

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Basic Japanese S1 #24

Basic Japanese #24: How To Ask If Someone Is There

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Hiroko: Do you know how to ask for someone over the phone? In this lesson, you are going to learn how to do that in Japanese. For example, when you call Mr. Tanaka's office and someone else picks up the phone, what would you say? You can say たなかさんは、いますか。 (Tanak-san wa, imasu ka.) which literally means, is Mr. Tanaka there but it means, can I speak to Mr. Tanaka or may I speak to Mr. Tanaka. Let's take a closer look at this sentence. Wa is a topic marking particle います (imasu) is a verb meaning to be or to exist and ka is a question marking particle. So たなかさんは、いますか。 (Tanak-san wa, imasu ka.) literally means is Mr. Tanaka there. Do you remember the sentence こうしゅうでんわは、ありますか。 (Kōshūdenwa wa, arimasu ka.) from the previous lesson? This sentence means, is there a Payphone? In this sentence, Arimasu is used to mean to be or to exist. Look at this sentence たなかさんは、いますか。 (Tanaka-san wa, imasu ka.) . In this sentence, Imasu is used to mean to be or to exist. Do you know what the difference is? The answer is, Imasu is used for animate things like people or animals, things that move and Arimasu is used for inanimate things like desk or Payphone. Let's take a look at some examples. ハンバーガーは、ありますか。 (Hanbāgā wa, arimasu ka.) This means, do you have hamburgers? きょうだいは、いますか。 (Kyōdai wa, imasu ka.) This means, do you have any brothers and sisters? Let's watch a skit that uses these expressions.

(Telephone rings)

Yuichi: はい、Innovative Language Learningです。 (Hai, Innovative Language Learning desu.)

Ushijima: ひろこさんは、いますか。 (Hiroko-san, imasu ka?)

Yuichi: ひろこは、スタジオです。 (Hiroko wa, sutajio desu.)

Ushijima: じゃ、ゆういちさん、お願いします。 (Jā, Yū-ichi-san, onegai shimasu.)

Yuichi: ぼくです。 (Boku desu.)

Ushijima: うそ！ゆういちさん？！ (Uso! Yūichi-san!?)

Hiroko: Here is Hiroko's hint. In the skit, the lady said ゆういちさん、おねがいします。 (Yūichi-san, onegai shimasu.) to ask to talk to Yuchi. When おねがいします (onegai shimasu) is used in a sentence like noun plus おねがいします (onegai shimasu) it means someone or something please. See you next time.