

Lesson 10

John goes to a JR reservation office (みどりの窓口 *midori no madoguchi*) in Tokyo Station to buy a ticket on the Super Express (*shinkansen*) to Kyoto.

駅員 次の方どうぞ。
ジョン 京都までの新幹線のきっぷを下さい。
駅員 指定席ですか、自由席ですか。
ジョン 指定席券はいくらですか。
駅員 五百円です。
ジョン それでは指定席をお願いします。
駅員 はい。いつのきっぷですか。
ジョン 来週の水曜日の午前十時発ひかり11号をお願いします。
駅員 ええと、来週の水曜日は十月十日ですね。午前中のひかりは全部いっぱいです。
ジョン それでは十一日はどうですか。
駅員 ひかり11号はいっぱいですが、次のひかり79号はどうですか。十時四分発です。京都へは十二時四十六分着です。
ジョン はい、それでけっこうです。
駅員 お一人ですか。
ジョン はい、そうです。
駅員 はい、どうぞ。乗車券と指定席特急券で 1,2970 円になります。
ジョン どうも。

John pays 1,5000 yen.

駅員 それでは 2030 円のおつりです。ありがとうございました。

Comment

When the Japanese rail network was 'privatised' in 1988, the overall name devised for the group that emerged was JR (pronounced ジェーアール), which stands for Japan Rail. The national system had previously been known as 国鉄 (こくてつ). JR is divided into regions, each with its own extended name: JR 東日

本 (read ひがしにほん), for example, which serves Tōkyō and its region. Despite the fact that this particular phonetic combination of foreign letters is definitely un-Japanese and awkward to pronounce, it seems to have been accepted because of its ‘modern’ feel. The privatisation is only partial, of course, and one can still buy tickets to anywhere in Japan on the national network at any JR station. The same is not true for the many truly private railways in Japan, which are more localized. To buy tickets for the Super Express (新幹線), you either have to go to a travel bureau or to a station that has a *midori no madoguchi* (‘green window’). This system of high-speed lines is gradually expanding throughout the country, because it brings such a dramatic reduction in travel times. The express that runs between Tōkyō and Kyōto (and on to Ōsaka) is known as the 東海道新幹線, named after the Tōkaidō, the old trunk road along the Eastern seaboard.

In the example here, John needs three types of ticket: a Tōkyō-Kyōto fare (乗車券), an express fare (特急券) and a seat reservation (指定席), although the last two may be combined. If he did not want to bother with a reservation and preferred to trust to luck that he could get a free seat (自由席), and if he was actually in Tōkyō station, he could obtain a ticket at an automatic machine. If he wants a non-smoking seat, he will have to ask for a 禁煙車 (きんえんしゃ).

10.1 Noun + を下さい

きっぷを下さい。

下(くだ)さい is the imperative form of the verb 下さる, which will be dealt with in detail in a later lesson. At this point simply learn that when 下さい is added to a noun or nouns it means ‘please give me (something).’ The particle を, which marks the object, may well disappear in colloquial speech. Observe the use of numerical classifiers in the following examples:

たまご (を) 一ダース下さい。

Please give me a dozen eggs.

220円の切手を八枚下さい。

Please give me eight 220 yen stamps.

あしたの六時ごろお電話を下さい。

Please give me a ring tomorrow around six thirty.

10.2 Noun + をお願いします

それでは指定席をお願いします。

We saw *お願いします* in 3.3 meaning 'please'. It works in a similar fashion to *下さい*, coming directly after a noun with the object marker *を*.

コーヒーをお願いします。

Please give me a cup of coffee.

コピーを十六枚お願いします。

Please make sixteen copies.

10.3 'When'

いつのきっぷですか。

いつ is an interrogative noun meaning 'when?' You can see here how useful the particle *の* can be at times. Here it is linking the interrogative to the noun 'ticket' in economical fashion: *lit.* 'when ticket?' The closest English equivalent is probably: 'A ticket for when?'

10.4 Train names and numbers

午前十時発ひかり11号

First of all, take note of the way 'departing at' is expressed. The time is followed immediately by the character 発 (はつ) 'leaving', read in the *on*. Most express trains are known by a name, which tells you their route, and a number. The trains on the 東海道新幹線 are called either ひかり, 'Light', stopping at Nagoya and Kyōto only, orこだま, 'Echo', stopping at many intermediate stations. The word for 'number' in this context is 号 (ごう), not 番. There is not much difference between these two words for 'number' and the decision to use one rather than the other is more a matter of usage; lines and platforms will need 番 for instance. Both words are short for the word you have already learned in connection with telephone numbers: 番号. Do *not* make the mistake of thinking that these are actually numerical classifiers: they are different ways of expressing the concept of 'number X'; they are not a way of counting the object concerned. The usual classifier for trains (rather than the engines themselves) is in fact 本, based on the way trains are listed vertically in the timetables.

10.5 Dates

来週の水曜日は十月十日ですね。

Months are expressed by adding the suffix 月(がつ) to the number, and there are no irregular sound changes.

| | | | | | |
|----|------|----------|----|------|--------|
| 一月 | いちがつ | January | 五月 | ごがつ | May |
| 二月 | にがつ | February | 六月 | ろくがつ | June |
| 三月 | さんがつ | March | 七月 | しちがつ | July |
| 四月 | しがつ | April | 八月 | はちがつ | August |

| | | | | | |
|----|-------|-----------|-----|---------|----------|
| 九月 | くがつ | September | 十一月 | じゅういちがつ | November |
| 十月 | じゅうがつ | October | 十二月 | じゅうにがつ | December |

Be careful! 一月 does *not* mean 'one month' but 'January'. Refer back to 9.1 to find out how to say 'one month'.

Days of the month are somewhat more complicated and involve a second set of numbers, two of which (よん and なな) we have already met. You will see that they are simple to write:

| | | | | | |
|-----|---------|------|------|----------|------|
| 一日 | ついたち | 1st | 十六日 | じゅうろくにち | 16th |
| 二日 | ふつか | 2nd | 十七日 | じゅうしちにち | 17th |
| 三日 | みっか | 3rd | 十八日 | じゅうはちにち | 18th |
| 四日 | よっか | 4th | 十九日 | じゅうくにち | 19th |
| 五日 | いつか | 5th | 二十日 | はつか | 20th |
| 六日 | むいか | 6th | 二十一日 | にじゅういちにち | 21st |
| 七日 | なのか | 7th | 二十二日 | にじゅうににち | 22nd |
| 八日 | ようか | 8th | 二十三日 | にじゅうさんにち | 23rd |
| 九日 | ここのか | 9th | 二十四日 | にじゅうよっか | 24th |
| 十日 | とうか | 10th | 二十五日 | にじゅうごにち | 25th |
| 十一日 | じゅういちにち | 11th | 二十六日 | にじゅうろくにち | 26th |
| 十二日 | じゅうににち | 12th | 二十七日 | にじゅうしちにち | 27th |
| 十三日 | じゅうさんにち | 13th | 二十八日 | にじゅうはちにち | 28th |
| 十四日 | じゅうよっか | 14th | 二十九日 | にじゅうくにち | 29th |
| 十五日 | じゅうごにち | 15th | 三十日 | さんじゅうにち | 30th |

The first term in this series is quite irregular. It is not in fact a number at all but means 'moon rising'. 2nd to 10th are formed by adding the suffix 日, read か here rather than にち, to what is in fact a set of original Japanese numbers that will be studied in more detail in due course. Note that this か also appears in 14th and 24th, and that 20th is again quite irregular. 'What day (of the month) is it?' is expressed as 何日 (なんにち) ですか, and 'What month is it?' is expressed as 何月 (なんがつ) ですか.

Make sure that you differentiate clearly between the two concepts of date on the one hand and duration of time on the other.

date:

九月一日 (ついたち) です。

It's September 1st.

duration:

一日 (いちにち) 四時間勉強する。

I study four hours a day.

十月十日から十ヶ月フランスに行きます。

I'll go to France from October 10th for ten months.

10.6 どう

それでは十一日はどうですか。

どう means 'how'. Learn this example as an idiomatic phrase, 'In that case, how about...?'

10.7 が as a conjunctive marker

ひかり11号はいっぱいですが、次のひかり79号はどうですか。

が can be used as a sentence particle to link two clauses which contrast with each other in some way. Note how it comes at the end of the first phrase, straight after the verb. It is usually translatable as 'but'. Almost every conjunctive operates at the end of the phrase in this way, and as a result it is not difficult to add on further sections. You will find that Japanese sentences have a tendency to keep expanding.

10.8 Two more idioms with で

それだけっこうです。
乗車券と指定席特急券で 1,2970 円になります。

Note the use of the particle で in these two phrases. In the first case we are dealing with それで in the sense of 'with that, it's fine'. Distinguish this from the idiomatic use of それでは 'in that case' in 10.6 above. In the second example it is a question of adding up and 'making something': 'with X and Y, that comes to...' This use of the verb になる in this sense of 'comes to' with figures is quite common.

Key to conversation

Romanisation

- Ekiin Tsugi no kata dōzo.
- Jon Kyōto made no shinkansen no kippu o kudasai.
- Ekiin Shiteiseki desu ka, jiyūseki desu ka.
- Jon Shiteisekiken wa ikura desu ka.
- Ekiin Gohyaku en desu.
- Jon Sore de wa shiteiseki o o-negai shimasu.
- Ekiin Hai. Itsu no kippu desu ka.
- Jon Raishū no suiyōbi no gozen jūji hatsu Hikari jūichigō o o-negai shimasu.
- Ekiin Ēto, raishū no suiyōbi wa jūgatsu tōka desu ne. Gozenchū no hikari wa zenbu ippai desu.
- Jon Sore de wa jūichinichi wa dō desu ka.
- Ekiin Hikari jūichigō wa ippai desu ga, tsugi no Hikari nanajūkyūgō wa dō desu ka.
Jūji yonpun hatsu desu. Kyōto e wa jūniji yonjūroppun chaku desu.
- Jon Hai, sore de kekkō desu.
- Ekiin O-hitori desu ka.

Jon Hai, sō desu.
Ekiin Hai, dōzo. Jōshaken to shiteiseki tokkyūken de ichiman nisen kyūhyaku nanajūen ni narimasu.
Jon Dōmo.
Ekiin Sore de wa nisen sanjūen no o-tsurei desu. Arigatō gozaimashita.

Translation

Attendant Next please.
John A Super Express ticket to Kyōto please.
Attendant With a seat reservation or without?
John How much is a reserved seat ?
Attendant Five hundred yen.
John In that case I'll have a reserved seat please.
Attendant Certainly. When is the ticket for?
John For Wednesday of next week. Hikari No. 11 departing at ten a.m. please.
Attendant Let me see now. Wednesday of next week is October the tenth, isn't it? All the morning Hikari are full.
John What about the eleventh then?
Attendant Hikari No. 11 is full, but how about the next one, No. 79? Departing at four minutes past ten and arriving in Kyoto at twelve forty-six.
John That will do fine.
Attendant Just one, is it?
John Yes please.
Attendant Here you are then. With the ticket and an express seat reservation that comes to 12,970 yen.
John Thank you.
Attendant That makes change of 2,030 yen. Thank you very much.
