Lesson 4

Conversation continued from lesson 3. Tadashi and Marie are talking and Marie wants to know who's who.

マリー	あの方はどなたですか。
正	私の先生です。
マリー	お名前は何ですか。
正	原教授です。
マリー	あちらの方は。
正	原先生の奥さまです。
マリー	どの方が正さんのおとうさまですか。
正	こちらです。どうぞ。

Tadashi then introduces Marie to his father.

正	おとうさん、マリー・ペレさんです。
一	始めまして。正の父です。
マリー	始めまして。どうぞよろしくお願いします。
一	こちらこそ。お国はどちらですか。
マリー	フランスです。
一	そうですか。フランスのどちらですか。
マリー	モンペリエです。

4.1 The prefix お again

> お名前は何ですか。
> お国はどちらですか。

We saw this use of お in 3.2. Sometimes it is almost obligatory, as in the case of the word for 'money', お金 (おかね), where お has become an integral part of

the word and the formality has been neutralised, but お is often used where the formality is in fact a matter of being polite about other people and their possessions. Note here, for example, that お is placed in front of both 名前 and 国 to show politeness to the person concerned. But who *is* the person concerned? Only context will actually tell you. Nine times out of ten お名前 means 'your name', but it should be clear that in this particular context Marie is actually referring to the teacher's name and so you would have to translate it 'his name' here. She is being polite not only because a teacher is due respect in any case, but also because he is closely connected to Tadashi. In the second example later on in the conversation, Tadashi's father is clearly saying 'your country'. This use of お is in fact one way of avoiding direct reference to the second person. The corollary is, of course, that お is not normally used when referring to one's own possessions or to something closely connected to one.

4.2 'Way over there'

あちらの方は。

Another example of the kind of truncated question that we saw in 3.7. The word あちら means 'way over there' and, in what should now be becoming a familar pattern to you, it forms a set together with こちら 'over here' and そちら 'over there'. どちら you have already met. You will find it later on in this conversation when Tadashi's father asks Marie フランスのどちらですか 'where in France?'

4.3 Referring to different members of a family

原先生の奥さまです。
正の父です。

When you wish to talk about a member of someone else's family, the person you know best becomes the main reference point and the other members of the

family will usually be identified in relation to that person. So in the first example here the person to whom Marie points is identified by Tadashi as his 'teacher's wife'. The word chosen for wife, by the way, 奥さま, is a polite one that should never be used about one's own wife.

Study the following Yamakawa family chart; it includes everyone we have met so far, and some others who will appear in due course.

山川一 (はじめ)　　　　　　山川信子 (のぶこ)
(56歳)　　　　　　　　　　(50歳)

正 (ただし)　　実 (みのる)　　国子 (くにこ)
(28歳)　　　　(21歳)　　　　(17歳)

On this basis, if you are a friend or colleague of 山川 一, you will refer to

信子	as	山川さんの奥さん/おくさま
正 and/or 実	as	山川さんのむすこさん
国子	as	山川さんのおじょうさん.

However if you are a friend of 実, you will refer to

一	as	山川さんのおとうさん/おとうさま
信子	as	山川さんのおかあさん/おかあさま
正	as	山川さんのおにいさん/おにいさま
国子	as	山川さんの妹さん.

Similarly, when you introduce yourself for the first time to someone who knows one of the members of your family, you will use that particular family member as the reference point. So in the second example above, Tadashi's father introduces himself to Marie as Tadashi's father: 正の父です.

4.4 More interrogatives

> どの方が正さんのおとうさまですか。

どの 'which' is the corresponding interrogative of the prenouns この/
その/あの. Here it is combining with 方 (かた) to produce a polite 'which
person?' Note the difference between this word, which specifically refers to
choosing one out of many, and the generally polite 'who?' どなた (2.2). Marie
chooses to raise the respect language a notch higher when referring to Tadashi's
father with the phrase おとうさま. See the table in 2.5. For an explanation of the
が here, see below.

4.5 The subject marker が as subject marker;

> あの方はどなたですか。
> versus
> どの方が正さんのおとうさまですか。

In this lesson a new particle が, the subject marker, is introduced. The use of は
and が is probably the most difficult point in Japanese grammar, and the
difference between subject and topic will be explained in detail in later chapters.
At this stage, the first rule to be learned is that an interrogative noun is always
followed by が when it is in the equivalent position to the English 'subject'.
Conversely, if the interrogative noun appears later in the sentence, the subject
will become topicalised with the particle は. In the replies to these questions the
particles は and が are simply repeated in the same place.

あの方はどなたですか。	あの方は山川さんです。
どの方が山川さんですか。	あの方が山川さんです。

4.6 'Please'

こちらです。どうぞ。

どうぞ is the kind of word you use when offering things to people: 'please accept'. Here Tadashi is offering to take Marie to meet his father, and the word might be accompanied by either a little hand gesture in the direction of the father or a small nod of the head.

4.7 Numbers

You will have noticed that in lesson 3 we gave the ages of the people concerned in the conversation, but left them without comment. The important matter of how to count objects will be introduced later. Here we can take the opportunity to introduce simple numbers. To say 'fifty-six years old' in Japanese you would say the number for fifty-six, as listed below, with the word 歳 (さい), which means 'years old'. What follows is a list of basic Japanese numbers: the kind you will use for counting years, counting on your fingers, or for doing arithmetic.

units:

0	零	れい、ぜろ、まる	5	五	ご
1	一	いち	6	六	ろく
2	二	に	7	七	しち、なな
3	三	さん	8	八	はち
4	四	し、よん	9	九	き"う、く

teens:

10	十	じゅう	15	十五	じゅうご
11	十一	じゅういち	16	十六	じゅうろく
12	十二	じゅうに	17	十七	じゅうしち/なな
13	十三	じゅうさん	18	十八	じゅうはち
14	十四	じゅうし/よん	19	十九	じゅうく/きゅう

tens:

20	二十	にじゅう	60	六十	ろくじゅう
30	三十	さんじゅう	70	七十	しち/ななじゅう
40	四十	し/よんじゅう	80	八十	はちじゅう
50	五十	ごじゅう	90	九十	きゅうじゅう

hundreds:

100	百	ひゃく	600	六百	ろっぴゃく
200	二百	にひゃく	700	七百	ななひゃく
300	三百	さんびゃく	800	八百	はっぴゃく
400	四百	よんひゃく	900	九百	きゅうひゃく
500	五百	ごひゃく			

thousands:

1,000	千	せん	6,000	六千	ろくせん
2,000	二千	にせん	7,000	七千	ななせん
3,000	三千	さんぜん	8,000	八千	はっせん
4,000	四千	よんせん	9,000	九千	きゅうせん
5,000	五千	ごせん	10,000	一万	いちまん

The readings よん for 4 and なな for 7 are borrowed from a second set of numbers which will be introduced later. よん is used in preference to し because the latter is homophonous with a word meaning 'death' and なな may also be used because しち can be misheard as いち. Note that Japanese has a separate word for 10,000. This you will find rather difficult at first because 'a hundred thousand' is expressed in Japanese as 十万 'ten ten-thousands' or 10,0000.

Key to conversation

Romanisation

Marī   Ano kata wa donata desu ka.

Tadashi	Watakushi no sensei desu.
Marī	O-namae wa nan desu ka.
Tadashi	Hara kyōju desu.
Marī	Achira no kata wa.
Tadashi	Hara sensei no okusama desu.
Marī	Dono kata ga Tadashi-san no o-tōsama desu ka.
Tadashi	Kochira desu. Dōzo.
Tadashi	O-tōsan, Marī Pere san desu.
Hajime	Hajimemashite. Tadashi no chichi desu.
Marī	Hajimemashite. Dōzo yoroshiku o-negai shimasu.
Hajime	Kochira koso. O-kuni wa dochira desu ka.
Marī	Furansu desu.
Hajime	Sō desu ka. Furansu no dochira desu ka.
Marī	Monperie desu.

Translation

Marie	Who is that person over there?
Tadashi	My teacher.
Marie	What is his name?
Tadashi	Professor Hara.
Marie	And that person over there?
Tadashi	That''Professor Hara's wife.
Marie	Which one is your father?
Tadashi	Here he is. I'll introduce you.
Tadashi	Father, this is Marie Perret.
Hajime	How do you do? I'm Tadashi''s father.
Marie	How do you do? Delighted to meet you.
Hajime	The pleasure is mine. Where are you from?
Marie	France.
Hajime	Oh really? What part of France?
Marie	Montpellier.