, sect.4.7).
26 Recall that some OV languages may have either an initial or a final complementizer (depending on the type of complement clause). See the text above (6) for the case of Bangla, and fn.13 for the case of Uzbek.
27 Cited from Dryer (2003,53).
28 Other languages displaying the same property are mentioned in fn.12 above. Also see Santali, Canela-Crahô, Kuku Yalanji, and Pech of the Appendix II in Cinque (2005).
‘When did you find out that he fell in the creek?’

(19)a domer C [[bor i-ga ] li] (Teribe - Quesada 2000,129)
man 1sg see-ABIL REL
‘The man who saw me’

b tthik’ihi C [neyaa yet’ah goḻo thehk’ė sii] (Slave – Dryer 2003,31)
gun 2SG.son it.with moose 3.shot COMP
‘the gun that your son shot the moose with’

(20)a ami ekhane eSe-chi C [[tomar SONge kOtha bol-bo] bole] (Bangla – Bayer 1996,255)
I here come-Pst1 you with speech say-Fut1 Comp
‘I have come here in order to talk with you’

b ?amá k’a way C [ma hi̱be] mpes] (Tol - Holt 1999,51)
land dry Cop Neg Pres.rain.3 because
‘The land is dry because it doesn’t rain’

Circumpositioned complementizers/subordinators. The existence of two complementizers/subordinators sandwiching the complement/adjunct or the relative clause also seems to constitute evidence for the hypothesized unpronounced higher complementizer, as it seems plausible to take the simultaneous appearance of an initial and a final complementizer to be the spelling out of both positions. See (21) for examples of complement clauses, (22) for an example of an adjunct clause, and (23) for examples of relative clauses.29

(21)a tuisi tu’i ke hu hamut bwika-kai (Yaqui – Dryer 1980,fn.7)
very good comp this woman sing-subord
‘It is very good that this woman sings’

b rapšuû-qi sè-na nå ya šá tsawa nê̱ma-qo o -s Lâp-pa-reê (Tibetan – Bayer 1999,fn25)
goat-tail-erg comp-I top meat at all neg-want-comp say-perf/inference
‘The goat-tail said “I don’t want any meat”’

(22) [se mi-wi’é a] mi-kô fi’e (Fanti – Welmers 1946,72)
when 1sg-finish when 1sg-go home
‘When I’m finished, I go home’

(23)a mo yɔ e jó sàŋ á’á (Banjoun (Ghomala) -Watters 2003,255)
man Rel 3ps see.Past bird Rel
‘…the man who saw the bird’

29 Note that the final complementizers of Yaqui and (Lhasa) Tibetan in (14) are enclitic. Another case of (almost) circumpositioned complementizers is the Bangla example in (20) below.
I take those cases where a finite (complement, adjunct or relative) clause appears in pre-head position without any overt complementizer/subordinator to involve non-pronounced Cs that fail to attract the remnant. Where a finite (complement, adjunct or relative) clause appears in post-head position without any overt complementizer/subordinator, I will instead assume that the higher (covert) C has the property of attracting the remnant to its Spec (in conformity with independent word order properties of the language)
man DEM 1sg-give 3sg 3sg-go:3 Polac DEM 3sg-go.back 3sg-go:1
‘Has the man I sent to Polac come back or not?’

c kpãwâ-wâ:y; [älî e; tà ná:b lá] (Buli – Hiraiwa 2003,46)
farmer-REL C have cow(indef.) Subord.Particle
‘the farmer who has the cow’

d dispela man [ya em i stap long bus ya] em i redi.. (Tok Pisin - Lyovin 1997,424)
this man C he [3p] live in bush C he 3p ready..
‘This man who lived in the bush was ready.’

Internal complementizers. The case of Bangla “Comp-internal clauses” discussed in Bayer (1996,1999,247;2001,fn.12), Bhattacharya (2001a,b), and references cited there, may possibly be another instantiation of the property that the (higher) finite complementizers have of attracting material to their left in “non-rigid” OV languages. Bayer and Bhattacharya point out that finite complement clauses can have an initial COMP if they follow the matrix verb ((24)a), but can no longer have an initial COMP if the complement clause precedes the matrix V ((24)b). In that case, the COMP is rather internal to the complement clause itself ((24)c). Like in Bhattacharya (2001b), I would like to interpret both cases as consequences of the attraction property of the complementizer. Either the remnant following the complement clause – i.e., the matrix V(P) - is attracted (with the consequence that [COMP S] will be postverbal – see (25)), or part of the complement clause itself will (see (26) (with the consequence that the remnant – the matrix V(P) - can no longer be attracted, but has to stay in situ, to the right of its complement):30

(24)a chele-Ta Sune-che [je [or baba aS–be]] (Bayer 1996,255)
boy-CL hear-Pst3 that his father come-will
‘The boy heard that his father will come’

b *chele-Ta [je [or baba aS–be]] Sune-che (Bayer 1996,255)
boy-CL that his father come-will hear-Pst3
‘The boy heard that his father will come’

(c chele-Ta [or baba je [aS–be]] Sone-ni (Bayer 1996,263)
boy-CL his father  that come-will hear-neg/Pst3
‘The boy hasn’t heard that his father will come’

(25)a C chele-Ta [or baba aS–be] Sune-che →
b [or baba aS–be] C chele-Ta Sune-che →
c je [or baba aS–be] C chele-Ta Sune-che →
d chele-Ta Sune-che [je [or baba aS–be]] C t] =(24)a

(26)a C chele-Ta [or baba aS–be] Sone-ni →
b [or baba aS–be] C chele-Ta Sone-ni →
c je [or baba aS–be] C chele-Ta Sone-ni →
d [or baba je [ t aS–be]] chele-Ta Sone-ni →
e chele-Ta [or baba je [ t aS–be]] Sone-ni(=24)c

30 A similar derivation is proposed by Kayne (2000b,49f) for Amharic if-clauses. For the comparable case of Amharic argument clauses, see (i), from Demeke (2001,196):
(i) [ e Saba worq-u-n yä[=[sãT-aë¥-iw] yi-mãś-all ]]]]
S. gold-def-acc comp-sellperf-1s-3ms 3ms-seem-Auxpres(ent)  ‘It seems that Saba sold the gold’

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That *je* corresponds to the higher complementizer *daß* (*that*) of (7), rather than to the lower complementizer *C*, is suggested by the fact that *C* may be spelled out as well (with the ‘final’ complementizer *bole* seen in (14)c). See (27) (also from Bayer 1996,263f):

(27) [[ chele  *je* poR-be  *bole*] ami mon-e kor-i ni  
boy  JE study-Fut3 BOLE  I  mind-loc do-1 neg-pst  
‘I haven’t thought that the boy will study’

Like in complement and adjunct clauses in the sentence, in some OV languages constituents of the RC may also end up to the left of the relative complementizer. This is more obvious (pace Kayne 1994,93) in those cases where the relative and declarative (or interrogative) complementizers have the same form, as is the case, apparently, in Amharic (Demeke 2001,196ff), and Basque (De Rijk 1972,116; Lehmann 1984,59). See (28):

to-Saba comp-sellperf-1s-3ms book  
‘a book that I sold to Saba’

As (following Kayne 2000a,2001,2003,2005) we take the post-“Head” positioning of a clause to depend on the presence of an overt (or abstract) complementizer (of the right kind), it could be that a non-rigid OV language with postverbal complement clauses still has only prenominal RCs if the language has no (relative pronoun or) relative complementizer of the same right kind. Conversely, it could be that a certain OV language with postnominal RCs introduced by relative pronouns or relative complementizers (of the right kind) has no postverbal clause as it lacks declarative complementizers (of the same right kind). Slave appears to be such a case. It has preverbal subordinate clauses (Rice 1989, chapt.42), but postnominal RCs (with final complementizers) (Rice 1989,chapt.47; Dryer 2003,31). In any case, we submit that both such situations are marked, the more general case being that if a language allows postverbal subordinate clauses (i.e., is VO or “non-rigid” OV) then it also allows postnominal RCs. This was seen to be a consequence of a property of higher complementizers.

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To illustrate the movement of a complementizer within a relative clause, consider the following example from Georgian:

(i) [xalxi [C [[kareb-tan axlos ro [ t idga] [C [aq’aq’anda]]]]]  
people doors-at close that he-sit he-clap  
‘the people who sat close by the doors began to clap’

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31 The complementizer can be internal to the RC also in Georgian, modulo the further raising of the RC Head (presumably to the Spec of a still higher Comp). See (i), from Harris (1994,132), and Georgian in the II of Cinque (2005).

32 Lendu and Ngiti (Central Sudanic) might be examples of this type. To judge from Kutsch Lojenga (1987/2003,9; 1994, 395) both have postverbal finite complement clauses (Ngiti with a final complementizer), yet only prenominal RCs (Lendu with a final invariable relative complementizer). Even some Dravidian “rigid” OV languages (Telugu and Malayalam) allow postverbal complement and adverbial clauses (with a final complementizer) (Bayer 2001,fn.11; and Jayaseelan, p.c.), yet, only have preverbal RCs. Lezgian (Nakho-Daghestanian) also has (some) postverbal finite complement clauses, arguably of Persian origin (Haspelmath 1993, chapter 20,§7), yet only prenominal participial RCs (chapter 19). Dhivehi (OV; Indo-Aryan – Cain and Gair 2000) also appears (cf. their ex.(110), p.37) to have postverbal complement clauses (with a final complementizer), but only prenominal, participial, relative clauses (“perhaps as a result of Dravidian influence”, p.35).

33 Although no lists, or numbers, of languages are cited, Lehmann (1984,183) may also be relevant here.
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