

■ *Ga* and *No* of Subject in Adnominal Clauses

Case *ga* and also, at times, case *no* are used to express the subject of an adnominal clause. Examples are: *se* {*ga/no*} *takai hito* ‘a tall person’, *Tarō* {*ga/no*} *kaita ronbun* ‘the thesis that Taro wrote’, *kasai* {*ga/no*} *okiru kikensei* ‘the possible danger of fire starting’, *ippan shimin* {*ga/no*} *shishō suru jiken* ‘an incident in which general citizens get killed and hurt’, *pan* {*ga/no*} *yakeru nioi* ‘the aroma of bread being baked.’

In comparison with *ga*, *no* has several usage limitations. In the so-called external proposition (when the modified noun does not represent an argument of the adnominal clause predicate), where an adnominal clause explains the content of a modified noun, *no* is not readily used. Especially, when there is a conjunctive word, such as *to iu* and *to no*, connecting the adnominal clause and the modified noun, it is inappropriate to use *no*, as in *doko no mise* {*ga/*no*} *oishii to iu chishiki* ‘the knowledge about which shop sells good-tasting food’, *kare* {*ga/*no*} *shisshoku shita to iu hanashi* ‘the story about his loss of the job.’

When the adnominal clause expresses a so-called internal proposition in which the modified noun represents an argument of the adnominal clause, there are several situations where it is difficult to represent the subject using *no* in the adnominal clause. First, it is harder to use *no* when there are other complements and adverbial components in between the subject and the predicate of the adnominal clause than when there are no such components. The longer the distance between the subject and the predicate, the harder it is to use *no* in this structure. Example: *Tarō* {*ga/*no*} *kyonen Nyuuyōku de kon'yakusha no tameni katta yubiwa* ‘the ring which Taro bought for his fiancé last year in New York.’ When the adnominal clause is in a complex sentence structure, it is difficult to use *no* to present the subject of the subordinate clause within the sentence structure. Examples: *Tarō* {*ga/*no*} *katte kite Jirō* {*ga/no*} *ryōri shita gyūniku* ‘the beef which Taro bought and which Jiro cooked,’ *kodomo* {*ga/*no*} *kaze o hiitara nomaseru kusuri* ‘the medicine which you have the child take when s/he catches a cold,’ *kodomo* {*ga/*no*} *iyagattemo tabesasetā hō ga ii shokuhin* ‘Food which you should make children eat even if they do not want to eat.’ There are also instances where the case particle *no* is inappropriate because it can be confused with the so-called possessive *no*. Examples: *tsuma ga shiriai ni kiita hanashi*, ‘the story which my wife heard from her acquaintance,’ *musuko ga sensei ni moratta hon* ‘the book which my son got from his teacher.’

→連体修飾節 Adnominal Clause (2-J)

● References

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