

## Lesson 29

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John, Tadashi and Marie go on talking in Marie's flat.

- 正 もうすっかり落ち着きましたか。  
マリー ええ、おかげさまで。一応片付け終わりました。  
ジョン 日本にはまだしばらくいるつもりですか。  
マリー 友達といっしょに日本の小説を一つフランス語に訳し始めたので、来年三月に大学が終わった後もその仕事を続けるつもりにしています。  
正 だれの小説ですか。  
マリー 安部公房のです。  
ジョン 難しくありませんか。  
マリー ええ、初めは引き受けるつもりはなかったんですが、いい勉強になると思ってやってみることにしました。  
正 いつでも手伝いますよ。  
マリー ありがとう。  
正 マリーさんが日本語を習い出したのは何年前ですか。  
マリー もう八年になります。  
正 それじゃあ、きっと大丈夫だ。  
マリー そうだといいいのですが、あまり自信がありません。話は割に分かりやすいのですが、フランス語に訳しにくい表現がたくさんあります。  
正 細かいところは気にし過ぎない方がいいのではありませんか。  
ジョン いや、僕は小説の場合は細かいところも大切だと思いますね。  
マリー この訳し終わったところを読んでみて下さい。
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### 29.1 Compound verbs using the conjunctive form

もうすっかり落ち着きましたか。  
一応片付け終わりました。

There are in Japanese a large number (over 1,000) of compound verbs; which express complex action or states in single units. They are a combination of two verbs, the first one ending in the conjunctive form.

(a) It is useful to distinguish a subset of these compound verbs where the second element is not tied exclusively to one verb but can link to almost any verb. The major examples that you will come across are:

Verb + 出す	-	start...
Verb + 始める	-	begin...
Verb + 終わる	-	finish...
Verb + 続く	-	continue...(intrans.)
Verb + 続ける	-	continue...(trans.)

(b) With the majority of compound verbs, it is a simple matter to predict the meaning from the constituent parts, but this is not always the case. There is, for example, a set of verbs which act as the second element in a compound the meaning of which may not be immediately obvious.

Verb + 合う (*lit.* to bring something together, mutually)

話し合う	-	discuss
出し合う	-	contribute
落ち合う	-	meet at a pre-arranged place
知り合う	-	get to know each other

Verb + 上げる (*lit.* to raise)

仕上げる	-	complete
読み上げる	-	complete reading, to read out aloud
切り上げる	-	wind up, to finish

Verb + 取る (*lit.* to take)

書き取る	-	write down
引き取る	-	take over

NB: 読み上げる in the second list is similar in meaning to 読み終わる but 読み

上げる emphasises the action that has been completed. The verbs \*食べ上げる, \*飲み上げる or \*話し上げる do not exist, although 食べ終わる, 飲み終わる or 話し終わる are all very common.

(c) You will also come across some compound verbs where the meaning is even more idiomatic.

落ち着く	-	settle down
立ち寄る	-	drop by
見合わせる	-	put off until later
見送る	-	see someone off
引き受ける	-	take on (a job)
割り切る	-	give a clear solution for, adopt a clear-cut attitude
張り切る	-	be in high spirits

Some compounds, however, appear to mean somewhat *less* than their constituent parts: つみおろす, for example, means not 'to load and then unload' but merely 'to unload', although the first verb may in fact refer to piling the load on the backs of labourers. Note also that although you may well find compounds being used which are not listed in dictionaries, you are not free to invent them at will. Restrict yourself to ones that you have heard and learned.

## 29.2 と producing conditionals

そうだといいのですが。

You will find this phrase in the shorter form だといいのですが or だいいんだが as well. Literally the phrase means 'good if it were thus', and so we are dealing with a pattern that uses the particle と to produce conditional statements. In 28.2 this particle was treated as a temporal particle and was translated exclusively as 'when', but the distinction between 'when' and 'if' does not always hold in Japanese. The main difference is that English concentrates on certainty versus uncertainty, whether the speaker knows an action will or will

not happen; Japanese, on the other hand, concentrates on the connection between two events, whether the second event is expected or arbitrary, natural or forced. The use of と in this example sentence should cause you no problems, but this particle will have to be discussed in more detail later when we introduce more ways of producing conditionals, because Japanese usage does not always coincide with English.

For the time being, we shall state the following: the implication of と in a conditional sentence is that the second clause is an *inevitable* consequence of the first: 'if..., then X is bound to happen'. Furthermore, there is a sense of immediacy and continuity attached to と, i.e. the action mentioned in the second clause follows straight after the first action almost automatically.

眠くなるとあくびが出る。

Whenever I become sleepy, I yawn.

今すぐ出発しないと飛行機に乗り遅れますよ。

Unless you leave right now you will miss the flight.

### 29.3 Verb + やすい, にくい

話は割に分かりやすいのですが、フランス語に訳しにくい表現がたくさんあります。

The descriptive verbs やすい 'is easy' and にくい 'is difficult' are often linked to verbs in the same way as these compounds.

Conjunctive + やすい    '...is easy to...'

Conjunctive + にくい    '...is difficult to...'

高速道路は運転しやすい。

It is easy to drive on motorways.

一度ついたらくせはなかなか直しにくい。

Once one falls into a habit it is difficult to get out of it.

In such compounds the final product is treated as a descriptive verb for the purposes of further agglutination.

#### 29.4 Use of + 過ぎる

気にし過ぎない方がいいのではありませんか。

The verb 過ぎる 'to exceed' 'to over...' can be linked not only to verbs but also to the stem of descriptive verbs and adjectival nouns.

きのうのパーティーでは飲み過ぎた。

I drank too much at yesterday's party.

正直過ぎる人はよく損をする。

Those who are too honest are often losers.

専門家の考え方は時々視野がせま過ぎる。

Experts think too narrow-mindedly on occasions.

#### 29.5 方がよい/いい

気にし過ぎない方がいいのではありませんか。

方 (ほう) がよい/いい is an expression meaning 'It would be better if...' 方 (ほう) is a noun meaning 'direction' or 'alternative' and so the literal meaning of this phrase is 'the/alternative is good/preferable'. More will be said later about the various grammatical uses of this useful word 方 (ほう).

練習を続ける方がいいですよ。

It would be better to carry on practising.

彼は来ないかもしれないので待たない方がよい。

It would be better not to wait because he may not come.

そんなことは言わない方がよい。

It would be better if you didn't say such a thing.

### Key to conversation

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#### *Romanisation*

- Tadashi Mō sukkari ochitsukimashita ka.  
Marī Ē, o-kagesama de. Ichiō katazuke owarimashita.  
Jon Nihon ni wa mada shibaraku iru tsumori desu ka.  
Marī Tomodachi to issho ni Nihon no shōsetsu o hitotsu Furansugo ni yakushihajimeta no de, rainen sangatsu ni daigaku ga owatta ato mo sono shigoto o tsuzukeru tsumori ni shite imasu.  
Tadashi Dare no shōsetsu desu ka.  
Marī Abe Kōbō no desu.  
Jon Muzukashiku arimasen ka.  
Marī Ē, hajime wa hikiukeru tsumori wa nakattan desu ga, ii benkyō ni naru to omotte yatte miru koto ni shimashita.  
Tadashi Itsu de mo tetsudaimasu yo.  
Marī Arigatō.  
Tadashi Marī san ga Nihongo o naraidashita no wa nannen mae desu ka.  
Marī Mō hachi nen ni narimasu.  
Tadashi Sore ja, kitto daijōbu da.  
Marī Sō da to ii no desu ga, amari jishin ga arimasen. Hanashi wa wari ni wakariyasui no desu ga, Furansugo ni yakushinikui hyōgen ga takusan arimasu.  
Tadashi Komakai tokoro wa ki ni shisuginai hō ga ii no de wa arimasen ka.  
Jon Iya, boku wa shōsetsu no baai wa komakai tokoro mo taisetsu da to omoimasu ne.  
Marī Kono yakushiwatta tokoro o yonde mite kudasai.
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*Translation*

- Tadashi      Have you completely settled in now?
- Marie        Yes thank you. I've finished tidying up for the time being.
- John         Do you intend to stay on in Japan for a bit longer?
- Marie        I've begun translating a Japanese novel into French together with a friend and so even after university finishes in March of next year I intend to continue with that project.
- Tadashi      Whose novel is it?
- Marie        One of Abe Kobo's.
- John         Isn't it difficult?
- Marie        Yes, so in the beginning I didn't intend to take it on, but I decided to give it a go because I thought I would learn a lot.
- Tadashi      I'll help you whenever you wish.
- Marie        Thank you.
- Tadashi      How many years ago did you begin learning Japanese?
- Marie        It's already eight years now.
- Tadashi      Well in that case you'll have no problems.
- Marie        It would be good if that were true, but I'm not so confident. The story is comparatively easy to understand, but there are many expressions which are difficult to translate into French.
- Tadashi      Wouldn't it be better not to worry too much about the finer details?
- John         On the contrary, I think that in the case of novels the finer details are important too.
- Marie        Please have a look at these passages I've finished translating.
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