

## ■ Expressions of Directionality

There are two types of Japanese verbs that are sensitive to the transference of concrete objects or something abstract.

The first type of verbs intrinsically contains the centripetal directionality toward the speaker or the centrifugal directionality away from the speaker. Of the verbs that belong to this type, *yaru* and *iku* have a *ga* subject and express centrifugal transference. The speaker is marked by *ga* with the verbs *morau* and (*kara*) *kiku*, and these verbs are used to express centripetal transference. Someone other than the speaker is marked by *ga* with *kureru*, *yokosu* and *kuru*, and these verbs express centripetal transference toward the speaker.

(1) {*Watashi ga kare ni* ‘I to him’/\**Kare ga watashi ni* ‘He to me’} *hon o yatta* ‘gave the book.’

(2) a. *Watashi wa sono hanashi o kare kara kiita* ‘I heard the story from him.’

b. \**Kare wa sono hanashi o watashi kara kiita*

(3) {*Imōto ga boku ni* ‘My little sister to me’/\**Boku ga imōto ni*} *tegami o yokoshita* ‘sent a letter.’

These verbs basically assume the speaker’s perspective in subordinate clauses as well.

(4) *Kare wa watashi ni tokei o {kureta/\*ageta} koto o wasureta rashii* ‘He seems to have forgotten that he’d given me the watch.’

Verbs of the second type are not suitable for expressing centripetal directionality toward the speaker, especially by themselves, when one wants to describe matters and phenomena. Such verbs include those that express the transference of the agent itself, such as *hikkosu* ‘change residence, move’, *chikayoru* ‘move closer’, and those that express the transference of the object, such as *okuru* ‘send’, *tsutaeru* ‘relay, tell’, and *hanashikakeru* ‘initiate a conversation.’

When one describes a phenomenon using one of these verbs, the verb alone cannot express the transference that has a directionality involving the speaker.

(5)\**Kondo otonari ni hikkoshita Yamada desu*

(6)\**Jikka no haha ga boku ni kudamono o okutta*

These sentences can be made grammatical by changing the verbals into *hikkoshite kita* and *okutte kita*, or, depending on the verb, adding *te kureru*, to clarify the directionality toward the speaker.

Likewise, verbs that express the transference of the object, such as *oshieru* and *kasu*, cannot express centripetal directionality toward the speaker by themselves. One must add *te kureru*, but not *te kuru*.

(7) *Hitori no rōjin ga watashi ni michi o {?oshieta/\*oshiete kita/oshiete kureta}* ‘An old man showed me the way.’

These verbs have counterpart verbs which have the recipient of the action as the subject, such as *osowaru* ‘receive instruction’ and *kariru* ‘borrow.’

Unlike the first type of verbs, such as *yaru*, verbs in the second type may be free from the limitation on directionality when they are used in subordinate clauses or when they have an appropriate modality at the end of the sentence.

(8) *Kare wa watashi ni hanashikakete kō itta* ‘He started to talk to me, and said the following.’

(9) *Haha wa watashi ni kudamono o okutta koto o wasureta rashii* ‘My mother seems to have forgotten that she sent me fruit.’

→授受表現の諸特徴 Various Characteristics of Giving and Receiving Expressions (2-E), 受動文での動作主の格 Case of the Agent in Passive Sentences (2-E), 視点 Perspective (2K)

● References

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