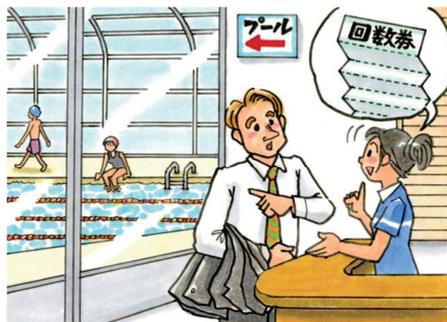


日本語流 32

The Nihongo Way 32

< Today's dialogue >

You (U) are at the reception desk (J) for a swimming pool run by the ward where your office is located. This is your first visit here.



U: すみません。このプールで泳ぎたいんですけど、私も 使えますか 。	<i>Sumimasen. Kono pûru de oyogitai n desu kedo, watashi mo tsukaemasu ka?</i>
J: ええ、もちろん使えますよ。お客様はこの区 <small>の</small> 住民ですか。	<i>Ê, mochiron tsukaemasu yo. Okyakusama wa kono ku no jûmin desu ka?</i>
U: すみません。ジューミンって何ですか？	<i>Sumimasen. Jûmin tte nan desu ka?</i>
J: えっと、お客様は千代田区 <small>に</small> 住んでいらっしゃいますか。	<i>Etto, okyakusama wa Chiyoda-ku ni sunde irasshaimasu ka?</i>
U: 私のオフィスはここにありますが、この区 <small>に</small> は住んでいません。	<i>Watashi no ofisu wa koko ni arimasu ga, kono ku niwa sundeimasen.</i>
J: 住んでいれば 500 円ですけど、住んでいないので、1 回 600 円になります。(1) でも、回数券を 買えば 6000 円で 11 回 泳げます よ。(2)	<i>Sundeire ba, gohyaku-en desu kedo, sundeinai node, ikkai roppyaku-en ni narimasu. Demo, kaisûken o kae ba, rokusen-en de jûikkai oyogemasu yo.</i>
U: なるほど。1 回タダになるんですね。	<i>Naruhodo. Ikkai tada ni naru n desu ne?</i>
J: そうです。	<i>Sô desu.</i>
U: 回数券はあの機械にお金を入れれば 買えます ね。(3)	<i>Kaisûken wa ano kikai ni okane o irere ba kaemasu ne?</i>
J: いいえ。下に行って、買ってきてください。	<i>Iie. Shita ni itte, kattekite kudasai.</i>

DIALOGUE OVERVIEW

U: Excuse me. I'd like to swim in this pool; can I use it, too?

J: Yes, sure, you can. Are you {Mr. Customer} a *jûmin* of this ward?

U: Sorry. What do you mean by *jûmin*? {*Jûmin* as you said- what is it?}

J: Well, are you living in Chiyoda ward, sir?

U: My office is located here, but I'm not living in this ward.

J: If you are living here, it's ¥500, but as you are not, it's ¥600.

But if you buy a coupon, you can swim 11 times for ¥6,000.

U: I see. There will be no charge for one time, huh?

J: That's right.

U: I can buy the coupon if I insert the money into that machine, can't I?

J: No. Please go downstairs and buy it (and come) here.

* { } indicates literal translation.

VOCABULARY FOCUS

Verbs

<i>ireru</i>	insert
<i>kaeru</i>	can buy (cf. <i>kau</i> : buy)
<i>oyogeru</i>	can swim (cf. <i>oyogu</i> : swim)
<i>sumu</i>	live, reside
<i>tsukaeru</i>	can use (cf. <i>tsukau</i> : use)

Nouns

<i>jûmin</i>	resident
<i>kaisûken</i>	coupon ticket
<i>kikai</i>	machine
<i>ku</i>	ward
<i>okane</i>	money
<i>okyakusama</i>	guest (polite)
<i>shita</i>	downstairs
<i>tada</i>	free of charge

GRAMMAR FOCUS

(1) Conditional

English conditionals are relatively easy to handle. Just put “if” at the front of a clause, and then the clause becomes conditional, as in:

If you go straight, you’ll find it.

Alternatively, you can just use the imperative:

Go straight, and (then) you’ll find it.

The Japanese equivalent to the conditional is similar to the latter, as explained below:

Massugu ike ba, arimasu.

Here, “*ike*” is the imperative form of the verb “*iku*” and the subsequent “*ba*” gives an effect similar to “and then.”

Now, look at the conditionals used in today’s dialogue :

- *Sundeire ba, 500 en desu...**

{Be residing (here), and then (the admission) is 500 yen.}*

If you are a resident, it’s 500 yen.

* { } indicates a literal translation.

- *...kaisûken o kae ba, 6000 en de jûikkai oyogemasu...*

Buy a coupon, and you can swim 11 times (using) 6000 yen.

If you buy a coupon, you can swim 11 times for 6000 yen.

- *...okane o irere ba, kaemasu...**

Insert money, and you can buy it.

If one inserts money, one can buy it.

* The standard imperative form for vowel verbs (or 2nd group) is:

(1) *iro* instead of *ire*, and

(2) *irero* instead of *irere*,

respectively, but the non-standard forms are still used in some parts of Japan.

(2) Potential form

To change the verb into what we could call potential mode, again English is relatively easy; i.e., add the auxiliary verb “can,” and that’s it. Japanese, however, modifies the verb.

For a consonant verb, add an extra *mora* “e” and change the verb to a vowel verb:

<i>iku</i> (go)	<i>ikeru</i> (can go)
<i>oyogu</i> (swim)	<i>oyogeru</i> (can swim)
<i>kau</i> (buy)	<i>kaeru</i> (can buy)*
<i>tsukau</i> (use)	<i>tsukaeru</i> (can use)*

* These verbs were originally *kawu/kaweru* and *tsukawu/tsukaweru*, respectively. But modern Japanese has lost the sounds *wu* and *we* (as well as *wi* and *wo*) and merged them into *u* and *e* (as well as *i* and *o*), respectively. (Only the *wa* sound is still retained.)

For a vowel verb, add *rare* or just *re*:

<i>miru</i> (see, look)	<i>mirareru</i> or <i>mireru</i> (can see)
<i>taberu</i> (eat)	<i>taberareru</i> or <i>tabereru</i> (can eat)

For the two irregular verbs, the potential forms are:

<i>kuru</i> (come)	<i>korareru</i> or <i>koreru</i> (can come)
<i>suru</i> (do)	<i>dekiru</i> (can do, is possible)

CULTURE FOCUS

Right or Wrong in Language

One of the currently controversial issues in modern Japanese grammar is whether the *reru* form, with omission of the *ra* in *rareru*, in the potential forms as explained in today's grammar focus, is valid or not.

Of the two alternative forms mentioned above, the former (*mirareru*, *taberareru*, *korareru*) is traditionally thought to be "correct" and the latter (*mireru*, *tabereru*, *koreru*) "incorrect." But the fact is that the latter has been increasingly gaining in popularity and is likely here to stay.

Language is not a gift from God, nor is it a product of linguists or scholars. It is a product of the people who use it. Just as "If I was you..." has replaced "If I were you..." for many or most Americans today, if a new usage develops and the majority accept it, it stays and becomes "standard."

There are examples in all languages: in modern Japanese, use of *zenzen* with non-negative adjectives is standard among the young, as in *zenzen ii* ("it's very good/fine"). This usage is not traditionally "correct." However, *totemo ii* ("very good") is now "correct," though the original "correct" use was only with negatives – as in *totemo dekimasen* ("can't do it at all"). These are illustrations of how language evolves over time in line with the likings of its speakers, and this is why language can be said to be part of culture.