

■ More Related Forms of Conditional Clauses

In addition to *to*, *ba*, *tara* and *nara*, there are other conditional forms.

Tewa is used in conditions where undesirable events and negative results occur. It may also be used with hypothetical conditions, general conditions, and counter-factual conditions. The form changes to *dewa* when affixed to a noun.

(1) *Mainichi rensyūshinaku tewa, jōzuni naranai* ‘Your skills won’t improve unless you practice every day.’

(2) *Kimi ni sō iware tewa, kaesu kotoba mo nai* ‘I don’t know how to respond to what you say.’

(3) *Ningen wa hitori dewa ikiteikenai* ‘A human being cannot live all by her/himself.’

(4) *Kimi ga inaku tewa, kitto shippaishiteita yo* ‘I would surely have failed without you.’

The main clause for the *tewa* clause can only be a declarative sentence. No imperative or volitional sentences are possible.

When *tewa* relates a factual event, it expresses the repetition of the action or phenomenon.

(5) *Asonde bakari itewa, chichi ni shikarareta* ‘I used to play a lot, and my father would scold me.’

(6) *Shiroi nami ga arawaretewa kieteiku* ‘White waves keep appearing and disappearing.’

Kagiri attaches to a stative predicate and states the result that occurs within the scope and situation of the circumstance.

(7) *Ikiteiru kagiri, go'on wa wasuremasen* ‘I won’t forget your kindness as long as I live.’

(8) *Jibun de minai kagiri, zettaini shinjinai* ‘I won’t believe it unless and until I see it with my own eyes.’

Shinai kotonniwa is also used to describe hypothetical conditions that bring about undesirable results, and constructs sentences which argue for the realization of the situation raised in the condition.

(9) *Mainichi rensyūshinai koto niwa, jōtatsushinai* ‘Your skills won’t improve unless you practice every day.’

The above example is saying that “it is desirable to practice every day”.

With *shiyō mono nara*, the condition is a situation that the speaker wishes not to happen. The speaker expresses that an unwanted result will occur, and that s/he does not wish the condition to become reality. The effect of this form is hyperbolic.

(10) *Himitsu o hito ni hanasō mono nara, tada dewa okanai zo* (i.e., don’t tell anyone) ‘If you tell the secret to others, I will make sure you won’t be unscathed.’

Shite miro also expresses that the speaker wishes the hypothetical condition to not become reality. It is used in conversation.

(11) *Usu no shinkoku o shite miro, suguni kokuhatsu sareru zo* ‘If you submit a false claim, you’ll immediately be prosecuted.’

(12) *Otōto ga jisatsu demo shite miro, omae o isshō yurusanai kara na* ‘Should my younger brother kill himself, I won’t forgive you the rest of my life.’

Shitaga saigo presents in the main clause the inevitable result of the situation described in the condition. The resulting event is emphasized and exaggerated. It may express a hypothetical or factual condition.

(13) *Himitsu o shitta ga saigo, omae mo nakama ni haittemorau* ‘Once you know the secret, you’re going to have to join our group.’

(14) *Meejin ga tsukuru ryōri wa, ichido ajiwattaga saigo, shōgai wasurerarenai oishisa da* ‘Once you’ve tasted food prepared by a master chef, you won’t forget the delicious taste of it all your life.’

(15) *Ie o deta ga saigo, nidoto modoranakatta* ‘Once he left home, he never came back.’

Baai and *toki* primarily express a temporal relationship. When they are made the focus by the function of *wa*, and when they connect hypothetical events, the clauses become closer to expressing a hypothetical condition.

(16) *Moshi jiko ga okotta baai ni wa, sumiyakani ninanshite kudasai* ‘Should an accident occur, please evacuate promptly.’

(17) *Renraku ga nai baai wa, keisatsu ni tsūhō shimasu* ‘If they don’t contact us, we’ll report the police.’

(18) *Shōgakusei ga kono norimono ni noru baai ni wa, hogosha no kyoka ga hitsuyō desu* ‘We need the guardian’s permission if an elementary school child boards this vehicle.’

(19) *Ame ga futta toki wa chūshi desu* ‘If it rains, [the event] will be cancelled.’

When the condition precedes the result, as in (16), (17) and (19), the *baai* construction may be replaced by the *ba*, *tara*, or *to* construction. The *nara* construction may replace the *baai* construction in (18).

When a temporal expression becomes the focus by the function of *wa*, it will contain the implication that “such a result will not be obtained in situation other than what is given.” This implication overlaps with the characteristic of hypothetical conditions, and makes the *baai* form close to a conditional form. The expression below, which meets the requirements of a conditional expression semantically and syntactically, also is close to a conditional form.

(20) *Shiken ga owatta hito wa, kaettemoii desu* ‘Those who have finished the exam may leave.’

→バ・ト・タラ・ナラー条件 *Ba*, *To*, *Tara* and *Nara*: Conditional (2-J), とりたて Focus (2-I)

● Reference

Group Jamashii, ed. (1998) *Kyoshi to Gakushusha no tame no nihongo bunkei jiten* (Dictionary of Japanese Sentence Patterns for Teachers and Learners). Kurozio Publishers.

(Maeda Naoko)