< Today's dialogue >

You (U) are home-staying with a Japanese family. They have a Shibainu dog named Mocha. You are talking with their young son (J).

U: あ、モカちゃん、何か欲しがっているね。	*A, Moka-chan, nanika hoshigatteiru ne.*
J: うん、そう。散歩に行きたいの。	*Un, sô. Sanpo ni ikitai no.*
U: あ、散歩に行きたがっているんだ。 　　行きたいときはいつもああやるの？	*A, sanpo ni ikitagatteiru n da.* *Ikitai toki wa itsumo â yaru no?*
J: うん。でも、自分で散歩のひもを持ってくる ときもあるよ。	*Un. Demo, jibun de sanpo no himo o* *mottekuru toki mo aru yo.*
U: ふうん。頭がいいね。	*Hûn. Atama ga ii ne.*

If you have been associating with Japanese people in casual settings, you may have noticed people putting *no* at the ends of sentences. Even in this position, this *no* is not a sentence-particle. Let's talk about this today.

DIALOGUE OVERVIEW

U: Ah, Mocha (is showing signs that she) wants something, isn't she?

J: Yeah, that's right. (It's that) she wants to go for a walk.

U: Oh, it's that she (is showing signs that she) wants to go for a walk.

　 Does she always do that way when she wants to go?

J: Yeah. But, she sometimes brings her leash {the walking rope} by herself, too.

　{There are also times that she brings the lead by herself}

U: Well! She's clever, isn't she!

* ( ) is added to show the meaning inherent in the original Japanese.

 { } is the literal translation.

VOCABULARY FOCUS

Verbs

hoshigaru	show signs of wanting
mottekuru	{hold and come} bring
yaru	do [casual]

Adjectives and **adjective** phrases

atama ga ii	{the head is good} clever, wise, smart
hoshii	want, desirous

Nouns and **noun** phrases

â	that way as they do (or s/he does)
atama	head
himo	string, rope
jibun de	by/for oneself
sanpo	a walk
toki	time, occasion

GRAMMAR FOCUS

1. *no* at the end of sentences

In last month's column, I discussed the nominalized sentence – the *<n/no desu>* form. To quickly review:

> *Sanpo ni ikitai n/no desu.* (It's that she wants to go for a walk)

As you may recall, by virtue of *n/no*, <sanpo ni ikitai n/no> (the case that she wants to go for a walk) is one big noun with the part before *n/no* constituting an explanation, or providing a subtle reason, for the given situation. Notice that structure-wise the sentence is comparable to:

> *Shibainu desu.* (She's a Shiba dog)

This last is a typical noun sentence. We can replace the noun <Shibainu> with the big noun <sanpo ni ikitai n/no> (the thing/case that she wants to go for a walk). So,

> *Sanpo ni ikitai n/no desu.* (It's that she wants to go for a walk).

Now, what if you want to use direct-style to be informal with your counterpart? You probably recall that one replaces <desu> with <da>. The above example would become "*Shibainu da.*" This is simple enough, but <da> is unstable and disliked. Natives tend to avoid it, especially at the end of sentences as it sounds blunt. Therefore, instead of "*Shibainu da,*" we would, much of the time, be likely to hear "*Shibainu,*" which has the same meaning.

Now, what should happen when this rule is applied to a nominalized sentence?

> Basic form: *Sanpo ni ikitai n/no da.*
> Softer without *da*: *Sanpo ni ikitai no.**
> * In this form, *no* is not shortened into *n*, in principle.

I hope you now see the function of *no* at the end of sentences.

2. An auxiliary verb: –garu

It is not uncommon at all, in English, to say "John wants it" or "Mocha wants to go." In Japanese, however, their Japanese equivalents (i.e., *"Jon wa hoshii desu"* or *"Moka ga ikitai"*) are grammatically possible but psychologically odd. Japanese natives avoid these constructions because they feel that since they are not John or Mocha they cannot truly tell what's on their minds.

The preferred method to express other party's desires, then, is to use the nominalized sentence, presenting the desire as a reason, such as:

> *Jon wa ikitai n desu.*
>> It's that John wants it (which explains why he looks that way/is putting on shoes/is grabbing an umbrella/etc.).

> *Moka wa ikitai no.*
>> It's that Mocha wants to go (which is why she is acting like that/brought her lead).

Another way is to put –*garu* to the core of the adjective, making *hoshi-garu* and *ikitagaru*, for example, and then using the resulting verb's *teiru* form. Thus:

> *Jon wa hoshi-gatteimasu.*
> *Mocha wa ikita-gatteiru.*
> * Notice that *hoshii* and *ikitai* are both adjectives, not verbs.

These would best translate as:

> John (is showing all signs that he) wants it.
> Mocha (is showing all signs that she) wants to go.

Please note that, -*garu* is used not only with these desire expressions but with all other emotion-based adjectives and nouns, to express a third person's state of mind. Examples:

> *Michiko-san wa totemo ureshi-gatteimasu.*   (Michiko is very happy)
> *Yamada-san wa zannen-gatteiru.*   (Mr Yamada is regretful)
> * *ureshii* (adj.) = happy;   *zannen* (noun) = regretful, regrettable

3. *toki*

When in English you would use "when" to mention the time something occurs, Japanese employ the noun "*toki*" (time), as follows:

> *ureshii toki*   (the time) when one is happy
> *ikitai toki*   (the time) when one wants to go
> *jibun de himo o mottekuru toki*   (the time) when she brings the lead by herself

Notice that the preceding word or clause simply modifies the noun (*toki*). Keep in mind the golden rule of Japanese: "a modifier comes always before the modified."