

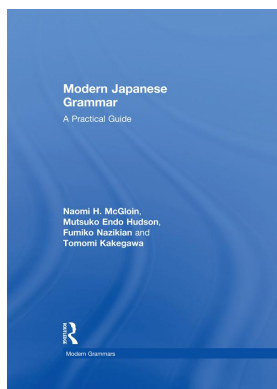
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85

Agreement, disagreement, and indifference

85.1 Expressing agreement and disagreement

There are various ways to express your agreement or disagreement depending on how clearly or openly you want to express it. Since ‘disagreeing’ may be confrontational and potentially create an embarrassing moment, the speaker often expresses his/her disagreement in an indirect, mitigated manner.

85.1.1 Expressing agreement with the prior speaker’s comment

- | | |
|---|--|
| A: これ、高いですね。
Kore, takai desu ne.
This is expensive, isn’t it. | B: そうですね。
Soo desu ne.
It is, isn’t it. |
| A: これ、高いね。
Kore, takai ne.
This is expensive, isn’t it. | B: そうだね。
Soo da ne.
Yeah, right. |

In these examples speaker B agrees with speaker A’s comment. The use of the sentence final particle **ne** by both speakers indicates that they share the same opinion. This style of conversation creates rapport between the speakers. The following expressions can be used when the speaker agrees with the prior speaker’s opinion or idea.

85.1.2 Expressing agreement with the prior speaker’s opinion, idea, or suggestion

- (それは) いい考えですね。(F)
(Sore wa) ii kangae desu ne
(That) is a good idea.
- (それ) いい考えだね。/ 考えね。(I) (Feminine)
(Sore) ii kangae da ne. / kangae ne.
(That) is a good idea.
- 私もそう思います。(F)
Watashi mo soo omoimasu
I think so too.
- 私もそう思う。(I)
Watashi mo soo omou.
I think so too.

私も同感です。(F)

Watashi mo dookan desu.

I agree.

なるほどね。

Naruhodo ne.

I see. (Indeed.)

私も賛成です。(F)

Watashi mo sansee desu.

I agree too.

私も賛成。(I)

Watashi mo sansee.

I agree too.

よろしいんじゃないでしょうか。(VF)

Yoroshii n ja nai deshoo ka.

I think it is good.

いいんじゃない。(I)

Ii n ja nai.

I think it's good.

(それは) いいですね。(F)

(Sore wa) ii desu ne

(That) sounds good.

(それ) いいね。(I)

(Sore) ii ne

(That) sounds good.

85.1.3

Expressing disagreement with the prior speaker's comment

In expressing disagreement with the prior speaker's comment, expressions such as **soo desu ka?** **soo?** or **soo ka na?** can be used.

A: これ、きれいですね。(F)

Kore kiree desu ne.

This is pretty, isn't it.

B: そうですか。

Soo desu ka.

Is that so?

A: これ、きれいだね。(I)

Kore kiree da ne.

This is pretty, isn't it.

B: そう？ or そうかな？

Soo? or Soo ka na?

Is that so?

When the speaker disagrees with the prior speaker's comment, moreover, he/she usually delays his/her response by a pause and/or uttering fillers such as **uun** 'uhm,' or **maa** 'well,' or the like.

Also, it is generally good to first acknowledge the prior speaker's comment or opinion and then disagree, using contrastive connectives or conjunctions.

A: 日本の大学生はアルバイトばかりしていて、ちっとも勉強しないみたい。

Nihon no daigakusee wa arubaito bakari shite ite, chittomo benkyoo shinai mitai.

It seems that Japanese college students spend their time doing part-time jobs and don't study at all.

B: うん、でも勉強する人はちゃんとやってるんだよ。

Un, demo benkyoo suru hito wa chanto yatte ru n da yo.

Yeah, but there are students who do study.

- A: 日本では仕事のあと飲みに行くのも仕事の一つなんだよ。
Nihon de wa shigoto no ato nomi ni iku no mo shigoto no hitotsu na n da yo.
 In Japan it is part of one's job to go out for a drink after work, you know.
- B: うーん、それはそうかもしれませんが。でも、早く家に帰りたくても、誘われたら断れないし。
Uun, sore wa soo kamo shiremasen ga. Demo, hayaku uchi ni kaeritakute mo sasowaretara kotowarenai shi.
 Yeah, that might be true. But, even if you want to go home early, it is difficult to say no if you are invited.

The following expressions can also be used in expressing 'disagreement' in an indirect manner.

- さあ、どうでしょうかね。(F)
Saa doo deshoo ka ne.
 Well, I don't know.
- さあ、どうかな。(I)
Saa doo ka na.
 Well, I don't know.
- それはそうだと思いますが...。(F)
Sore wa soo da to omoimasu ga...
 I think that's right, but...
- 確かにそれもそうなんですけど...。
Tashika ni sore mo soo na n desu ga...
 That's indeed true, but...

In the following examples, disagreement is more openly expressed.

- 私はそうは思いませんが...。(F)
Watashi wa soo wa omoimasen ga...
 I don't think so but...
- 私はそうは思わないけど...。(I)
Watashi wa soo wa omowanai kedo...
 I don't think so but...
- それは違うんじゃないでしょうか。(F)
Sore wa chigau n ja nai deshoo ka.
 I think it might not be so.
- それは違うんじゃない？(I)
Sore wa chigau n ja nai?
 Isn't that wrong?
- 私は反対です or 反対します。(F)
Watashi wa hantai desu or hantai shimasu.
 I disagree with it.
- 私は反対。(I)
Watashi wa hantai.
 I disagree.

85.2

Asking about agreement and disagreement

It is not very common in Japanese society to ask directly about agreement and disagreement. Instead, the speaker may ask what the addressee thinks.

田中さんのアイデアの方がいいと思うんですが、どう思いますか。(F)

Tanaka-san no aidea no hoo ga ii to omou n desu ga, doo omoimasu ka.
I think Tanaka's idea is better, but what do you think?

こっちの方がいいと思うけど、どう思う？(I)

Kotchi no hoo ga ii to omou kedo, doo omou?
I think this one is better, but what do you think?

田中さんをお願いしようと思うんですが、どうでしょうか。(F)

Tanaka-san ni o-negai shiyoo to omou n desu ga, doo deshoo ka.
I am thinking of asking Mr/Ms Tanaka to do it, but what do you think?

田中さんをお願いしようと思うんだけど、どうかな。(I)

Tanaka-san ni o-negai shiyoo to omou n da kedo, doo ka na.
I am thinking of asking Mr/Ms Tanaka to do it, but what do you think?

In some cases such as meetings, conferences, debating, etc., it is appropriate to directly ask about agreement and disagreement.

今の意見に賛成しますか、反対しますか。Or 賛成ですか、反対ですか。

Ima no iken ni sansee shimasu ka, hantai shimasu ka. Or Sansee desuka, hantai desu ka.

Do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

85.3

Expressing indifference

To express that you do not either agree or disagree, the following expressions can be used.

どちらでもけっこうです。(VF)

Dochira demo kekkoo desu.
Either one would be fine.

どちらでもいいですよ。(F)

Dochira demo ii desu yo.
Either one is fine.

どっちでもいいよ。(I)

Dotchi demo ii yo.
Either one is fine.

どっちでもかまわないよ。(I)

Dotchi demo kamawanai yo.
Whichever is fine.

どうでもいいよ！(I)

Doo demo ii yo!
I don't care!