

## Lesson 30

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### A conversation between John and Tadashi

- 正           ネパールのこと決めましたか。
- ジョン       ええ…。とても行きたいとは思っているんですが…。
- 正           何か問題があるんですか。
- ジョン       一つは時期の問題で、十月からイギリスの病院で働くことが決まったので四月から九月末までネパールに行くというのはちょっと時間的にきついと思うのです。
- 正           そうですね。
- ジョン       それに、イースターまでには帰ると母に手紙を書いたばかりなので両親ががっかりすると思うんです。
- 正           ジョンさんは日本へ来てもう三年目ですね。
- ジョン       そうです。その間一度も帰っていませんし…。それに新しい仕事を始める前にイギリスやアメリカで最近出た医学雑誌なども読んでおきたいと思っているんです。
- 正           僕達医者の仕事は忙しいからゆっくり本を読んだり、考えたりする時間が本当にほしいですね。調査隊の責任者の人が二十五日までに決めてほしいと言っていましたけど…。
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### 30.1 The ~たい form

とても行きたいとは思っているんですが…。  
最近出た医学雑誌なども読んでおきたいと思っているんです。

When the suffix ~たい is added to the conjunctive form of the verb the result is a descriptive verb signifying 'I want to...'

行く	行きたい	I want to go/
する	したい	I want to do/
買う	買いたい	I want to buy/

As the *～たい* suffix transforms the whole compound into a descriptive verb, the pattern of inflections is as follows:

	<i>positive</i>	<i>negative</i>
<i>imperfective</i>	～たい	～たくない
<i>perfective</i>	～たかった	～たくなかった
<i>imperfective</i>	行きたい	行きたくない
<i>perfective</i>	行きたかった	行きたくなかった
<i>imperfective</i>	勉強したい	勉強したくない
<i>perfective</i>	勉強したかった	勉強したくなかった

### 30.2 が or を?

A verb form such as 買いたい ‘I want to buy’ being a descriptive verb is of course stative, so that when the ‘object’ bought is expressed, a stative construction should be used. This kind of construction was first introduced in 12.2, where it was explained in terms of a は + が combination. It might help to see this pattern in the same terms, although the は phrase is almost always suppressed:

(私は) 自転車が買いたい。

I want to buy a bike.

(私は) さっぱりした物が食べたい。

I want to eat something simple.

There is one important constraint about this pattern that you must always keep in mind. The general rule with such words that express desire or internal feeling in Japanese is that they can only be used in the affirmative *about the first person*, on the grounds that it is not possible to state anything about anyone else’s feelings. They refer to individually experienced desires or wishes and cannot be

used to assert anything about someone else. The only time you may use this construction about a second person is when you are asking a question. When you do so, however, you are specifically asking about their desires and feelings. It is for this reason that you should try to avoid as far as possible saying things like 行きたいですか, for 'do you want to go?' It is preferable to use some other phrase such as 行きませんか, or 行きましょうか ('shall we go', a form that will be introduced in due course).

Despite what has just been said above about stative intransitive constructions, you will, however, find sentences such as the following:

帰りに買物をしたい。

I would like to do the shopping on my way home.

パンダのよい写真をとりたかったが天気がよくなかったので  
難しかった。

I wanted to take good pictures of pandas but it was difficult because the weather was bad.

These are quite clearly simple transitive constructions with を. What seems to be happening is that the dynamic nature of the verb in question is achieving greater prominence than the stative nature of the construction itself. The construction shifts ground accordingly. You must be prepared to meet both kind of sentences, because the situation is at present fluid.

There will also be times, however, when this が/を conversion is *not* automatic, times when only を is acceptable. The rule here seems to be that if the 'object' is animate, or is being treated as being animate (for example in metaphorical usage), then を must be used.

敵を殺したい。

I want to kill my enemy.

私達のパーティーに原先生を招待したい。

I would like to invite Professor Hara to our party.

その指導者は人民の眠っている精神を呼び起こしたいと言っていた。

The leader said that he wanted to awaken the people's dormant spirit.

### 30.3 のですが and ～たいと思います(が)

とても行きたいとは思っているんですが...

Just as in English, only more so, it is considered rather rude to state one's wishes in a blunt manner. You should take care to use this ～たい construction as sparingly as possible. When you need to say 'I want to...' get in the habit of softening the demand by adding のですが..., or ～たいと思います(が).

頭が痛いので今日は少し早目に帰りたいと思います(が)。

As I have a headache I should like to go home slightly early today.

ちょっと御相談したいのですが、

I would like to talk to you...

### 30.4 The suffix 的

ちょっと時間的にきつい

This suffix 的 (てき) can be appended to many nouns to form the Japanese equivalent of 'like', 'wise' or 'ish'. It is as ubiquitous as its English counterparts and you will find it cropping up in both adjectival position, taking the form 的な, or in adverbial position as here, taking the form 的に. Because it originates in Chinese, you will find it restricted, by and large, to nouns of Chinese origin.

### 30.5 Use of ばかり with the perfective

イースターまでには帰ると母に手紙を書いたばかりなので  
がっかりすると思うんです。

You will find the word ばかり normally used as an adverb meaning 'only' or 'just'. When the ~た form of a verb is followed by ばかり, it signifies that the action expressed by the verb has been completed only a short while ago. This construction is very similar to perfective + ところ (28.4).

父は中国から帰って来たばかりです。

My father has only just returned from China.

その点についてはつい先日説明したばかりです。

I explained to you about that point only the other day.

聞いたばかりの話をもう忘れた。

I have already forgotten the story I just heard.

木村さんのうちでは赤ちゃんが生まれたばかりだ。

They've just had a baby at the Kimura's.

### 30.6 ~て + おく

医学雑誌なども読んでおきたいと思っています。

This is another example of a ~て form being combined idiomatically with another verb. In this case the second verb is おく 'put', and so literally the pattern means 'do something and put (leave) it' hence 'do something in advance of something'. John uses it here because he will be studying the journals to help him with future research. This is a very useful construction, but we tend to forget to use it because it has no direct counterpart in English. Observe the following:

今日の午後停電があるかもしれないと話しておきました。

I have warned (them) that there might be a power cut this afternoon.

あしたのミーティングまでにこのレポートを読んでおいて下さい。

Please make sure you read this report before tomorrow's meeting.

彼女には三時ごろ行くと電話しておきました。

I have telephoned to tell her we'll be there around three.

Note that ておく can be abbreviated to とく: this produces forms such as 電話しときました. Note in particular the two forms 置いておく, meaning 'leave it, let it be' (usually abbreviated to 置いとく) and とっておく, meaning 'to set aside, to reserve for, to keep back' (usually abbreviated to とっとく).

### 30.7 Noun + が + ほしい

ゆっくり本を読んだり、考えたりする時間がほしいですね。

There is another descriptive verb ほしい, which signifies 'want, desire'. This can be used in two patterns: noun + が + ほしい or ～て form + ほしい. Noun + が + ほしい is used when one wants an object or something that is seen to be an 'object': 'I am desirous of obtaining...'. Again note the use of が here, going with the stative nature of the expression.

クリスマス・プレゼントにカメラがほしい。

I want a camera for my Christmas present.

自由がほしい。

I want freedom.

私がほしかったレコードは売り切れでした。

The record which I wanted was sold out.

Note that this descriptive verb *never* takes the nominalised form of a verb. Thus you cannot say either \*行くことがほしいです or \*食べるのがほしいです.

### 30.8 ～て form + ほしい

調査隊の責任者の人が二十五日までに決めてほしいと言っていましたけど。

When ほしい is linked with the ~て form this pattern signifies 'I want *you* to...'. Take particular care to compare this with 30.6. Because this form expresses a direct request for someone to do something for you, you should be careful when you use it. It can sound very pushy in the wrong situation.

あしたまでこの本を貸してほしい。

I would like you to lend me this book until tomorrow.

希望を持ってほしい。

I want you to have hope.

約束は守ってほしい。

I want you to keep your promises.

### Key to conversation

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#### *Romanisation*

Tadashi      Nepāru no koto kimemashita ka.

Jon            Ē...Totemo ikitai to wa omotte iru no desu ga...

Tadashi      Nani ka mondai ga arun desu ka.

Jon            Hitotsu wa jiki no mondai de, jūgatsu kara Igirisu no byōin de hataraku koto ga kimatta no de shigatsu kara kugatsu matsu made Nepāru ni iku to iu no wa chotto jikanteki ni kitsui to omou no desu.

Tadashi      Sō desu ne.

Jon            Sore ni, Īsutā made ni wa kaeru to haha ni tegami o kaita bakari na node ryoshin ga gakkari suru to omoun desu.

Tadashi      Jon-san wa Nihon e kite mo sannenme desu ne.

Jon            Sō desu. Sono aida ichido mo kaette imasen shi...Sore ni atarashii shigoto o hajimeru mae ni Igirisu ya Amerika de saikin deta igaku zasshi nado mo yonde okitai to omotte irun desu.

Tadashi      Bokutachi isha no shigoto wa isogashii kara yukkuri hon o yondari kangaetari suru jikan ga hontō ni hoshii desu ne. Chōsatai no sekininsha no hito ga nijūgonichi made ni kimete hoshii to itte imashita kedo...

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*Translation*

Tadashi        Have you decided about Nepal?

John            Yes... I do very much want to go, but...

Tadashi        Is there some sort of problem?

John            One is the problem of timing. It's been decided that I'll work at a hospital in England from October, so to go to Nepal from April to the end of September is cutting it a bit fine I think.

Tadashi        It is indeed.

John            And then I have just written a letter to my mother saying that I'll be back before Easter and so I think that my parents would be very disappointed.

Tadashi        This is the third year since you arrived in Japan isn't it?

John            Yes. And I haven't been back even once during that time. And then before I start my new job I've been thinking that I want to read up on recently published English and American medical journals and so forth.

Tadashi        Our work as doctors keeps us so busy that we really do want some time to read and think, don't we? The man in charge of the survey team said that he'd like you to decide by the twenty-fifth.

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