

Lesson 2

Study the following sentences:

これは私の本です。

あの男の子はだれですか。
弟の友達です。

あの女の方はどなたですか。
私達の学校の先生です。

あれはだれの絵ですか。
(あれは) ピカソの (絵) です。

このかさはどなたのですか。
(そのかさは) 山川さんのです。

それは妹さんのめがねですか。
いいえ、これは妹の (めがね) ではありません、姉のです。

この車は日本ののですか。
いいえ、それは日本のではありません、イギリスのです。

Comment

This lesson deals with, among other things, how to express possession of something: 'mine', 'yours', etc. It also introduces the whole question of the social context within which you will be using the language. You must always ask yourself as to the nature of your relationship with whomever you are talking, because your vocabulary will have to change accordingly. In this sense, Japanese is far more context sensitive than English. This is known as 'changing register' and learning how to do this quickly is a major hurdle in studying the language.

2.1 Noun modification with の

これは私の本です。

Look at the following phrases. They all illustrate examples of one noun being modified by another. The fundamental rule here is that *the first noun modifies the second*.

私の本	my book
日本の車	a Japanese car
木のつくえ	a wooden desk
私達の先生	our teacher
妹のめがね	my younger sister's glasses
めがねの男	the man with glasses
女の子	a girl

The particle の simply indicates a connection between the two nouns. Sometimes this relationship can be one of possession, as in 私の本, sometimes one of attribution as in 木のつくえ. The English equivalent will therefore differ according to the type of modification. Note how useful this particle is: English has to employ a large number of different constructions to achieve the same result. Occasionally, however, you may find this very usefulness gives rise to ambiguity: 男の子, for example, could be either 'man's child' or 'boy', depending on context.

When answering a question in which this pattern is involved, you may omit the second noun, again very much as in English.

あれはだれのかさですか。

Whose umbrella is that?

あれは兄のかさです。

That's my elder brother's umbrella.

or あれは兄のです。

That's my elder brother's.

2.2 'Who' and 'whose'

あの男の子はだれですか。
弟の友達です。
あの女の方はどなたですか。
私達の学校の先生です。

Both *だれ* and *どなた* are interrogatives meaning 'who?' *どなた* is more polite and should be used in preference to the somewhat abrupt *だれ* unless you find yourself in a situation where you can dispense with such formalities. Note the following contrast:

- (a) あれはだれの絵ですか。 ピカソの(絵)です。
(b) これはどなたの絵ですか。 山本先生のです。

The question in (a) is impersonal in the sense that it refers to who painted the picture, and you are not assuming that the person to whom you are speaking has any connection with the painter. You therefore use *だれ*. If, however, you are asking to whom the picture belongs, as in (b), it would be more natural to use *どなた*, because some kind of personal relationship may well be involved.

2.3 この/その/あの

このかさ そのかさ あの女の方

These words *この/その/あの* belong to a special category of noun that we shall call *prenouns*. Prenouns are identified as a separate category because they occur immediately before other nouns with no intervening particle, although in fact a word such as *この* is derived from the noun *こ* ('this') + *の*. These words

cannot occur by themselves. We have here a set of three: この 'this', その 'that' and あの 'that over there'. Always remember that they *cannot* stand on their own and in usage they correspond to English demonstrative adjectives. When these words occur with inanimate objects or animals their use is quite regular, but when they are used in phrases that refer to people, この方 (read このかた) 'this person', その方 'that person', あの方 'that person over there', you must take more care. Let us suppose that you want to say 'This is a teacher from our school'. If the person referred to were present and standing near to you, you would say この方は私達の学校の先生です. You would definitely *not* use その方, just as in English it would be impolite to say something like 'and is she your younger sister's teacher?' if the person concerned were standing next to you and within hearing. その方 would only be used if you were saying 'Is the person you have just been discussing (or you have just mentioned) your younger sister's teacher?' あの方 is used when the person is standing some way off, or if you are referring to a mutual acquaintance, who need not necessarily be present.

It should already be clear from this explanation that constant attention must be paid to the social situation around you, if you are to speak correctly. This will be a recurrent theme of this course.

2.4 'I' and 'you'

The words 私 (read わたくし) 'I' and あなた 'you' must be used with great caution and you cannot assume that they can be used either as often or as widely as their English counterparts. Note that, although they are translated as personal pronouns; in English, they are really nouns in Japanese with the literal meanings of 'private, secret' and 'that side over there'. In due course you will find that there are many more different equivalents for 'I' and 'you' in Japanese than there are in English, but paradoxically the general rule is: avoid them whenever possible. Constant use of these words is a sure sign of a clumsy foreign speaker. In the case of 'I', it is considered presumptuous to keep on referring to oneself explicitly and in most contexts matters are quite clear without mentioning 'I' at all. It is for this reason that many Japanese sentences give an initial impression of being subjectless.

For the second person, 'you', the normal practice when addressing others directly is to use their family name (or given name if they are very close friends) plus the polite suffix さん: so 山川さん. In the beginning you will find yourself

wanting to use あなた as often as you use 'you' in English, but you must make a special effort to resist this, because it can actually cause offence. In general, あなた is used only by women, but again only in certain circumstances. It is, for instance, the usual way a wife addresses her husband when in the home. Women also use this word commonly with close friends. Men use あなた only rarely, occasionally perhaps when addressing women who are younger than themselves. If you think of あなた as being the equivalent of 'my dear' you will at least err on the side of caution.

For the third person, 'he' 'she' or 'they', play safe at this early stage and restrict yourself to using the family name plus さん. If you do not know the person's name or have forgotten it, use the locutions mentioned in 2.3, あの方, その方 etc.

2.5 Kinship terms

妹 (いもうと) さんの。

Kinship terms in Japanese are arranged in pairs on a neutral/respect basis. The following is an initial list of the most common terms. A more complete chart of kinship terms will be found in Appendix I.

<i>neutral</i>	<i>respectful</i>	<i>meaning</i>
父 (ちち)	おとうさん/おとうさま	father
母 (はは)	おかあさん/おかあさま	mother
兄 (あに)	おにいさん/おにいさま	elder brother
姉 (あね)	おねえさん/おねえさま	elder sister
弟 (おとうと)	おとうとさん	younger brother
妹 (いもうと)	いもうとさん	younger sister
祖父 (そふ)	おじいさん/おじいさま	grandfather
祖母 (そぼ)	おばあさん/おばあさま	grandmother

You must take great care to observe the social constraints on each of these words.

As a general rule use the neutral set when talking to others about your own family and the respectful set when referring to members of another family. In such a context 父 would therefore mean 'my father' and おとうさん/おとうさま 'your father'. There are two quite common occasions, however, when this rule does not apply.

(a) When directly addressing members who are above you in the hierarchy, which would usually mean all those members who are older than you, you should use the respect series: おとうさん, おかあさん, おにいさん, おねえさん etc.

(b) When talking about such members to other members of your own family, you should again use the respect series. But what if the family member you are referring to is younger than you are? Clearly you will not feel like showing undue respect. You solve this problem by simply using his or her given name. Note that this is the fourth time in one lesson that we have drawn your attention to the necessity of making constant decisions and choices about which word to use in which particular social context.

Key to sentences

Romanisation

Kore wa watakushi no hon desu.

Ano otoko no ko wa dare desu ka.

Otōto no tomodachi desu.

Ano onna no kata wa donata desu ka.

Watakushi-tachi no gakkō no sensei desu.

Are wa dare no e desu ka.

(Are wa) Pikaso no (e) desu.

Kono kasa wa donata no desu ka.

(Sono kasa wa) Yamakawa-san no desu.

Sore wa imōto-san no megane desu ka.

Iie, kore wa imōto no (megane) de wa arimasen; ane no desu.

Kono kuruma wa Nihon no desu ka.

Iie, sore wa Nihon no de wa arimasen; Ijirisu no desu.

Translation

This is my book.

Who is that boy?

He's a friend of my younger brother.

Who is that woman?

She's a teacher at our school.

Whose painting is that?

It's a painting by Picasso.

Whose is this umbrella?

That umbrella is Mr Yamakawa's.

Are those your younger sister's glasses?

No, these are not my younger sister's glasses; they are my elder sister's.

Is this car a Japanese one?

No, that's not a Japanese one; it's an English one.
