

■ Stative Verbs

Stative verbs describe state, as in *aru* ‘exist’ and *iru* ‘require’. In the narrow definition, stative verbs describe state by themselves. In the broader definition, stative verbs include such a verb as *sugureru* ‘is superior’ on the ground that it does not describe movement. *Teiru* is suffixed to this type of verbs to describe state.

Adjectival and nominal predicates, such as *samui* ‘cold’ and *gakusei da* ‘is a student,’ describe state, in that the predicate remains the same before and after it becomes the focus. Verbs such as *aru* ‘exist,’ *iru* ‘require,’ *iru* ‘be present,’ *nomeru* ‘capable of drinking, fit for drinking,’ and *dekiru* ‘able’ describe the current state, and are used in expressions such as *ima iru* ‘need it now,’ and *genzai iru* ‘currently needed.’ These are stative verbs in the narrow definition.

Non-stative verbs are generally grouped together as verbs that can describe movement. Verbs that describe movement, such as *taberu* ‘eat’ and *ochiru* ‘fall,’ describe phenomena that occur within a certain period (temporarily localized events). However, they cannot describe events that are temporarily localized within the time period of utterance. Generally, the *suru* form expresses future when movement verbs (non-stative verbs) are used in the context of a specific time, as in:

Ima taberu yo (=not yet eaten. ‘I will eat now.’)

Cf. **Genzai* ‘currently’ *taberu*.

To express future, the *suru* form is used as in the example above. To express the current status, one must suffix a stative verb to the *te*-form to form the *shite iru* pattern (e.g., *tabete iru* ‘is eating’).

There are stative verbs that do not affix the stativized form (e.g., *shitei ru*), as in **itte iru* ‘is needing’, and there are also stative verbs that such affixation does not alter the meaning (e.g., *nezasu* ‘be rooted’) vs. *nezashite iru* ‘be rooted’). Verbs such as *sugureru* and *bakageru* are not used in the conclusive form (the *suru* form); they accompany *teiru*, as in *sugurete iru* ‘excel’, to express state. Please note: These verbs are sometimes called Class 4 verbs, based on Kindaichi’s terminology (1950).

Potential verbs, such as *hashireru* ‘able to run,’ express the state of potentiality in the *suru* form, while they express the resulted “state” in the (*shi*)*teiru*-form, as in *hashirete iru* ‘have come to be able to run.’ Many verbs have both the stative verb and movement verb usages.

→スル形・シテイル形の意味 Meaning of *Suru* Form and *Shiteiru* Form (2G), アスペクト Aspect (2-G), 動詞 Verbs (2-B)

● References

Kindaichi, Haruhiko, ed. (1976) *Nihongo dōshi no asupekuto* (Aspect of Japanese Verbs). Mugishi Shobo.

Takahashi, Taro (1994) *dōshi no kenkyū – dōshi no dōshi-rashisa no hatten to shōshitsu* (Study of Verbs –Development and Disappearance of What Makes Verbs Verbs). Mugishi Shobo.

Terashima, Hideo (1984) *Nihongo no shintakusu to imi II* (Japanese Syntax and Meaning II).
Kurosio Publishers.

(Moriyama Takuro)