



Grandma's Whisper: Verb Potential form

1 Verb potential form

The potential form is used to express the both one's ability and situational possibilities to do something. For example, "kono hana wa taberareru" (This flower is edible); "Watashi wa sashimi ga taberareru" (I can eat sashimi.)

2 Task A

Discuss what rules exist in the following examples.

Group III ^{する} → ^{できる}*
^{くる} → ^{来られる}

*"Suru" is converted into "dekiru" and sounds completely different. "Dekiru" is useful because it can be used in place of various verbs. However, "dekiru" also means "to be completed". e.g. "Ban gohan wa dekimashita ka." (Is dinner ready?)

Group II ^{みる} → ^{見られる}
^{食べる} → ^{食べられる}

Group I

	u	→	e
k	^か 書く	→	書ける
g	^{およ} 泳ぐ	→	泳げる
s	^{はな} 話す	→	話せる
t	^ま 待つ	→	待てる
n	^し 死ぬ	→	死ねる
b	^{あそ} 遊ぶ	→	遊べる
m	^よ 読む	→	読める
y	no verbs in this line.		
r	^き 切る	→	切れる
w	^か 買う	→	買える

3 Task B

Choose some verbs from the list of verbs and make potential form of each verb.

1. ^{する} → ^{できる} 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____
9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____

4 Discussion

1. Discuss what are the characteristic sounds of potential form.
2. Confirm two meanings that can be expressed in potential form and make sentences respectively.
3. Make a sentence asking for a completed state like "Is dinner ready?" and have a conversation. e.g. "Gohan, dekita?"— "Un, dekita."
4. Making the polite form of the potential form is easy, just replace "ru" with "masu".
 - (a) Dekiru → Dekimasu.
 - (b) Nomemasu ka?— Hai, nomemasu (Can you drink it? / Yes, you can).
5. Let's have a conversation using the potential form in "–masu" style.
 - (a) Gohan, dekimashita ka?— Hai, dekimashita. (Is dinner ready?/Yes, it is ready.)
 - (b) Gohan, itsu, dekimasu ka?— Ato, 30 pun de dekimasu yo. (When will dinner be ready?— It will be ready in 30 minutes.)
 - (c) Osake, nomemasu ka?— Hai, nomemasu. (Can you drink sake?— Yes, I can.)