THE CATEGORIAL STATUS OF LIKE 
FROM A MORPHOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT*

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The aim of this paper is to argue that, contra Maling (1983) and Quirk et al. (1985), the English word like 'similar to, characteristic of' is an adjective rather than a preposition; specifically, that it is an adjective which is subcategorized for to NP in the lexicon, and that the to between like and NP is obligatorily incorporated into like at D-structure. Evidence for the adjectival status of like comes from derivational morphology, specifically, from unprefixation, -ness suffixation, and -ed suffixation. Evidence for the presence of to in the subcategorization frame of like comes from inheritance of the subcategorization of the base and compound adjectives of the form N-like.

1. INTRODUCTION. It is well known that the word like illustrated in 1 below has both adjectival and prepositional properties.

(1) a. John is like his mother.
   b. Many bars in Japan are like closed societies, and a person seems to need an invitation to become a regular.
   (Paul Gilbert, Glimpses of Japan, Kinseido, p. 10.)

Two alternative views have been put forth as to the categorial status of this like: like is a preposition under one view, and an adjective under the other. Proponents of the former claim are Scheurweghs (1959), Maling

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1 The like in question also has an adverbial use, as exemplified in (i–ii):
   (i) You're behaving like a perfect idiot.
   (ii) People expect rulers to live like rulers.
   (Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary, s.v. 'like')

This is not unnatural, because it is often the case that predicative adjectives are used adverbially, as shown below:
   (iii) John stood NEAR (TO) the door.
   (iv) This provides evidence for the morphological part of the analysis of the
(1983), and Quirk et al. (1985) among others, and proponents of the latter are Jespersen (1942) and Ogawa (1954) among others. It is Maling (1983) and Quirk et al. (1985) that explicitly argue for the prepositional status of like by adducing certain criteria claimed to define prepositions. The others simply assume their positions without arguments.

In section 2 I will briefly review the discussions of Quirk et al. (1985) and Maling (1983). In section 3 I will examine their proposals and argue against them. In section 4 I will argue on morphological grounds that like is an adjective subcategorized for to NP and that to is incorporated into like at D-structure. Section 5 is a summary.


2.1. Quirk et al. (1985: 658-9) give a definition of central prepositions as follows:

(2) Central prepositions in English can be defined negatively with three criteria. They cannot have as a complement:
(i) a that-clause
(ii) an infinitive clause
(iii) a subjective case form of a personal pronoun.

They adduce examples 3 and show that at is a central preposition because it meets the three criteria in 2.

(3) a. *He was surprised at (that) she noticed him.
   b. *He was surprised at to see her.
   c. *He was surprised at she.

On the basis of these criteria they put like in a list of simple prepositions and state that it expresses manner (Quirk et al. 1985: 665).

2.2. Maling's (1983) paper 'is an investigation into the criteria for establishing syntactic categories, and more specifically, into the problem of distinguishing between the categories of Adjective and Preposition.' She argues 'that in the history of English, at least two adjectives, like and worth, were reanalyzed as prepositions' (Maling 1983: 253), emphasizing the strictly syntactic nature of the criteria for distinguishing between typical adjectives and typical prepositions. After discussing a variety of

volere type of construction presented above, INDEPENDENT OF coanalysis. (Di Sciullo, Anna-Maria and Edwin Williams, 1987, On the Definition of Word, p. 100. Emphasis mine—TN)
diagnostic criteria, Maling summarizes the results in the following table:

(Maling 1983: 272)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnostic Criteria for A vs. P²</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>a. semantic or functional</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. occurs as pred. comp. to seem, etc.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. degree modification by very</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. degree modification by how, so, too</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b. morphological</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. has synthetic comparative</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. can be base for negative un-prefix</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c. strictly categorial (syntactic)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. prenominal position in NP</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. occurs ‘intransitively’</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. occurs with postmodifier enough</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. degree modifiers without much</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maling argues that criterion 4ai is not a sufficient condition for adjectivehood since some metaphorical PPs like under the weather, off the wall, and in good spirits can occur immediately after seem, look, etc. She also states that it is necessary to have recourse to grammatical functions such as ‘predicate complement’ and semantic notions such as ‘gradable predicate’ in order to state subcategorization frames properly.

Maling shows that degree words such as very, so, too, and how occur not only with APs but also with metaphorical PPs, as in 5:

(5) a. They seemed very/so/too foolish.
    a’. They seemed {very, so, too} in love.
    {so, too} at home.
    {so, too} out of shape.

b. How good of you!

b’. How out of shape Lee looked!

(Maling 1983: 261)

In contrast, these degree words do not occur with locative or directional PPs, as shown in 6:

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² Maling lists two more diagnostics in her original table, but they are ‘not applicable for modern English’. (Maling 1983: 272) Since the present paper is a synchronic study of like, these two irrelevant diagnostics are omitted here.

³ By ‘metaphorical PPs’ Maling means PPs ‘which have nonliteral, nonlocative readings, and which are good in these contexts’. (Maling 1983: 256)
Noting that most locatives are not gradable, Maling states that the 'feature [+gradable] is very likely necessary for an adequate account of degree modifiers.' (Maling 1983: 261) This means that criteria 4aii and 4aiii also need to refer to the semantic notion of 'gradability'.

Let us turn to the morphological criteria in 4b. Dividing morphology into derivational morphology and inflectional morphology, Maling claims that evidence 'from derivational morphology is notoriously unreliably as evidence for category assignment. Often the processes are not fully productive, and speakers do not make synchronic connections between diachronically related forms. Thus the non-existence of *unnear does not show that near is not an adjective, and the existence of unlike shows only that like was not yet a preposition at the time the word was created, and says nothing about its synchronic status.' (Maling 1983: 272-3) This seems to be the reason why she puts the '+' mark in parentheses in criterion 4bii.

As for the synthetic comparative form, Maling says, 'Evidence from comparatives is unfortunately also unidirectional, since not all adjectives are gradable. If a word does have a synthetic comparative, then it seems reasonable to conclude that it is an adjective rather than, say, a preposition; but lack of a synthetic comparative shows nothing.' (Maling 1983: 273)

In sum, Maling maintains that derivational morphology does not constitute reliable evidence for the distinction between adjectives and prepositions in Present-Day English. As a result, it is natural that she resorts to more strictly syntactic criteria. First, she regards the ability to occur in prenominal position in NP as a test for adjectival status (criterion 4ci), adducing 7 as a contrastive example:

(7) *The two in-love senior citizens walked hand-in-hand down memory lane. (Maling 1983: 266)

Second, criterion 4cii is whether it occurs 'intransitively', that is, whether it occurs with no complement.4

Maling's third diagnostic is whether it appears with postmodifier enough. This diagnostic is involved in what seems to be her strongest

4 In note 30 Maling states that this 'is clearly an oversimplification, since I would like to allow for the analysis of verbal particles and certain adverbs as intransitive prepositions'.
argument that *like* is a preposition rather than an adjective. She adduces the following examples:

(8) a. Robin seems { *enough sensible.}  
    { sensible enough.}

b. Robin seems enough { in love.}  
    { at home.}  
    { out of shape.}

c. ??Robin seems { in love}  
    { at home}  
    { out of shape}  

    (Maling 1983: 263)

d. Toby seems enough like his grandfather.  

    (Maling 1983: 268)

In other words, *enough* follows adjectives but precedes prepositions.\(^5\)

The fourth criterion for the adjective/preposition distinction is whether the word in question occurs with degree modifiers without *much*. Maling states that adjectives typically take *very* but not (*very*) *much* as a modifier, that locative PPs take neither, but that metaphorical PPs allow *too much, so much*, etc., as shown in 9:

(9) a. The birds were very { noisy.}  
    { *in the tree.}

b. *The kids were very much noisy. (Maling 1983: 261)

c. Too much in love. (Maling 1983: 262)

3. EXAMINATION OF QUIRK ET AL. (1985) AND MALING (1983). In this section I will examine the arguments of Quirk et al. (1985) and Maling (1983) and show that they are ill-founded. Let us take up Quirk et al. (1985) first.

3.1. The definition of central prepositions in 2 above is a reasonable one. According to the three criteria, *like* is defined as a central preposition, since it cannot have a *that*-clause, an infinitive clause, or a

\(^5\) Maling points out that *enough* follows prepositions in two cases: when the preposition takes a PP-complement, as in (i), and when it is used with no complement, as in (ii).

( i ) The cat wouldn’t go up enough into the tree.

(ii) The cat wouldn’t go { *enough up.}  
    { up enough.}
subjective case form, as shown below:

(10)  
  a. *John is like that NP AUX VP.
  b. *John is like to VP.
  c. *John is like she.

However, it does not follow from 10 that like is a preposition. Another analysis would be to claim that like is an adjective which is subcategorized for to + NP\(^6\) and that the to is obligatorily incorporated into like\(^7\) and consequently gives like the ability to assign an oblique Case to a following noun. The structure of 1a in this approach then is the following:\(^8\)

\(^6\) The idea of the presence of to in a subcategorization frame of like was first suggested to me by Reiko Shimamura.

\(^7\) The notion of incorporation here is similar to ‘incorporation’ (i.e. polycategorial lexical attachment) in Gruber (1976). In explicating the relationships between sentences such as (i) and (ii) (Gruber 1976: 9),

(i) The pencil pierced the cushion.
(ii) The pencil pierced through the cushion.

Gruber postulates prelexical structure for pierce and pierce through as in (iii) and (iv), respectively. (Gruber 1976: 12-3)

(iii)  
\[ V \quad PP \quad MOTIONAL \quad P \quad POSITIONAL \quad THROUGH \]

(iv)  
\[ V \quad MOTIONAL \quad POSITIONAL \quad THROUGH \]

(iii) indicates that the transitive verb pierce obligatorily incorporates through, and (iv) indicates that through in this case is in the syntactic environment following the intransitive verb and is not incorporated.

There are, however, a few differences between Gruber’s notion of incorporation and mine. First, Gruber’s incorporation of prepositions, unlike mine, does not concern the assignment of oblique Case. Second, incorporation occurs at prelexical structure under Gruber’s assumptions, whereas incorporation occurs at D-structure under my assumptions. In other words, Gruber’s incorporation occurs at the level of semantic representation, while my incorporation occurs at the level of syntactic representation. Third, the only category into which prepositions are incorporated in Gruber’s theory is Verb, whereas the category into which to is incorporated in my approach to like is Adjective. Fourth, various verbs are involved in Gruber’s incorporation analysis (pierce, cross, climb, transport, ascend, rise, hover, buy, sell, keep, turn, etc.), but like is the only one example involved in my incorporation of to.

\(^8\) ‘Aux’ is omitted here for simplicity.
(11) a.

```
(11)  a. S
    |   VP
    |   NP
    |   N  V  AP  PP
  John  is  A  P
     |     |  to  to his mother
     |     |  his mother
```

In other words, I would like to maintain that *like* is different from ordinary adjectives in that it acquires the ability to assign an oblique Case by obligatory incorporation of *to*, which directly follows it. If *like* is analyzed in this way, the facts in 10 follow naturally. Morphological evidence in favor of this analysis will be presented in section 4.

3.2. Let us turn to Maling’s discussions. As far as her criteria 4ai-iii are concerned, I agree with her in maintaining that they refer to semantic or functional notions. Thus we should rely on other kinds of criteria in order to establish reliable diagnostics for distinguishing between the two syntactic categories A and P.

As for Maling’s ‘strictly categorial’ criteria, none of them is convincing. First, the criterion of prenominal position in NP is neither necessary nor sufficient for adjectival status. It is well known that there are adjectives which cannot appear in prenominal position (e.g. *afire, aflame, afraid, ajar, asleep, astray, awake*). Even these adjectives can appear prenominally, if they are modified by degree adverbs or if they are conjoined with other adjectives which can appear in attributive position: *the half-asleep child, the fully awake patient, a sensitive and aware audience.*

(Yasui et al. 1976: 99)
Second, criterion 4cii is not dependable. As indicated in fn. 4, Maling herself admits that this criterion is an oversimplification, since she allows for the existence of intransitive prepositions.

Maling's third diagnostic seems relatively well-motivated at first glance. Bolinger (1972: 49) also states that enough 'has the peculiarity of following the adjectives it intensifies', though he does not mention its position relative to prepositions. However, Bolinger (1972: 111) cites the example enough heavier than before, where enough precedes rather than follows the AP (heavier than before). Thus we cannot say that enough always follows the adjectives that it intensifies, and the fact that enough precedes the sequence like NP does not constitute evidence that like is a preposition.

Maling's last syntactic criterion concerns occurrence with degree modifiers without much. Though Maling claims that adjectives do not take Deg + much as modifiers, it is clear that there are adjectives which do so, as shown below:

\[(12) \ a. \ \text{very much alone (Swan 1980: 16)} \]
\[b. \ \text{The public is very much aware of Type I errors. (Yagi 1987: 201)} \]

Criterion 4civ, then, is not appropriate enough as a diagnostic for the distinction between A and P. In sum, none of Maling's alleged 'strictly categorial' criteria is convincing.\(^{11}\)

Now we are in a position to examine Maling's morphological diagnostics 4bi–ii. Her general claim is that evidence from derivational morph-ology is notoriously unreliable as evidence for category assignment. Regarding un- prefixation as not fully productive, she maintains, as we have already seen, that the existence of unlike shows only that like was not yet a preposition at the time the word was created, and says nothing about its synchronic status.

However, Maling's general claim is open to question. It is true that evidence from derivational morphology is often not dependable when the morphological rules involved are not productive. But when the morphological rules are productive, derivational morphology can present

\(^{11}\) An anonymous reviewer has pointed out to me that there are other criteria for distinguishing As from Ps: one concerns the question of whether a word can appear in the construction as ... as ... (the adjectival status), and the other concerns the pied-pipability of the word in question (the prepositional status). Consider the following:

(i) They are as like as peas in the pod. (due to the reviewer)
(ii) The man like whom I was said to be ... (due to Brent de Chene)
I am grateful to the reviewer for his suggestion.
reliable evidence for category assignment. This is because affixes are in most cases allowed to attach only to bases of specific lexical categories.

Before proceeding to un- prefixation, -ness suffixation, etc., let me briefly discuss the absence of the synthetic comparative form *liker. This fact might be interpreted as counterevidence to the claim that like is an adjective, since gradable monosyllabic adjectives usually have synthetic comparative forms. However, matters are not so simple. There are gradable monosyllabic adjectives without synthetic comparative forms: *apter, *perter, and *pucer. Therefore, the lack of *liker in Present-Day English does not constitute evidence against the adjectival status of like at least until an exact characterization of the rule governing synthetic comparatives is available.

4. MORPHOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE ADJECTIVAL STATUS OF LIKE. Un- prefixation has generally been considered a productive rule in the literature of both traditional morphology and generative morphology, such as Marchand (1969), Allen (1978), Selkirk (1982), and Namiki (1985). The negative prefix un- fairly freely attaches to English adjectives and participles, unlike the prefix in-, which is limited to the adjectives of latinate bases. Observe the following:

(13) a. simple adj. clean unclean *inclean fair unfair *infair

b. derived adj.
   (i) -y lucky unlucky *inlucky
   (ii) -ly friendly unfriendly *infriendly
   (iii) -ful fruitful unfruitful *infruitful
   (iv) -ish selfish unselfish *inselfish
   (v) -ed populated unpopulated *inpopulated
   (vi) -ing amazing unamazing *inamazing


Negative un- can be attached only to adjectives, and not to prepositions

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12 Maling herself does not take this position, because she says ‘lack of a synthetic comparative shows nothing.’ (Maling 1983: 273)

13 This is due to Harry Bochner (personal communication). But Brent de Chene has said to me, ‘it may be that puce isn’t gradable at all’. There may be idiolectal variation.
(e.g. *unalong, *unfor, *unfrom, *unwith). That is, the existence of un-X guarantees that X is not a preposition. There are a handful of exceptions whose bases are nouns, such as unconcern, unemployment, uninvolvment, unrest. (cf. Selkirk 1982: 130, Fabb 1984: 250) But as far as unlike is concerned, there is no reason to regard its base like as a noun. Therefore, it is natural to consider it an adjective.

The next morphological rule that I want to discuss is -ness suffixation. The productivity of -ness can be seen from the fact that it can be attached not only to simple adjectives but also to participles and compound adjectives. Consider the following:

(14) a. participles
   knowingness, shiningness; cursedness, unexpectedness
   b. compound adjectives
   kind-heartedness, tongue-tiedness; matter-of-course-ness, up-to-dateness; rough and readiness


Like has a nominal derivative likeness, as shown below:

(15) a. a family likeness (LDCE)
   b. Richard Williams, Jr. bears a strong likeness to his father.

The meaning of -ness suffixation is compositional: A-ness means 'a state, condition, or quality of being A'. Likeness, in particular, means 'the quality or state of being like'. Taking these facts into consideration, it is reasonable to conclude that like is an adjective rather than a preposition.

The third morphological rule is -ed suffixation, which is exemplified in 16:

(16) a. cruel-hearted, kind-hearted, long-haired, noble-minded, short-sighted, strong-minded
   b. bigger-sized, kinder-hearted, nastier-minded
   c. kindest-hearted, noblest-minded, sweetest-tempered


It is well known that this rule is very productive. When Marchand adduces examples of this type, he states that 'coinages are practically unlimited in number'. (Marchand 1969: 266) It is clear from 16, especially 16b, c, that the category of the lefthand element of the examples in 16 is an adjective and not a preposition.

14 Marchand also cites outness and inness, but he adds 'both philosophical terms'. (Marchand 1969: 335)
Like can occur in the lefthand element of this type of words. Consider the following:


Judging from the above evidence, it is clear that *like* in *unlike*, *likeness*, and *like-minded* is an adjective, and not a preposition.

Next, I will show that *like* is subcategorized for *to NP* in the lexicon, although *to* does not appear on the surface. First, when an affix is attached to a base, there are many cases in which a certain complement is inherited from the base, as shown below:

(18) 

a. similar *to NP*  
   a'. similarity *to NP*  

b. sensitive *to NP*  
   b'. insensitive *to NP*  

c. depend *on NP*  
   c'. dependent *on NP*  

d. accord *with NP*  
   d'. accordance *with NP*  

e. able *to VP*  
   e'. ability *to VP*  

   (Namiki 1984: 2, 5)  

f. sure *that S*  
   f'. sureness *that S*  

g. happy *that S*  
   g'. unhappy *that S*  

   (Roeper 1981: 135)

Inheritance of the subcategorization of the base is unmarked at least for deadjectival words.

*Likeness* takes *to NP* as its complement, as shown in 15b. So it is natural to consider that the base *like* is subcategorized for *to NP*.

Second, there are many words which have the form of N-*like*, as shown in 19:


Quirk et al. (1985: 662) admits that *like* is adjective-like in accepting the intensifier *very* and comparison.

According to Carlson and Roeper, inheritance of the subcategorization of the base is marked for a complex verb (e.g. prefix + verb). For details, see Carlson and Roeper (1980: 123–4).
417–8 and Quirk et al. 1985: 1553). But 'combinations with like are originally adjectival compounds of the type color-blind' (Marchand 1969: 356), and even in Present-Day English 'such formations might be regarded as compounds' (Quirk et al. 1985: 1553).17

The productivity and semantic transparency of the formation N-like allow us to consider words of this type compound adjectives. Certain types of compound adjectives are productive and semantically transparent. Observe the following:

(20) a. N-free: duty-free, rent-free, tax-free, toll-free, etc.
    b. N-proof: burglar-proof, fire-proof, water-proof, etc.
    c. N-resistant: fire-resistant, moth-resistant, etc.
    d. N-specific: language-specific, species-specific, etc.

(Namiki 1985: 107–8)

Notice that these types of compound adjectives can generally be paraphrased in the following way: N−A = A P NP, where the adjective is subcategorized for a particular preposition.18 Thus N-free is paraphrased as free from/of NP, N-proof as proof against NP, N-resistant as resistant to NP, and N-specific as specific to NP.

The pattern N-like shows the same properties. The productivity of this pattern is illustrated in 21:

(21) a. In particular, we have found empirical support for the Government Transparency Corollary, which implies that Incorporation automatically creates ‘Exceptional Case Marking’-like structures. (Mark Baker, 1985, Incorporation: A Theory of Grammatical Function Changing, MIT diss., p. 140.)
    b. In this article I consider a number of relative clause-like constructions exhibiting “missing” adverbial elements in the subordinate clause. (Richard Larson, 1987, “Missing Prepositions” and the Analysis of English Free Relative Clause,’ LI, 18, p. 239.)
    c. He wore a long black coatlike jacket that reached to just above the knees, ... (Chaim Potok, The Promise, Fawcett Crest Books, p. 117.)
    d. Once we noticed a sausage-like thing in a shop window

17 Marchand (1969: 356) refers to -like as a ‘semi-suffix’, because it stands ‘midway between full words and suffixes’.
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marked PORK BRAWN. (George Mikes, *Dr Mikes Goes around the World*, Eichosha, p. 5.)

e. PRO is also anaphor-like in that it (typically) lacks independent specific reference, being either bound or interpreted as arbitrary. (Noam Chomsky, 1986, *Knowledge of Language*, Praeger, p. 125.)

As for semantic transparency, Quirk et al. (1985: 1553) say, ‘the relation between base and suffix is very direct: x-like means “like (an) x.”’ We can paraphrase N-like as like to NP, although to is not overt. This means that N-like is in accord with the general pattern of productive compound adjectives, if like is regarded as an adjective subcategorized for to NP.

One possible piece of counterevidence to the claim that N-like is a compound adjective is that the negative prefix un- can attach to the words of this pattern, as follows: unmanlike, unsummerlike, unworkmanlike. (Marchand 1969: 356) But this is not persuasive, because un- can sometimes attach to compound adjectives. Selkirk (1982: 106) adduces the following: un-self-sufficient, un-easygoing, un-homesick, un-bloodthirsty, un-light-sensitive, un-germ-resistant, etc.

I have shown on morphological grounds that like is an adjective subcategorized for to NP in the lexicon. Let us return now to the preposition-like properties of like. The definition of central prepositions was given in 2 above, and it was shown in 10 that like satisfies the three criteria of 2. Let me repeat 10 as 22 for convenience:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(22) a. } & \text{ *John is like that NP AUX VP.} \\
\text{b. } & \text{ *John is like to VP.} \\
\text{c. } & \text{ *John is like she.}
\end{align*}
\]

We need to reconcile the adjectival properties and prepositional properties of like. In section 3 I proposed that like is an adjective which is subcategorized for to NP and that to is obligatorily incorporated into like and consequently gives like the ability to assign an oblique Case to a following noun (cf. 11). Given this analysis of like, the ungrammaticality of 22a–c follows from the fact that to cannot have as its complement a that-clause, an infinitive clause, or a subjective Case form of a personal pronoun, since it is a preposition. I assume that like obligatorily incorporates to before Move-α applies. This is a specific property of like. If this marked property of like is allowed, then all the facts concerning like that I have discussed follow naturally.

There are other possible approaches to the like in question. First, one might appeal to Kayne’s ‘empty preposition’ analysis. In dealing with
dative constructions like 23, Kayne proposes that 23 contains, at every stage of derivation, an empty preposition \([p_e]\) as in 24:

(23) John gave Mary a book.

(24)  
```
    VP
   /\    
  V   PP    NP
   \   /    |
     P  e    a book
    /|   |
   NP  Mary
```

He states that V assigns objective Case to the PP, that this objective Case can percolate to the head \([p_e]\), and that \([p_e]\) may transmit to its object an objective Case received by percolation. The reason why Kayne does not claim that the \([p_e]\) assigns a Case to the NP is that he sets up the principle 25.

(25) An empty preposition cannot be the source of Case.  
(Kayne 1984: 195)

If we accept the idea of empty preposition and the principle 25 in treating sentences such as 1a involving *like*, there would be no way of assigning a Case to the NP following *like*, since neither \([p_e]\) nor the adjective *like*, unlike a verb, can be a Case-assigner.\(^19\) The crucial difference between 1a and 23 is that the former involves an adjective but the latter involves a verb. Therefore, we cannot make use of Kayne's empty preposition analysis.

Second, one might suggest that Baker's (1985) notion of incorporation as x-o movement plays a role in treating *like*. Analyzed along the lines of Baker (1985), the structure of 1a would be either 26a or 26b, which would be changed into 27 by the movement (incorporation) of \(P_1\) into \(A_1\).

(26) a.  
```
    AP
   /\    
  A_1   PP    NP
   \   /    |
     like  P_1  to his mother
    /|   |
   NP  his mother
```

b.  
```
    AP
   /\    
  A_1   PP    NP
   \   /    |
     like  P_1  \(\emptyset\)  his mother
    /|   |
   NP  his mother
```

(27)  
```
    AP
   /\    
  A_2   PP    NP
   \   /    |
     like  \(\emptyset\)  e  his mother
    /|   |
   A_1  P_2  P_1
```

\(^19\) Cf. also Platzack (1982: note 5).
However, Baker also states that 'it is very natural to claim that a phonologically null element cannot be a Case assigner' (Baker 1985: 161). Since an adjective is not a Case-assigner under Baker's assumptions either, the NP his mother would not be assigned any Case by A₁, A₂, P₁, or P₂ in 27, causing ungrammaticality. Thus Baker's notion of incorporation will not account for the characteristics of like.

A third approach would be to assume that the adjective like itself assigns an objective Case to a directly following NP, along the lines of Platzack (1982). Platzack points out that in Swedish 'there are some adjectives that cannot take a PP complement, only a NP complement' (Platzack 1982: 41), and adduces five instances of such adjectives (i.e. hängiven (=devoted), lik (=like), tillgiven (=attached), underlägsen (=inferior), and värd (=worthy), two of which are illustrated below:

(28) a. Han var hängiven religionen.
   'He was devoted [to] the religion.'

b. Hon är lik sin mor.
   'She is like her mother.'

On the basis of the distribution of the adverb tillräckligt (=enough), he argues against the Empty Preposition Hypothesis. He maintains that these somewhat marked adjectives assign an objective Case to a directly following NP under government, and proposes that Chomsky's Case Assignment Rules (Chomsky 1981: 170) be modified as follows:

(29) Case Assignment Rules for Swedish (Platzack 1982: 53)

a. ...

b. NP is objective iff governed by V, P, or A

c. ...

But Platzack's proposal is not adequate for like in English. This is because it is not plausible to modify general Case assignment rules in order to account for exceptional properties of a single adjective.20

Finally, I would like to touch on Chomsky's Case theory in Chomsky (1986). His revision of Case theory includes the following:21

(30) a. We distinguish the 'structural Cases' objective and nominative, assigned in terms of S-structure position, from the 'inherent Cases' assigned at D-structure.

b. All lexical categories assign Case: P, N, and A assign

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20 Or at most two (like and worth) if we follow Maling (1983).
21 Chomsky also proposes a 'uniformity condition', but this condition is irrelevant to the topic under consideration, and so it is omitted here.
inherent Case at D-structure, whereas V (along with INFL containing AGR) assigns structural Case at S-structure.

c. The direction of Case-marking for lexical categories is uniform and, in the unmarked case, corresponds to the head parameter of X-bar theory.

d. We must distinguish Case-assignment at D-structure from Case-realization at S-structure.

Under Chomsky's revised Case theory, adjectives such as proud are generated at D-structure with a directly following NP (i.e. without an intervening of.) The adjective proud assigns a genitive Case to John at D-structure, and of is inserted as a semantically empty Case-marker to realize the genitive Case at S-structure. Consider the following:

(31) a. proud [John] (at D-structure)
b. proud [of John] (at S-structure) (Chomsky 1986: 192)

Adjectives which take prepositions other than of should be treated differently. They would take a particular PP at D-structure, as shown below:

(32) a. dependent [on NP] (at D-structure)
b. familiar [with NP] (at D-structure)

However, like does not share a subcategorizational property either with the adjectives of the proud type or with those of the dependent type. Like needs a special treatment in Chomsky's revised Case theory.

To conclude, alternatives to the proposals made above are not adequate to account fully for the properties of like.

5. SUMMARY. I have examined Quirk et al.'s (1985) and Maling's (1983) proposal that like in English is a preposition, and have argued against this proposal on morphological grounds. I have maintained that like is an adjective which is subcategorized for to NP and that the to is obligatorily incorporated into like at D-structure, giving like the ability to assign an oblique Case to a following NP. My arguments have been based on un-prefixation, -ness suffixation, -ed suffixation, inheritance of the subcategorization of the base, and compound adjectives of the form N-like. A few possible alternative approaches to like have been shown to

22 Masayuki Ike-uchi has pointed out to me that this process may not be compatible with Projection Principle. My hunch is that this problem might be settled, say, by the characterization of ‘A/P’ in 11b. At present, this question is left open.
be inadequate for accounting for the fact that *like* has the adjectival and prepositional properties that have been discussed above.

REFERENCES


