Insertion of Commas in Japanese Conditional Expressions
—Adopted from Japanese Literature—

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When constructing sentences in Japanese, the comma is one of the most important elements because it is related to the meaning of a sentence. It is difficult for Japanese language learners to study how to insert commas precisely in Japanese sentences. Thus, I investigated how native speakers of Japanese insert commas. This research focused on the conditional expressions -to, -ba, -tara, -nara in 10 works of Japanese literature. They are classified into logical constructions of the conditional expressions and non-logical constructions of the conditional expressions. The non-logical constructions of conditional expressions are classified into five groups:

1) Conditional expressions used as introductory remarks, 2) Conventional conditional expressions,
3) Conjunctural conditional expressions, 4) Abbreviated conditional expressions, 5) Sub-subordinate conditional expressions.

The results show that there is a tendency for commas to be easily inserted after logical constructions of conditional expressions. However, there is no tendency to put commas after non-logical constructions of conditional expressions. Furthermore, it was found that the comma is relatively used after conditional expressions used as introductory remarks.

【Keywords】 insertion of commas, logical constructions of the conditional expressions, non-logical constructions of the conditional expressions, sentence structure