Quasi-small clause construction in Japanese
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It has been controversial (cf. Takezawa 1988, Kikuchi and Takahashi 1990, Kawai 2008, Hoshi and Sugiioka 2009, and Matsuoka 2012) as to whether adjective (A) in (1a) forms a small clause with Mary-o (ADP) as in (1b), or a complex V with the matrix predicate (MP), as in (1c), where SUBJ denotes matrix subject. Yokoyama (2012) offers three arguments for (1b): viz., (i) an ADP-NPI is licensed by negative A (2), (ii) subject-oriented reflexive zibun may be coreferential with the ADP (3), and (iii) the ADP can license the BP in the honorific form (4), which is known to be licensed by a subject. If successful, Yokoyama’s argument strongly supports (1b).

   John-top Mary-acc lovable/pity considered/
   ‘John considered Mary to be lovable/to be pity.’
   b. [SUBJ [sc ADP A] MP].

(2) John-wa dare-mo [BA kawiku-naku] omotta
   John-top who-NPI cute-neg considered
   ‘John considered no one cute.’

(3) John-wa Mary-o zibun-ni kibisiku kanjita
   John-top Mary-acc self-with strict-neg felt
   ‘John felt Mary strict to herself.’

(4) John-ga sensei-o o-kashikoku omotta
   John-nom teacher-ace hon-early considered
   ‘John considered the teacher wise.'

This paper first examines Yokoyama’s three arguments, concluding that they are inconclusive. Dare-mo differs from English NPIs in that it simply requires negation to be the closest operator, not a clause-mate negation (Sells and Kim 2006); thus, (2) does not show that ADP is clause-mate with BA. Neither conclusive are the data with zibun and honorific licensing; I, together with my informants, found (3) and (4) marginal at best.

Second, the paper presents three pieces of evidence that ADP is the matrix object; (i) ADP may be followed by the adverb modifying the matrix V (5); (ii) ADP can host –no-koto (6) (Kawai 2008), which attaches only to an object (Koizumi 2008); (iii) ADP is not predicated of BA (7); and (iv) subject-predicate idioms are not licensed (8) construction (Matsuoka 2012).

(5) John-wa Mary-o kokoro-kara kawiku omotta.
   John-top Mary-acc heart-from cute considered
   ‘John full heartedly considered Mary cute.’

(6) John-wa Mary-no-koto-o kawiku omotta.
   John-top Mary-gen-koto-acc cute considered/ ‘John considered Mary adorable.’

(7) John-wa Mary-o human-ni omotta
   John-top Mary-acc dissatisfied consider
   ‘John is not happy about Mary. (≠ ‘John considered that Mary is dissatisfied.’)

(8) * John-wa Mary-no kuchi-o karuku omotta.
   John-to Mary-gen mouth-acc light-quote considered
   ‘John considered Mary loose tongued.’

In short, contrary to Yokoyama’s contention, the evidence supports the objecthood of ADP, not its subjecthood. Therefore, for the analysis of (1a), this paper supports (1c), instead of (1b), contrary to Yokoyama’s contention.
References


