



Design: Masako Ban



Pera Pera Penguin's

5-minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama Vol. 12

Lately, the word buri has popped up in several news programs and its meaning is bothering me. It is used in contexts such as: the yen is at its strongest standing in three years and eight months (san nen hachi kagetsu-buri); the baseball team clinched a league title for the first time in 26 years (nijū roku nen-buri); this year's rice crop is the best in two years (ni nen-buri); and two brothers were rescued from the rubble 129 hours after the Taiwan quake (hyaku nijū ku jikan-buri). Apparently, it's a different kind of buri than the name given to the yellowtail fish. Can you tell me what in the world it is?

■■■ It's the same kind of buri that is used in the saying ohisashi buri desu (long time, no see). It is called an "emotional expression" because it conveys feelings. For example, if you were to say, senjitsu, 14 nen-buri ni yū jin ni aimashita (the other day, I met a friend who I hadn't seen for 14 years), the implication would be that you had really missed him and you were happy because you had finally seen him again. Used in similar contexts, buri adds feeling to a sentence.

Emotional Expressions

ぶり buri is used to convey things like, "I was looking forward to ..."; "I'm so happy to..."; "I really miss ..."; "I've been waiting for..." etc.

If you have missed something for a while, you say: **the length of time** **ぶり**です。
 e.g., It has been for 10 days. 10日 **ぶり**です。
 tōka buri desu

If you don't remember the length of time, you say: **something** は **ひさしぶり** です。
 e.g., I didn't eat fish for a long time. 魚 は **ひさしぶり** です。
 sakana wa hisashiburi desu

If you want to emphasize how long you have missed something, you say: **something** は **the length of time** **ぶり** です。
 e.g., I haven't eaten fish for 10 days. 魚 は 10日 **ぶり** です。
 sakana wa tōka buri desu

If you want to emphasize that you are happy about what you are going to do, you say: **the length of time** **ぶり** に + sentence
 e.g., I am going to eat fish 10 days after the last time. 魚 は 10日 **ぶり** に 食べます。
 sakana wa tōka buri ni tabemasu



■■■ Expressions for lengths of time (Be careful of numbers 4 and 9; they are very confusing.) ■■■

- hours: [number + jikan] yo jikan (four hours), ku jikan (nine hours)
 - days: [number + nichī] ichinichi (one day), futsuka (two days), mikka (three days), yokka (four days), itsuka (five days), muika (six days), nanoka (seven days), yōka (eight days), kokonoka (nine days), tōka (10 days), jūichi nichī (11 days)...jū yokka, (14 days), etc.
- (Expressions for one to 10 days are Japanese in origin, but from 11 days and up derive from Chinese, except for 14 days, 20 days, and 24 days.)

- weeks: [number + shūkan] yon shūkan (four weeks), kyū shūkan (nine weeks)
- months: [number + kagetsu] yon kagetsu (four months), kyū kagetsu (nine months)
- years: [number + nen] yo nen (four years), kyū nen (nine years)

Mr. Pole: I've finally arrived!

やっと着きました。
 yatto tsukimashita
 finally arrived

God, I haven't drunk water for two days!
 ああ～ 水は ① two days です。
 aa mizu wa desu
 water

I haven't eaten anything for a week!
 食べ物は ② one week です。
 tabemono wa desu
 food

Whew! I haven't taken a bath for four months!
 ふうう～ 風呂は ③ four months です。
 fū furo wa desu
 bath

I haven't slept in a bed for half a year!
 ベッドは ④ half year です。
 wa desu

Mr. Pole soon loses consciousness and comes to seven days later.

Hirayama: Oh, hello, Mr. Pole! Long time, no see, huh?

あらあ ⑤ long time, no see です。
 arā desu ne
 my, my...

Mr. Pole: Oh, wow, dear, it's been a year!

わあ～ 本当に ⑥ one year です。
 wā hontōni desu
 really

Wait a minute, what was your name? ...I'm just kidding!

あのう～どなたでした...? 冗談ですよ。
 anō donata deshita jōdan desu yo
 'Excuse me'

Answers

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ① ふつか ぶり
futsuka buri | ② いっしゅうかん ぶり
isshūkan buri | ③ よんかげつ ぶり
yon kagetsu buri |
| ④ はんとし ぶり
hantoshi buri | ⑤ ひさしぶり
hisashiburi | ⑥ いちねん ぶり
ichi nen buri |



振り ぶり / ぶり
furi / -buri
behavior, to wave

1. 無い袖は振れない nai sode wa furenai
You cannot wave the sleeve when there is not one.
(You cannot give what you don't have.)
It is mostly used for financial matters.
2. 人の振り見て我振りなおせ hito no furi mite waga furi naose
Observe the behavior of others and correct your own.
(Take a lesson from faults of others.)

Hirayama: I am going to pay you back next month, so could you lend me some money?

Mr. Pole: Well, I would really like to, but ...
 え～ 貸してあげたいのはやまやまですが、
 ē kashite-agetai nowa yamayama desu ga
 well I want to lend you
 I'm really broke right now, so...I can't give you what I haven't got, you know!
 う～ん A. I can't give you what I don't have です。
 umm desu

Hirayama: [grumbling]

Friend: The person is griping all the time.
 あの人は四六時中文句ばかり言っていますね。
 ano hito wa shirokujichū monku bakari itteimasu ne
 she (that person) complain only
 See below

Mr. Pole: I know, that's why everyone around her hates her.

そう、だから周りの人に嫌われるんです。
 sō, dakara mawari no hito ni kirawareru n desu
 I know therefore everyone around hates her
 I'd better "learn a lesson from the faults of others!"

B. learn a lesson from faults of others 私も気をつけなければ ...。
 watashi mo ki o tsukenakereba
 too must be careful

Answers — A ... 1 B ... 2

四六時中 = always; used with negative feelings
 shirokujichū

e.g., My husband is fooling around all the time.

主人は四六時中遊んでいます。
 shujin wa shirokujichū asondeimasu
 my husband fooling around

～たいのはやまやまですが ...I wish I could/I would
 -tai nowa yamayama desu ga love to, but...

e.g., I would like to buy it, but I'm broke right now!
 買いたいのはやまやまですが、お金がありません。
 kai-tai nowa yamayama desu ga, okane ga arimasen
 I want to buy money don't have

With cooperation from Yasuhiro Koga