

Lesson 21

Yamakawa Minoru and Kinoshita Akiko are in a cafe near the Kyōto International Conference Centre.

山川 きょうはずいぶん混んでいますね。
木下 そうですね。きのうから物理学の国際学会が始まりましたから。
山川 ああ、そう言えば僕も新聞で読みました。
木下 あそこに座わっている女の方は最近ノーベル賞をもらった有名な学者ではありませんか。
山川 そうですね。確かポーランドの人ですね。
木下 ところで、山川さんは将来何をするつもりですか。
山川 まだ決めていませんが。木下さんは。
木下 私もまだはっきりは決めていませんが、もう少し英語を勉強するために、一、二年イギリスへ行くつもりです。
山川 それはいいですね。イギリスのどこですか。
木下 さあ、まだ分かりません。でもロンドンではなくて小さな町を選ぶつもりです。

21.1 Contractions in everyday speech

混んでいますね。

Just as in English, it is quite common to drop certain sounds in fast speech. Here we have an example in the opening phrase: instead of 混んでいます, Yamakawa says 混んでいます. Once you hear this a number of times, it will become second nature to you.

21.2 'Come to mention it'

そう言えば

Learn this as an idiom. It literally means 'if (or when) you say thus'.

21.3 Noun modification

あそこに座わっている女の人は最近ノーベル賞をもらった
有名な学者ではありませんか。

(a) Noun modification revisited

As you now know, Japanese descriptive verbs directly precede the noun which they modify:

黒い自動車	a black car
青白い顔	a pale face

In order to explain this pattern it was suggested in 11.2 that the literal meaning of 黒い自動車 was 'a car which is black' and this is indeed an example of the Japanese equivalent of English relative clauses. Unlike English, the Japanese construction is simple and involves few changes; just follow the rule that the modifying word or clause comes *before* the noun being modified. Observe the following:

- (i) きのう映画を見た。
- (ii) その映画はとてもおもしろかった。
- (i)+(ii) きのう見た映画はとてもおもしろかった。
The film which I saw yesterday was very interesting.

When the modifying clause includes a subject, either が or の can be used as a subject marker within the clause.

私が/のきのう見た映画はとてもおもしろかった。

Study another example:

- (i) 駅の前に女の人が立っています。
- (ii) その女の方は私の日本語の先生です。
- (i)+(ii) 駅の前に立っている女の方は私の日本語の先生です。
The woman who is standing in front of the station is my Japanese teacher.

(b) Shedding polite forms

One major change that does occur to the verb when it is shifted into the modifying position is that it will normally shed any polite ending such as ~ます; the plain form is used instead.

- (i) 兄は大学で医学を勉強しています。
- (ii) その兄は二十三歳です。
- (i)+(ii) 大学で医学を勉強している兄は二十三歳です。
My elder brother who is studying medicine at the University is twenty-three years old.

It is possible to retain the ~ます ending sometimes, but this is only when you wish to be particularly polite. For the time being you should stick to the rule that such verbs in modifying position should be in the plain form.

(c) What modifies what?

Occasionally, because of the very simplicity of the Japanese pattern here, you may find yourself faced with an apparent ambiguity when, for example, the noun that is modified could be the subject of the modifying verb. 今読んでいる小説 can only mean 'the novel X is now reading', but 待っていた人 could mean either 'the person for whom X was waiting' or 'the person who was waiting'. Context will usually tell you which interpretation is correct, but you should be aware of the tremendous range and flexibility of this construction.

21.4 Using the negative for politeness

有名な学者ではありませんか。

The negative form is very commonly used when asking questions or making suggestions.

これはあなたのかぎではありませんか。

Isn't this your key?

いっしょに行きませんか。

How about going together?

21.5 つもり

ところで、山川さんは将来何をするつもりですか。

つもり is a noun which means a range of things from intention to opinion, from pretension to belief. It is modified by a whole range of words and is usually followed by the copula, although you will also find が (は) ある/ない after it, especially in negative expressions. It is usual to use this word about oneself, and about the second person if asking a question, but it is not normally found referring to a third person on the principle that other people's intentions can never be known.

この手紙に返事を書くつもりですか。

Do you intend to reply to this letter?

ええ、そのつもりですが。

Yes, I do but...

ええ、そのつもりでした。

Yes, that was my intention.

その学会に参加するつもりはありません。

I have no intention of attending that conference.

今年は日本へは行かないつもりです。

I do not intend to go to Japan this year.

21.6 'I haven't decided yet'

将来何をするつもりですか。

まだ決めていませんが。

Study this response carefully. If you were talking in English, you might also respond with 'I don't know, yet.' Do *not* be tempted to say まだ知りません in Japanese. The verb 知る cannot be used in this way; 決める is the right word in this context.

21.7 ために

私もまだはっきり決めていませんが、もう少し英語を勉強するために、一、二年イギリスへ行くつもりです。

ため is a noun meaning 'sake' or 'benefit'. It is used together with に to express the idea of 'for the purpose of', 'in order to' or 'because of'. It can be attached either to another noun with の or to the plain form of verbs. In this example it obviously means 'in order to', but study the following sentences:

(a) meaning 'in order to'

日本へ行くためにお金をためています。

I am saving up money (in order) to go to Japan.

(b) meaning 'because'

楽しみにしていた秋の遠足は雨のために中止になりました。

The autumn trip to which we had been looking forward was cancelled because of the rainy weather.

(c) meaning 'because'

ケンブリッジからロンドンまでの電車が遅れたために飛行機に間に合わなかった。

Because the train from Cambridge to London was late, I missed the plane.

In the context of (a) *ため* must be followed by *に*; in the context of (b) and (c) *に* is optional.

Key to conversation

Romanisation

Yamakawa Kyō wa zuibun kondemasu ne.

Kinoshita Sō desu ne. Kinō kara butsurigaku no kokusai gakkai ga hajimarimashita kara.

Yamakawa Ā, sō ieba boku mo shinbun de yomimashita.

Kinoshita Asoko ni suwatte iru onna no hito wa saikin Noberu-sho o moratta yūmei na gakusha de wa arimasen ka.

Yamakawa Sō desu ne. Tashika Porando no hito desu ne.

Kinoshita Tokoro de, Yamakawa-san wa shōrai nani o suru tsumori desu ka.

Yamakawa Mada kimete imasen ga. Kinoshita san wa.

Kinoshita Watakushi mo mada hakkiri wa kimete imasen ga, mo sukoshi Eigo o benkyō suru tame ni, ichi-ni nen Ijirisu e iku tsumori desu.

Yamakawa Sore wa ii desu ne. Ijirisu no doko desu ka.

Kinoshita Sā, mada wakarimasen. Demo Rondon de wa nakute chiisa na machi o erabu tsumori desu.

Translation

Yamakawa It's pretty crowded today isn't it?

Kinoshita Yes it is. It's because an international physics conference started yesterday.

Yamakawa Oh yes, now that you mention it I read about it in the newspaper.

Kinoshita Isn't that woman sitting over there the famous scholar who recently won a Nobel prize?

Yamakawa So it is. A Pole I think.

Kinoshita What are you thinking of doing in the future?

Yamakawa I haven't decided yet. What about you?

Kinoshita I haven't made any firm plans either yet, but I plan to go to England for one or two years so I can study English a bit more.

Yamakawa That sounds good. Where in England?

Kinoshita Hm, I don't know yet. But not London. I plan to choose a small town.
