

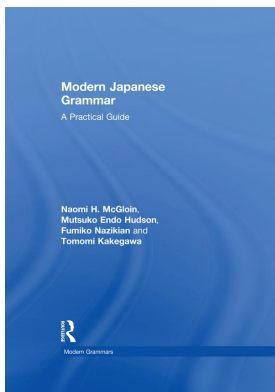
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## **Modern Japanese Grammar A Practical Guide**

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### **Cause and effect**

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# 48

## Cause and effect

### 48.1 Asking about cause

To ask about cause, the noun **gen'in** is used.

原因は何ですか。(F)

**Gen'in wa nan desu ka.**

As for the cause, what is it?

何が原因ですか。(F)

**Nani ga gen'in desu ka.**

What is the cause?

原因は何？(I)

**Gen'in wa nani?**

As for the cause, what is it?

何が原因？(I)

**Nani ga gen'in?**

What is the cause?

To ask about the cause of an event more specifically, **gen'in** can be modified by the noun modification structure as follows.

#### ▶ 7.2

火事の原因は何ですか。

**Kaji no gen'in wa nan desu ka.**

As for the cause of fire, what is it?

何が試験に落ちた原因ですか。

**Nani ga shiken ni ochita gen'in desu ka.**

What caused you to fail the exam?

It is also common to use questions words **naze**, **nande** and **dooshite**, all meaning 'why,' to ask about cause.

#### ▶ 4.3; 18.2; 32.1.2; 32.2

なんで本棚が倒れたの？

**Nande hondana ga taoreta no?**

Why did the bookshelf fall down?

どうして橋が落ちたのでしょうか。

**Dooshite hashi ga ochita no deshoo ka.**

Why did the bridge fall down?

### 48.2 Expressing cause

To express cause, the following sentence structures are commonly used.

X **no gen'in wa Y desu.** 'The cause of X is Y.'

火事の原因はたばこです。

**Kaji no gen'in wa tabako desu.**

The cause of the fire was a cigarette.

X **ga gen'in desu**. 'X is the cause.'

Q: 何が肥満の原因ですか。  
**Nani ga himan no gen'in desu ka.**  
 What is the cause of obesity?

A: 運動不足が原因です。  
**Undoo busoku ga gen'in desu.**  
 Lack of exercise is the cause.

Clause **no/koto ga gen'in desu**. '... is the cause.'

あまり歩かなくなったの/ことが原因です。  
**Amari arukanakunatta no/koto ga gen'in desu.**  
 That people walk less is the cause.

Other expressions that are used to express cause are listed below with examples.

せいだ **see da** 'due to'

**See da** has a negative connotation and is used when the consequence has an adverse effect on the speaker. **See da** is used when the speaker is placing the blame on someone or something rather than stating the cause objectively. Structurally, the cause is expressed as the noun modifier of **see**, i.e. noun **no see** or predicate (plain form) **see**.

▶ 7.2

俺が負けたのはおまえのせいだ。  
**Ore ga maketa no wa omae no see da.**  
 I lost because of you!

朝寝坊したのは、目覚まし時計がならなかったせいだ。  
**Asaneboo shita no wa, mezamashi dokee ga naranakatta see da.**  
 That I overslept is due to the alarm clock not ringing.

雨にぬれたせいで、風邪をひきました。  
**Ame ni nureta see de, kaze o hikimashita.**  
 I caught a cold due to getting wet in the rain.

おかげだ **okage da** 'thanks to'

The cause is expressed as the noun modifier of **okage**, i.e. noun **no okage** or predicate (plain form) **okage**.

▶ 7.2

留学できたのは奨学金のおかげだ。  
**Ryuugaku dekita no wa shoogakukin no okage da.**  
 That I was able to study abroad is thanks to the scholarship.

プロジェクトが成功したのはみんなが協力してくれたおかげです。  
**Purojekuto ga seekoo shita no wa minna ga kyooryoku shite kureta okage desu.**  
 The success of the project is due to everyone's cooperation.

The verb **motarasu** 'to bring about' is also used to express cause. In this case the cause is stated as the topic or the subject of the sentence.

その年の台風は大災害をもたらした。  
**Sono toshi no taifuu wa daisaigai o motarashita.**  
 The typhoon that year caused severe damage.

果物は健康に良い影響をもたらします。  
**Kudamono wa kenkoo ni yoi eekyoo o motarashimasu.**  
 Fruits bring about good effects on health.

## 48.3

## Expressing relationships of cause and effect

The **te**-form can be used to express cause when two events are closely related as cause and effect.

## ▶ 22.1

道が混んでいて、遅くなりました。

**Michi ga konde ite, osoku narimashita.**

The road was congested, and so I was delayed.

番号が分からなくて、連絡できませんでした。

**Bangoo ga wakaranakute, renraku dekimasen deshita.**

I didn't know the number, and so I couldn't contact you.

The **te**-form can also indicate the cause of one's emotional or physical state.

試験に受かってうれしいです。

**Shiken ni ukatte ureshii desu.**

I'm glad to have passed the exam.

(Lit. I passed the exam and so I'm glad.)

パーティーに行けなくてがっかりです。

**Paatii ni ikenakute gakkari desu.**

I'm disappointed that I couldn't go to the party.

(Lit. I couldn't go to the party and so I'm disappointed.)

お腹が空いて目眩がする。

**Onaka ga suite memai ga suru.**

I feel dizzy from hunger.

(Lit. I'm hungry and so I feel dizzy.)

In formal speech or in writing, instead of **te**-form, the V-stem may be used.

目標を達成でき、感激です。

**Mokuhyoo o tassee deki, kangeki desu.**

I'm ecstatic to have been able to achieve my goal.

病を患い、入院した。

**Yamai o wazurai, nyuuin shita.**

I was hospitalized as I developed an illness.

The negative **te**-form **nakute** can be replaced by **zu** in writing or in formal speech.

パーティーに行けず、がっかりです。

**Paatii ni ikezu, gakkari desu.**

I'm disappointed because I couldn't go to the party.

誰にも会えず、さびしかった。

**Dare ni mo aezu, sabishikatta.**

I couldn't see anyone, so I was lonely.

When the cause can be expressed by a noun, the particle **de** is used.

地震で本棚が倒れた。

**Jishin de hondana ga taoreta.**

The bookshelf fell down because of the earthquake.

火事で家が焼けてしまった。

**Kaji de ie ga yakete shimatta.**

The house burned down due to the fire.

結婚で生活が変わった。

**Kekkon de seekatsu ga kawatta.**

My lifestyle has changed due to my marriage.

When a consequence is something negative, **see de** is often used to state the cause with a tone of blame.

台風のせいで遠足に行けなかった。

**Taifuu no see de ensoku ni ikenakatta.**

Because of the typhoon, we couldn't go on the field trip.

ルームメイトがうるさかったせいで、全然眠れなかった。

**Ruumumeeto ga urusakatta see de, zenzen nemurenakatta.**

Because my roommate was noisy, I couldn't sleep at all.

The conditional particle **to** is used to express a natural or logical cause-and-effect relationship.

▶ 24.1

このボタンを押すと電気がつきます。

**Kono botan o osu to denki ga tsukimasu.**

When you press this button, the light turns on.

冬になると寒くなります。

**Fuyu ni naru to samuku narimasu.**

When it becomes winter, it gets cold.

疲れると甘い物がほしくなる。

**Tsukareru to amai mono ga hoshiku naru.**

When I get tired, I crave something sweet.