

anata & NOX

I am going on a trip with a friend and his family, and I went to his home to make plans with them. I heard his mother saying: "anata wa itsu ga i desu ka? anata wa hotel to ryokan to dochira ga i desu ka?" I didn't know who she was talking to, so I didn't say anything. Then I noticed that she was staring at me, and she said, "Pole-san anata desu yo!" I finally realized that she was asking me! I couldn't decide, so I used a phrase from "Icebreaker" and said, "anata ni omakase shimasu" (I'll let you decide). To my surprise, she gave me an unpleasant look. Why is that? Does it mean she doesn't want to go on a trip with me?

Pera Pera Penguin's

5-minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama

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■■■ In the past, the word "anata" was considered a polite expression, but the nuance has changed recently. Be very careful as to when you use the word "anata." In Japan, it is often used toward someone who is subordinate (employee, junior and so on). You might cause someone discomfort if you use "anata" in the same way as you use "you" in English. The best way to avoid unexpected trouble is to use the family name or first name when addressing Japanese people, instead of saying "anata." Please keep that in mind! And it might be best never to use "anata" in business situations.



Coversation
会 話
kai wa

A) Pole-san : Are you going to have a party tomorrow night?
明日の飲み会 どうしますか?
ashita no nomikai dō shimasu ka
Friend: It's up to you.

次第ですよ。
shidai desu yo

B) Pole-san : How are your parents doing?
 はお元気ですか。
wa ogenki desu ka

Friend: They're fine—thanks for asking.
ええ (はい) おかげさまで
ee (hai) okagesama de

C) Pole-san : How many are there in your family?
 は何人ですか。
wa nan-nin desu ka

Friend: There are five of us.
 は5人です。
wa go-nin desu

D) Pole-san : How old are your children?
 はおいくつですか。
wa oikutsu desu ka

Friend: The oldest is 5, and the youngest is 3 years old.
上が5歳で下が3歳です。
ue ga go-sai de shita ga san-sai desu

E) At a job interview:
Interviewer: Would the next person please come in?
次の方どうぞ。
tsugi no kata dōzo

A person sitting on your side: You're next!
 の番ですよ。
no ban desu yo

F) A wife who is complaining to her husband: It's all your fault!
ダメだったのは のせいです。
dame-datta nowa your no sē desu

Answers
A) Pole-san B) go-ryōshin C) go-kazoku
C) kazoku D) oko-san E) anata F) anata

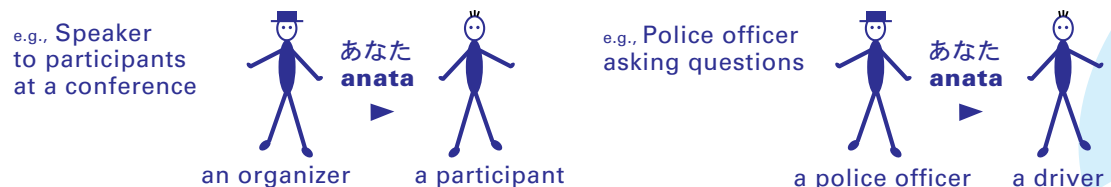
Causing discomfort by using "anata" incorrectly:

If you use "anata" even though you know the other person's name, you might discomfort him. If you do know the person by name, it is best to use his name, rather than calling him "anata."



Using "anata" the same way "you" is used in English:

If you are referring to someone you do not know by name, it will not discomfort him to be called "anata."



■ My own group or another group

In the Japanese language, when one refers to oneself (first person) and members of one's own group, one uses different expressions than when referring to someone else (second person / third person) or the people of another group.

- My own group (my relatives, my colleagues and so on)
- Another group (someone else's relatives, colleagues and so on)

In the Japanese language, the possessive pronoun (my... "watashi no" or your... "anata no") is usually omitted when describing the members of a family group, except for a few specialized cases. It is important to remember these words describing the family relationship in order to avoid confusion.

e.g., This is (my) wife. 私(わたくし)の妻(つま)です。 **watashi no tsuma desu**
e.g., Is this your wife? あなたの奥(おく)さんですか。 **anata no okusan desu ka**
e.g., This is Yamada-san's wife. 山田(やまだ)さんの奥(おく)さんです。 **Yamada-san no okusan desu**
奥(おく)さんですか。 **okusan desu ka**

	my group	another group		my group	another group
father	父 chichi	お父さん otō-san	parents	両親 ryōshin	御両親 go-ryōshin
mother	母 haha	お母さん okā-san	family	家族 kazoku	御家族 go-kazoku
husband	主人 shujin	御主人 go-shujin	grandfather	おじいさん oji-san	おじいさん oji-san
wife	妻 tsuma	奥さん oku-san	grandmother	おばあさん obā-san	おばあさん obā-san
child	子供 kodomo	お子さん oko-san	uncle	おじ oji	おじさん oji-san
daughter	娘 musume	お嬢さん ojō-san	aunt	おば oba	おばさん oba-san
son	息子 musuko	息子さん musuko-san	nephew	おい oi	おいごさん oigo-san
older(elder) brother	兄 ani	お兄さん oni-san	niece	めい mei	めいごさん meigo-san
older(elder) sister	姉 ane	お姉さん one-san	cousin	いとこ itoko	いとこのかた itoko no kata
younger brother	弟 otōto	弟さん otōto-san	relative	親戚 shinseki	御親戚 go-shinseki
younger sister	妹 imōto	妹さん imōto-san			
brothers and sisters	きょうだい kyōdai	ごきょうだい go-kyōdai			

Practice

1. (At a conference)

Speaker: Recently, the number of the unemployed has increased in Japan, but how critical is it in your country?

日本は失業者が増えています。 **Nihon wa shitsugyō-sha ga fuete-imasu ga**

の国ではどうですか。
no kuni dewa dō desu ka

2. (A police officer)

Police officer: Is this your car?

この車は のですか。
kono kuruma wa you no desu ka

You're parked in a no parking zone.

ここは駐車禁止ですよ。
koko wa chūsha-kinshi desu yo

3. (Talking to a friend)

Mr. Pole: How are you?
お元気ですか。
ogenki desu ka

friend: I'm fine, thank you.
ええ おかげさまで
ee, okagesamade

And you?
 は **wa**

Answers
1. anata
2. anata
3. Pole-san

