

北大オリジナル
アカデミック・リーディングの基礎
ビデオ教材

Modular Approach to Reading

Foundations for Academic Reading Skills



北海道大学外国語教育センター

Reading ビデオ教材作成タスクフォース

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Unit 5 Hypothetically Speaking

Peter (P) : Hello, everyone. I am Peter Richardson. Welcome to our special lecture “Modular Approach to Reading”. In this unit, we will consider a very interesting property of human language: hypothetical expressions. Hello, Satoshi.

Satoshi (S) : Hi Peter. みなさんこんにちは。奥聡です。「仮定法」という表現方法を聞いたことがありますね。今日はそれについて少し考えてみましょう。

P: Some of you might say, “Oh, no. I don’t like grammar”, but don’t worry. It is something about human language, and thus something about us. There is no man standing next to me.

Suppose that you are going to describe this situation.
You may be able to draw a picture of this situation.
Or you can use your language, either Japanese,

テーブルの上にピザがあります

or English.

There is a pizza on the table.



この状況を絵で描くこともできますし、日本語でも、英語でも表すことができますね。

It is very easy, right? Now, how about the next situation?

How do you describe this situation by drawing a picture?

There would be various ways to do so.

Interestingly, however, there is something
which you can express with your language very easily
but which is very difficult to express by drawing a picture.

ことばでは簡単に表すことができますが、絵でそれを描くのは
難しいことがあります。たとえば、ことばでなら、

机の上に人参はありません

とこの状況を述べることができます。同じ情報を絵で描いて伝えるのは相当に難しいでしょう。

Likewise, in English, you can say:

There is no carrot on the desk.



to describe this situation, but it is very difficult to express this information by drawing a picture. As we have

just seen, we human beings can talk very freely about something which is not here or which is not happening right now.

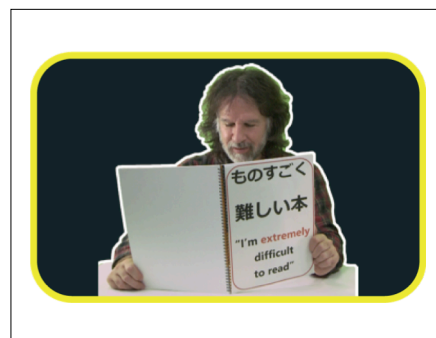
人間は、言語を使うことによって、今ここにないもの、今ここで起こっていないことを自由に語ることができるのです。

More than “right here” and “right now” 人間言語の表現力

This is a very important property of human language.

Let us look at a few more examples. You can describe the situation which is happening right in front of you, either by drawing a picture or by using your language:

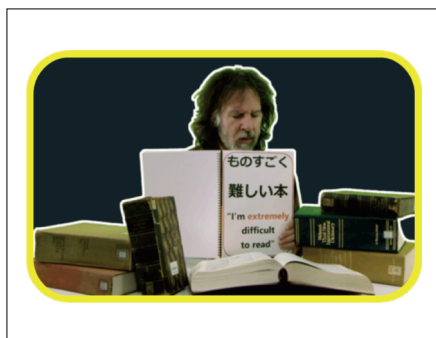
Jeff is reading a very difficult book now.



now

But it would be extremely difficult (if not impossible) to draw a picture of the past event. By using language, however, it is very easy to describe the past event.

Jeff was reading a very difficult book last month.

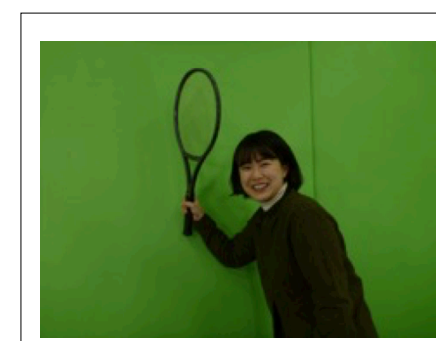


last month

過去に起こった出来事でもことばを使えば簡単に表現できますね。

Similarly, you can describe the situation which is happening right now, either by drawing a picture or by using your language:

Tomo is playing tennis now.

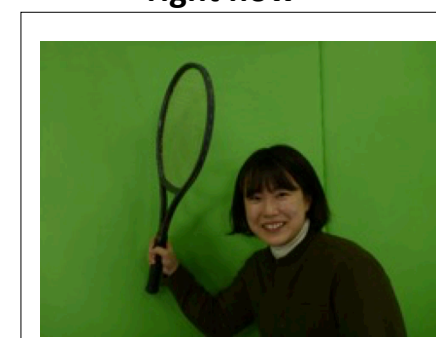


right now

But it would be extremely difficult again to draw a picture of a future event. Using language, however, it is very easy to describe a future event:

Tomo is going to play tennis next Sunday.

未来の予定についても、ことばを使えば簡単に表現できますね。



next Sunday

Pochi (a stuffed doggie): [off screen] Bow wow!

Peter: Ah, Pochi, Pochi. come here, come here!

[The stuffed puppy appears happily]

Peter: Come here. Ah, good boy, good boy. OK. [Peter throws the tennis ball]. Fetch!

[Pochi gets the ball and brings it back to Peter]

Peter: [Petting the puppy] Well, if you keep a dog, you may say, “my dog understands my language.”

It is true to some extent, but actually it is generally limited to “right now, right here” situations.

For instance, if you say to your dog;

We could have walked to the botanical park yesterday if it had not been raining.

your dog would simply look puzzled.

[Pochi looks really puzzled]

雨が降っていなかったら、昨日植物園に行けたのにね。

Human children, even five or six, however, easily understand this hypothetical sentence.

人間の子どもであれば、5～6才にもなれば、このような仮定の話をちゃんと理解することができます。「今」「この場所で」以外のことを自由に話せるのが、人間言語の大きな特徴なのです。

Let us quickly look at one famous example of animal communication.

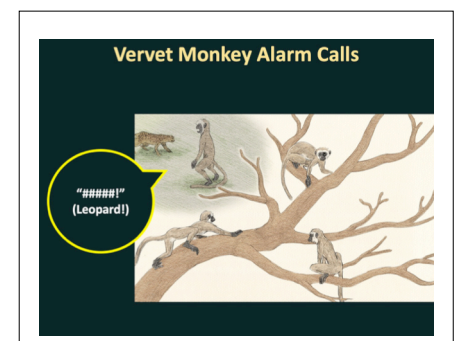
動物のコミュニケーションの有名な例を1つ見てみましょう。

Comparison with “monkey” language サルのコミュニケーションと比較すると

ヴェルベットモンキーは、危険の種類によって、異なる警戒音を発し、仲間に知らせます。

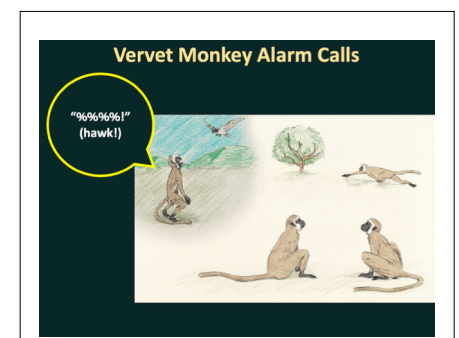
Vervet monkeys have different alarm calls depending on the type of their natural enemy. If one of them finds a leopard, for instance, the monkey gives a specific call and other monkeys climb up into the trees.

豹を知らせる声を出すと、仲間のサルはそれを聞いてみな木に登ります。



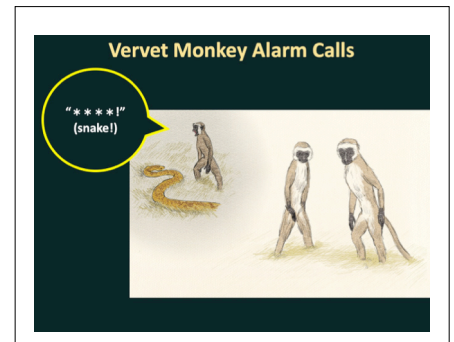
If one of the vervet monkeys finds a hawk, on the other hand, the monkey gives another specific call and other monkeys crouch on the ground looking up, or run under big trees.

また、一匹が、鷹を知らせる警戒音を出すと、仲間はそれを聞いて地面に座り込み上を見上げるか、木の下に逃げ出します。



Or if one of them finds a snake, the monkey gives still another specific call and other monkeys stand on their feet looking down into the bush.

また、一匹が、へびを知らせる声を出すと、仲間はそれを聞いて立ち上がり、茂みの中を見回します。



As you can see, the vervet monkey's communication system is well-designed for their survival, but restricted to “right now” and “right here” situations. Given this, it is now self-evident that learning sentences which state hypothetical situations is very important when you learn a foreign language. このように見てくると、仮定の状況を表現する文を学ぶことは、外国語学習においてとても重要であることがわかります。

So, finally let us consider a couple of important structures to talk about hypothetical situations in English.

Subjunctive Past (仮定法過去) 「もし今、～なら ...」

When you talk about current hypothetical situations, you use “subjunctive past” structure. 現在の事実と反する仮定を表す場合は、「仮定法過去」という構造を使います。

If I **had** a lot of money, I **would** buy a new laptop.

もしお金をたくさん持っていたら、ノートパソコンを買うのになあ～

As the verb in the *if* clause, you have the past form *had*.

日本語も似ていますね、「もしお金をたくさん持っていたら」と過去形を使って、現在の事実とは異なる状況を述べています。

And the main clause usually has a past form auxiliary verb such as *would*, *could*, and so on. Here are a few more examples of this type.

If we **had** no exam, we **could** eat out together.

もし試験がなかったら、一緒に食事に行けるのに。

If they **agreed** with me, I **would** revise the plan.

もし彼らが同意してくれたら、その計画を修正するのだが。

となりますね。実際とは異なる状況を語っているわけです。さらに、日本語でも「もし」という言葉を使わなくても仮定を表すことができるのと同様に、英語でも必ず “If” が出てくるわけではありません。

Note that you do not have to have the word *If* even when you talk about a hypothetical situation. Look at the following examples.

To hear Phil speak Japanese, you **would** take him for a Japanese person.

(= If you hear Phil speak Japanese),

ここでは、If という単語は出てきませんが、「フィルが日本語を話すのを聞いたら」と仮定の話をしていると理解できますね。

Likewise, ...

With your support, they **should** finish it in time.

(= If they had your support),

ここでも If は出てきませんが、あなたのサポートがあれば、間に合わせることができるのだが、と仮定の話をしています。

Subjunctive Past Perfect (仮定法過去完了)「もしあの時、～だったなら ...」

Let us look at the second type of structure to talk about hypothetical situations. When you talk about hypothetical situations in the past, you use “subjunctive past perfect” structure.

過去の事実とは異なる仮定の話をする場合は、仮定法過去完了という構造を使うのが一般的です。

If I **had had** a lot of money, I **would have bought** a new laptop.

もし（あの時）お金をたくさん持っていたら、ノートパソコンを買っていただろうに。

In this case, you use a past perfect form in the *if* clause, and a past form auxiliary verb plus a present perfect form in the main clause.

この場合、If 節には過去完了形を用い、主節は過去形助動詞プラス現在完了、という形になるのが標準的です。

And also in this type, we do not have to have the word *If* in some cases.

この場合も、If という単語が表に出て¹こないことがあります。

But for your support, they **would not have finished** it in time.

(= If they had not had your support),

(あの時)あなたのサポートがなかったら、彼らが期限までに終えることはなかったでしょう

Or ...

Had it not been for Jeff's assistance, we **could not have completed** that slide.

(= If we had not had Jeff's assistance),

ジェフが(あの時)手伝ってくれなかったら、

あのスライドを完成させることはできなかったでしょう。

¹ 注：この **but for** を用いた仮定法の表現は、少し古い文献には出てくるがあるので、知っておくと良いでしょう。ただし、近年ではほとんど使われなくなってきていますので、自分で書いたり話したりする場合は、次の表現を使うとよいでしょう。

Notice that there is no “If” word in these examples, but we are surely talking about hypothetical situations in the past.

If という単語は表に出てきていませんが、

過去の事実とは異なる、仮定の状況を話していると理解できますね。

Very complicated? Yes, to some extent, but remember that human language texts are very rich and sophisticated partly because we can talk a lot about something not here and not now. Therefore, if you learn how to read or how to talk about hypothetical situations accurately in English, your English skills, either reading, listening, speaking, or writing, will substantially improve.

OK? Finally, here is a quick quiz for you.

では最後にクイズです。

[Quiz: Unit 5]

Shall we go to eat some pizza or something?

A friend of yours suggests that you eat out together with her, but you are too busy.

How would you tell her that you cannot come, in a polite way with a simple phrase?

食事に誘われましたが、忙しくて行けません。

一言で、そして丁寧に、断るにはなんと言いますか？

[Quiz: Unit 5 の解答例は[Wrap up]のページの一番下に]

This is a very polite and considerate way of turning down the invitation, using a subjunctive structure!

誘ってくれた相手の気持ちを気遣ったとても丁寧な断り方ですね。そして、仮定法を使っています！

OK? Let us wrap up.

Wrap Up まとめ

We talk a lot about something which does not exist here, or which is not happening now.

日本語でも、「いま」「ここ」にないもの、実際には存在しない状況をたくさん話しますね。

And when you read any English texts, you will find tons of sentences which are not about now and here.

そして、英語のテキストを読めば、「いま」「ここで」以外のことがたくさん書かれています。

Something about past events, something about future plans, and something about hypothetical situations!

私たちはベルベットモンキーではないので、現実にはない状況を自由に語ることができます。英語での言い方も、基本的な形をしっかり意識すれば、必ず覚えられますでしょう。

Peter: Well, how do you like today's lecture? We can talk a lot about something which is not here in English. For instance, I can say “there is no gorilla next to me.”

[Peter notices the gorilla, surprised a bit]

Well, that's all for today. Good luck, keep working hard, and see you next time!

[Looking at the gorilla again and whispers “Where did he come from... ?”]

[Quiz: Unit 5 の解答例はこのページの一番下に]²

² I wish I could. 「行けたらいいんだけど...」