

## Lesson 13

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John visits Minoru's lodgings.

ジョン 実さんの下宿はずいぶん静かなところにありますね。  
実 前は静かでしたが、このごろはそうでもありません。  
あまりきれいな部屋ではありませんが、どうぞ。  
ジョン 失礼します。  
実 こちらへどうぞ。  
ジョン いいお部屋ですね。  
実 ええ、でもあまり明るくありません。  
お茶をどうぞ。  
ジョン ありがとうございます。今日はいいお天気でしたね。  
実 そうですね。割にあたたかかったですね。  
ジョン 実さんは京都が好きですか。  
実 ええ、東京も好きですが京都も好きです。  
ジョン 時々東京へ帰りますか。  
実 二ヶ月に一度ぐらいですね。新幹線がとても便利です。  
ジョンさんは旅行が好きですか。  
ジョン 大好きです。でもひまな時間があまりありません。  
正さんは山登りが上手ですが実さんは。  
実 ぼくは山は全然だめです。休みの日に近くの公園や  
お寺に散歩には行きますが。

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### 13.1 Adjectival nouns

静かなところ きれいな部屋
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In addition to the descriptive verbs that we met in lesson 11, there is another set of words that translate into English as adjectives but that operate in a rather different manner in Japanese; these are nouns that modify other nouns by means

of the link な. な is a form of the classical copula なる and so the underlying pattern is again one of 'noun which is X': きれいな花 'a flower which is pretty', hence 'a pretty flower'. Do not be misled by the fact that きれい ends in い and so looks at first sight like a descriptive verb. As you will see, this is somewhat of an exception and should cause you no problems. Note that not all nouns can be transformed into descriptive expressions in this way: you will have to learn them as you proceed. Many are Chinese compounds, but there are also some native Japanese expressions and the occasional word of European origin. It is probable that this kind of expression, which we shall call 'adjectival nouns', arose in response to the need for the language to absorb a large number of non-native descriptive words that it could not accommodate within traditional grammatical structures. Some common examples are as follows:

便利 (べんり)	convenient	きれい	pretty, clean
元気 (げんき)	good health	ていねい	polite
丈夫 (じょうぶ)	sturdy	いや	unpleasant
立派 (りっぱ)	splendid	ひま	free time
静か (しずか)	quiet	だめ	no good
変 (へん)	strange	ナンセンス	nonsense
正直 (しょうじき)	honest	ゴージャス	gorgeous
大切 (たいせつ)	important	ショッキング	outrageous
平和 (へいわ)	peace	好(す)き	like
自由 (じゆう)	free	きらい	dislike
上手 (じょうず)	good at	下手 (へた)	bad at

Note that in certain rare cases this form can be found with native Japanese descriptive verbs, so that together with phrases such as 大きい町 we can also have 大きな町, and 小さい村 can also be expressed as 小さな村.

### 13.2 Adjectival nouns in main verb position

京都が好きですか。  
新幹線がとても便利です。

These adjectival nouns can also appear at the end of a clause somewhat like descriptive verbs (12.1): but because they are in essence nouns, they must be followed directly by the modern copula *だ* or *です* (depending on whether the context demands a plain or a polite form). This is definitely *not* the case with descriptive verbs, so beware (refer back to 12.3).

あの花はとてもきれいだ。

That flower is very beautiful.

この教室は静かです。

This classroom is quiet.

The negative forms of these expressions are created quite simply by changing *だ* to *ではない* and *です* to *ではありません*.

このワープロはあまり便利ではありません。

This word processor is not very useful.

この作家は日本ではあまり有名ではない。

This writer is not very well known in Japan.

### 13.3 The perfective form of the copula and adjectival nouns

前は静かでした
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You must now learn another set of inflections, which will allow you to produce sentences that refer to completed actions or states. We shall call this the perfective, in distinction to the form you have already learnt: the imperfective. Often, but not always, this form also marks a past tense. Because it ends in *～た*, we shall also call it the *～た* form. The first table is for the copula:

*imperfective*

*perfective*

*plain* だ

*positive*

だった

*negative*

ではなかった

*polite* です

でした

ではありませんでした

As you have just learned above, the copula must be used when adjectival nouns appear in final position. The perfective of adjectival nouns; is formed as follows:

*imperfective*

*perfective*

*positive*

*negative*

*plain* 静かだ

静かだった

静かではなかった

*plain* 丈夫だ

丈夫だった

丈夫ではなかった

*plain* 立派だ

立派だった

立派ではなかった

*polite* きれいです

きれいでした

きれいではありませんでした

*polite* 自由です

自由でした

自由ではありませんでした

*polite* 上手です

上手でした

上手ではありませんでした

#### 13.4 'Not really the case'

このごろはそうでもありません。

The phrase そうでもない or そうでもありません should be learned as an idiom. What is in fact happening is that the usual は that you find with the negative has here been replaced by も. The effect of this is to soften the impact of the negation, as with the slightly hesitant English 'really'.

#### 13.5 The perfective form of descriptive verbs

割にあたたかかったですね。

To form the ～た form of descriptive verbs, change the final い to かった.  
 Similarly, to form the negative ～た form, change ない to なかった. Study the following examples where both imperfective and perfective have been listed in both plain and polite forms.

### Plain forms

<i>imperfective</i>		<i>perfective</i>	
<i>positive</i>	<i>negative</i>	<i>positive</i>	<i>negative</i>
新しい	新しくない	新しかった	新しくなかった
古い	古くない	古かった	古くなかった
高い	高くない	高かった	高くなかった
安い	安くはない	安かった	安くなかった

### Polite forms

The polite forms are by and large what you would expect, but there are a number of points which need care. Pay particular attention to the positive in both the imperfective and the perfective. In both cases you will find that です is simply added to the plain form. In the imperfective this should cause you no trouble, but the perfective can cause problems. A very common mistake is for beginners to try and create the form \*新しいでした. This is simply wrong and should be avoided. First create the perfective and then make it polite with a simple です.

<i>imperfective</i>		<i>perfective</i>	
<i>positive</i>	<i>negative</i>	<i>positive</i>	<i>negative</i>
新しいです	新しくありません	新しかったです	新しくありませんでした
古いです	古くありません	古かったです	古くありませんでした
高いです	高くありません	高かったです	高くありませんでした
安いです	安くありません	安かったです	安くありませんでした

Now turn your attention to the negative of both the imperfective and the perfective: 新しくありません and 新しくありませんでした. There is in fact an alternative form, but it is not listed here for fear of making the list look even more complicated. Learn this set, but be aware of the alternatives, which are 新しくないです and 新しくなかったです.

### 13.6 The stative construction with adjectival nouns

実さんは京都が好きですか。

This is an extension of what you learned in 12.2. The は/が construction is also commonly found with adjectival nouns expressing the concept of ‘whole + part’. Note how many of these expressions involve a strong possessive relationship between the は and が parts of the sentence. Study the following sets.

あの学生は言葉がていねいです。

That student speaks politely.

あの学生は数学がだめです。

That student is hopeless at maths.

あの学生は体が丈夫ではありません。

That student is not very fit.

あの学生はかみの毛がきれいです。

That student's hair is beautiful.

パリは地下鉄が便利です。

The Paris Metro is very convenient.

パリは春と秋がきれいです。

Spring and autumn in Paris are lovely.

パリは建物が立派です。

Paris has splendid buildings.

### 13.7 Use of が as a sentence particle

東京も好きですが京都も好きです。

休みの日に近くの公園やお寺に散歩には行きますが。

You saw in lesson 10 how が can be used as a sentence particle to link two clauses which contrast with each other. Given two sentences such as (a) 東京も好きです and (b) 京都も好きです, you can join them with が: 東京も好きですが京都も好きです, 'I like Tokyo, but I like Kyoto as well.'

Take careful note of the second example sentence, where it might seem that が is in fact ending a sentence. You will come across many situations like this where the sentence has indeed just been left hanging, just as we might end a sentence with 'but' if we are not too sure of how to continue. This kind of truncation is quite common, since it can lend a kind of hesitancy that is taken for politeness.

### 13.8 近くの

近くの公園

There are a few important exceptions to the rule given in 12.1, that descriptive verbs occur in noun-modifying and predicate position in the same form. The major exceptions are as follows:

<i>as predicate</i>	<i>as noun-modifier</i>	<i>meaning</i>
近い	近くの or 近い	near, nearby
遠い	遠くの or 遠い	far
多い	多くの	many

So one gets pairs such as the following:

私の家は海に近い。

My home is close to the sea.

but

近くの郵便局で切手を買う。

I buy my stamps at the nearby post office.

'Note that the word 少ない meaning 'few' or 'little' can never be used as a noun modifier.

### 13.9 More on the marker は

ぼくは山は全然だめです。

There are two はs in this sentence. How do they differ? Take the following example:

この小説は長いがおもしろかった。

This novel is long but it was interesting.

This kind of contrast is a simple one, where the topic remains the same and only the descriptive statement about the topic is contrasted. Now look what happens when the contrasted elements multiply.

(a) 象の耳は大きい。

(b) 象の目は小さい。

(a)+(b) 象の耳は大きいが目は小さい。

Elephant's ears are large but their eyes are small.

The function of は in (a) and (b) is that of a simple topic marker; but when the statements are juxtaposed and hence contrasted, は can be seen as having a dual role, that of topic marker within its own clause and that of contrast marker in the context of the whole statement. It is this latter use that takes precedence in such cases. Now observe what happens when the clauses being contrasted are of the は/が, 'whole + part' type.

(c) 和子さんはピアノが上手です。

(d) 夏子さんはピアノが上手ではありません。



(c)+(d) 和子さんはピアノが上手ですが夏子さんは (ピアノが)  
上手ではありません。

Kazuko is good at playing the piano but Natsuko is not.

First of all, make absolutely sure that you understand the difference between が used as a subject marker and が used as a sentence marker (here underlined). In (c)+(d), the fact that two clauses are linked in a contrastive relationship again shifts the は in 和子さんは and 夏子さんは from topic marker to contrast marker. Now observe what happens when the elements being contrasted are other than the topic of each clause.

(e) 和子さんはピアノが上手です。

(f) 和子さんはヴァイオリンがあまり上手ではありません。

(e)+(f) 和子さんはピアノは上手ですがヴァイオリンはあまり  
上手ではありません。

Kazuko is good at playing the piano but she is not very good  
at playing the violin.

In this case 和子さんは remains as the single topic and a contrast is newly introduced between piano and violin, a contrast which is effected by transforming が into は. This transformation highlights the contrast between the two elements and the use of は here should not hide from you the fact that the underlying structure of the clauses is still the は/が of 'whole + part'.

### Key to conversation

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#### *Romanisation*

Jon Minoru-san no geshuku wa zuibun shizuka na tokoro ni arimasu ne.

Minoru Mae wa shizuka deshita ga, kono goro wa sō de mo arimasen. Amari kirei na heya de wa arimasen ga, dōzo.

Jon Shitsurei shimasu.

Minoru Kochira e dōzo.

Jon Ii o-heya desu ne.

Minoru      Ē, demo amari akaruku arimasen. O-cha o dōzo.  
Jon            Arigatō gozaimasu. Kyō wa ii o-tenki deshita ne.  
Minoru       Sō desu ne. Wari ni atatakakatta desu ne.  
Jon            Minoru-san wa Kyōto ga suki desu ka.  
Minoru       Ē, Tōkyō mo suki desu ga, Kyōto mo suki desu.  
Jon            Tokidoki Tōkyō e kaerimasu ka.  
Minoru       Nikagetsu ni ichido gurai desu ne. Shinkansen ga totemo benri desu. Jon-san wa ryokō ga suki desu ka.  
Jon            Daisuki desu. Demo hima na jikan ga amari arimasen. Tadashi-san wa yamanobori ga jōzu desu ga, Minoru-san wa.  
Minoru       Boku wa yama wa zenzen dame desu. Yasumi no hi ni chikaku no kōen ya o-tera ni sanpo ni wa ikimasu ga.

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*Translation*

John            Your lodgings are in a really quiet area aren't they?  
Minoru        It used to be quiet, but these days that's not really the case. It's not such a nice room, but do please come in.  
John            Thank you.  
Minoru        Come this way.  
John            What a lovely room!  
Minoru        Maybe, but it's not very light. Have some tea.  
John            Thank you very much. It was good weather today, wasn't it?  
Minoru        Yes it was. It was relatively warm, wasn't it?  
John            Do you like Kyōto?  
Minoru        Well, I like Tōkyō, but I like Kyōto as well.  
John            Do you go back to Tōkyō sometimes?  
Minoru        About once every couple of months. The Super Express is very convenient. Do you like travelling?  
John            Very much. But I don't have much free time. Tadashi is very good at mountain climbing; how about you?  
Minoru        I'm hopeless when it comes to mountains. On my days off I do go for a walk in the nearby park or temple though.

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