

■ Invitation

Expressions of invitation are used when the speaker wants to involve the listener in what the speaker is planning on doing or what the speaker is currently doing. Invitation involves the volitionality of the verb, as with volitional expressions and expressions of action-requesting.

There are conjugative forms that express volition and action-requesting, such as the volitional form and command form, but there is no particular conjugative form of invitation. Invitation is considered a function derived from questions using *shinai ka*, as well as the volitional expression *shiyō*, or its interrogative form *shiyōka*.

Shinai ka is a form used to indirectly invite the listener to participate by asking the listener whether the listener will perform the act or not. It functions as an invitation when the speaker's action in question has already been mentioned. In *Kore kara dekakeru n da kedo, kimi mo issho ni ikanai?* 'I am going out; won't you come along?', the speaker is inviting the listener to participate in the action that the speaker is planning on performing. *Koko aiteru yo. Suwaranai?* 'Here're empty seats. Why don't we sit here?' may be used either when the speaker is inviting the listener to sit next to her/him, or when the speaker and the listener are both looking for empty seats. As we have seen, *shinai ka* is used widely as an expression of invitation. When the speaker's action is not pre-presented, it emphasizes the function of proposition, as in *Kimi, rainen, ryūgaku shinai?* 'Would you like to study abroad next year?'

The volitional form of verbs, *shiyō*, on the other hand, is used when the speaker invites the listener to join in what the speaker is about to do, as in *Kore kara dekakeru n dakedo, kimi mo issho ni ikō* 'I am going out now. Let's go together.' The speaker cannot invite the listener to sit next to her/him in *Kono seki, aiteru yo. Suwarō* 'These seats are vacant. We're going to sit here,' unless both the speaker and listener are looking for seats.

Shiyō tends to sound aggressive, since it expresses the speaker's intent to pull the listener into the speaker's action. *?Sensei mo issho ni ikimashō* 'Professor, let us go together' sounds a little curt compared to *Sensee mo issho ni ikimasen ka?* 'Professor, won't you come with me?' Conversely, *shiyō* is more appropriate when the speaker wants to forcefully engage the listener to act together, as in *Aitsu no koto nanka ki ni suru na. {Kaerō!?/Kaeranaika?}* 'Don't worry about him. Let's go home/Why don't we go home?'

The volitional question, *shiyō ka*, does not work in *??Kimi mo isshoni ikō ka?* because *shiyō ka* does not work well when the speaker invites the listener to join in what the speaker has already decided to do. It is appropriate for the situation where the speaker seeks consent from the listener to execute an act together.

→モダリティ Modality (2-H), 意志の表現 Volitional Expressions (2-H)

● References

Adachi, Taro (1995) 'Kan'yubun – *shinai ka* to *shiyō* to *shiyō ka*' (Sentences of Invitation – *Shinaika*, *shiyō*, and *shiyōka*) in Miyajima, Tatsuo & Nitta Yoshio, ed., *Nihongo ruigi hyōgen no bunpō (jō)* (Grammar of Japanese Synonymous Expressions I). Kurosio Publishers.

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(Adachi Taro)