

Kiyoko Takahashi

17 Thai

1 Introduction

Tsunoda (this volume-a, 2.1) proposes that the prototype of the mermaid construction (hereafter, “MMC”) has all of the following five properties.

- (a) The structure is as shown in (1) – superficially at least.
- (b) The Noun is an independent word (not a clitic) that is a noun.
- (c) The subject of the Clause and the Noun are non-coreferential.
- (d) The Clause can be used as a sentence by itself.
- (e) The Clause is not the subject of the “Noun + Copula”.

(1) Prototype of the mermaid construction (“MMC”):

Clause Noun Copula.

In the prototypical MMC, the Noun slot of the MMC is occupied by a noun that is an independent word. In non-prototypical instances, it may be occupied by an enclitic or a suffix which derives from a noun. The forms in the Noun slot – particularly independent nouns – generally have a contentful meaning. However, they may also be nominalizers. (The nominalizers may be independent words, clitics or affixes (T. Tsunoda, this volume-a, 2.3-[1]).) That is, the MMC may have the structure shown below.

(2) Clause NMLZ Copula.

Tsunoda (this volume-a, Section 1 and 2.1) notes as follows. Superficially at least, it looks as if the MMC contains a subordinate clause and is bi-clausal. However, languages such as Modern Standard Japanese (Tsunoda, this volume-b, Section 6) and Korean (Kim, this volume, Section 6) provide ample evidence to show that syntactically their MMC is mono-clausal, not bi-clausal, despite its superficial appearance (shown in (1)). The MMC of these languages has just one predicate, not two predicates, and the predicate is a compound predicate that consists of the predicate of the Clause, the Noun and the Copula, as shown below.

(3) ... predicate of Clause Noun Copula.

compound predicate

The prototype of the MMC is based on the MMC of Modern Standard Japanese, an AOV language (cf. Tsunoda, this volume-a, 2.1). Most instances of the MMC reported in the present volume are found in AOV languages.

Thai is an AVO language. Unlike Mandarin Chinese, an AVO language with variants of the MMC (cf. Ono (2013) and Tsunoda (this volume-a, 2.3-[2])), Thai does not have a structure that would be unequivocally called the MMC. Nonetheless, Thai has a structure that may be considered a peripheral type of the MMC. It will be referred to as quasi-MMC. It is of three types.

(4) Quasi-MMC of Thain

- a. Psych-verb type: (Target-N) Copula-V [NMLZ Psych-V] (Obl-P Experiencer-N).
 - b. Speech-verb type: (Target-N) Copula-V [NMLZ Speech-V] (Obl-P Speaker-N).
 - c. Quotative-complementation type: Copula-V [NMLZ Psych-V/Speech-V]¹ [COMP Clause].
- (COMP: complementizer. N: noun. NMLZ: nominalizer. Obl-P: oblique preposition. V: verb.)

“Target” stands for a noun phrase designating the target, goal or the like of the psychological or verbal activity (see 5.6). “Obl-P Experiencer-N/Speaker-N” stands for a prepositional phrase composed of an oblique preposition and a noun phrase representing the experiencer/speaker who is engaged in an activity denoted by a psych/speech verb (see 5.5). In (4), the constituents shown with parentheses are optional.

All of the three types of the quasi-MMC contain (i) the copula verb (Copula-V), (ii) a nominalizer (NMLZ), and (iii) a psych-verb (Psych-V) or a speech verb (SpeechV). That is, they contain the following.

(5) Copula-V [NMLZ Psych-V/Speech-V].

The combination of the nominalizer and the psych/speech verb ([NMLZ Psych-V] or [NMLZ Speech-V]) and that of the quotative complementizer and the complement clause ([COMP Clause]) are indicated by means of square brackets.² The reason for this marking is as follows. The nominalizer and the psych/speech verb form a unit, to the exclusion of the prepositional phrase (“Obl-P Experiencer-N” or “Obl-P Speaker-N”) (see 5.10-[2]). Similarly, the complementizer and the complement clause are inseparable.

The quotative-complementation type (i.e. (4c)) differs from the other two types in three respects. First, it lacks “Obl-P Experiencer-N/Speaker-N” and “Target-N”. Second, it obligatorily contains [COMP Clause], i.e., a clausal complement consisting of the quotative complementizer and a complement clause (see 5.7). Third, it has an epistemic modal flavor. Specifically, it expresses the speaker’s view or belief that the general public must feel or think such and such (see 5.7 and 5.8).

The quasi-MMC of Thai resembles those instances of the MMC of other languages that contain a nominalizer (cf. (2)). An example from Modern Standard Japanese is the second sentence in (68).

To sum up, the structures shown in (4a) to (4c) can be considered variants of the MMC – albeit non-prototypical and peripheral ones; they are the farthest away from the MMC prototype among all the varieties of the MMC investigated in the present volume (cf. Tsunoda, this volume-a, 2.3).

2 Initial illustration

Examples (6) to (8), respectively, illustrate the three types of the Thai quasi-MMC (4a) to (4c).

(4a) Psych-verb type

(6) *kháw yôom pen [thîi chûu a mân] khǒŋ phûu tây bankháp banchaa*

PRON inevitably COP NMLZ be.confident GEN subordinates

LT: ‘He is inevitably that/what (they) are confident (of), of the subordinates.’

FT: ‘He is inevitably trusted by (his) subordinates.’

¹ In the present chapter I sometimes use a slash “/” in place of the word “or” to save space. For example, the schematic representation of the syntactic structure “Copula-V NMLZ Psych-V/SpeechV” is read as “Copula-V NMLZ Psych-V” or “Copula-V NMLZ Speech-V”.

² In the present chapter, square brackets are used in this way. However, in other chapters, square brackets are used to indicate the Clause of the MMC and its English translation.

(4b) Speech-verb type

(7) nawaniyaay rūaŋ nī pen [thīi klàaw thǔ ɲ yàaŋ phrɛ̌ lǎay]

novel CLF this COP NMLZ say reach widely

LT: ‘This novel is that/what (they) mention widely.’

FT: ‘This novel is widely mentioned.’

(4c) Quotative-complementation type

(8) pen [thīi yoom rap kan thūa pay] [wāa wannakam lɛʔ phāaphayon

COP NMLZ admit RECP in.general COMP literary.work and movie

mīi ɔ̌tthíphon tò kan lɛʔ kan yàaŋ māk]

have influence upon each.other very.much

LT: ‘(It) is that/what (they) generally admit that literary works and movies influence each other very much.’

FT: ‘It is generally admitted that literary works and movies influence each other very much.’

When glossing pronouns, the gloss ‘PRON’ is used, rather than specific glosses, such as ‘1SG’, ‘2SG’, ‘3SG.M’, ‘3SG.F’ and so forth. See (6). The pronoun system in Thai, unlike that in Indo-European languages, has not been entrenched as a fixed paradigm, and it is sometimes difficult to provide such a specific gloss. It should be mentioned in this connection that a pronoun used as an argument or complement is often absent if the preceding clause contains a coreferential pronoun or noun phrase.

(Thai constructions with the reciprocal marker kan ‘RECP’ following a verb phrase, such as (8), may express ‘(do something) together’.)

The psych-verb type describes a situation where a certain entity, i.e., person or matter, is the target of a group of people’s or the general public’s psychological activity such as perception, emotion and cognition. The speech-verb type describes a situation where a certain entity is the target of a group of people’s or the general public’s verbal activity such as criticizing and rumoring. The quotative-complementation type expresses the utterer’s view or belief regarding the general public’s feeling or opinion.

A reviewer points out that the psych-verb and the speech-verb types of the quasi-MMC in Thai (e.g. (6) and (7)) are similar to the middle construction (MC) in English (e.g., the pen writes well and the book sells well) in that they alike derive from transitive-verb constructions, and that they alike tend to receive a noneventive, generic or habitual interpretation. However, there are crucial differences between the two constructions, as follows. First, the quasi-MMC requires a clausal nominalizer and a copula verb (cf. Sections 5.2 and 5.4), whereas the MC does not. Second, the degree of transitivity of verbs that occur in the MC is relatively high, while that of verbs that occur in the quasi-MMC is relatively low. The situation denoted by the MC involves a covert agent doing an activity with a relatively high transitivity (e.g. the writer and the seller for the examples above) which cannot be named (e.g. *the pen writes well by the writer and *the book sells well by the seller). The situation denoted by the quasi-MMC involves an experiencer or speaker doing an activity with a relatively low transitivity, which may or may not be named by an oblique prepositional phrase (e.g. khǒŋ phūu tǎy bāŋkháp banchaa ‘of the subordinates’ in (6)) (cf. Sections 5.3 and 5.5). Third, the referent of the forefront noun phrase of the MC (e.g. the pen and the book in the examples above) corresponds to an instrument or a patient connected with the covert agent. On the other hand, the forefront noun phrase of the quasi-MMC represents an entity conceived as emotional or cognitive target (cf. Section 5.6).

3 Profile of the language

Thai belongs to the Tai group of the Tai-Kadai family. It is the official language of Thailand. According to Ethnologue (online

version 2017; see Simons & Fennig (eds.) 2017), the number of Thai L1 speakers is 20,548,550 and that of Thai L2 users is 40,000,000.

The inventory of Thai phonemes is as follows: (a) consonants: /p, t, c, k, ʔ, ph, th, ch, kh, b, d, f, s, h, m, n, ŋ, l, r, w, y/; (b) vowels: /i, u, e, ə, o, ε, a, ɔ, ii, uu, uu, ee, əə, oo, εε, aa, ɔɔ/; (c) diphthongs: /ia, ua, ua/; and (d) tones: Mid, Low, Falling, High, Rising (e.g., maa, maa, ma` a, ma^ a, ma´ a). (For the phonological structure of Thai, see Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom (2005: 3–6).)

Thai is a typical isolating language. It employs virtually no affixation. Verbs do not inflect. Thai is neither dependent-marking nor head-marking. It may be regarded as configurational, for the verb tends to be tightly connected with the object (rather than the subject).

Thai has prepositions. However, like other functional words, they tend to be not used, especially in oral discourse. The basic orders of clausal constituents are AVO and SV. The A, the S, and the O are not marked for case. That is, Thai has the neutral case system: A=S=O. Modifiers of a noun, e.g., demonstrative, classifier phrase and adnominal clause, follow the noun.

Thai abounds with the serial verb construction, which is composed of more than one verb phrase serialized without any linker (see 4.1). To be accurate, it is really a “serial verb-phrase construction”, but it is conventionally and briefly called “serial verb construction”.

The Thai writing system was created in the thirteenth century. The present work is based on data gathered from the written language.³ The examples of the quasi-MMC cited in this chapter were collected mainly from the Thai National Corpus, which is the largest electronic Thai corpus available on the Internet, and in part from two previous studies: Kitsombat (1981) and Prasithrathsint (1985). The English glosses and translations are mostly the present author’s. Some of the examples were slightly modified owing to space limitation and other stylistic reasons.

4 Types of sentences and clauses

4.1 Verb-predicate sentences and noun-predicate sentences

In terms of the type of the predicate, sentences of Thai are divided into two main types: (i) verb-predicate sentences and (ii) noun-predicate sentences. Thai morphemes with meanings that correspond to the meanings of adjectives of, say, English and Japanese are categorized as verbs, e.g., (11).⁴

Verb-predicate sentences are classified into four types: (i) one-place sentences; (ii) two-place sentences; (iii) three-place sentences; and, (iv) serial verb constructions. Verbs occurring in verb-predicate sentences may be modified by modal and/ or aspectual markers. For example, in (9) and (19), the verb (mii ‘exist’, pen ‘COP’) is preceded by an epistemic modal marker (ʔaat ‘maybe’ and khon ‘probably’, respectively). In (10), the verb and its argument (kəət panhăa ‘a problem occurs’) are followed by the inchoative aspect marker (khûn ‘INC’).

³ This restriction on the type of research data, i.e., using only data from a corpus of written texts, does not come from a belief that the quasi-MMC tends to be used in the written language rather than the oral language. The Thai National Corpus, which is based on data from the written language, is available, and this makes it convenient to work on the written language.

The Thai National Corpus is a general corpus of written texts of various genres, e.g., academic, administration, commerce, religion, law, letters, blogs, newspapers, etc., in the standard Thai language, which is designed to be comparable to the British National Corpus in terms of its domain and medium proportion (Aroonmanakun 2007).

⁴ A clarification is in order here. In this study I follow Prasithrathsint’s (2000) and Enfield’s (2004) view that Thai and Lao morphemes that are semantically equivalent to adjectives in languages that have the class of adjectives form a verbal subclass. Post (2008: 376) states that “contrary to claims made by at least some previous analysts [that there “is not” a class of adjectives in Thai – KT], there “is” a class of terms in Thai which closely resembles the adjective classes of many other languages in terms of semantic contents, internal structures, and distribution relative to other lexical classes”. At the same time, however, he concurs with Prasithrathsint’s and Enfield’s idea that there is not a class of adjectives in Thai and Lao in the sense that adjectives are grouped together with verbs at a “higher taxonomic level” than that at which adjectival class-defining criteria are construed as applying. In passing, Prasithrathsint (2010) provides a view that is different from that in Prasithrathsint (2000), and she sets up the class of adjectives in Thai (e.g., suan tua ‘private’, sùt thón ‘last born’, nán ‘that’, ʔu un ‘other’, năy ‘which’, day ‘which’, dīi dīi ‘good’, tǎn tǎn ‘different’). She provides the syntactic definition of Thai adjectives as follows. Adjectives are morphemes that (i) always occur after noun, (ii) do not co-occur with the negative mǎy, and (iii) do not co-occur with the demonstrative nīi ‘this’, either (ibid., 49–52).

One-place sentences are of two types: those with the VS order and those with the SV order. The VS-order sentences report an event of existence, e.g., (9) (mii ‘exist’), or of emergence/extinction, e.g., (10) (kəət ‘occur’). The SV-order sentences describe other situations than those of existence and emergence/extinction, e.g., (11) (yaaw ‘be.long’) and (12) (tèek ‘break’).

- (9) ɹàat mii panháa
maybe exist problem
‘There may be a problem.’
- (10) kəət panháa khuu n
occur problem INC
‘A problem occurs.’
- (11) phǒm yaaw
hair be.long
‘The hair was long.’
- (12) kɛw tɛ̀ɛk
glass break
‘The glass broke.’

Two-place sentences have the AVO order. Examples include:

- (13) miiit baat níw
knife cut finger
‘The knife cut the finger.’

The word order of three-place sentences is: AVO1O2, in which “O1” stands for a noun phrase representing the theme, gift or the like, and “O2” stands for a noun phrase indicating the goal, recipient or the like. The O2 consistently follows the O1, if there is O1. See (14), where the theme/gift noun phrase ɹaahǎan ‘food’ (O1) precedes the goal/recipient noun phrase mǎa ‘dog’ (O2).

- (14) kháw hây ɹaahǎan mǎa
PRON transfer/give food dog
‘He transferred some food to the dog’ or ‘He gave the dog some food.’

The O2 may be replaced by a prepositional phrase (viz., a combination of a preposition and a nominal), which may contain the dative preposition kɛ̀ɛ ‘to’, the comitative/dative preposition kàp ‘with, to’, or the benefactive preposition hây ‘for, to’. Prepositional phrases are not arguments but adverbial elements.

In addition, the serial verb construction is very common in Thai, as illustrated in (15) and (16).

- (15) cɛ́ɛkan tòk tɛ̀ɛk
vase fall.off break
‘The vase fell and broke.’
- (16) lom phát bâan phan
wind blow house tumble.down

‘The wind blew the house, which tumbled down.’

In (15), two one-place verbs (tòk ‘fall.off’ and tè ek ‘break’) are serialized. They share the same subject noun phrase (cɛ́ekan ‘vase’). In (16), a two-place verb (phát ‘blow’) and a one-place verb (phaŋ ‘tumble.down’) are combined. The object noun phrase of the former verb and the subject noun phrase of the latter verb are identical (bâan ‘house’). See Takahashi (2009) for a comprehensive classification of basic serial verb constructions of Thai, which are composed of two verb phrases.

Thai has two copulas: the copula verb *pen* and the copula particle *khuuu*. As *khuuu* is not a verb, it cannot be negated; see (22). The copula verb *pen*, which may function as an emergence/change verb meaning ‘become, come to be’ that presumably is an erstwhile one-place verb, forms a verb-predicate sentence, e.g., (17), and the copula particle *khuuu* takes part in a noun-predicate sentence, e.g., (18).

(17) kháw pen khruu

PRON COP teacher

‘He is a teacher; He becomes a teacher.’ (verb-predicate sentence)

(18) nân khuuu náŋsǔu u kháw

that COP book PRON ‘That is his book.’ (noun-predicate sentence)

The two copulas, *pen* and *khuuu*, have been contrastively characterized as “characterizational” vs. “identificational” (Kuno & Wongkhamthong 1981) and “thought-like, slow/analytic processing” vs. “sensation-like, fast/holistic processing” (Takahashi & Shinzato 2003). For instance, *pen* in (17) portrays a characteristic of the referent of the subject (categorization), whereas *khuuu* in (18) presents the entity with which the referent of the subject is identified (definition). These dichotomic meanings of the two copulas are presumably ascribable to the different modes of information processing that the speaker executes. Specifically, the use of *pen* reflects slow/analytic processing of information (thought-like processing), while the use of *khuuu* is associated with fast/holistic processing of information (sensation-like processing). Accordingly, the thought-implicating copula *pen* is compatible with modal modification indicative of the speaker’s deliberation, reasoning, inference, judgment, reckoning, etc., e.g., (19), but the sensation-implicating copula *khuuu* is not; see (20).

(19) nân khoŋ pen náŋsǔu u kháw

that probably COP book PRON

‘That is probably his book.’

(20) *nân khoŋ khuuu náŋsǔu u kháw

that probably COP book PRON

IM: ‘That is probably his book.’

Related to this is the fact that *pen* may be used for expressions of negative evaluation, e.g., (21), while *khuuu* cannot; see (22). Someone who uses an expression of negative evaluation has to engage herself in analytic thinking before reaching the conclusion of negative evaluation.⁵ Hence, negative evaluation employs the thought-implicating copula *pen*.

⁵ Takahashi & Shinzato (2003: 138) use the finding of Taylor’s (1976) experiment as evidence supporting this argument. In Taylor’s experiment, the subjects are asked to make “same-different” judgments about successively presented pairs of letters, and he found that “same letter” responses with the recognition of matching letters, which is analogous to the affirmative “X is Y” situation, were faster than “different letter” responses with the recognition of mismatching letters, which is more congruous with the negative “X is not Y” situation. He concludes that while “fast/holistic” processing is employed for “same letter” responses (affirmative recognition), “slow/analytic” processing is utilized for “different letter” responses (negative recognition).

(21) kháw mây pen khruu

PRON NEG COP teacher

‘He is not a teacher.’

(22) *kháw mây khuuu khruu

PRON NEG COP teacher

IM: ‘He is not a teacher.’

The use of a copula is not obligatory, e.g., (23). Daily conversations often dispense with copulas.

(23) nân nâjsǔu u kháw

that book PRON

‘That (is) his book.’

A copula is not used to negate a noun-predicate either. For nominal negation, the nominal negator mây châ (or mǐz châ) ‘NEG’ is put immediately before a noun-predicate.

(24) kháw mây châ khruu

PRON NEG teacher

‘He is not a teacher.’

(25) nân mây châ nâjsǔu u kháw

that NEG book PRON

‘That is not his book.’

However, the copula verb in the quasi-MMC (cf. (4)) is obligatory (cf. 5.1 and 5.4).

4.2 Adnominal clauses

4.2.1 Introductory notes

Teramura (1969) divides adnominal clauses (ACs) (or relative clauses) of Modern Standard Japanese into two types. Tsunoda (this volume-b, 4.2.2) proposes to label these two types as “gap type” and “addition type”. Thai has both of these two types of ACs, as shown below. Roughly speaking, the head noun of an AC of the gap type corresponds to an argument or an adjunct in the clause, while that of an AC of the addition type does not.

Other chapters in the present volume use the terms “ACs of the gap type” and “ACs of the addition type”. In this chapter, however, I use the terms used in previous studies on Thai grammar, that is, “relative clauses” and “noun complement clauses” (Givón 1990: 509, 645–698; Kullavanijaya 2008: 448) in place of these two terms, respectively. (Thai relative clauses may employ the gapping strategy; otherwise, they contain a resumptive pronoun.)

I also conventionally use the terms “relativizer” and “noun complementizer”. They are defined as follows. A relativizer is a functional morpheme that heads an adnominal clause, the head noun of which must have a syntactic relation with the verb in the clause. A noun complementizer is a functional morpheme that heads an adnominal clause, the head noun of which does not have any grammatical relation with the verb in the clause.

In Thai, an adnominal clause – either a relative clause or a noun complement clause – follows its head noun, bringing about a complex noun phrase. In the complex noun phrase, an adnominal clause marker (most commonly sǔu η or thǐi) may be absent, as in (26a), or present, as in (26b) and (26c).

(26) The structure of a noun phrase containing an adnominal clause

a. Head-N Ø Clause

The adnominal clause marker is absent, e.g., (28).

b. Head-N *sû η* Clause

The adnominal clause marker is the relativizer *sû η*, e.g., (30).

c. Head-N *thîi* Clause

The adnominal clause marker is the clausal nominalizer *thîi* functioning as a relativizer, e.g., (30), or as a noun complementizer, e.g., (39).⁶

Usually, a noun complementizer, e.g. *thîi* in (39), is not absent. However, it is not impossible for it to be absent. In present-day Thai, *sû η* is scarcely used as a noun complementizer, though it is still capable of functioning as a noun complementizer.

4.2.2 Relative clauses

Thai relative clauses are of the “external-head”, “postnominal” type in Keenan’s (1985) and Lehmann’s (1986) terminology. Compare (27) with (28), (29) and (30). The relative clause is shown with braces. Example (29) is marked with the sharp (#), which indicates that the sentence concerned is unacceptable for the intended reading but acceptable for some other reading.

(27) *nák sù ksăa rian phaasăa ʔaŋkrit*

student learn English

‘The student learns English.’

(28) *nák sù ksăa (khon) {rian phaasăa ʔaŋkrit}*

student (CLF) learn English

‘the student who learns English’

(29) *#nák sù ksăa {kháw rian phaasăa ʔaŋkrit}*

student PRON learn English

IM: ‘the student who learns English’

(30) *nák sù ksăa (khon) {sû η / thîi (kháw) rian phaasăa ʔaŋkrit}*

student (CLF) REL (PRON) learn English

‘the student who learns English’

Sentence (28) is an example of (26a) (Head-N Ø Clause). When the relativizer is absent, the clause cannot contain its subject. In (29), the clause contains its subject (*kháw* ‘PRON’) and so it is no longer an example of (26a). It does not mean ‘the student who learns English’. It is acceptable for the meaning ‘As for the student, he learns English’. (30) is an example of (26b) (Head-N *sû η* Clause) and (26c) (Head-N *thîi* Clause). A classifier may occur between the head noun and a relative clause, e.g., (28) and (30). Also, a resumptive pronoun may occur in relative clauses, e.g., *kháw* ‘PRON’ in (30).

The head noun of a relative clause corresponds to an argument or an adjunct in the clause. All the positions on Keenan & Comrie’s (1977) noun phrase accessibility hierarchy can be relativized on (Yaowapat & Prasithrathsint 2009). For example, compare (31) with (32) (subject), (33) (direct object) and (34) (indirect object).

(31) *phûu chaay hây ʔaahăan mǎa*

⁶ See Takahashi (2011) for more details on the natures of relative clause constructions with *thîi*, those with *sû η*, and those without a relativizer.

man transfer/give food dog

‘The man gave the dog some food.’

(32) phûu chaay {thîi hây ʔaahǎan mǎa}

man REL transfer/give food dog

‘the man who gave the dog some food’

(33) ʔaahǎan {thîi phûu chaay hây mǎa}

food REL man transfer/give dog

‘the food that the man gave the dog’

(34) mǎa {thîi phûu chaay hây ʔaahǎan}

dog REL man transfer/give food

‘the dog that the man gave some food’

Additional examples in which the subject is relativized on are (28) and (30).

4.2.3 Noun complement clauses

As noted in 4.2.1, the head noun of a noun complement clause does not correspond to any argument or an adjunct in the clause.

For example, compare (35) with (36).

(35) phûu chaay yâaŋ plaa

man grill fish

‘The man grills a fish.’

(36) klin {thîi phûu chaay yâaŋ plaa}

smell COMP man grill fish

LT: ‘the smell that the man grills a fish’

FT: ‘the smell of the man grilling a fish’

Note that the head noun (klin ‘smell’) in (36) is absent in (35). The head noun (klin ‘smell’) does not have any grammatical relation, even oblique one, with the verb in the clause (yâaŋ ‘grill’). The following expressions with an oblique prepositional phrase containing klin ‘smell’, for example, are odd.

(37) *phûu chaay yâaŋ plaa kàp klin

man grill fish to/with smell

IM: ‘The man grills a fish to/with the smell.’

(38) *phûu chaay yâaŋ plaa dûay klin

man grill fish with/by.means.of smell

IM: ‘The man grills a fish with/by.means.of the smell.’

Another example containing a noun complement clause is the following.

(39) rû aŋ {thîi khâw rian phaasǎa ʔaŋkrít}

fact COMP PRON learn English

‘the fact that he learns English’

5 Quasi-mermaid construction

5.1 Introductory notes

The structure of the quasi-MMC of Thai was shown schematically in (4), which is repeated below.

(4) Quasi-MMC of Thai

- a. Psych-verb type: (Target-N) Copula-V [NMLZ Psych-V] (Obl-P Experiencer-N).
 - b. Speech-verb type: (Target-N) Copula-V [NMLZ Speech-V] (Obl-P Speaker-N).
 - c. Quotative-complementation type: Copula-V [NMLZ Psych-V/Speech-V] [COMP Clause].
- (COMP: complementizer. N: noun. NMLZ: nominalizer. Obl-P: oblique preposition. V: verb.)

As noted in Section 3, these three structures are peripheral types of the MMC. Tsunoda (this volume-a, 2.3-[2]) notes that these three structures of Thai “may be considered variants of the MMC, although they are the farthest away from the MMC prototype among all the varieties of the MMC investigated in the present volume”. The extent to which the Thai quasi-MMC is remote from the prototype of the MMC will be illustrated in 5.9-[1] below.

In (4), the constituents shown with parentheses are optional. Note that in each type the copula verb is obligatory. This is in contrast with ordinary copula-verb-predicate sentences or the copulative construction (see 5.4), in which the copula verb is used optionally; see (23).

“Target-N” identifies the target, goal or the like of psychological/verbal activities. “Obl-P” may be *khǒɔŋ* ‘GEN’, *nay* ‘LOC’, *kɛ̀* ‘DAT’, or *kàp* ‘COM/DAT’. “Experiencer-N” refers to the mental “Undergoer”, i.e., an experiencer, and “Speaker-N” indicates the verbal “Actor”, i.e., a speaker. The terms “Undergoer” and “Actor” for macro-roles are adopted from Foley & Van Valin (1984). [COMP Clause] (the quotative complementizer plus a clause) represents the complement of the psych/speech verb.

In (4), the square brackets are used to mark a unit whose constituents are inseparable. The psych-verb type (4a) and the speech-verb type (4b) do not contain [COMP Clause]; “Target-N” and “Obl-P Experiencer-N/Speaker-N” are dispensable for these two types. On the other hand, the quotative-complementation type (4c) lacks both of “Target-N” and “Obl-P Experiencer-N/Speaker-N”; [NMLZ Psych/ Speech-V] and [COMP Clause] are indispensable to this type.

The psych-verb type (i.e. (4a)) is the oldest quasi-MMC in Thai. It has been used since the era of the Sukhothai dynasty (13–14C), the earliest period in the documented history of the Thai language (Kitsombat 1981: 33). The speech-verb type (i.e. (4b)) and the quotative-complementation type (i.e. (4c)) appear to have originated from the psych-verb type. Presumably, the speech-verb type arose rather recently. It is not mentioned in the existing studies on Thai grammar. The quotative-complementation type emerged in the nineteenth century (Kitsombat 1981: 44) and came to be commonly used in the twentieth century (Prasithrathsint 1985: 96).

For seven hundred years the psych-verb type has been used to describe a situation where a certain entity, i.e., person or matter, is the target of a group of people’s or the general public’s psychological activity such as perception, emotion and cognition. Put differently, it is a useful device to effectively encode a human-particular event in which a group of associated people are together mentally affected in some way by a remarkable entity in the society. Therefore, it has been regarded as a peculiar sort of passive construction by Thai linguists, e.g., Prasithrathsint (1985: 17, 92–97). In particular, it is taken to be a non-prototypical passive construction with a transitive verb for psychological activity. The degree of its transitivity is quite low.⁷

⁷ The other types of passive construction in Thai are exemplified below. The word/words in bold face indicate(s) that the sentence is a passive construction.

The present chapter sets forth an alternative analysis demonstrating that these three constructions can be regarded as peripheral MMCs.

In the following subsections we will closely examine each constituent of the quasi-MMC of Thai, paying attention to their semantic and syntactic aspects: clausal nominalizers (5.2), psych-verbs and speech verbs (5.3), copula verb (5.4), oblique noun phrases (5.5), target noun phrase (5.6) and quotative complement clause (5.7). We then turn to other issues: meanings of the quasi-MMC (5.8), Can the Clause be used as a sentence by itself? (5.9), and sentencehood of the Clause (5.10). Morphological issues are largely not relevant, since Thai is basically an isolating language. In order to appreciate the structure and meaning of the quasi-MMC, it is the most convenient to start with clausal nominalizers.

5.2 Clausal nominalizers

The clausal nominalizers⁸ used in the quasi-MMC are *thîi* and *kaan*. In the quasiMMC of the present-day Thai, *kaan* is little used, whereas *thîi* is dominantly used.⁹ Both *kaan* and *thîi* are polysemous, polyfunctional morphemes, as shown below.

kaan is used as (i) a generic noun meaning ‘activity, affair’, e.g., (40); (ii) a class noun¹⁰ meaning ‘matter’, e.g., (41); (iii) a lexical nominalizer, e.g., (42); (iv) a clausal nominalizer, e.g., (43).

(40) *ṇaan kaan*

work activity

‘duties’

(41) *kaan prapaa*

matter water.supply

‘waterworks’

(i) *bāan nán thùuk (fay) phǎw mây*

house that undergo/PASS (fire) burn

LT: ‘The house underwent (an event that) (the fire) burnt (it).’

FT: ‘The house was burnt (by the fire).’

(ii) *khǎw dāy rǎp kaan chūay lǔu a (cǎak phǔu an)*

PRON receive NMLZ support (from friend)

LT: ‘He received the support (from his friends).’

FT: ‘He was helped (by his friends).’

(iii) *nǎngsǔu u nǐ khǎan dooy nǎk khǎan thǐi mǐi chǔu u sǎn*

book this write by writer REL be.famous

‘This book was written by a famous writer.’

Type (i) contains a transitive verb that expresses a damaging activity or process (e.g., *phǎw mây* ‘burn’). Type (i) by and large conveys the sense of adversity. Type (ii) contains a transitive verb that describes an activity of benefit (e.g., *chūay lǔu a* ‘help’). Type (iii) contains a transitive verb that represents a creating activity (e.g., *khǎan* ‘write’).

⁸ The term “clausal nominalizer” refers to a lexical item functioning as a syntactic device for clausal nominalization (in contrast with a morphological device for lexical nominalization, e.g., -ness in English). By the term “clausal nominalization” I mean the process through which a verbal clause is converted into a noun phrase. The converted noun phrase, i.e., nominalized clause, is generally embedded as an argument, a complement, or an adverbial of another clause (Givón 1990: 498).

⁹ John Whitman (p.c.) comments that it might be the case that the nominalizer *thîi* in the Thai quasi-MMC is a calque (loan translation) of the nominalizer *suo* in Chinese. I am not in a position to judge whether this idea is plausible, for I do not have sufficient knowledge of historical changes of the two morphemes. However, one may say that the assumed grammaticalization pathways of *suo* (cf. Yap & Wang 2011) have something parallel to those of *thîi* (cf. Kullavanijaya 2008). The Chinese morpheme *suo*, just like the Thai morpheme *thîi*, was originally a noun meaning ‘place’ and evolved into a “light noun”, viz., semantically generalized or bleached noun (or “class noun” in Bisang’s (1993) terminology; cf. Note 10), before further developing into a wide range of functional morphemes including location nominalizer, patient nominalizer, conditional subordinator, and part of possessive and passive constructions.

¹⁰ Class nouns are defined by Bisang (1993: 5) as “nouns with a high level of abstraction”. In other words, they are nouns having generic (non-specific) meanings. DeLancey (1986: 438–439) explicates the characteristics of “class nouns” which he calls “class terms” as follows. (N.B., The present author has supplied the words in the square brackets.)

[Class terms = class nouns] are morphemes which occur as the head of a number of noun compounds which are exemplars of the category labelled by the class term [= class noun]. Thus class terms [= class nouns] have a semantic classifying function quite similar to that of classifiers, although they do not ordinarily show the incoherent range of uses which is a not uncommon feature of classifiers. Many class terms [= class nouns], like *khon* [‘person’ in Thai], also function as classifiers (though [...] it is not always the case that a class term [= class noun] which is also a classifier is the classifier for all compounds in which it functions as a class term [= class noun]); and a number of class terms [= class nouns] do not occur alone as independent nouns.

(42) kaan sù ksāa pen phúu un thāan khǒŋ thúk wátthanátham

NMLZ study COP foundation GEN every culture

‘Education is the foundation of every culture.’

(43) kaan cà? yàa ráan lḗ w hǎa khūu mǎy yǒm mǐ? chǎy rǔu aŋ nǎay

NMLZ IRR divorce PFV seek spouse new inevitably NEG matter easy

‘To divorce and look for a new spouse is inevitably not an easy matter.’

Generic nouns are lexical morphemes proper, which have a referential and contentful meaning and can occur independently of other morphemes in an utterance. Class nouns are partially lexical and partially functional morphemes. They are lexical morphemes in that their meanings are referential even though their level of abstraction is rather high, at least higher than the basic level. At the same time, they may be considered functional in that they are always followed by a noun (e.g. (41)) or a verb (e.g. (45) and (46)) and form a compound in which they function as the head referring to some class/type. A compound with a class noun is basically a noun (e.g. (41) and (45)) but it may be used as an adverb (e.g. (46)). In contrast, nominalizers are functional morphemes proper, whose meanings are totally procedural. While generic nouns and class nouns have a referential meaning, nominalizers do not.

The compound *naan kaan* ‘duties’ in (40) is composed of two generic nouns *naan* ‘work’ and *kaan* ‘activity’, neither of which functions as the head of the compound. The compound *kaan prapaa* ‘waterworks’ in (41) contains the class noun *kaan* ‘matter’ that refers to a class/type of matter-like entities. The class noun is the head constituent of the compound. The nominalizer *kaan* ‘NMLZ’ in (42) and (43) is utilized for lexical and clausal nominalization, respectively.

thii is used as (i) a generic noun meaning ‘place’, e.g., (44); (ii) a class noun meaning ‘entity (thing, instrument, person, etc.)’, e.g., (45) and (46); (iii) a classifier, e.g., (47); (iv) a preposition, e.g., (48); (v) a clausal nominalizer, e.g., (49); (vi) a relativizer, e.g., (30) and (50); (vii) a noun complementizer, e.g., (36), (39) and (51); (viii) a verb complementizer following an emotion verb, e.g., (52).¹¹ (The other two verb complementizers are *wāa* (< *wāa* ‘say’), which follows a perception/cognition/speech verb, and *hāy* (< *hāy* ‘transfer/give’), which follows a desiderative/ volitive-action verb.) Note that in Thai any adnominal phrases and clauses, including demonstratives, classifier and prepositional phrases, and relative and complement clauses, follow the head noun phrase.

(44) *thii* (din)

place (earth)

‘place (a piece of land)’

(45) *thii nān*

entity sit

‘seat’

(46) *thii cīn*

entity be.true

‘in fact (< what is true)’

(47) *nām chaa sǒŋ thii*

water tea two CLF

LT: ‘two teas’

¹¹ My basic view of the morpheme *thii* is as follows. The adnominal clause marker *thii*, including the relativizer *thii*, e.g., (50), and the noun complementizer *thii*, e.g., (51), as well as the verbal complementizer *thii*, e.g., (52), are variants of the versatile clausal nominalizer *thii*, e.g., (49). In other words, *thii* is basically a clausal nominalizer and it may function as a relativizer, as a noun complementizer, or as a verb complementizer in accordance with its varying syntactic and semantic conditions.

FT: ‘tea for two people’

(48) dèk dèk thii bân

children at house

‘the children at home’

(49) thii khaw laa ʔòk thamhâi chán lambàak

NMLZ PRON resign make PRON be.hard

‘That he resigned made me feel hard.’

(50) plaa {thii khaw yâaŋ}

fish REL PRON grill

‘the fish that he grilled’

(51) rû aŋ {thii khaw laa ʔòk}

fact COMP PRON resign

‘the fact that he resigned’

(52) chán sǎ cay {thii khaw laa ʔòk}

PRON be.sorry COMP PRON resign

‘I was sorry that he resigned.’

The demarcation between the class noun thii ‘entity’ and the nominalizer thii ‘NMLZ’ is parallel to that between the class noun kaan ‘matter’ and the nominalizer kaan ‘NMLZ’, as noted above. That is, the class noun thii is a lexical morpheme referring to a class/type of certain entities, while the nominalizer thii is a functional morpheme for clausal nominalization.

It is in the capacity of a clausal nominalizer that thii and kaan can occur in the quasi-MMC of Thai. Examples of the quasi-MMC involving thii include (6) (psychverb type), (7) (speech-verb type), (8) (quotative-complementation type), and (53) (psych-verb type). Those involving kaan include (54) (psych-verb type).

(53) nay bàtcuban níi ʔaahǎan yîipùn càʔ pen [thii níyom kan yàaŋ phræ lǎay] nay mùu khon thay

currently food Japan IRR COP NMLZ favor RECP widely LOC group people Thai

LT: ‘Currently Japanese food is that/what (they) favor widely in the group of Thai people.’ (psych-verb type)

FT: ‘Currently Japanese food is widely favored among Thai people.’

(54) phaasǐi pen [kaan ramkhaan] kàp khon sú u khǎay

tax COP NMLZ be.annoyed COM/DAT buyers.and.sellers

LT: ‘Tax is that/what (they) are annoyed (at), with buyers and sellers.’

FT: ‘Buyers and sellers are annoyed at tax’ or ‘Tax annoys buyers and sellers.’ (psych-verb type)

Both of the nominalizers thii and kaan can be used as a noun with a generic meaning. kaan is used as the generic noun ‘activity, affair’ and the class noun ‘matter’. Likewise, thii is used as the generic noun ‘place’ and the class noun ‘entity’. As shown in other chapters in the present volume, nouns that occupy the Noun slot of the MMC in other languages often have generic meanings. (See Tsunoda, this volume-a, 3.1.3.1.) In this respect, too, the quasi-MMC in Thai is similar to the MMC in these languages.

5.3 Psych-verbs and speech verbs

Verbs following the clausal nominalizer in the quasi-MMC are categorized as follows.¹²

(a) Psych-verbs

(a-1) Perception verbs

hěn ‘see’, pracàk ‘be.evident’.

(a-2) Emotion verbs

chủ a măn ‘be.confident’ (6), nỳom ‘favor’ (53), (57) and (60), (nâa) sĩa daay ‘regret’, (nâa) ramkhaan ‘be.annoyed’ (54), zùn cay ‘feel.relieved’ (55), tồk kaan ‘need’ (73), rák ‘love’, khrây ‘desire’, lỏn lỏy ‘dote.on’ (58), sanúk ‘enjoy’ (62), sàtthaa ‘believe.in’ (64), (nâa) phỏ cay ‘feel.satisfied’ (65), nêe nỏn ‘be.sure’ (66), chủ a thũ u ‘trust, have.faith.in’, phítsàwỏn ‘wonder.in.admiration’, bủ a ‘be.tired’.

(a-3) Cognition verbs

yỏm ráp ‘admit’ (8), rủ cắc ‘know, be.acquainted.with’ (59) and (63), rủ/sỏp ‘know, be.aware.of’, khỏ cay ‘understand’, (nâa) sỏk kỏet ‘notice’, sỏn cay ‘be.interested’.

(b) Speech verbs

klỏaw ‘say’ (7) and (67), klỏaw khỏn ‘criticize’ (56), lủ a lủ ‘rumor’.

Examples (55) and (56), respectively, contain a psych-verb (zùn cay ‘feel.relieved’) and a speech verb (klỏaw khỏn ‘criticize’).

(55) phủ ráp chỏy thũ u khỏam sủ u tron pen [thũ zùn cay]

employee REL hold loyalty COP NMLZ feel.relieved khỏn hủ nỏ GEN boss

LT: ‘Employees who have loyalty are that/what (they) feel relieved of the bosses.’ (psych-verb type)

FT: ‘Employees with loyalty are a relief to the bosses.’

(56) phalittaphan lỏ nủ pen [thũ klỏaw khỏn thũ ỏ yỏn mỏak]

product these COP NMLZ criticize reach very.much

LT: ‘These products are that/what (they) criticize very much.’

FT: ‘These products are criticized very much.’ (speech-verb type)

The sample data collected from the Thai National Corpus reveals that psychverbs are more common than speech verbs in the quasi-MMC in terms of both token and type frequency.¹³ Only psych-verbs and speech verbs are used in the quasiMMC. Prototypical transitive verbs, such as ‘break (something)’, do not occur in the quasi-MMC. Thus, in this respect the quasi-MMC is low in transitivity.

The serial verb construction abounds in Thai. Expectedly, a psych-verb or a speech verb appearing in the quasi-MMC is often followed by other verbs. Examples include (7) ‘say + reach’, (56) ‘criticize + reach’, (57) ‘favor + eat’, (58) ‘love + desire + dote.on’, and (63) ‘know + be.good’.

(57) ỏỏỏỏ nủ pen [thũ nỳom rápprathaa kan thủa pay]

food this COP NMLZ favor eat RECP in.general

¹² The psych-verbs and speech verbs listed below are mainly taken from the collected sample data and partially supplied by my native-speaker consultant.

¹³ As noted in the last paragraph of Section 3, the data for the present work was mainly taken from a corpus of written texts. Dealing with data only from a corpus of written texts has a limitation. If we analyze oral data, too, a different picture may emerge. For example, both psych-verbs and speech verbs may turn out to be commonly used in the quasi-MMC.

LT: ‘This food is that/what (they) favor for eating generally.’

FT: ‘This food is generally favored for eating.’ (psych-verb type)

5.4 Copula verb

Thai has two copulas: the thought-implying copula *pen* (the copula verb) and the sensation-implying copula *khuuu* (the copula particle) (see 4.1). Only *pen* is used in the quasi-MMC. Its use in the quasi-MMC is obligatory. This is in contrast with ordinary copula-verb-predicate sentences or the copulative construction, in which the copula verb is used optionally; see (23).

The copula verb *pen* in the quasi-MMC (i.e. Copula-V), like a psych/speech verb in the construction (i.e. Psych/Speech-V), can participate in the serial verb construction. For example, in (74), it is preceded by another verb (*râəm* ‘begin’).

The copula verb (Copula-V) may be accompanied by a modal marker and/or an aspectual marker. (In Thai, it is not always easy to distinguish between modal markers and aspectual markers.) Examples include the deontic marker *yôəm* ‘inevitably’ in (6); the irrealis marker *cà?* in (53) and (58); the continuous marker *yaŋ* ‘still’, the epistemic marker *khon* ‘probably’, and the negative marker *mây* in (59); and the progressive marker *kamlaŋ* in (60). Hence, the entire sentence – with the copula verb – is fully asserted. (In contrast, the psych/speech verb (Psych/Speech-V) cannot be accompanied by a modal and/or aspectual marker. That is, the clause containing psych/speech verb cannot be fully asserted. See 5.10-[2] for a further discussion.)

(58) *naaŋ cà? pen [thii rák khrây lǒŋlǎy] khǒŋ theep thán lǎay*

lady IRR COP NMLZ love desire dote.on GEN god all.and.sundry

LT: ‘The lady would be that/what (they) love and dote on of all the gods.’ (psych-verb type)

FT: ‘The lady would be loved and doted on by all the gods.’

(59) *tɔɔn nán ʔaahǎan yǐpùn kô yaŋ khon mây pen [thii rúu càk]*

that.time food Japan CONJ CONT probably NEG COP NMLZ know

LT: ‘At that time, Japanese food was probably not yet that/what (they) know.’ (psych-verb type)

FT: ‘At that time, Japanese food was probably not yet known.’

(60) *ʔaahǎan níi kamlaŋ pen [thii níyom kan]*

food this PROG COP NMLZ favor RECP

LT: ‘This food is being that/what (they) favor.’ (psych-verb type)

FT: ‘This food is being favored.’

The structure of the ordinary copulative construction is shown in (61). Examples include (17).

(61) Ordinary copulative construction

Nominal(1) Copula-V Nominal(2)

The quasi-MMC (cf. (4)) and the ordinary copulative construction exhibit the following commonalities and differences.

(a) Commonalities

(a-1) Both contain the copula verb *pen* (Copula-V).

(a-2) In both of them (except the quotative-complementation type of the quasiMMC), the copula verb functions as the linker of two nominals.

(b) Differences

(b-1) Structural difference

In the ordinary copulative construction, what follows the copula verb is a nominal in general. It may be a simplex noun phrase or a nominalized clause. But in the quasi-MMC, what follows the copula verb is always “Clause (= [Psych-V/Speech-V])” (see Section 5.10).

(b-2) Semantic difference

In the quasi-MMC (except the quotative-complementation type), the nominal that precedes the copula verb represents the target of an activity denoted by the psych/speech verb that follows the copula verb. Such a semantic relationship cannot be found in the ordinary copulative construction.

On the basis of these structural and semantic differences, it is justifiable to say that the quasi-MMC is a construction distinct from the ordinary copulative construction.

5.5 Oblique prepositional phrase

The structure of the psych-verb type (4a) and the speech-verb type (4b) contains an oblique prepositional phrase (“Obl-P Experiencer-N” or “Obl-P Speaker-N”). The following prepositions are attested: khǒŋ ‘GEN’, e.g. (6), (58), (65), nay ‘LOC’, e.g. (53), (63), (64), kè ε ‘DAT’, e.g. (62), and kàp ‘COM/DAT’, e.g. (54). The speaker noun phrase (Speaker-N) cannot be preceded by the dative preposition kè ε or the comitative/dative preposition kàp.

(62) pen [thîi sanùk] kè ε thêephayádaa thán puan

COP NMLZ enjoy DAT god all

LT: ‘(It) was that/what (they) enjoy to all the gods.

FT: ‘All the gods enjoyed (it)’ or ‘(It) was enjoyed by all the gods.’ (psychverb type)

In the quasi-MMC of the contemporary Thai, the genitive case and the locative case seem dominant, but the dative case and the comitative/dative case are uncommon.

The noun phrase following the preposition refers to an experiencer (mental Undergoer) or a speaker (verbal Actor). The experiencer/speaker is generally a certain group of people or the general public, and not a specific individual. When a noun phrase in a locative prepositional phrase names a specific place, it metonymically refers to the people living there. For example, in (63), náŋhásáŋkì? ‘Nagasaki’ refers to Nagasaki people.

(63) kaafæ pen khru̯ aŋ dùu um sū η pen [thîi rúu càk kan dii] nay náŋhásáŋkì? maa tân tē samăy ʔèdò?

coffee COP drink REL COP NMLZ know RECP be.good LOC Nagasaki CONT since the.Edo.era

LT: ‘Coffee is the drink which has been that/what (they) know well in Nagasaki since the Edo era.’ (psych-verb type)

FT: ‘Coffee is the drink which has been well known in Nagasaki since the Edo era.’

The oblique prepositional phrase may be absent, e.g., (7), (56), (57), (59), (60) and (73). Nonetheless, it is by no means insignificant. Indeed its presence is often necessary for adequately interpreting a quasi-MMC, especially if the experiencer/ speaker noun phrase refers to not the general public, but members of a certain group. As examples, consider (64) and (65). If the prepositional phrase (nay mùu chon chán náŋ róp ‘in the group of the warrior class’ in (64) and khǒŋ khǒmmiwnít ‘of the communists’ in (65)) were absent, it would be impossible to precisely understand what the expressions mean.

(64) níkaay sen pen [thîi sàtthaa] nay mùu chon chán nák róp

sect Zen COP NMLZ believe.in LOC group social.class warrior

LT: 'The Zen sect was that/what (they) believe in in the group of the warrior class.' (psych-verb type)

FT: 'The Zen sect was believed in by the warriors.'

(65) bùkkhon phûu níi pen [thîi phòw cay] khǒw khǒwmmiwnít

person CLF this COP NMLZ feel.satisfied GEN communist

LT: 'This person is that/what (they) feel satisfied of the communists.'

FT: 'This person satisfies the communists' or 'The communists are satisfied with this person.' (psych-verb type)

5.6 Target noun phrase

The structure of the psych-verb type (4a) and that of the speech-verb type (4b) contain a noun phrase representing the target of a psychological/verbal activity (Target-N), e.g., (6) kháw 'PRON'; (7) nawaniyaay rûu aŋ níi 'this novel'; (53), (59) ʔaahǎan yiipùn 'Japanese food'; (54) phaasǐi 'tax'; (55) phûu ráp cháw thîi thûu u khwaam sùu u troŋ 'employees with loyalty'; (56) phalittaphan làw níi 'these products'; (57), (60) ʔaahǎan níi 'this food'; (58) naaŋ 'the lady'; (63) khǒu aŋ dùu uum 'the drink'; (64) níkaay sen 'the Zen sect'; (65) bùkkhon phûu níi 'this person'; and (73) ʔaahǎan chǎw khǎw ǎ 'frozen foods'. The target noun phrase is not an argument (subject/object) noun phrase of a verb in the construction. It is a sort of topic noun phrase that names a salient entity serving as the stimulus of a psychic state or a verbal activity, such as the object of emotional concern (admiration, desire, confidence, anxiety, envy, aversion, etc.), the focus of cognition, the target of criticism, and the center of public attention. Take the target noun phrase in (65) (bùkkhon phûu níi 'this person'), for an example. It refers to the person whose behavior has been observed by the communists and who eventually makes them feel satisfied. Sometimes the target noun phrase is absent and the preceding sentence or discourse alludes to the target, goal or the like of the psych/speech verb in question.

By contrast, the structure of the quotative-complementation type (4c) does not contain the target noun phrase. This is because the description of this type of the quasi-MMC places focus on the content of a complement clause of the psych/speech verb. It expresses the utterer's view or belief regarding the general public's feeling or opinion (see 5.7).

5.7 Quotative complement clause

The structure of the quotative-complementation type (4c) contains a complement clause of a psych/speech verb, which is led by the quotative complementizer wǎa ([COMP Clause]), e.g., (8), (66) and (67). The quotative complement clause immediately follows [NMLZ Psych/Speech-V].

(66) pen [thîi nǎw nǎw] [wǎa kaan plǎn plǎw làw níi sǒw phǒn tòw rûup bèw ruan lǎw ...]

COP NMLZ be.sure COMP NMLZ change these transmit effect upon style house and

LT: '(It) is that/what (they) are sure that these changes effected the style of houses and ...'

FT: '(It) is sure that these changes effected the style of houses and ...' (quotative-complementation type)

(67) pen [thîi klàaw kan] [wǎa camnuan chaaw yiw thîi taay loŋ khǎw hǎw níi mâak kwǎa khon yǎeraman thîi...]

COP NMLZ say RECP COMP number people Jew REL die TER camp CLF this be.many more.than person German REL

LT: '(It) is that/what (they) say that the number of Jewish people who died in this camp was more than German people that ...'

FT: '(It) is said that the number of Jewish people who died in this camp was more than German people that ...' (quotative-complementation type)

As mentioned in Section 2, the quotative-complementation type seems to have derived from the oldest quasi-MMC, i.e. the psych-verb type, which inherently takes no complement clause. Unlike the psych-verb type and also unlike the speechverb type, the quotative-complementation type specifies neither the experiencer/speaker (Obl + Experiencer/Speaker) nor the target of the experiencer/speaker's psychological/verbal activity (Target). Rather, it signals that the unnamed experiencer/speaker is supposed to be the general public. The quotative complement clause represents the general public's feeling or opinion, which the utterer assumes; or more accurately, it expresses the utterer's view or belief that the general public must feel or think so. On this basis, it can be regarded as a "modalized construction". That is, it is likely that over time the construction has undergone the process of "subjectification", i.e., a pragmatic-semantic process whereby meanings become increasingly based on the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition, or the process of "modalisation of the epistemic kind", and eventually gained a modal meaning (cf. Traugott 1989, 1995). As the construction came to suppress the prepositional phrase and embrace the complement clause, its meaning shifted from less subjective/epistemic, i.e., being based on the external described situation, to more subjective/epistemic, i.e., being based on the internal described situation. While the original construction remains irrelevant to modality, the derived construction thus exhibits the utterer's stance or epistemic attitude toward what she/he is talking about.

It is useful to cite an example of the Modern Standard Japanese MMC with the enclitic nominalizer =no. See the second sentence in (68) (cited from Tsunoda (this volume-b, 5.1.4)).

Modern Standard Japanese:

(68) gakusee=ga issyokenmee benkyoo-si-te i-ru.

student=NOM very.hard study-do-GNF be-NPST

'The students are studying very hard.'

siken=ga ar-u =no =da.

examination=NOM be-NPST =NMLZ =COP.NPST

Clause Noun Copula

'This is because there will be an examination.'

The second sentence in (68) has the structure shown in (1). Siken=ga and ar-u constitute the Clause. The Noun slot is occupied by the nominalizer =no. That is, the second sentence has the structure shown in (2). (The enclitic =no may also be regarded as the genitive case marker or a non-content noun.) The Modern Standard Japanese MMC with =no expresses cause, reason, or the like.

The quasi-MMC of Thai shares the following commonality with the instances of the MMC reported from other languages: a clause (e.g. Clause in (1)) is indispensable.

In particular, the quotative-complementation type of the Thai quasi-MMC is similar to the Modern Standard Japanese MMC with the nominalizer =no in that they are both grammatical constructions with an epistemic modal flavor. Specifically, the quotative-complementation type expresses the utterer's view or belief regarding the general public's feeling or opinion, and the Modern Standard Japanese MMC with the nominalizer =no denotes the utterer's understanding or judgment as to what is the cause, reason, or the like of the relevant situation.

5.8 Meanings of the quasi-MMC

We now recapitulate the meanings of the three types of the Thai quasi-MMC.

The psych-verb type describes a situation where a certain entity, i.e., person or matter, is the target of a group of

people's or the general public's psychological activity such as perception, emotion and cognition. It is a useful device to effectively encode a human-particular event in which a group of associated people are together mentally affected in some way by a remarkable entity in the society.

The speech-verb type describes a situation where a certain entity is the target of a group of people's or the general public's verbal activity such as criticizing and rumoring.

The quotative-complementation type expresses the utterer's view or belief regarding the general public's feeling or opinion.

5.9 Can the Clause be used as a sentence by itself?

As seen in Section 1, Tsunoda (this volume-a) proposes that the prototype of the MMC has five properties, one of which is the following:

(d) The Clause can be used as a sentence by itself.

The aim of the investigation that follows is to examine whether the Clause is acceptable as a non-elliptical sentence (not just as an elliptical sentence) by itself.

Regarding the Thai quasi-MMC, it is not easy to identify the Clause itself. This issue will be discussed in [1]. Then, whether the Clause of the Thai quasi-MMC can be used as a sentence (to be precise, a non-elliptical sentence) will be discussed in [2].

[1] Clause

As stated above, concerning the Thai-quasi MMC, it is not easy to identify the Clause itself. The reason for this is the following. As mentioned in Section 1, according to Tsunoda (this volume-a, 2.3-[2]), the three types of the Thai quasi-MMC may be considered variants of the MMC, but they are the farthest away from the MMC prototype among all the varieties of the MMC investigated in the present volume.

As noted in Section 1, the prototype of the MMC has a structure shown in (1) – superficially at least. The Noun slot may be occupied by a nominalizer, as shown in (2). Note that the nominalizer (NMLZ) is outside the Clause. Thai has three structures that may be considered variants of the MMC, as shown in (4). They contain a nominalizer (NMLZ). As noted in Section 1, the nominalizer and the psych/speech verb form a unit, to the exclusion of the prepositional phrase (“Obl-P Experiencer-N” or “Obl-P Speaker-N”). A group of words that form a unit are shown with the use of square brackets.

(1) Prototype of the mermaid construction (“MMC”): Clause Noun Copula.

(2) Clause NMLZ Copula.

(4) Quasi-MMC of Thai

a. Psych-verb type: (Target-N) Copula-V [NMLZ Psych-V] (Obl-P Experiencer-N).

b. Speech-verb type: (Target-N) Copula-V [NMLZ Speech-V] (Obl-P Speaker-N).

c. Quotative-complementation type: Copula-V [NMLZ Psych-V/Speech-V] [COMP Clause].

In the MMC of many other languages, the Clause can contain arguments (the subject and the object) and adjuncts. For example, consider the following sentence, which is an instance of the MMC of Modern Standard Japanese.

Modern Standard Japanese:

(69) asita koko=de syusyoo=ga enzetu=o su-ru yotee =da.

tomorrow here=LOC/INS prime.minister=NOM speech=ACC Clause do-NSPT plan =COP.NPST

Clause

Noun Copula

‘The prime minister plans to deliver a speech here tomorrow.’

(Syusyoo=ga ‘Prime.minister=NOM’ (the subject) and enzetu=o ‘speech=ACC’ (the object) are arguments of su-ru ‘do-NPST’.)

In contrast, the Thai quasi-MMC does not have a constituent that exactly corresponds to the Clause of the MMC in languages such as Modern Standard Japanese. See (4a), for example. Psych-V does not have any argument (in contrast with su-ru ‘do-NPST’ of (69)). For example, “Obl-P Experiencer-N” is not an argument of PsychV. As noted in Section 3, the A, the S, and the O are not marked for case. “Obl-P Experiencer-N” contains a preposition, and therefore it is not an argument. It is an adjunct (an oblique prepositional phrase). Target-N is separated from Psych-V; Copula-V and NMLZ intervene between them. Therefore, it should not be considered an argument of Psych-V. The same applies to (4b), and a similar remark applies to (4c).

It is important to stress here that, while a verb (or serial verbs) in an independent verb-predicate sentence may or may not take an argument, a psych/speech verb in the quasi-MMC must not take an argument. Consider (70), which is a constructed example. The psych-verb (təŋ kaan^ ‘need’) takes an experiencer noun phrase (chaaw yîipùn ‘Japanese people’) as its subject argument, and this expression is not acceptable.

(70) *ʔaahāan chɛ̌ khɛ̌ ŋ rə̌ ɔm pen^ [thîi chaaw yîipùn təŋ kaan^]

frozen.foods begin COP NMLZ people Japan need

IM: ‘Frozen foods began to be needed among Japanese people.’

We have seen that for the Thai quasi-MMC, it is not easy to identify the Clause itself. (This in turn shows the extent to which the Thai quasi-MMC departs from the MMC in languages such as Modern Standard Japanese.) For the purpose of the present subsection – Can the Clause be used as a sentence by itself? –, the Clause of the Thai quasi-MMC is characterized as follows: the morpheme/morphemes that remains/remain after the NMLZ has been deleted from [NMLZ Psych-V], [NMLZ Speech-V] and [NMLZ Psych-V/Speech-V], respectively. (In (2), the NMLZ is outside the Clause. Therefore, in (4), too, the NMLZ should be considered to be outside the Clause.) For the purpose of presentation, this/these morpheme/morphemes that remains/remain will be shown as “the portion [Psych-V/Speech-V]”.

[2] Unacceptability of the Clause as a sentence by itself

The portion [Psych-V/Speech-V] of the quasi-MMC is not acceptable as a non-elliptical sentence, although it may be acceptable as an elliptical sentence. For example, the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of (6) (psych-verb type) is as shown in (71). Similarly for (7) (speech-verb type) and (72), and for (8) (quotative-complementation type) and (73).

(71) chû a mân

be.confident

‘(A group of people) are confident (of something).’

(72) klàaw thǔŋ ŋ yàaŋ phrêe lăay

say reach widely ‘(A group of people) mention (something) widely.’

(73) yɔɔm ráp kan thûa pay

admit RECP in.general ‘(A group of people) admit (something) generally.’

All of (71), (72) and (73) are incomplete as sentences. They are not acceptable as non-elliptical sentences. At best they are elliptical sentences, as shown in the translations above.

To sum up the discussion of 5.9, it is not easy to identify the Clause of the Thai quasi-MMC. (This is because the Thai quasi-MMC is remote from the MMC in languages such as Modern Standard Japanese.) Nonetheless, if we take “the portion [Psych-V/Speech-V]” to be the Clause, the Clause is not acceptable as a sentence (to be precise, a non-elliptical sentence) by itself.

5.10 Sentencehood of the Clause

The Clause of the Thai quasi-MMC lacks properties of independent sentences at least in the following two respects and it shows a lower degree of sentencehood than independent sentences.

[1] Absence of arguments

As seen in 5.9, the Clause (i.e. the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]”) of the quasi-MMC cannot take any argument, in contrast with independent sentences. Consequently, it cannot be used as a sentence (to be precise, a non-elliptical sentence) by itself. At best it will be an elliptical sentence.

In the structure of the quasi-MMC (4a, b), the noun phrase representing the experiencer/speaker (Experiencer-N/Speaker-N) is preceded by an oblique preposition (Obl-P). The “Obl-P Experiencer-N/Speaker-N” (oblique prepositional phrase) is an adverbial element, not an argument (see 4.1).

[2] Modal and/or aspectual markers

(As noted in 5.4, in Thai, it is not always easy to distinguish between modal markers and aspectual markers.) The Clause (i.e. the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]”) of the quasi-MMC cannot contain any modal/aspectual marker. Compare (74) and (75). In (75), which is a constructed example, the verb *tôn* *kaan* ‘need’ is accompanied by a modal and/or aspectual marker (*cà* ‘IRR’), and the sentence is unacceptable.

(74) *ʔaahǎan chɛ̃ khɛ̃ ɲ rǎ̌ ɔm peñ [thii tɔ̃n kaañ]*

frozen.foods begin COP NMLZ need

LT: ‘Frozen foods began to be that/what (they) need.’

FT: ‘Frozen foods began to be needed.’ (psych-verb type)

(75) **ʔaahǎan chɛ̃ khɛ̃ rǎ̌m peñ [thii cà tɔ̃n kaañ]*

frozen.foods begin COP NMLZ IRR need

IM: ‘Frozen foods began to be needed.’

Needless to say, modal and aspectual markers are acceptable in independent sentences, e.g. (9) (*ʔàat* ‘maybe’), (10) (*khûn* ‘INC’), and (19) (*khon* ‘probably’).

The acceptability/unacceptability of arguments concerns an important aspect of sentencehood. The acceptability/unacceptability of modal markers concern another important aspect of sentencehood: assertedness, i.e., functional independence at the speech-act level (Croft 2001: 338, 360). As seen above, the Clause of the quasi-MMC cannot contain any argument. Nor can it contain any modal/aspectual marker. This shows that the Clause lacks two important properties of independent sentences. To conclude, the Clause exhibits a very low degree of sentencehood.

I note in passing that the copula verb (Copula-V) of the quasi-MMC may be accompanied by a modal/aspectual marker (see 5.4). This shows that the entire quasi-MMC has a high degree of assertedness.

6 Comparison of the quasi-MMC with other constructions

6.1 Introductory notes

We now compare the quasi-MMC with other constructions of Thai.

The structure of the prototype of the MMC is as shown in (1). Superficially at least, it looks as if the prototypical MMC is bi-clausal. In some of the languages reported in the present volume, the Clause of the MMC looks similar to an adnominal clause of the respective languages and consequently it looks as if the MMC is bi-clausal, with an adnominal clause as an embedded subordinate clause. This applies to the Thai quasi-MMC – partly at least. The clause nominalizer *thii* is used in one of the three main types of adnominal clauses (see (26c)), and it is one of the two clausal nominalizers used in the quasi-MMC (see 5.2). (However, a Thai adnominal clause may not be considered an embedded subordinate clause. With the clausal nominalizer *thii*, it may be considered an independent nominal, i.e. nominalized clause, rephrasing the so-called head noun preceding it.)

However, languages such as Modern Standard Japanese (Tsunoda, this volume-b, Section 6) and Korean (Kim, this volume, Section 6) yield evidence to show that their MMC does not contain an AC and that it is syntactically mono-clausal. (See Tsunoda (this volume-a, 3.4.2).) In view of this, it is important to examine the following two issues, regarding the Thai quasi-MMC.

- (a) Does the quasi-MMC contain an adnominal clause?
- (b) Is the quasi-MMC bi-clausal or mono-clausal?

For Thai, we shall compare the following constructions.

- (i) Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences (cf. 4.1).
- (ii) Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type.
- (iii) Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type.
- (iv) Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type.
- (v) Relative clauses (4.2.2)
- (vi) Noun complement clauses (4.2.3).

Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences are chosen as the representative of monoclausal independent sentence. It is necessary to consider mono-clausal sentences, since one of the aims of this comparison is to examine the issue (b) listed above.

When we look at the quasi-MMC, we shall mainly be concerned with the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC (cf. 5.9-[1]) (which excludes the nominalizer), but we also look at the entire quasi-MMC (which contains the nominalizer).

The result of this comparison is shown in Table 1 in Section 6.8.

6.2 Modal and aspectual markers

- (i) Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences

Modal and aspectual markers are acceptable, e.g. (9), (10), (19).

- (ii) Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type
- (iii) Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type
- (iv) Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type

As noted in 5.10-[2], modal and aspectual markers are unacceptable in the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC. See (75).

(v) Relative clauses

Modal and aspectual markers are acceptable. See the relative clause of (76) where the verb *hây* ‘transfer/give’ is accompanied by the irrealis marker *càʔ* ‘IRR’.

(76) *phûu chaay {thîi càʔ hây ʔaahăan mǎa}*
 man REL IRR transfer/give food dog
 ‘the man who would give the dog some food.’

(vi) Noun complement clauses

Modal and aspectual markers are acceptable. See the noun complement clause of (77) in which the verb *yâaŋ* ‘grill’ is modified by the progressive marker *kamlaŋ* ‘PROG’.

(77) *klîn {thîi phûu chaay kamlaŋ yâaŋ plaa}*
 smell COMP man PROG grill fish
 LT: ‘the smell that the man is grilling a fish’
 FT: ‘the smell of the man grilling a fish’

6.3 Clausal nominalizers

(i) Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences

A clausal nominalizer cannot occur. See (9) to (14), for example.

(ii) Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type

(iii) Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type

(iv) Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type

A clausal nominalizer obligatorily precedes the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC. See (4).

(v) Relative clauses

(vi) Noun complement clauses

Use of a clausal nominalizer is acceptable, but not obligatory. See (26).

6.4 Final particles

Thai has a large number of final particles (cf. Hudak 1991: 773–774): question particles, particles of politeness/formality, which may express an impolite attitude, and particles of modality. Thai final particles occur not only at the end of independent sentences or dependent clauses; they also occur at the end of single phrases or single morphemes (Pittayaporn & Chulanon 2012: 17–18). The units that host final particle(s), be they morphosyntactically large or small, constitute “intonational phrases”, i.e., the prosodic constituents that serve as the domain for the characteristic intonational contours. Thai intonational phrases are realized with one pitch contour delimited by a final stressed syllable (Pittayaporn & Chulanon 2012: 17). A unit containing final particle(s) is highly asserted, even though it may be a nominal unit composed of a noun in isolation and the particle (i.e., noun-predicate).

(i) Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences

Final particles can occur. See the final particle *mǎn* ‘I guess’ in (78).

(78) *kháw pen khruu mǎn*

PRON COP teacher PRT

‘He is a teacher, I guess so.’

(ii) Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type

(iii) Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type

(iv) Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type

Final particles cannot occur in the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC. See:

(79) **kháw pen [thii chû a mǎn mǎn] khǒŋ phûu tǎy bǎnkháp banchaa*

PRON COP NMLZ be.confident PRT GEN subordinates

IM: ‘He is, I guess, trusted by (his) subordinates.’

(v) Relative clauses

(vi) Noun complement clauses

Final particles cannot occur. See:

(80) **phûu chaay {thii hǎy ʔaahǎan mǎa mǎn} pen khruu*

man REL transfer/give food dog PRT COP teacher

IM: ‘The man who, I guess, gave the dog some food is a teacher.’

6.5 Arguments

As noted in 5.9-[1], in Thai, the A, the O and the S, i.e. the arguments, are not marked for case with case markers, such as prepositions. In contrast, combinations of a preposition and a nominal are adverbial elements. That is, the “Obl-P Experiencer-N/Speaker-N” (oblique prepositional phrase) is an adverbial element, but not an argument of the psych/speech verb.

(i) Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences

Arguments can occur, e.g. (9) to (14).

(ii) Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type

(iii) Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type

(iv) Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type

As noted in 5.9-[1], arguments cannot occur in the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC. See (70).

(v) Relative clauses

(vi) Noun complement clauses

Arguments can occur, e.g. (32) to (34), (36), and (39).

6.6 Resumptive pronouns

It is convenient to start with (v) Relative clauses.

(v) Relative clauses

A resumptive pronoun may occur in a relative clause, but its use is not obligatory. See kháw ‘PRON’ in (30).

(i) Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences

(ii) Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type

(iii) Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type

(iv) Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type

(vi) Noun complement clauses

A resumptive pronoun cannot occur in these constructions. Its occurrence is acceptable in a relative clause. However, its occurrence is unacceptable in a noun complement clause. This is because, in contrast with a relative clause, the head noun of a noun complement clause does not have any grammatical relation with the verb in the clause (cf. 4.2.1).

6.7 Gapping

The term “gapping” may not be suitable as a label for the phenomenon discussed below. However, we use this term in the absence of a suitable term. See Keenan (1985: 154) for gapping in the formation of relative clauses. For gapping, too, it is convenient to start with (v) Relative clauses. (v) Relative clauses A note on resumptive pronouns in relative clauses is in order. Compare (27) and (30). The relative clause in (30) contains a resumptive pronoun (‘PRON’). Like other functional words, pronouns tend to be not used, especially in oral discourse (cf. Section 3). Also, a pronoun used as an argument or a complement is often absent if the preceding clause contains a coreferential pronoun or noun phrase (cf. Section 2), and this applies when a pronoun is used as a resumptive pronoun. As (30) shows, the use of a resumptive pronoun is optional. When the resumptive pronoun is absent, gapping has taken place. When the resumptive pronoun is present, gapping has not occurred. That is, gapping optionally occurs in the formation of relative clauses.

(vi) Noun complement clauses

Gapping does not take place in the formation of noun complement clauses. For example, both the subject and the object are present in the noun complement clause of (36), as is the case with (35).

(ii) Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type

(iii) Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type

(iv) Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type

As seen in 5.9-[1], arguments cannot occur in the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC. (The quotative-complementation type contains [Psych-V/SpeechV]; see (4c) and 5.7.) “Obl-P Experiencer-N/Speaker-N” (oblique prepositional phrase) is an adverbial element, but not an argument of the psych/speech verb. In view of this, it is justifiable to say that gapping takes place in the formation of the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]”, that is, in the formation of each of the three types of the quasi-MMC. For example, compare the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of (63) (quasi-MMC) and (81). While (81) contains both the subject and the object, the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of (63) contains neither of them.

(81) khon náʔŋáʔsáʔkìʔ rúu càk kaafɛɛ kan dii
people Nagasaki know coffee RECP be.good

‘Nagasaki people know coffee well.’

(i) Mono-clausal verb predicate sentences

Gapping does not take place in the formation of these sentences.

From 6.2 to 6.7, we compared the six construction types listed in 6.1. Many chapters on individual languages investigate verb morphology in this comparison. However, the issue of verb morphology is irrelevant in Thai; verbs do not inflect. All the criteria examined concern syntactic aspects.

6.8 Discussion

The result of the comparison above can be shown as in Table 1.

As noted at the end of 6.7, all the criteria examined concern syntactic aspects. Now, in terms of “Clausal nominalizer”, the entire quasi-MMC (of any type) behaves exactly like relative clauses and noun complement clauses, and unlike mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences. Also, in terms of “Final particle”, the portion “[PsychV/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC behaves exactly like relative clauses and noun complement clauses, and unlike mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences. In these two respects, it may look as if the quasi-MMC contains an embedded subordinate clause, that is, as if the entire quasi-MMC is bi-clausal.

However, in terms of “Resumptive pronoun”, the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC behaves unlike relative clauses, but like noun complement clauses and mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences. In this respect, it is difficult to say whether the quasi-MMC is bi-clausal or mono-clausal.

Tab. 1: Comparison of the quasi-MMC with other constructions.

	Modal/aspectual marker	Clausal nominalizer
Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences	+	—
Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type	—	+
Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type	—	+
Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type	—	+
Relative clauses	+	+
Noun complement clauses	+	+
	Final particle	Arguments
Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences	+	+
Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type	—	—
Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type	—	—
Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type	—	—
Relative clauses	—	+
Noun complement clauses	—	+
	Resumptive pronoun	Gapping
Mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences	—	—
Quasi-MMC: psych-verb type	—	+
Quasi-MMC: speech-verb type	—	+
Quasi-MMC: quotative-complementation type	—	+
Relative clauses	+	—

Noun complement clauses

Legend: +: acceptable or obligatory; -: unacceptable.

In terms of “Modal/aspectual marker”, “Arguments” and “Gapping”, the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” of the quasi-MMC differs from mono-clausal verb-predicate sentences and also from relative clauses and noun complement clauses. This provides no evidence to decide as to whether the quasi-MMC is bi-clausal or monoclausal.

To sum up, whether the quasi-MMC is bi-clausal or mono-clausal is not a clearcut matter. Nonetheless, the evidence for its bi-clausality is stronger than that for its mono-clausality. The quasi-MMC may have to be considered bi-clausal.

In most of the languages investigated in the present volume, syntactically the MMC should be considered mono-clausal, not bi-clausal. The Thai quasi-MMC may be uncommon in that syntactically the evidence for its bi-clausality is stronger than that for its mono-clausality. This may be due to its remoteness from the prototype of the MMC (5.9-[1]). (See Tsunoda, this volume-a, 3.4.2).

6.9 Compound predicate

As seen in Section 1, the prototype of the MMC has the structure shown in (1) – superficially at least. However, languages such as Modern Standard Japanese (Tsunoda, this volume-b, Section 6) and Korean (Kim, this volume, Section 6) provide ample evidence to show that syntactically their MMC is mono-clausal, not bi-clausal, despite its superficial appearance (shown in (1)). The MMC of these languages has just one predicate, not two predicates, and the predicate is a compound predicate that consists of the predicate of the Clause, the Noun and the Copula, as shown in (3).

(1) Prototype of the mermaid construction (“MMC”): Clause Noun Copula

(3) ... predicate of Clause Noun Copula.

compound predicate

(The portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” may form a serial verb construction. The Thai serial verb construction may be considered a construction of co-predication; in other words, each verb phrase in the construction may constitute a concurrent predication. In the discussion below, however, we shall consider, for convenience’ sake, that the construction as a whole constitutes a single predicate.)

We saw in 6.8 that for the Thai quasi-MMC syntactically the evidence for its biclausality is stronger than that for its mono-clausality. However, despite this, there are two pieces of evidence to support the view that the quasi-MMC has only one predicate, but not two predicates.

First, the Noun and the predicate of the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” form a unit. As noted in Section 1, the clausal nominalizer (i.e. the Noun) and the psych/ speech verb in the portion “[Psych-V/Speech-V]” form a unit, to the exclusion of the prepositional phrase (“Obl-P Experiencer-N” or “Obl-P Speaker-N”), which is an adverbial element.

Second, no morpheme can intervene between the copula (Copula-V) and the nominalizer (NMLZ).

Then, syntactically the evidence for the bi-clausality of the quasi-MMC is stronger than that for its mono-clausality. However, there is also evidence for the existence of just one predicate in the quasi-MMC. This incongruence is intriguing.

7 Summary and concluding remarks

Most instances of the MMC reported in the present volume are found in AOV languages. Thai is an AVO language, but it has what may be called a quasi-MMC. It is a non-prototypical MMC, and among the reported instances it is the farthest away from the prototype.

The Thai quasi-MMC can be classified into three types: (i) psych-verb type, (ii) speech-verb type, and (iii) quotative-complementation type. The quotative-complementation type employs both psych-verbs and speech verbs. All of these verbs are low in transitivity.

The psych-verb and speech-verb types describe a situation where a certain entity is the target of a group of people's or the general public's psychological activity (such as perception, emotion and cognition) and verbal activity (such as criticizing and rumoring), respectively. The quotative-complementation type expresses the utterer's view or belief regarding the general public's feeling or opinion.

In all of the three types, the copula verb is necessary, and another important constituent verb, viz., a psych/speech verb, is obligatorily accompanied by a clausal nominalizer. In this respect, the Thai quasi-MMC resembles a type of the MMC found in languages such as Modern Standard Japanese. Besides, the clausal nominalizer adjacent to the copula verb can be used as a noun expressing a generic meaning. This is reminiscent of the fact that a noun adjacent to the copula verb in the MMC reported in some other chapters in the present volume has a generic meaning.

The experiencer/speaker noun phrase in the psych/speech-verb type refers to the general public or members of a certain group. As such, the psych-verb type effectively describes an event in which a group of people are mentally affected by a certain remarkable entity in the society. Because of this, it has been regarded by Thai grammarians as a kind of passive construction. In this study I have alternatively analyzed it as a quasi-MMC. I have also shown that the speech-verb type, which hitherto has not been mentioned in studies on Thai grammar, can be taken as a quasi-MMC as well. In addition, I have pointed out that the quotative-complementation type is a modalized construction.

Syntactically the evidence for the bi-clausality of the quasi-MMC is stronger than that for its mono-clausality. However, there is also evidence for the existence of just one predicate in the quasi-MMC. This incongruence is intriguing.

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Abbreviations

A = transitive subject; AC = adnominal clause; ACC = accusative; CLF = classifier; COMP = complementizer; COM = comitative; CONJ = conjunction; CONT = continuous; COP = copula; DAT = dative; F = feminine; FT = free translation; GEN = genitive; GNF = general nonfinite; IM = intended meaning; INC = inchoative; INS = instrumental; IRR = irrealis; LOC = locative; LT = literal translation; M = masculine; MC = middle construction; MMC = mermaid construction; N = noun; NEG = negative; NMLZ = nominalizer; NOM = nominative; NPST = nonpast; O = object; O1 = a noun phrase representing the theme, gift or the like; O2 = a noun phrase indicating the goal, recipient or the like; Obl-P = oblique preposition; PASS = passive; PFV = perfective; PROG = progressive; PRON = pronoun; PRT = final particle; RECP = reciprocal; REL = relativizer; S = intransitive subject; SG = singular; TER = terminative; V = verb; 1 = first person; 2 = second person; 3 = third person.

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