MORPHOLOGY
GREENBERG'S UNIVERSAL 27 : AFFIXATION & ADPOSITION

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OUTLINE

BASIC CONCEPTS

❑ Derivational Affixation :

New word with a new semantic meaning and sometimes also a different lexical category

▪ derivational prefixes :

un-happy

go-kazoku(ご家族)　　(Japanese ; Japonic)

im-poli　　　　　　　(French ; Indo-European)

▪ derivational suffixes :

 happy-ness

 polit-esse　　　　　　(French ; Indo-European)

(السَعَادَة) ◌َة- السَعَاد　　　　(Arabic (MSA) ; Afroasiatic)

BASIC CONCEPTS

❑ Inflectional Affixation :

▪ Inflectional prefixes :

New form of the word with the same basic meaning and same lexical category

تَ - ذْهَبْنَ   (Arabic (MSA) ; Afroasiatic)

▪ Inflectional suffixes :

Change of the grammatical properties of a word within its syntactic category

Same word class after inflection

happy-er

قَدِم -نَْ (قَدِمْنَ)   (Arabic (MSA) ; Afroasiatic)

BASIC CONCEPTS

❑ Adposition:

▪ Prepositional phrases:

As a computational linguist, I find this interesting.

أكلت **في** المطبخ　　　　　　　　　　　　(Arabic (MSA) ; Afroasiatic)

J'ai monté **sur** le toit de l'immeuble.　　　　(French ; Indo-European)

▪ Postpositional phrases:

I came here two years **ago**.

Talo**sta** : house from = 'from the house'　　　(Finnish ; Finnic)

Hashi **de** : chopsticks with = 'with chopsticks'　　(japanese ; Japonic)

HYPOTHESIS

Greenberg's Universal 27 :

"If a language is exclusively suffixing, it is postpositional; if it is exclusively prefixing, it is prepositional."
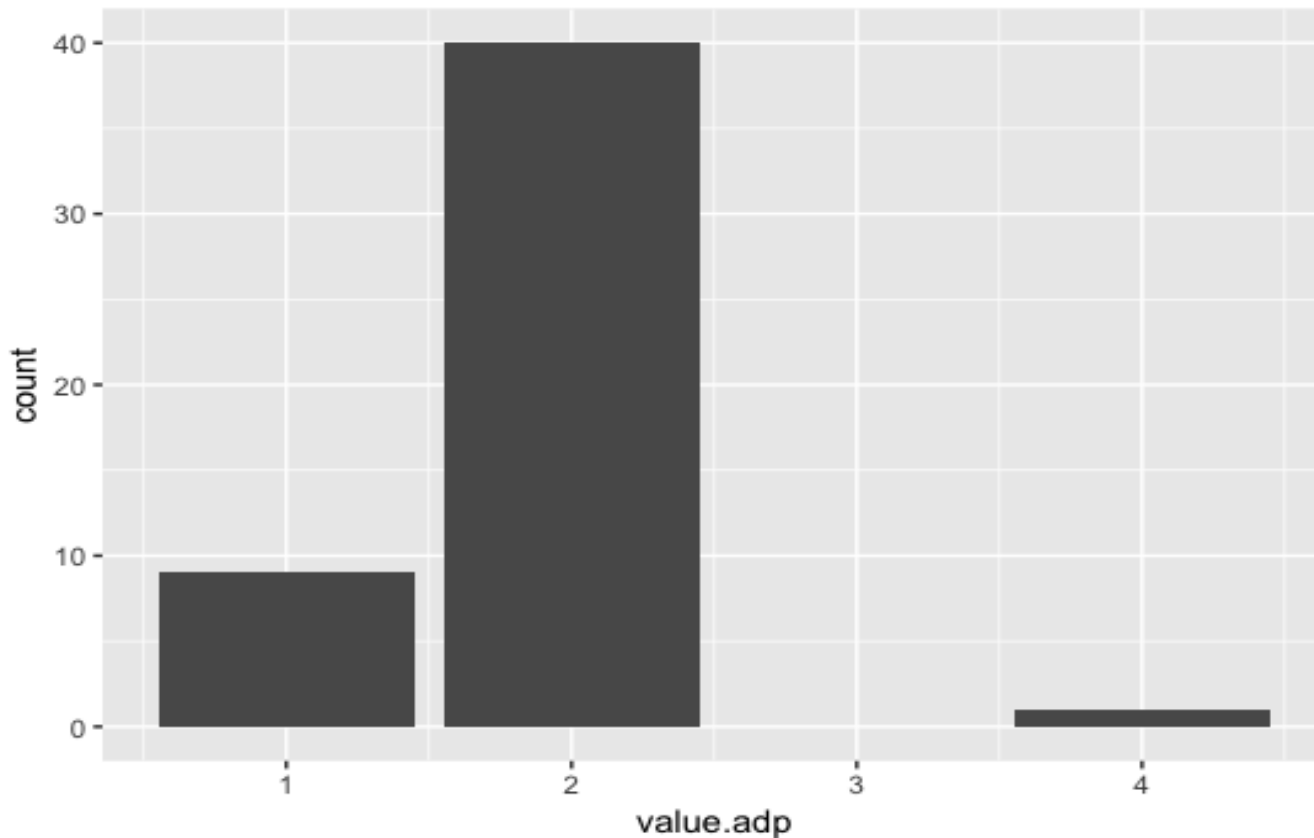
➢ **West Greenlandic** (Eskimo; Fortescue 1984) is a postpositional language . Greenberg claims that the reason behind this is that the language being exclusively suffixing.

➢ The same goes for the prepositinal language **Hunde** (Bantu; Democratic Republic of Congo; Kahombo 1992) for being exclusively preffixing .

OVERVIEW

✓ After resaerch on both affixation and adposition : not a lot of data was available (especially on adposition)

✓ Research through WALS and Autotyp

➤ Used data from WALS :

26A: Prefixing vs. Suffixing in Inflectional Morphology

85A : Order of Adposition and Noun Phrase

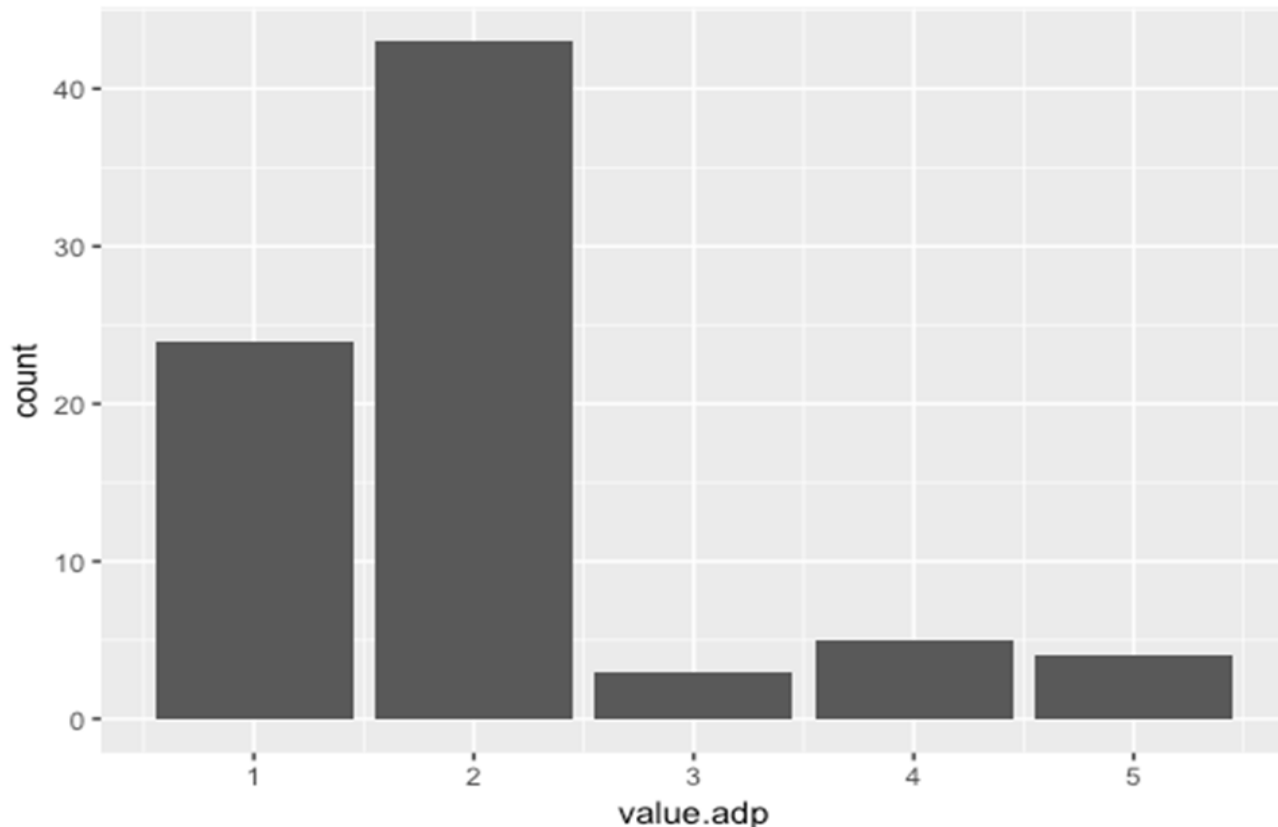# ANALYSIS OF WALS DATA
PREFIXING VS ADPOSITION

Strongly prefixing languages (50 Languages)

- 1) postpositions : 8
- 2) prepositions : 40
- 3) impositions : 0
- 4) no dominant order : 2
- 5) no adpostion : 0

ANALYSIS OF WALS DATA
PREFIXING VS ADPOSITION
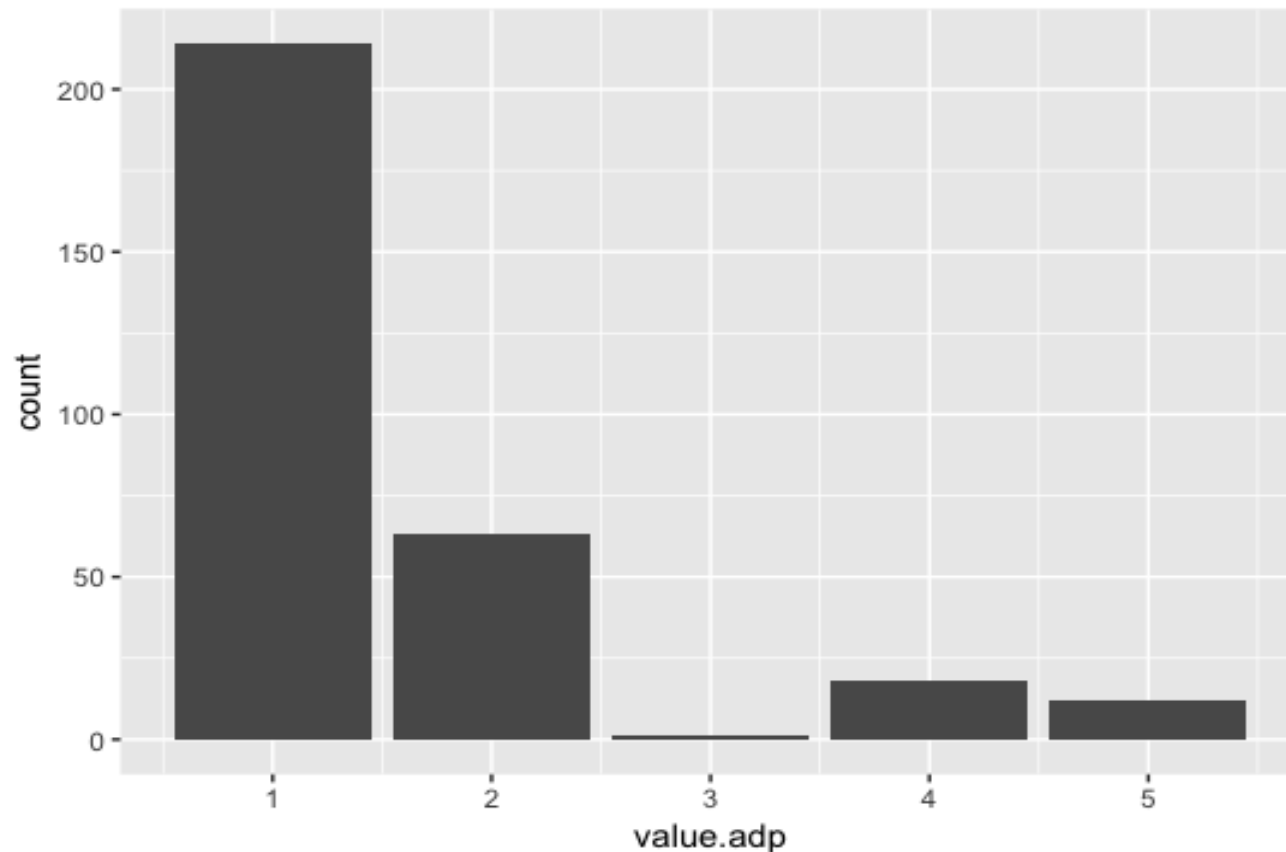
Weakly prefixing languages (79 Languages)

- 1) postpositions :   24
- 2) prepositions :   43
- 3) impositions :   3
- 4) no dominant order :   5
- 5) no adpostion :   4

ANALYSIS OF WALS DATA
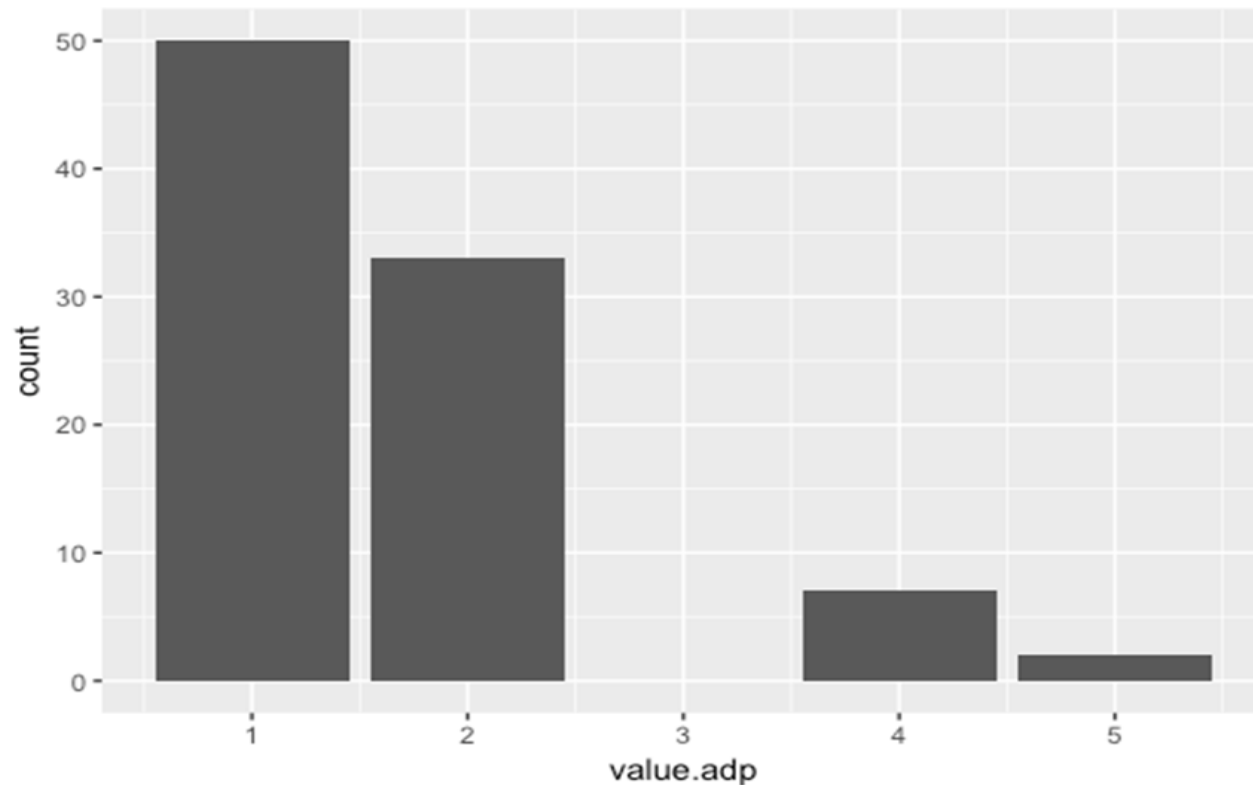# SUFFIXING VS ADPOSITION

Strongly suffixing languages (308 Languages)

- 1) postpositions :   212
- 2) prepositions :   57
- 3) impositions :   2
- 4) no dominant order : 22
- 5) no adpostion :   15

ANALYSIS OF WALS DATA
SUFFIXING VS ADPOSITION

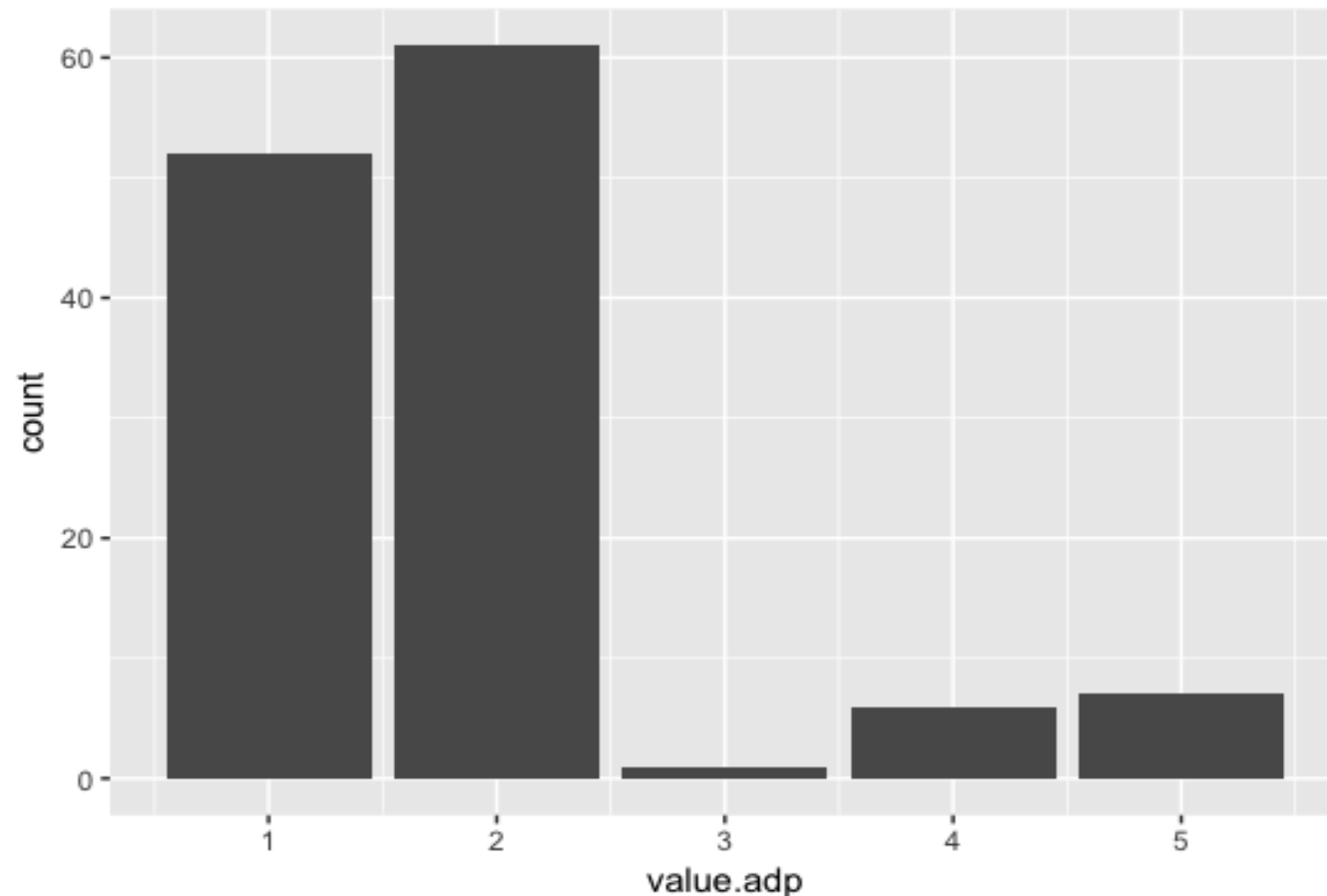Weakly suffixing languages (92 Languages)

- 1) postpositions : 50
- 2) prepositions : 33
- 3) impositions : 0
- 4) no dominant order : 7
- 5) no adpostion : 2
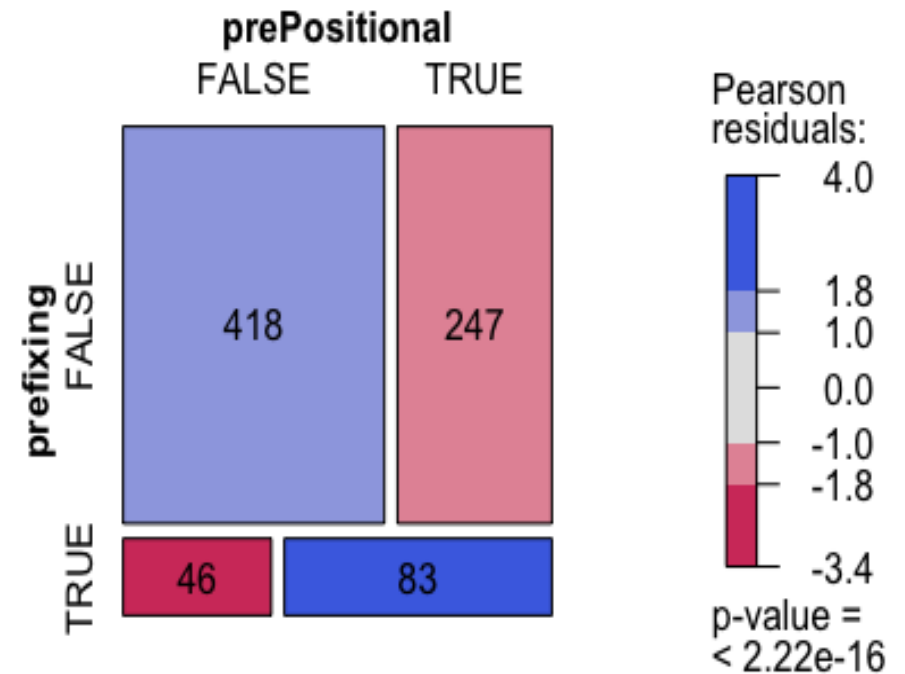
ANALYSIS OF WALS DATA AFFIXATION VS ADPOSITION

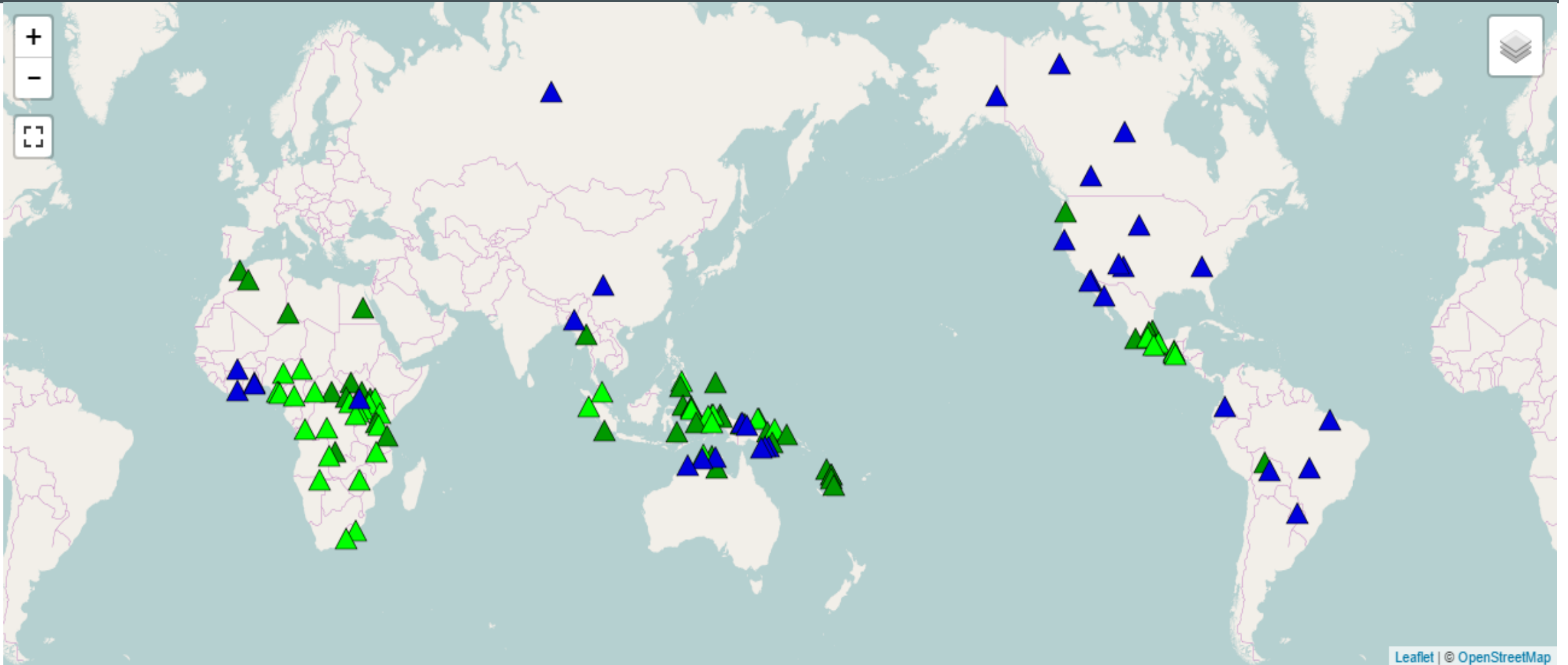Equal prefixing and suffixing languages (127 Languages)

- 1) postpositions :   52
- 2) prepositions :   61
- 3) impositions :   1
- 4) no dominant order :   6
- 5) no adpostion :   7

ANALYSIS OF WALS DATA
PREFIXINX / PREPOSITIONAL

- Both DATA of strongly and weakly prefixing languages combined

- Only prepositinal or not value from the adpostion data

DISTRIBUTION OF PREFIXING/PREPOSITIONAL (▲ , ▲) AND PREFIXING/POSTPOSITIONAL (▲) LANGUAGES (WALS)
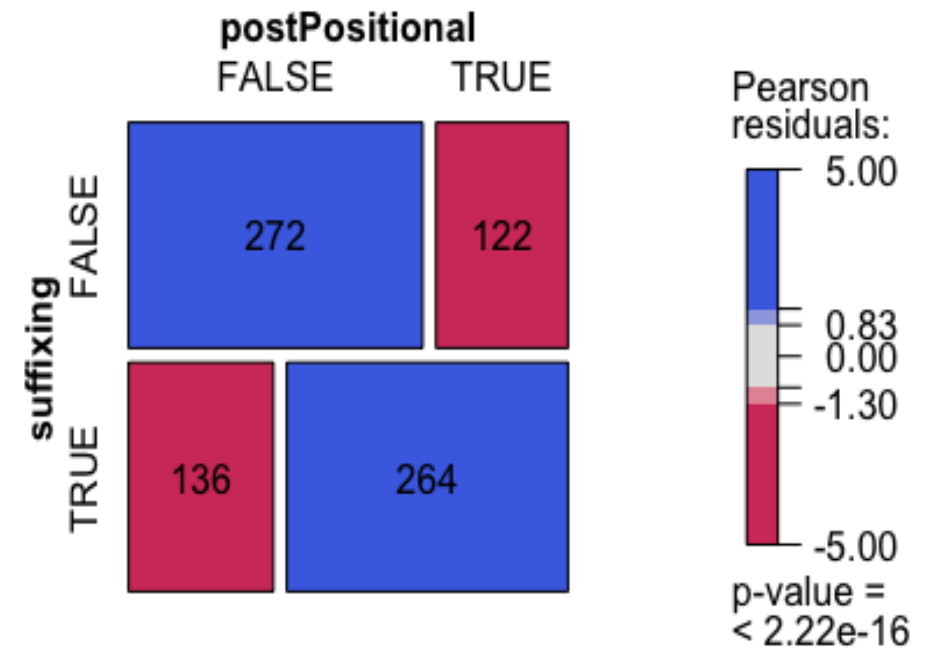
DISTRIBUTION OF PREFIXING/PREPOSITIONAL AND PREFIXING/POSTPOSITIONAL LANGUAGES (WALS)

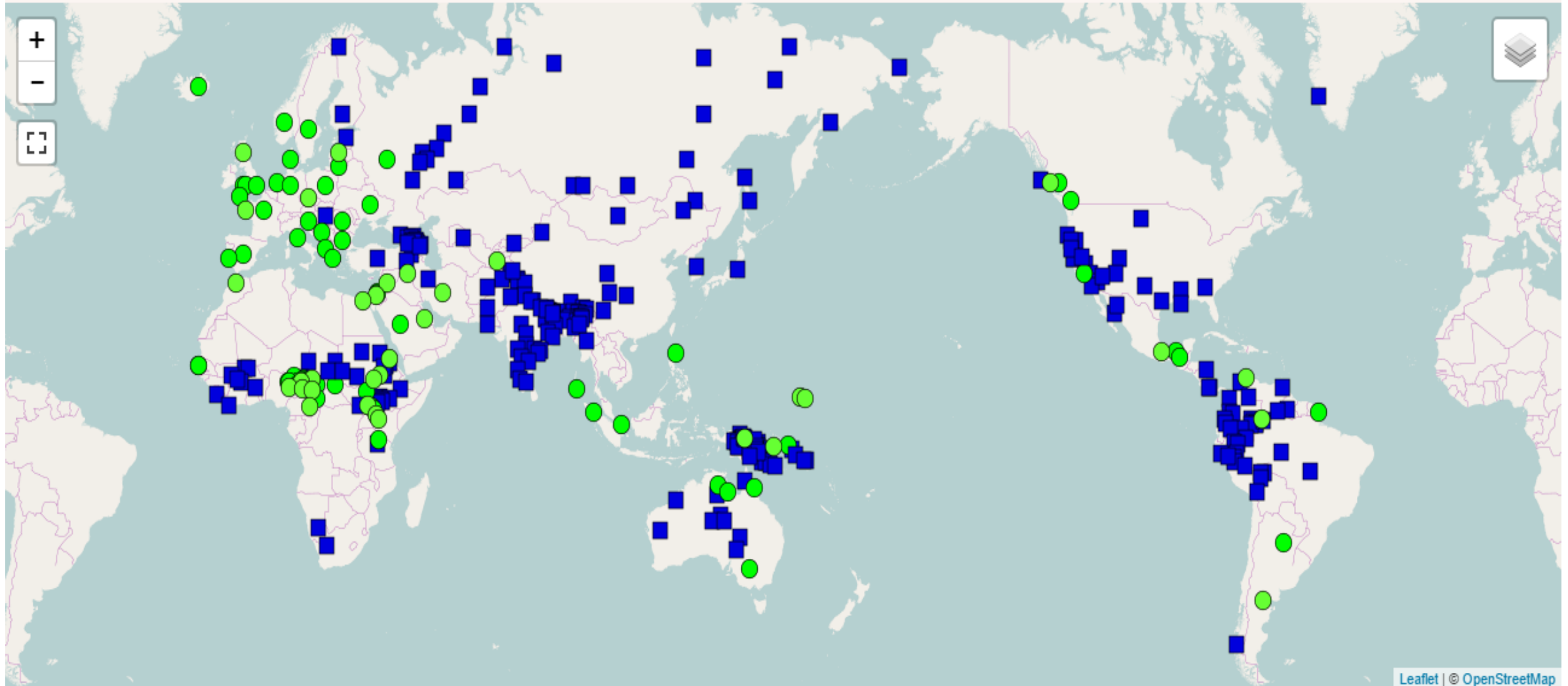- Prefixing prepositional languages can be seen to be mainly located in Central Africa as well as in the Pacific Island. We can also see a number of this type of languages in Central America. Taking this into account , one could say that those languages seem to be located close to the Ecuator .

- On the other hand, prefixing postpositional languagues are mainly found in North and South America .

ANALYSIS OF WALS DATA
SUFFIXING / POSTPOSITIONAL

- Both DATAs of strongly and weakly suffixing languages combined

- Only postpositional or not value from the adpostion data

DISTRIBUTION OF SUFFIXING/PREPOSITIONAL (●) AND SUFFIXING/POSTPOSITIONAL (■) LANGUAGES (WALS)

DISTRIBUTION OF SUFFIXING/PREPOSITIONAL AND SUFFIXING/POSTPOSITIONAL LANGUAGES (WALS)

- With regard to suffixing preprositional languages we can see that most of them are concentreted in Europe and the Middle East . There is also a significant number of these languages in Central Africa:

- On the other hand , a very large number of suffixing postpositional languages are located in India, as well as in Oceania (Papua new Guinea) . There is also a significant number of these languages in the Western Coast of America .

DISCUSSION
INTERPRETATION

➢ The prefixing languages which are prepositional are clearly more than prefixing languages with other adpositions.

➢ The suffixing languages which are postpositional are clearly more than the suffixing languages with other adpositions

➢ The stronger suffixing languages had more postpositions than the weak suffixing languages.

➢ The stronger prefixing languages had more prepositions than the weak prefixing languages.

➢ There are indeed suffixing languages which are prepositional and prefixing languages which are postpositional.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

➢ The DATA seem to disprove Greenberg's hypotheses as a certain rule, but it does also prove that there is a strong relation between affixation and adposition.

➢ Is an exclusively suffixing language certainly postpositional?

NO

➢ Is an exclusively suffixing language most likely to be postpositional?

YES

REFRENCES

- Matthew S. Dryer. 2013. Prefixing vs. Suffixing in Inflectional Morphology.
  In: Dryer, Matthew S. & Haspelmath, Martin (eds.)
  The World Atlas of Language Structures Online.
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  In: Dryer, Matthew S. & Haspelmath, Martin (eds.)
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- Fortescue, Michael. 1984. West Greenlandic. (Croom Helm Descriptive Grammars.) London: Croom Helm.

- Kahombo, Mateene. 1992. Essai de grammaire du Kihunde. (Hamburger Beiträge zur Afrikanistik, 1.) Münster: LIT Verlag