

## **A Study on the Use of Helping Verb (TE MORAU) in Japanese Language**

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### **Abstract**

This research studies the use of helping verb “te morau” in Japanese language. The use of this helping verb is very important in grammar of Japanese language and common in daily expressions but at the same time it can cause misunderstanding if the speaker misuses it. By studying the use of “te morau” which reflects the culture and characteristics of Japanese people, learners of Japanese language will be able to use this helping verb “te morau” correctly. While studying the culture and characteristics of Japanese people, learners can compare and contrast with that of their mother tongue. In writing this research paper, descriptive method is used. A comparative study is made to know similarities and differences in the use of helping verbs between Myanmar and Japanese languages. In doing this research, academic research papers on “giving and receiving” in Japanese language, Japanese Grammar books, Myanmar Grammar books and Myanmar-Japanese dictionaries were used. This study points out difficulties which Myanmar students encounter in learning Japanese language concerning with the use of helping verb “te morau” and suggests some ways to solve these difficulties. This study would be helpful for the Myanmar learners of Japanese language to some extent.

**Keywords:** Ageru, Kureru, Morau, temorau

### **Introduction**

The action of “giving and receiving” something can be expressed by the words “Ataeru” and “Uketoru” in Japanese language. However, in daily expressions of Japanese language, this action is not described by the words “Ataeru” and “Uketoru” but by the words “~kudasaru, ~ageru, ~ yaru, ~ te sashiageru, ~ te itadaku ~temorau”. Giving and receiving means not only giving tangible things or material things but also intangible things or abstract notions. The aim of this research is that the learners of Japanese language would be able to avoid misuse of helping verbs in real life situations and not to misunderstand in communication with Japanese people. It also aims for the learners to be able to use Japanese language accurately and systematically.

### **Research Questions**

1. How is Japanese language different from Myanmar language in the use of helping verb?
2. What are the weaknesses of Myanmar students of Japanese language in the use of helping verb?

### **Literature Review**

There are many references in Japanese language to study the use of giving and receiving verbs such as Te ageru, Te kureru, and Te morau. Helping verbs such as Te kureru and Te morau express the request and wish the use of Te ageru, Te kureru and Te morau which cannot be seen often in the grammar books such as

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Intermediate level books.<sup>1</sup> Helping verbs such as *Te kureru*, *Te morau* express the request, wish and gratitude of a receiver of the act of kindness, where as *Te ageru* expresses the overly emphasized kindness of the act. Also, these helping verbs have closely related to who's viewpoint sentences are described with, which is very unique to Japanese and make it more difficult for foreigners. However, these usages of helping verbs are not well explained in the grammar books or intermediate level books.

### Theoretical Background

Among the use of the Verbs of giving and receiving in Japanese language, the verb which means “receive” is “*morau*”. In Japanese language, the verb of giving and receiving is used in transferring possession and it varies depending on the social status of people. In Japanese language society, the use of verbs varies expressing the feeling and emotion of the speaker in a particular situation. The significance of Japanese language is the role of prepositions. The use of prepositions can change the meaning of expression. Although an expression is grammatically correct, interpretation may be wrong because of misunderstanding of the prepositions.

### Material and Method

In writing this research paper, descriptive method is used. A comparative study is made to know similarities and differences in the use of helping verbs between Myanmar and Japanese languages. The references used in this research are research papers on “giving and receiving” in Japanese literature, Japanese Grammar books, Myanmar Grammar books and Myanmar-Japanese dictionaries. Based on the experience of the researcher as a Japanese language teacher, the paper points out difficulties which Myanmar students encounter in learning Japanese language concerning with the use of helping verb “*te morau*” and suggests some ways to solve these difficulties.

### Findings and Discussion

Misunderstanding of the following sentences can cause wrong interpretation.

(a) Yamadasan wa Wansan ni chuugokugo o <u>oshiete agetta</u> . (✘)	(a) Yamadasan wa Wansan ni chuugokugo o <u>oshiete moratta</u> . (✔)
ယာမဒသည်ဝမ်းအား တရုတ်ဘာသာသင်ပေးသည်။	ယာမဒသည်ဝမ်းထံမှ တရုတ်ဘာသာသင်ယူသည်။
Yamadasan teaches Wansan Chinese language.	Yamadasan learns Chinese language from Wansan.

Yamadasan and Wansan are the names of people. Chuugokugo is Chinese language. Students translate this sentence as “Yamadasan teaches Wansan Chinese language”. Therefore they use the verb “*Ageru*”. It is grammatically correct but they didn't notice that Wansan is the name of a Chinese. Therefore, it is not logical that a Japanese person teaches Chinese language to a Chinese.

おおえさぶろう                      にちえいご                      なぐもどう  
<sup>1</sup>大江三郎 (1975) 『日英語の比較研究』南雲堂

(b) Wansan wa Yamadasan ni chuugokugo o <u>oshiete moratta</u> . ( ✘ ) ဝမ်းသည် ယာမဒအံမှ တရုတ်ဘာသာ သင်ယူသည်။ Wansan learns Chinese language from Yamadasan.	(b) Wansan wa Yamadasan ni chuugokugo o <u>oshiete agetta</u> . ( ✔ ) ဝမ်းသည် ယာမဒအား တရုတ်ဘာသာ သင်ပေးသည်။ Wansan teaches Yamadasan Chinese language.
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In this sentence, the preposition “ni” has the same meaning as “kara” so students make mistake by using “Morau”.

(c) Wansan wa sensei ni chuugokugo o <u>oshiete itadaita</u> . ( ✘ ) ဝမ်းသည် ဆရာထံမှ တရုတ်ဘာသာ သင်ယူသည်။ Wansan learns Chinese language from the teacher.	(c) Wansan wa sensei ni chuugokugo o <u>oshiete sashiageta</u> . ( ✔ ) ဝမ်းသည် ဆရာအား တရုတ်ဘာသာ သင်ပေးသည်။ Wansan teaches his teacher Chinese language.
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In this sentence, by looking at the words Wansan (ဝမ်း), Sensei (ဆရာ) and *tyuugokugo* (တရုတ်ဘာသာ) if the reader uses “itadaku”, thinking that it is Sensei who teaches the students, it will be wrong. The main point, Wansan, being a Chinese, is not taken into consideration. It is because students think that it is a teacher who always does teaching. By analyzing students’ mistakes, the teacher can find out the weaknesses of the students in using verbs in Japanese language. The following are the possible causes of students’ errors.

- Thinking that the sentence is grammatically correct
- Making direct translation into Myanmar language
- Misunderstanding the meaning of a sentence

### The Use of the Verbs of Giving and Receiving

Example (1): Porusan wa watashi ni hon o kuremashita.

ပေါလ်သည် ကျွန်မအား စာအုပ် ကို ပေးသည်။ (ကာယကံရှင်)

Poul gave me the book. (The actor)

Example (2): Porusan wa Mariasan ni hon o agemashita.

ပေါလ်သည် မာရီယာအား စာအုပ် ကို ပေးသည်။ (အခြားတယောက်)

Poul gave Maria a book. (The other person)

Example (3): Mariasan wa Porusan ni hon o moraimashita.

မာရီယာသည် ပေါလ်ထံမှ စာအုပ် ကို ရရှိသည်။ (အခြားတယောက်)

Maria received the book from Poul. (The other person)

The verb “Morau” is like “Ageru” and “kureru” is used by the receiver (as an actor) in transferring possession from a person to the other.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matsuoka Hiroshi(kansyuu), Iori isao et.al.(2006) *Syokyuu o oshieru tame no Nihongo Bunpoo Hando Booku*, suriie nettowaaku

Tanakasan wawatashi ni kyandi o kuremashita . (Tanaka gave me the sweet.)

တာနကသည်ကျွန်တော့်အား သကြားလုံးပေးသည်။

Watashi wa Tanakasan ni kyandi o moraimashita. (I received the sweet from Tanaka.)

ကျွန်တော်တာနကဆီက သကြားလုံးကိုရသည်။

The above sentences have the same meaning but it must be considered who the speaker is and the speaker must be in the place of the subject. Although the position of the preposition is the same, in the first sentence, the preposition “ni” means (for) someone and ‘ni’ in the second sentence means (from) someone.

**(a) The Use of “te morau” as a Helping Verb**

Verbs of giving and receiving are used as helping verbs in Japanese language. Two verbs are combined and the former verb must be changed into Te-form. It means that something is done for someone.

1. Mariasan wa Zyunsan ni nihongo o oshiemashita. ⇨ Simple form

မာရီယာသည် ဂျပန်စာ ကို သင်ပေးသည်။

2. Zyunsan wa Mariasan ni nihongo o oshiete moraimashita. ⇨ Showing

Gratitude

ဂျပန်သည်မာရီယာထံမှ ဂျပန်စာ သင်ပေးခြင်းကို ရရှိသည်။

In the sentence “John teaches me English” (I received English teaching from John), it means that John teaches me English, so I thank John. However, it is difficult to translate “te morau”. In Myanmar, there is no expression like “သင်ပေးခြင်းကိုရရှိသည်” (receive teaching). It is direct translation into Myanmar.

**(b) The difference between V te morau and V rareru**

1. Yamada kun wa shashin o torimashita.

ယာမဒ ဓါတ်ပုံရိုက်သည်။ (ဖြစ်စဉ်ပြ)(သာမန်)

Yamada took photo. (Narrative) (Simple)

2. Watashi wa Yamadakun ni shashin o totte moraimashita.

ကျွန်တော်သည် ယာမဒ ၏ဓါတ်ပုံရိုက်ပေးခြင်းကိုရရှိခဲ့သည်။ (ဖြစ်စဉ်ပြ)(ကျေးဇူး)

I received being taken photo by Yamada. (Narrative + Gratitude)

3. Watasi wa Yamadakun ni shashin o toraremashita.

ကျွန်တော်သည် ယာမဒ၏ဓါတ်ပုံရိုက်ခြင်းကို ခံရသည်။ (ဖြစ်စဉ်ပြ + ထိခိုက်နစ်နာခြင်း)

I was taken photograph by Yamada. (Narrative + emotionally hurt)

The speaker does not receive direct action but is still bothered by some event or through the actions of others. When the person who feels bothered by those events or actions is affected adversely in some way, that person (usually ‘I’ or someone psychologically close to ‘I’) is made the subject (See number 3).

**(c) Difference between V te morau and V te kureru**1. Haha ni seetaa o okutte moratta.

အမေထံမှ ဆွယ်တာပို့ပေးခြင်းကိုရရှိခဲ့သည်။ (ကျွန်တော်၏တောင်းဆိုမှု+အမေ၏ကြင်နာမှုပြု)

I received giving sweater from mother. (My request + mother's kindness)

2. Haha ga seetaa o okutte kureta.

အမေက ဆွယ်တာကိုပို့ပေးခဲ့သည်။ (အမေ၏ကြင်နာမှုပြု)

Mother sent me the sweater. (Showing mother's kindness)

These two sentences, both express gratitude. However, the use of the expression “V te morau” describes the speaker's request, whereas “V te kureru” can be used in the case when “Mother sent the sweater even without my request.”

Therefore, these cases can also be described in longer sentences as follows.

## 1. Haha ni (tanonde) seetaa o okutte moratta.

I received the sweater from my mother “as I had asked her”.

## 2. Haha ga (tanondenai noni) seetaa o okutte kureta.

I received the sweater from my mother “even though I didn't ask her to”.

However, please be noted that “V te kureru” can also be used when there is a request as the case below.

## 2+ (Haha nit anon dara) Haha ga seetaa o okutte kureta.

I received the sweater from my mother “as I had asked her”. (Same English as in 1)

As you can see, [1] and [2+] are same if translated into English. Only difference is that “I” asked my mother and I know that she would do it for sure in [1] but in [2] “I” am not sure if she would do it as I'm just taking a chance on her kindness.

Therefore, the feeling of gratitude is expressed a little bit stronger in [2].

**(d) “te morau” of gratitude and its different categories**

There are four categories of “te morau” of gratitude.

(d-1) Giving and taking according to the other person's wish or the speaker's request and transferring something from the other person.

Example (1): Okane o kashite morau.

သူ့ဆီကပိုက်ဆံကိုချေးအုံးမယ်။

(From her) I will borrow money.

Example (2): Kashita okane o kaeshite morau.

ချေးထားတဲ့ပိုက်ဆံကိုပြန်ပေးခိုင်းမယ်။

I asked her to give back my money.

In No.1 sentence, although there is no subject and object, according to Japanese Grammar, it can clearly be seen who is the giver and the receiver. In the

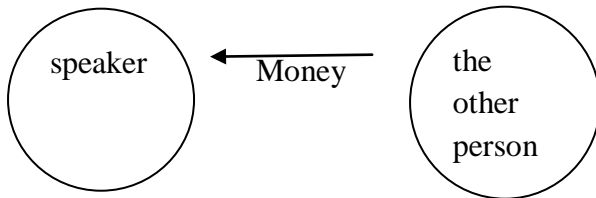
given example sentences, the other person is the giver and the speaker is the receiver. In other words, it is said to be beneficial.

Example (3): Sensei ni ogotte moratta.

ဆရာက ကျွေးမွေးသည်။

The teacher treated me.

In this sentence, there is a subject but its role is not significant because the strength of helping verbs after it already conveyed this sense. By the use of helping verb “ogoru” with the helping verb “te-morau”, it is apparent that someone treats me.



(d-2) Forcing the other person or making the other people to do something Present situation has been changed to another.

Example (1): Isha ni mite morau.

ဆရာဝန်ဆီသွားပြပါ။

Go and see the doctor.

Example (2): Tumaga rusu na node, kyaku ni kaette itadaita.

အိမ်မှာဇနီးမရှိတဲ့အတွက် ဧည့်သည်ကိုပြန်စေသည်။

I made the guest return because my wife was not at home.

In Example No. 2, because of my persuasion, the other person says “yes”.

Example (3): Zyama da kara soto e dete morau.

အနောက်အယုတ်ဖြစ်နေလို့အပြင်ကိုထွက်သွားပေးပါ။

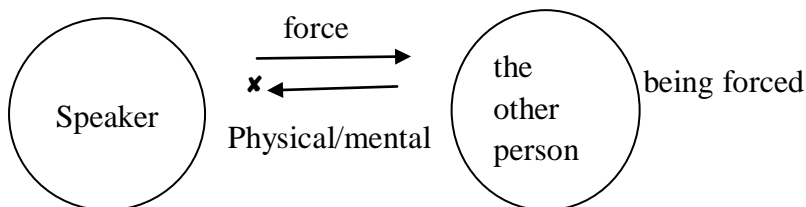
Please go out because you’re making disturbance.

Example (4): Urusai kara acchi e itte morau.

ဆူညံနေလို့ ခပ်ဝေးဝေးသွားပါ။

Please go away because it’s too noisy.

It can be called Imperative, but the expression conveys the speaker’s humbleness and it is called “Kenzyooshieki” in Japanese language. The speaker has to be humble.



(d-3) The speaker transferred the thing or responsibility that he/she should give to the other person according to the other's wish or the speaker's request.

Example (1) Chichi ni hiyoo o dashite morau.

အဖေဆီက အသုံးစရိတ်များရရှိသည်။

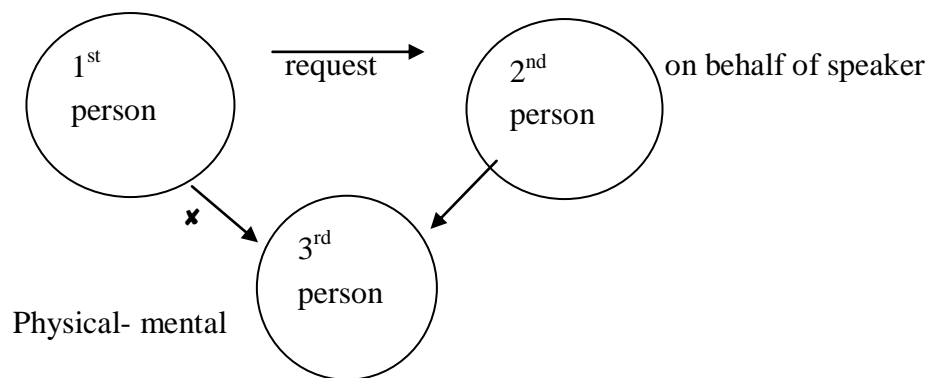
I got money from my father.

Example (2) Komakai no ga nai node, tomodachi ni haratte morau.

ငွေအကြွမရှိသောကြောင့် သူငယ်ချင်းကစိုက်ပေးသည်။

My friend paid for me as I didn't have notes.

Unlike (d-1) and (d- 2), (d-3) includes 1<sup>st</sup> person, 2<sup>nd</sup> person and 3<sup>rd</sup> person. It is called request for one's benefit "Irai zyueki kei".



(d-4) The speaker doesn't do something he/she should do giving a reason and asks the other person to do it for him/ her. According to the other person's wish or the speaker's request, it is used as an imperative.

Example (1) (Kakari no mono ni) kurai node denki o tsukete morau.

တာဝန်ရှိသူအား မှောင်လာသောကြောင့် မီးဖွင့်ခိုင်းမည်။

The responsible person will be asked to switch on the light because it is getting dark.

Example (2) Ootoo ni zisyo o katte kite morau.

ညီလေးအား အဘိဓာန်ကို ဝယ်လာခိုင်းသည်။

My younger brother was asked to buy a dictionary.

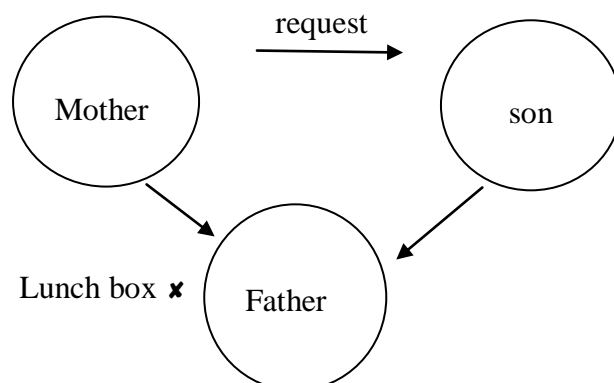
Like (d-3), (d-4) has 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person. When transferring possession according to the speaker's request, there are 2 parts: agreeing and disagreeing. In agreeing, the speaker's possession was transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person and then 2<sup>nd</sup> person's possession was transferred to the 3<sup>rd</sup> person. In this case, 2<sup>nd</sup> person becomes the mediator who is responsible for the action.

Example (3) Isogasii node obentoo o kodomo ni todokete morau.

အလုပ်မအားသောကြောင့် ထမင်းဖူးကို သားနှင့် ပို့ခိုင်းလိုက်သည်။

Because I was busy, I asked my son to send the lunch box.

In Example 3, let us suppose that the person who is busy is mother and the other person is her son and 3<sup>rd</sup> person is father. Mother is busy and she asked her son to do something for her. She asked her son to send lunch box to father. Father received it only from her son who was given the task to carry out.



Although there are many books to study Te Morau, only a short account about this is included in the prescribed text. On the other hand, verbs of Giving and Receiving can be studied in detail in text books prescribed for first year to final year students. To avoid misunderstanding when communicating with Japanese people and also to be able to use systematic and correct Japanese language, the following advice is suggested for the Japanese teachers to try out while teaching his or her students.

- Let them practise writing using the sentence structure of Japanese language and explain the students if the sentence they write means opposite to the intended meaning.
- Explain the differences of confused words.
- Teacher creates the appropriate context (e.g. asking for direction, going to the Students' Affair Department, going shopping, etc.) (Choose the expressions that Japanese people mostly used in these contexts)
- Both teacher and students participate energetically/ actively.

### Conclusion

From this analysis, it was found that the use of helping verbs which is a portion of verbs, and an important part of the Grammar of Japanese language, is so wide that it covers not only material things but also mental phenomena. They can be used in society for communication but one must take great care in using them. It can be seen that these verbs can convey the speaker's opinion and feelings as well. It is hoped that this study would be a help for the Myanmar learners of Japanese language to improve their Grammar usage, speaking skill, writing skill, interpretation skill and translation skill. It can also be a great help for the teachers who teach Japanese language to know the problems students encounter in learning the helping verb "Te Morau" and can emphasize that area and prepare the lesson to make their teaching more effective. Further research is needed to be done on the use of other helping verbs such as "Te Kureru".



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