

■ *O* and *Kara* of Originating Point

Both case particles *o* and *kara* may express the originating point.

(1) *Tanaka wa isoide heya {o/kara} deta* ‘Tanaka left the room in a hurry.’

(2) *Fune ga kishi {o/kara} hanareta* ‘The ship pulled away from the pier.’

Kara primarily expresses the starting point of motion or contiguity with an ending point, as in *sangai kara nikai ni oriru* ‘go down from the 3rd floor to the 2nd floor.’ In contrast, *o* focuses on the crossing of the boundary of the domain indicated by the preceding noun phrase.

This difference creates a specific division of labor listed below.

First, *o* cannot be used together with a noun phrase that is marked by *ni* that signifies the arriving point.

(3) *Sangai {*o/kara} nikai ni oriru* ‘Go down from the 3rd floor to the 2nd floor.’

Conversely, it is difficult to use *kara* if the arriving point cannot be envisioned.

(4) *Ekimae de basu {o/*kara} orita* ‘Got off the bus in front of the station.’

(5) *Maiasa 7 ji ni ie {o/*kara} deru* ‘Leave home at 7am every morning.’

Second, *kara* is used when the movement is conceived as continuous following the departure from the said starting point.

(6) *Dorobō wa genkan {*o/kara} nigeta rashii* ‘The thief apparently fled via the front entrance.’

(7) *Kamera ga kata {*o/kara} sagatte iru* ‘The camera is dangling from her shoulder.’

When a movement prior to reaching the starting point is observed, as in (6), the said starting point is also called the waypoint.

Third, the starting point for an insentient subject is expressed with *kara*. *O* tends not to be appropriate.

(8) *Kemuri ga heya {*o/kara} dete iru* ‘Smoke is coming out of the room.’

(9) *Poketto {*o/kara} ame ga dete kita* ‘Some candy came out of the pocket.’

Example (8) describes one cross section of a continuing state, and (9) describes one cross section of on-going motion. Neither example describes passage through a boundary, and *o* cannot be used.

O may be used with an insentient subject, however, if the focus is on protrusion past a boundary.

(10) *Tonari no ie no ki no eda ga kakine o deteiru* ‘Some branches of a tree in the house next door are sticking out though our hedge.’

→動詞と格助詞 Verbs and Case Particles (2-D)

● Reference

Miyake, Tomohiro (1995) 'O and kara' in Miyajima, Tatsuo & Nitta Yoshio, ed., *Nihongo ruigi hyōgen no bunpō: jō* (Grammar of Japanese Synonymous Expressions I). Kurosio Publishers.

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