

Lesson 47

Kuniko talks to her brother Tadashi.

国子 ねえ、おにいさん。どうしよう...。

正 どうしようっていきなり言われても、何が何だかさっぱり分からないじゃないか。どうしたんだい。

国子 それがね....、実は数学の試験で失敗しちゃって...。

正 落ちたのか。

国子 うん...。

正 おとうさんとおかあさんにはもう話したのか。

国子 うううん....。だって...。

正 ちゃんと話さなくちゃだめだよ。

国子 だって、心配させるだけでしょ。

正 そんなことを言ったって、だまっているわけにはいかないじゃないか。試験を一つ落したら卒業出来ないんだろ。

国子 うん。でもあさって追試があるので、それでまあまあの点がとれば卒業は大丈夫だろうって、担任の先生はおっしゃるんだけど。

正 それで自信はあるのか。

国子 全然。でも運がよければ30点ぐらいはとれるかもしれないと思うの。

正 国子の数学はそんなにひどいのか。

国子 だって、きれいなんですもの。

正 数学はちゃんと勉強しさえすればだれでも点がとれる学科だと思っただけだな。

国子 そんなことないわよ。いくら勉強したってちっとも分かるようにならないわ。

正 そんなものかなあ。

国子 おにいさんだってずいぶんピアノを練習したのにちっとも上手にならなかったじゃない。同じことよ。人それぞれ向き不向きがあるんだと思うわ。

正 まあ、それは当たっているかもしれないな。

国子 もし追試がうまくいって、卒業できるようだったら、この数学の試験のことはだまっただけではいけないかしら。

正 うそをついてはいけないと思うけどな。
国子 別にうそをつくわけではないでしょ。どうしても今晚
おとうさんに話さなきゃだめ。
正 まあ、今すぐにはおとうさん'おかあさんに話さなくても
いいから、そんなことを心配するより少しはその追試のため
に勉強しておきなさい。
国子 ありがとう。子供のころからおにいさんはいつも私の味方に
なってくれたものね。
正 そういうわけでもないんだけど。

Comment

This exchange between brother and sister reverts to the highly colloquial. Note that at this level of informality と is regularly reduced to っ and でしょう, だろう are both 'cut back' to でしょ, and だろ. However, informality in no way reduces the gender difference as revealed in speech; indeed in many ways it becomes more pronounced. Kuniko's sentence endings are recognizably female: の, もの, わ; and Tadashi's recognisably male: だい, のか, な and なあ.

47.1 Prohibition

ちゃんと話さなくちゃだめだよ。
うそをついてはいけない。

The patterns introduced in 44.6 and 46.1, meaning 'must', all involved the use of a double negative. The first example sentence here is yet another way of saying 'must', this time in colloquial form. いけない or ならない can often be replaced by だめ + (だ/ですよ), or even just simply omitted altogether. ちゃ is a colloquial form of ては.

早くしなくちゃだめよ。

You have to do it (or finish it) soon!

あら、もう三時だわ。急いで行かなくちゃ。
Oh, it's three o'clock already. I must dash.

The prohibition 'must not' is expressed in Japanese with a similar somewhat roundabout phrase: 'if you do x, it will not do'. Note that this involves only *one* negative and this negative occurs in the second part of the phrase. You may find this a little confusing, so take care to understand what is going on here.

ここでタバコをすってはいけません。
You should not smoke here.

そんな失礼なことを言ってはならない。
You must not say such rude things.

展示品に手をふれてはいけません。
Please do not touch the exhibits.

まだ食べちゃだめですよ。
You mustn't eat it yet!

47.2 わけにはいかない

だまっているわけにはいかない。

The noun *わけ* means 'reason', 'motive' or 'meaning' (see 31.2) and is often found simply in these senses. It also appears, however, in a number of important idiomatic expressions. *わけにはいかない* means 'it's impossible to...' 'it's not reasonable to...', or 'there is no way that'.

その件に関しては他言しないように言われているので教える
わけにはいかない。

I have been told to keep that business to myself, so there is no way that I
can tell you about it.

安全のためと言われたら飛行機の遅れで迷惑をかけられてもそう
やたらに文句を言うわけにはいかない。

Even if we are being inconvenienced by the flight delay, we really can't
moan too much when they explain it's for our safety.

47.3 Indefiniteness revisited

だれでも点がとれる学科だ。

In 20.2 we explained the pattern 'interrogative noun + も...ない, meaning 'not any...'. Hence:

彼女は外国語は何語も話せない。

She can't speak any foreign languages at all.

When this kind of indefinite statement appears in the positive, the pattern is 'interrogative word + でも':

彼女は外国語は何語でも話せる。

She can speak any foreign language!

そんなことはだれでも出来る。

Anyone can do that!

In this last example **でも** can be replaced by the more colloquial **だって**:

そんなことはだれだって出来る。

When an interrogative word like **だれ**, **何** or **いくら** appears in a **～ても** or **のに** sentence, the indefiniteness is extended even further:

何回読んでもこの話は分らない。
No matter how many times I read this story, I still don't understand it.

何回も読んだのにこの話は分らない。
Although I have read this story many times, I still don't understand it.

父はいくら説明しても私の気持ちを分かってくれない。
However much I explain, my father never understands my feelings.

47.4 Some idiomatic uses of ～ても

どうしても今晚おとうさんに話さなきゃだめ。

The following is just a list of some useful phrases:

どうしても	at any cost, by all means
何としても	at any cost (risk), somehow or other
それにしても	but, still, nevertheless

それにしても今年は春が来るのが遅いですね。
And yet, spring is late in coming this year, you know.

何としてもこの実験は成功させたい。
I am determined to make this experiment successful.

47.5 Asking permission

だまっていてはいけないかしら。

You have met one way of asking permission in 41.7. This involved the patterns ～てもいいです and ～てもかまいませんか. Another way of doing this involves ～てはいけない set in the interrogative:

- (a) ここに駐車 (を) してもいいですか。 or
ここに駐車 (を) しても かまいませんか。
(b) ここに駐車してはいけませんか。

(a) is a straightforward question: 'Is it all right if I park here?', but if you use (b), you are showing that your expectation of a negative answer is higher: 'Do I take it that it is prohibited to park here?' For sociological reasons you may find (b) used more in Japanese than you might expect from looking at its English equivalent.

Observe the following:

この報告書は明日書いてもいいですか。

Is it all right if I write this report tomorrow?

この報告書は明日までに書かなくてもいいですか。

Is it all right if I do not write this report by tomorrow?

この報告書は明日までに書かなくてはいけませんか。

Do I have to write this report by tomorrow?

この報告書は明日までに書かなければいけませんか。

Do I have to write this report by tomorrow?

クレジットカードで払ってはいけませんか。

Can't I pay with a credit card?

どうしても教授からの許可をもらわなくてはいけませんか。

Do I really have to obtain permission from the professor?

47.6 わけではない

うそをつくわけではない。

This phrase literally means 'It is not a case of...', and it can also be found as わけでもない.

君一人が悪いわけではない。

lit: It is not the case that only you were wrong.

You were not the only one who was wrong.

参加したくないわけではありませんが、財政上ちょっと無理だと思えます。

It is not that I don't want to participate, but I feel it's just not financially feasible.

組合側の要求が分からないわけでもないんですがね....。

It is not that I don't understand the Union's demands, but...

47.7 Commands

勉強しておきなさい。

Commands in Japanese are a combination of the conjunctive form of the verb plus the word なさい, which is the imperative form of the verb なさる, the respectful equivalent of する 'to do'. Commands of this type should only really be used with people you know very well indeed; their most common use is in fact by parents speaking to their children. They are certainly less polite than forms with ~てください.

お風呂に入りなさい。

Get in the bath!

ぐずぐずしていないでさっさと来なさい。

Stop messing around and come here quickly!

Note the following everyday formulae which use this pattern. You will probably have already met all of these in conversation, but they are listed here for convenience:

お帰りなさい。

Welcome back!

お休みなさい。

Sleep well.

ごめんなさい。

Please excuse me.

Key to conversation

Romanisation

- Kuniko Nē, o-niisan. Dō shiyō...
- Tadashi Dō shiyōtte ikinari iwarete mo, nani ga nan da ka sappari wakaranai ja nai ka. Dō shitan dai.
- Kuniko Sore ga ne... Jitsu wa sūgaku no shiken de shippai shichatte...
- Tadashi Ochita no ka.
- Kuniko Un...
- Tadashi Otōsan to okāsan ni wa mo hanashita no ka.
- Kuniko Ūun... Datte...
- Tadashi Chanto hanasanakucha dame da yo.
- Kuniko Datte, shinpai saseru dake deshō.
- Tadashi Sonna koto o ittatte damatte iru wake ni wa ikanai ja nai ka. Shiken o hitotsu otoshitara sotsugyō dekinain daro.
- Kuniko Un. Demo asatte tsuishi ga aru no de, sore de mā mā no ten ga torereba sotsugyō wa daijōbu darōtte, tannin no sensei wa ossharun dakedo.
- Tadashi Sore de jishin wa aru no ka?
- Kuniko Zenzen. De mo un ga yokereba sanjuttan gurai wa toreru ka mo shirenai to omou no.
- Tadashi Kuniko no sūgaku wa sonna ni hidoi no ka.
- Kuniko Datte, kirai nan desu mono.
- Tadashi Sūgaku wa chanto benkyō shi sae sureba dare demo ten ga toreru gakkā da to omoun dakedo na.
- Kuniko Sonna koto nai wa yo. Ikura benkyō shitatte chittomo wakarū yō ni naranai wa.
- Tadashi Sonna mono ka na.

Kuniko O-niisan datte zuibun piano o renshū shita no ni chittomo jōzu ni naranakatta ja nai. Onaji koto yo. Hito sorezore muki fumuki ga arun da to omou wa.

Tadashi Ma, sore wa atatte iru ka mo shirenai na.

Kuniko Moshi tsuishi ga umaku itte sotsugyō dekiru yō dattara kono sūgaku no shiken no koto wa damatte ite wa ikenai kashira.

Tadashi Uso o tsuite wa ikenai to omou kedo na.

Kuniko Betsu ni uso o tsuku wake de wa nai deshō. Dōshite mo konban otōsan ni hanasanakya dame.

Tadashi Mā, ima sugu ni wa otōsan ya okāsan ni hanasanakute mo ii kara, sonna koto o shinpai suru yori sukoshi wa sono tsuishi no tame ni benkyō shite okinasai.

Kuniko Arigatō. Kodomo no koro kara o-niisan wa itsumo watakushi no mikata ni natte kureta mono ne.

Tadashi Sō iu wake de mo nain dakedo...

Translation

Kuniko Well, Tadashi. What shall I do?

Tadashi You ask me what to do all of a sudden, but I haven't got a clue what you're on about. What's wrong?

Kuniko Well... Actually I've gone and done badly in my maths exam.

Tadashi Have you failed?

Kuniko Yes.

Tadashi Have you mentioned it to father and mother?

Kuniko No... Because...

Tadashi You'll have to tell them you know.

Kuniko But, it'll only get them worried.

Tadashi You say that, but you can't just keep quiet about it can you? If you fail one exam you can't graduate, can you?

Kuniko I know. But I've got a resit tomorrow and the form teacher said that if I got reasonable marks in that I'd be able to graduate.

Tadashi So are you confident?

Kuniko Absolutely not. But if I'm lucky I might get about 30.

Tadashi Your maths that bad?

Kuniko Well, I hate it.

Tadashi Surely, maths is the kind of subject that anyone can pass as long as they study.

Kuniko That's not true! No matter how hard I study I don't seem to understand a thing.

Tadashi Really?

Kuniko Look at you. You practised the piano a lot but never got any better. It's the same thing. Everyone has got strengths and weaknesses.

Tadashi Well, I suppose you're right.

Kuniko If my resit goes well and I can graduate, do you think it would be wrong to say nothing about this exam?

Tadashi I do think it would be wrong to lie.

Kuniko It's not really lying at all. Do you think I ought to tell father this evening?

Tadashi Well, you don't have to tell father and mother immediately, so rather than worrying about that why don't you do some preparation for that resit instead.

Kuniko Thanks. You always were on my side, ever since we were children.

Tadashi Well, I don't know about that...
