

# A Comparative Study of Conditional Sentences in Hindi and Japanese

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## Research Purpose

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The research examines the characteristics of Hindi and Japanese verb forms and the aspects, tenses, and moods associated with them, based on Hindi complex sentences with conditional or hypothetical sentences, as well as their Japanese translations.

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## Premise of the Research

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- There are countless studies on aspect, tense, and mood in Hindi and Japanese, respectively.
- Among them, we mainly refer to Comrie (1976), Masica (1991), and Deo (2007) for Hindi and Tokieda (2005) and Mikami (2007) for Japanese.
- The following three tables summarize the Hindi and Japanese verb forms that can be used in conditional and hypothetical clauses or sentences, based on aspect, tense, and mood.

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## Simple Forms (Finite) 'to see, to look'

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**Table 1 Simple forms (finite) 'to see, to look'**

Aspect	Japanese	Tense/Mood	Hindi	Tense/Mood
Imperfective	--	--	dekh-ũ/e/ẽ/o	Potential <sup>2</sup> (PTN)
Imperfective	mi-ru mi-you	Non-Past (NPST) =Future	dekh- ũ/e/ẽ/o+gā/ge/gī	Future
Imperfective	mi-ru	Non-Past =Present	dekh-tā/-te/-tī	Counterfactual
Perfective	mi-ta	Past	dekh-ā/-e/-ī	Past

2. Some scholars of South Asian languages call it subjunctive, conjunctive, or contingent future.

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## Compound Forms (Finite) ' to see, to look'

**Table 2 Compound forms (finite)**

Aspect1	Japanese	Aspect2	Hindi	Aspect2
Imperfective	mi-te+AUX	habitual, generic	dekh-tā/-te/-tī+COP	habitual, generic
Perfective		resultative	dekh-ā/-e/-ī + COP	resultative

Japanese AUX  
 iru / aru : NPST  
 ita / atta : PST

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## Conditional / Hypothetical Forms ' to see, to look' [Japanese]

**Table 3 Conditional/hypothetical forms**

Aspect1	Japanese	meanings
Imperfective	mi-re- <b>ba</b>	conditional/hypothetical, counterfactual with <i>noni</i>
Imperfective	mi-ru- <b>to</b>	habitual, generic, conditional etc. counterfactual with <i>noni</i>
Imperfective	mi-ru- <b>na-ra(-ba)<sup>3</sup></b>	(implying 'If the event, 'miru' is true, then...')
Perfective	mi-ta- <b>ra(-ba)</b>	Conditional/hypothetical, counterfactual with <i>noni</i>

3. Nowadays 'na-ra-ba' and 'ta-ra-ba' tend to be used only in archaic Japanese.

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## Summary of the Verb Forms for Expressing Condition or Hypothesis in Japanese

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1. *re-ba* form
2. *ta-ra* form
3. *na-ra* form
4. NPST + *to* (particle)

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## Conditional Sentences

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- (1) a. agar rām **ae-gā** to maī nahĩ āū-gā.  
 if Ram come-FUT.m.sg then I NEG come-FUT.m.sg
- b. ?(moshi) rāmu=ga **ku-re-ba** boku=wa ko-nai.  
 (if) Ram=NOM come-IPFV-COND I=TOP come-NEG.NPST
- b'. ?(moshi) rāmu=ga **ki-ta-ra** boku=wa ko-nai.  
 (if) Ram=NOM come-PFV-COND I=TOP come-NEG.NPST
- b''. (moshi) rāmu=ga **kuru-na-ra** boku=wa ko-nai.  
 (if) Ram=NOM come-AUX-COND I=TOP come-NEG.NPST
- ‘If Ram comes, then I will not come.’

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## Conditional Sentences

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- (2) a. agar rām āe to maī nahī āū-gā.  
 if Ram come-PTN.m.sg then I NEG come-FUT.m.sg
- b. ?(moshi) rāmu=ga **ku-re-ba** boku=wa ko-nai.  
 (if) Ram=NOM come-IPFV-COND I=TOP come-NEG.NPST
- b'. (moshi) rāmu=ga **ki-ta-ra** boku=wa ko-nai.  
 (if) Ram=NOM come-PFV-COND I=TOP come-NEG.NPST
- 'If Ram comes, then I will not come.'

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## Conditional Sentences

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- (3) a. agar rām āyā to maī nahī āū-gā.  
 if Ram come-PFV(PST).m.sg then I NEG come-FUT.m.sg
- b. ?(moshi) rāmu=ga **ku-re-ba** boku=wa ko-nai.  
 (if) Ram=NOM come-IPFV-COND I=TOP come-NEG.NPST
- b'. (moshi) rāmu=ga **ki-ta-ra** boku=wa ko-nai.  
 (if) Ram=NOM come-PFV-COND I=TOP come-NEG.NPST
- 'If Ram comes, then I will not come.'

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## Counterfactual Sentences

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- (4) a. agar rām ā-tā to acchā ho-tā.  
 if Ram come-IPFV.m.sg then good.m.sg be-IPFV.m.sg
- b. rāmu=ga ku-re-ba ii no-ni.  
 Ram=NOM come-IPFV-COND good-NPST though
- b'. rāmu=ga ki-ta-ra ii no-ni.  
 Ram=NOM come-PFV-COND good-NPST though
- 'If Ram came (or had come), it would be good.' / 'I wish Ram had come'

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## Counterfactual Sentences

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- (5) a. agar bhārat bīc mē na ā-yā ho-tā to  
 if India between LOC NEG come-PFV.m.sg be-IPFV.m.sg then  
 yūkren kā kyā ho-tā?  
 Ukraine GEN what be-IPFV.m.sg
- b. (moshi) indo=ga aida=ni haira-nakere-ba /haitte i-nake-reba  
 (if) India=NOM between=LOC enter-NEG.IPFV-COND /enter.CONJ be-NEG.IPFV-COND  
 ukuraina=wa dou natta /na-tte ita ka?  
 Ukraine=TOP how become.PST/become-CONJ be.PST Q

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## Counterfactual Sentences

- (5) b'. (moshi) indo=ga aida=ni **haira-nakatta-ra** /haitte **i-nakatta-ra**  
 (if) India=NOM between=LOC enter-NEG.PFV-COND /enter.CONJ be-NEG.PFV-COND  
 ukuraina=wa dou na-tta /na-tte ita ka?  
 Ukraine=TOP how become-PST/become-CONJ be.PST Q  
 'What would have happened to Ukraine if India had not come in the middle?'

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## Counterfactual/Hypothetical or Narrative Sentences

- (6) a. bāris ho-tī to mausam badal jā-tā.  
 rain.f be-IPFV.f then weather.m change GO-IPFV.m  
 b. ame=ga **fu-re-ba** tenki=ga kawaru (no-ni).  
 rain=NOM fall-IPFV-COND weather=NOM change.NPST (though)  
 b'. ame=ga **fu-tta-ra** tenki=ga kawaru (no-ni).  
 rain=NOM fall-PFV-COND weather=NOM change.NPST (though)  
 'If it rained, the weather would change.' or 'The weather changes when it rains.'

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## Counterfactual/Hypothetical or Narrative Sentences

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(6) b". ame=ga    **fu-ru-to**            tenki=ga            kawaru            (no-ni).  
 rain=NOM fall-IPFV-PAR\*    weather=NOM            change.NPST (though)  
 'If/When it rains, the weather changes.'

\*PAR=particle

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## The Main Findings - 1

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1. Hindi allows all finite verb forms used in the indicative mood to be used in conditional and hypothetical clauses.
2. Japanese translations usually use the conditional or hypothetical 're-ba' and 'ta-ra' forms. In conditional, hypothetical, or counterfactual clauses, it is often possible to use both forms.
3. However, the 'ta-ra' is used more frequently than 're-ba'. This is because the main sentence of 're-ba' is difficult to use unless the main sentence has a desirable meaning, as in (1), (2), and (3) [Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. (n.d.)].

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## The Main Findings - 2

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4. As in (1b"), 'na-ra' may be used if the event is true or is meant to emphasize the event. In the opinion of the authors, who translated it into Japanese, the best option is (1b").
5. As for counterfactual sentences as (4) and (5), in Hindi, the imperfective participle is used alone in (4a), which in the past, was also used to express the present. It can still be used in narratives as in (6a).
6. (6b), (6b'), and (6b") require 'no-ni' at the end of every sentence, if (6a), analogous to (4a), has a counterfactual meaning, i.e., *hetuhetumad bhūtkāl* in traditional Hindi grammar. However, when expressing a general condition, 'no-ni' is not attached. If (6a) has habitual or generic meaning, (6b") is the best choice for Japanese translation.

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## The Main Findings - 3

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7. Regarding (7), the Hindi (7a), which connects sentences with the particle 'to', and the Japanese translation (7b"), which also connects sentences with *setsuzoku joshi*, i.e., conjunctive particle 'to', are similar in both structure (especially the absence of 'if') and meaning.

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## The Future Issues

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- I. Does the use of the past tense (perfective participle) of a verb in a conditional clause in Hindi strengthen the hypothetical meaning? If so, how does the meaning differ from that of using the potential form as we have seen in (1a) and (3a)?
- II. In Japanese, *moshi* 'if' is optional because there are two verb forms, *re-ba* and *ta-ra*, which are dedicated to conditional or hypothetical clauses. In Hindi, however, any verb form can be used in a conditional clause, which means there is no special verb form that expresses condition or hypothesis. Is that the reason why Hindi requires *agar* or *yadi*, which is equivalent to 'if', are necessary as a conditional or hypothetical trigger?

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## The Future Issues

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- III. Looking from a historical perspective, when exactly did the imperfective participle come to be used specifically for counterfactuals? According to Deo (2007: 168-177), in Middle Hindi the 'bare' imperfective participle was used to indicate 'non-progressive' (habitual, generic, etc.), and the imperfective participle + COP (tense auxiliary) was used to express progressive meaning. In modern Hindi, on the other hand, it is used to indicate 'non-progressive' and this 'bare' imperfective participle tends to be used especially for counterfactuals.

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**Thank you for your attention!**

Any comments or suggestions will be appreciated

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