

## Lesson 27

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A short letter from John to Tadashi.

正君

先日会った時に伝えるのを忘れてましたが、マリーさんが十一月二十三日にいっしょに遊びに来ないかと言っていました。この日は祭日だと思いますが、ちがいますか。都合を知らせて下さい。

この間の話のことですが、まだ決心がつきません。大学の調査隊の医師としてネパールへ行くというのはとても興味のある話ですが、実は来年はイギリスへ帰ることも考えているのです。調査目的、方法、日程などについては読んでみましたが、分からないことが一つ、二つあるので今度会った時に説明して下さい。いずれにしても今年中に決めるつもりです。では又近いうちに。ジョン

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### 27.1 Quoting and reporting

マリーさんが十一月二十三日にいっしょに遊びに来ないかと言っていました。

What Marie actually said was:

(a) 十一月二十三日の土曜日に正さんといっしょに遊びに来ませんか。

If you were to quote this as direct speech, you would enclose the actual words in quotation marks and add と言った.

(b) マリーさんが「十一月二十三日の土曜日に正さんといっしょに遊びに来ませんか」と言った。

If you were to report this as indirect speech, the result would be a little different:

(c) マリーさんが十一月二十三日の土曜日にいっしょに遊びに来ないか  
とっていました。

From this it should be clear that と is the quotative particle. It is used with verbs of saying and thinking and marks both direct and indirect speech. In the latter case it has the same effect as 'that' in English: it nominalises the quoted clause. Unlike English, however, there is a minimum of morphological change between the content of direct and indirect speech; often the only marker identifying direct speech is either the typographical one of quotation marks or the presence of polite verb endings and other sentence particles that denote 'raw' speech. Quoted material in indirect speech is usually minus these. Note that the particle と often emerges as って in ordinary speech:

一郎君がよろしくってっていました。  
Ichiro said to send his best.

## 27.2 言った as opposed to 言っていた

Why does (b) above end in と言った and (c) in とっていました? Observe the following exchange:

I am talking to Hayashi:

私: 今晚、山田さんのうちの集まりに行きますか。  
Are you going to the meeting at Yamada's tonight?

林: ええ、もちろん行きますよ。  
Yes, of course.

Later, in conversation with Yamada, I report what Hayashi said (note that both 'I' and Yamada are female; you can tell this from the final particles):

山田: 今晚の集まりに林さんはいらっしゃるかしら。  
Do you think Hayashi will come tonight?

私: さっき会った時、もちろん行くって言ってたわよ。  
I've just met him and he said of course he'd come.

山田: それはよかったわ。  
Oh good.

That evening:

山田: 林さんずいぶん遅いわね。もう来ないと思うわ。  
Hayashi's very late isn't he? I don't think he'll come now.

私: でも今日の午後会った時には来ると言っていたわよ。  
But he said he would come when I met him this afternoon.

Three hours later:

山田: やっぱり林さんは来なかったわ。あなたの聞きちがいがいいじゃない。  
You see, Hayashi didn't come did he? Didn't you mishear him?

私: そんなことはないわよ。私には「行きます」ってはっきり言ったわよ。 or 私には来るってはっきり言ったわよ。  
No, honestly. He definitely said he was coming.

When you are simply *reporting* what someone said it is normal to use the *～ている* form of the verb. Such and such was said and you are reporting what was said and the fact that it was said. However, when you actually *quote* what was said or wish to stress that something was definitely said 'in so many words' then you would tend to use the perfective instead. The *～ていた* suggests the present relevance of something that has occurred; the *～た* pinpoints it in the past. There is a certain parallel in the English 'he said that the other day' versus 'he was saying just that the other day', although this analogy should not be pushed too far.

### 27.3 'I think that...'

この日は祭日だと思いますが、ちがいますか。

The two verbs that normally occur in this pattern are *～と思う* 'I think that...' and *～と考える* 'I consider that...' Here too, as in indirect speech, the clause containing the thought content normally takes the plain form:

まちがっているのは彼だと思ふ。  
I think it is he who is wrong.

On the principle that one cannot really know what other people are thinking, the subject of the verb 思ふ or 考える is usually the speaker. Thus, a sentence like

山田さんは来ないと思います。

can only mean 'I don't think Mr Yamada will come' and *not* 'Mr Yamada thinks he won't come.' To express speculation about other people's thoughts you need to use different forms that will be introduced later in the course. Note that we translated 山田さんは来ないと思います as 'I don't think Mr Yamada will come.' The literal English version, 'I think Mr Yamada will not come', sounds stilted and old-fashioned, and if used at all today would suggest that I was convinced Yamada would not come.

#### 27.4 知らせる

都合を知らせて下さい。

The verb for 'tell or inform' here is 知らせる. You may learn it as a verb in its own right, but you will also probably recognise part of it as the verb 知る 'know'. It is in fact the causative form of this verb and so should be analysed as 'cause to know'. You will be introduced to causatives in a more systematic manner in a later lesson.

#### 27.5 Noun + のことですが...

この間の話のことですが、まだ決心が付きません。

This phrase is used to introduce a topic of conversation, but in a more roundabout way than simply marking it with は.

明日のことですが、朝の会議は何時から始めますか。

About tomorrow; at what time shall we start the morning session?

山田さんのことですが、このごろ元気がありませんね。

By the way, about that Mr Yamada; he doesn't look well these days, does he?

The second phrase in the box above is a good example of how Japanese tends to avoid passives when possible. You will be introduced to the passive form later, but note here how what we would put as a passive, 'there's no decision been made yet', is expressed intransitively in Japanese.

#### 27.6 という as an identification marker

大学の調査隊の医師としてネパールへ行くというのはとても興味のある話ですが、

という is used to identify or to give further information about a noun. Quite often, as in the above example, it serves to nominalise a rather long clause:

他人と共同生活をするというのは難しい。

It is difficult to lead a communal life with strangers.

林田さんと結婚するといううわさは本当ですか。

Is the rumour that you are going to get married to Hayashida true?

社会における男の役割と女の役割はちがうという考え方は日本では一般的ですか。

Is the idea that man's role and woman's role in society are different common in Japan?

You will find that this explanatory pattern is used far more often in Japanese than you might expect, and as a result it does not have the rather precious feel that a literal translation would suggest. One fairly literal use of *という* can be found in the pattern 'noun + *という* + noun' meaning '...called...'

黒沢明という人を知っていますか。

Do you know someone called Kurosawa Akira?

これは何という花ですか。

What is this flower called?

山口というところで生まれました。

I was born in a place called Yamaguchi.

Again, you will find that, as a general rule, *という* is used far more than the English 'called', which can sound pedantic if used too often. Conversely, this means that you may find yourself forgetting to use *という* in contexts where a Japanese would expect it.

## 27.7 More on *こと*

分からないことがひとつ、ふたつあるので今度会った時に説明して下さい。

*分からないこと* in this context must be translated as '(there are one or two) things I don't understand', *not* as 'the lack of understanding'. The context tells you that *こと* is best interpreted here as an abstract noun meaning 'things' rather than as a nominaliser. Take, for instance, the following pair of sentences:

- (a) その作家にとって書くことは社会批判だ。  
For that author writing means social criticism.
- (b) その作家の書くことは平凡だ。  
What that author writes is trite.

In (a) it is the activity of writing that is in question, and so we can say that 書く is being nominalised; in the second case it is what is being written that is in focus, and so こと means 'the things that'.

## 27.8 Choice of tense or aspect

今度会った時に説明して下さい。

Note the use of the ~た form here. You might, on the pattern of English 'please explain when next we meet', be tempted to produce an imperfective at this point. Remember, however, that the logic of time in a Japanese sentence works more within the sentence than without. The verb for 'meet' is in the perfective here, because the explanation will take place *after* the actual moment of meeting. Think of it as 'please explain when we (will) have met.' Conversely, in a sentence such as:

今度来る時に持ってきて下さい。

Please bring it when next you come.

the imperfective is used, because the 'bringing' is an integral part of the 'coming' and does not happen either before or after.

### Key to passage

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#### *Romanisation*

Tadashi-kun

Senjitsu atta toki ni tsutaeru no o wasuremashita ga, Marī-san ga jūichigatsu nijūsannichi ni issho ni asobi ni konai ka to itte imashita. Kono hi wa saijitsu da to omoimasu ga, chigaimasu ka.

Tsugō o shirasete kudasai.

Kono aida no hanashi no koto desu ga, mada kesshin ga tsukimasen. Daigaku no chōsatai no ishi

toshite Nepāru e iku to iu no wa totemo kyōmi no aru hanashi desu ga, jitsu wa rainen wa Ijirisu e kaeru koto mo kangaete iru no desu. Chōsa mokuteki, hōhō, nittei nado ni tsuite wa yonde mimashita ga, wakaranai koto ga hitotsu futatsu aru no de kondo atta toki ni setsumei shite kudasai. Izure ni shite mo kotoshi-jū ni kimeru tsumori desu. Dewa mata chikai uchi ni. Jon.

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*Translation*

Dear Tadashi,

When we met the other day I forgot to tell you that Marie asked us to come over to her place together on 23 November. I think it's a public holiday, but correct me if I'm wrong. Please let me know whether you're free or not.

Concerning that other business, I still haven't been able to make up my mind. It sounds interesting to go to Nepal as the doctor on a university survey team, but to tell the truth I am also thinking of going back to England next year. I read about the purpose, method and schedule of the survey, but there are one or two things I'm not clear about so I'd like you to explain them next time we meet. In any case, I intend to decide before the end of the year. Hope to see you again soon. John.

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