

Japanese is Possible!  
Week 20

## Part 20

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## Romanization

Romanization is turning Japanese characters into our alphabet, so an average American can read them. Our alphabet is called the *Roman* alphabet. In Japan, they call our alphabet *Roumaji*.

Without romanization, you'd have to use the Japanese alphabet(s) to write everything in Japanese.

For various reasons, there are at least 2 styles of *Romanizing* Japanese.

Here are some examples of how the same couple of letters could be written in several different ways:

**ji = zi**  
**e = he**  
**o = wo**  
**shi = si**  
**ou = oo**  
**ou = ô (o with a line over it)**

So *Jishin* (self confidence) could technically be written:

**zisin**

Personally, I don't like that romanization, because it doesn't look like it sounds. However, some books use that romanization exclusively. I find it rather annoying.

Often times, a line will be drawn over a vowel to show that there are actually 2 of that vowel. I prefer to actually write 2 of the vowel. My reasoning is as follows: If you're romanizing something, it should look pretty normal to an average reader. Notice that we don't use the "bar over a letter" symbol at all in English! I think a romanization should be pretty easy to read.

**yasashi**

## yasashii

The above 2 words are the same, but the second one suggests how to pronounce it. The first one looks like something out of a pronunciation dictionary.

That's also why I prefer **ou** to **oo**. If you have a double 'o' in English, you want it to rhyme with *crude*. However, it's supposed to be pronounced **oooh**. I think spelling it **ou** helps you to pronounce it the right way.

## The Particle E

This particle basically means, "to" or "toward".

### Examples

*mise e itta.*  
store (to) went.  
**(he, she) went to the store.**

*sairaag e iku ka?*  
sairaag (toward) go ?  
**Are you going to Sairaag?**

Notice that it is usually used with some form of **iku** (to go), or a similar verb.

## The Particle SHI

This particle is used to connect several mini-sentences. It's not all that different from the English word **AND**. The best way to explain it is to demonstrate its use!

### Examples

*koko wa kowai shi,*  
here (subject) scary (and)

*bakemono ga iru shi, ikou ze!*  
monsters (in particular) are here (and) let's go!

**It's scary here, and there are monsters, so let's go!**

*kimi wa kawaii shi*  
you (subject) cute (and),

*ai shite iru shi*  
[I'm] loving you (and)

*kekkon sureba ii to omou yo!*  
if [I] were to marry [you] good (and) think !

**You're cute, and I'm in love with you, so I'm thinking marriage would be a good idea!**

## **-ku naru (to become something)**

Remember the -ku form?

You can use the **-ku** form of a *normal* adjective with the verb **naru** (to become), and make some very nice sentences. This form is used a lot. If you watch just about any Anime, you'll hear it at least once.

### Examples

**shiroi** - white

**shiroku natta** - became white

**osoi** - slow

**osoku natta** - became slow

**hayai** - fast

**hayaku natte iru** - is becoming fast

**nai** - not there (opposite of aru, to exist)

**naku natta** - became nothing

## Example Sentences

*Akane wa Dracula o taoshita kedo,*

Akane (subject) Dracula (who or what) killed but,

*inochi ga naku natta n'da.*

life (subject) not there became (is).

**Akane defeated Dracula, but at the price of her own life.**

*ranma o taoshita ato de, genma to tatakatte ita.*

ranma (who) defeated after, genma (with) was fighting.

**After he defeated Ranma, he was fighting with Genma.**

*tabako mou naku natta nda!*

cigarettes already nothing became !

**We're already out of cigarettes!**

*kono rousoku o naku naru made,*

this candle (what) nothing becomes until,

*koko de matte kudasai!*

here (location) wait please!

**Please wait here until this candle completely burns up.**

*doushite konna tokoro ni kuru nante?*

why this kinda place (to) come (a thing such as)

**Why did you come to a place like this?**

*ame ga futte iru shi,*

rain (subject) is falling (and)

*okaasan ga okotte iru shi,*

mother (subject) is being angry (and)

*nanimo dekinai n dakara.*  
nothing can't do (\*filler\*) therefore.

**It's raining, and mom's mad, so I can't do anything.**

## **Useful Words**

**inochi** - life  
**nakusu** - to lose  
**rousoku** - candle  
**tabako** - cigarettes  
**ame** - rain

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