

■ *Saichū*, *Uchini*, and *Aida*

Saichū, *uchini*, and *aida* construct complex sentences by forming temporal relative clauses where they express a time period in which a situation is established. Other forms, such as *tochū*, are also used to form temporal relative clauses of duration.

Saichū expresses that another situation occurs right when the preceding situation is going on, as in *Shokuji shiteiru saichū ni denwa ga kakattekita* ‘I was right in the middle of having dinner when the phone rang.’ *Saichū ni* is the form used frequently. *Saichū* connects with other elements in such forms as noun + *no saichū* and the *teiru* form of verbs + *saichū*. It may be affixed to an adjective, as in *Isogashii saichū ni ojama shimasu* ‘Pardon me for interrupting right when you are busy.’ It does not connect easily to the *masu* form of verbs. *Sanaka* is used in almost the same way as *saichū*, but it has a special usage, where it expresses that a situation is at its peak, as in *atsui sanaka* ‘in the midst of the heat,’ *ōyuki no sanaka* ‘in the midst of a heavy snow.’ In this usage, *saichū* is not appropriate. *Massaichū* emphasizes the sense of immediacy of the situation.

Saichū expresses that a situation is interrupted by an unexpected event, and is not appropriate for use in other situations.

(1) *Haha ga denwa shiteiru {aidani/*saichū ni}*, *shokuji no yōi o shita* ‘I prepared the meal while my mother made a phone call.’

Uchini expresses that the situation in the succeeding clause occurs while the preceding situation continues to exist. The forms of continuance include noun + *uchini*, the conclusive form of *i*-adjectives + *uchini*, the adnominal form of *na*-adjectives + *uchini*, and the *ru* form/*te iru* form/negative form of verbs + *uchini*.

Uchini may be affixed to the *masu* form, but it does not connect easily to the *desu* form. The main clause with the *uchini* clause tends to be a volitional expression of action-requesting.

(2) *Wakai uchi ni, iroiro benkyō shiyō*. ‘I will/Let us study a variety of things while I am/we are young.’

When the sentence strongly suggests that something be done before the situation in the main clause is over, *uchi ni* may be replaced with *mae ni*.

(3) *Sensei ga {konai uchini/kuru mae ni} shukudai o yatte shimaō* ‘I will/Let’s finish the homework before the teacher comes.’

Uchini in this example expresses that the proceeding action can only be performed within the time period mentioned. In this usage, the affirmative and negative forms of a verb occur in succession, as in *hanashi ga owaruka owaranai (ka no) uchini* ‘the talk barely ended, when ...,’ and it expresses that one situation is immediately followed by another.

Aida also occurs as *aida ni* and *aida(ni) wa*. The connecting forms include noun + *no aida*, conclusive form of *i*-adjectives + *aida*, the adnominal form of *na*-adjectives + *aida*, the *ru* and *teiru* forms of verbs + *aida*. The past forms of *i*-adjectives, *na*-adjectives, and verbs may also occur with *aida*. *Aida* is sometimes affixed to the *masu* form, but it does not connect readily to the *desu* form. Fundamentally, *aida* expresses the continuance, repetition, maintenance of the result and state,

of the situation in the main clause. *Aida ni* tends to be used to express the situation in the main clause only once.

(4) *Kare wa sensei ga setsumei shite iru {aida/*aida ni} zutto soto o mite ita* ‘He was looking out the window all the while the teacher was explaining.’

(5) *Ryūgaku shite iru {aida ni/*aida} ichido Hokkaidō e itte mitai* ‘I’d like to visit Hokkaido once while I am doing study abroad.’

The main clause to occur with the *aida ni* clause may contain continuance or repetition of the situation, but maintenance of the result or adjectival state do not appear readily.

(6)**Haha ga dekakete iru aida ni {mado o shimete iru/sabishikatta}*.

There are instances where *aida ni* and *uchi ni* are interchangeable, as in *Terebi o mite iru {uchi ni/aida ni} nemuku natte kita* ‘I got sleepy while watching TV.’ When there is a strong sense that the result must be obtained during the aforementioned period, *aida ni* is not readily used.

(7) *Atsui {uchi ni/*aida ni} tabete kudasai* ‘Please eat it while it is still hot.’

Aida ni (wa) may be used when the proceeding situation is a state, as in (8), and when a predicate of movement with *wa* of contrast follows, as in (9).

(8) *Kenkō de irareru aida wa shiawase da* ‘I am happy as long as I am healthy.’

(9) *Kyōgi o okonatte iru aida wa ii tenki datta ga, kyōgi ga owatte kara ōame ni natta* ‘The weather was good while the game was on, but after the game was over, it started to rain hard.’

→とき・折・頃・際 *Toki, Ori, Koro/Goro*, and *Sai* (2-J), マエ (ニ)・アト (デ)・テカラ (2-J)

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