

■ Adnominal Modification Clauses

● Classification by Structure

Adnominal clauses may be classified by the relationship with the modified noun.

(1) In examples such as *iriguchi ni tatte iru hito* ‘the person who is standing in the doorway,’ *kare ga oshiete kureta uwasa* ‘the rumor which he told me,’ *watashi ga mita jōkei* ‘the scene that I saw,’ and *sofu ga naku natta toshi* ‘the year in which my grandfather died,’ there is a case relationship where the modified noun is the complement of the predicate in the modifying clause (i.e., *Sono hito ga iriguchi ni tatte iru* ‘The person is standing in the door way,’ *Kare ga sono uwasa o oshiete kureta* ‘He told me the rumor,’ *Sono toshi ni sofu ga nakunatta* ‘My grandfather died in that year’). This type of relationship between the modifying clause and the modified noun is called the “internal proposition.” In contrast, when there is no such relationship between the modified noun and the predicate in the modifying clause, the relationship is called the “external proposition.” The external proposition can be further classified into sub-types.

(2) *Sofu ga naku natta yokutoshi* ‘the year after my grandfather died’ and *Tarō ga shimbun o yonde iru tonari* ‘next to where Taro is reading a newspaper.’ can be rephrased as “*aru toshi ni sofu ga naku natta. Sono yokutoshi* ‘My grandfather passed away in a certain year. [It is] the year after that,’” and *Tarō ga aru ichi de shimbun o yonde iru. Sono ichi no tonari* ‘Taro is reading a newspaper in a certain position. [It is] the position next to it.’ The modified nouns *yokutoshi* and *tonari* are in a relative relationship with the respective hidden complements, (*aru*) *toshi* and (*aru*) *ichi*, of the predicates of the modifying clauses.

(3) In *kare ga kaisha o yameru rashii to iu uwasa* ‘the rumor that he’s quitting the job’ and *kodomo tachi ga sakkaa o tanoshinde iru jōkei* ‘the scene where children are enjoying soccer,’ “the rumor” and “the scene,” which are nouns with a certain content, become the modified nouns, and the modifying clauses respectively explain the content of each noun.

● Internal Proposition

For the type discussed in (1), it is important to have an unambiguous semantic relationship between the modified noun and the modifying clause, especially the predicate of the modifying clause, in order for the expression to work.

(1) ?*Shokudō e itta yūjin* (when the speaker means that the speaker went to the cafeteria with the friend).

(2) ?*Purezento o moratta hito* (when the speaker received the present from the person).

Unlike sentences, this type of adnominal clauses has various constraints on their components. For example, the predicate of an adnominal clause may not accompany a sentence-final particle or certain types of modality expressions (e.g., **taihen omoshiroi ne eega*, **suguni kopii shiro kono shorui*, *?raishū nyūka suru sō na shinamono*). Topics do not appear in the modifying clause. For example, in *watashi wa suki na sake, wa* expresses contrast.

● External Proposition

In the type described in (2), the following types of nouns are modified.

Temporal nouns: *mae* ‘before’, *ato* ‘after’, *zenjitsu* ‘the previous day’, *yokujitsu* ‘the following day’, *yokunen* ‘the following year’, etc.

Spatial nouns (i.e., positional, locational): *mae* ‘front’, *ushiro* ‘back, behind’, *yoko* ‘side’, *tonari* ‘next’, *ue* ‘above’, *shita* ‘below’, etc

In Type (3), the following types of nouns are modified.

Nouns of linguistic expressions and thought: *uwasa* ‘rumor’, *shitsumon* ‘question’, *iken* ‘opinion/view’, *hōkoku* ‘report’, *shiteki* ‘pointing out/suggestion’, *yosō* ‘prediction’, *kangae* ‘thought’, *ishi* ‘intent’, *kesshin* ‘resolution’, *tegami* ‘letter’, *denwa* ‘telephone’, *kiji* ‘article’, etc.

Nouns of events, phenomena: *dekigoto* ‘happening’, *jiken* ‘incident’, *jijitsu* ‘fact’, *jōtai* ‘state/condition’, *shigoto* ‘work/job’, *kekka* ‘result’, *keikō* ‘trend/tendency’, etc.

Nouns concerning scenes, visual media: *jōkei* ‘scene’, *kōkei* ‘sight’, *e* ‘picture’, *shashin* ‘photo’, etc.

There is a correlation between the semantic characteristics of the modified noun and the components and the type of predicate that can appear in the modifying clause. There is also a correlation between the semantic characteristics of the modified noun and the presence or absence of an expression (such as *to iu* and *to no*) that connects the modifying clause and the modified noun.

When the modified noun is a noun, such as *shitsumon* ‘question’, *iken* ‘opinion/view’, or *shiteki* ‘pointing out/suggestion’, and when an utterance or thought is quoted in the modifying clause, *to iu* or *to no* has to be used to connect the two.

When a noun that expresses an event or phenomenon becomes the modified noun, the use of the intermediary *to iu* is optional.

(3) *Kono deeta wa machigatte iru {to iu/tono} shiteki* ‘the suggestion that the data is inaccurate.’

(4) *Kare ga sagi o shite ita (to iu) jijitsu* ‘the fact that he has committed fraud’

● Classification by Function

Let us compare *pasokon ni kuwashii hito* ‘a person who is well-versed in PCs’ and *pasokon ni kuwashii Tarō* ‘Taro, who is well-versed in PCs.’ In the former, the modifying clause, *pasokon ni kuwashii*, has the function of limiting the referent in amongst the modified collective noun, *hito*, while in the latter, the modified noun *Tarō* is a noun that can be identified in itself, and the modifying clause does not have the function of limiting the referent of the modified noun. Modified clauses may be classified by such functional differences into restrictive modifying clauses and non-restrictive modifying clauses. Modifying clauses have a different function other than limiting the referent when they occur with proper nouns (which identify the referent without the help of a modifying clause), nouns that represent unique existences (e.g., Earth, Japan), nouns that accompany determiners such as *kono*, and generic nouns.

→ *Ga* and *No* That Mark the Subject of Adnominal Clauses (2-D)

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