

令和 3 年 度

小 論 文

10 : 00 ~ 11 : 30

英 文 学 科

学校推薦型選抜(一般)

注 意 事 項

1. 開始の合図があるまでこの冊子を開いてはいけません。
2. 合図があったら、最初に受験番号を小論文解答用紙の指定の欄に記入しなさい。
3. 解答は横書きで書きなさい。
4. 印刷の不鮮明な箇所があった場合は、すみやかに申し出てください。
5. 解答用紙は 2 枚配付しますが、1 枚だけ提出しなさい。残りの 1 枚は下書きに使ってかまいません。
6. 冊子と下書きに用いた解答用紙は、持ち帰ってください。

I 次の文章を読み、以下の設問に答えなさい。

In daily conversations, business meetings, and school classrooms in Japan, silence is much more common and is of longer duration than in Western countries. There are a number of reasons for silence being so ubiquitous in Japanese communication, and these causes can be classified into two main categories: historical factors and the dominance of group consciousness in Japanese life.

The Japanese have long treated silence as a kind of virtue similar to “truthfulness.” The words *haragei* and *ishin denshin* symbolize Japanese attitudes toward human interactions in this regard. The former means implicit mutual understanding; the latter suggests that people can communicate with each other through telepathy. In short, what is important and what is true in Japan will often exist in silence, not in verbal expression.

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Another reason why the Japanese often become silent among other people is group consciousness, which is symbolized by the saying “The nail that sticks out will be hammered down” (*Deru kui wa utareru*). In Japanese society, where people usually identify themselves primarily as members of certain groups, not just as individuals, silence has played a very important role in creating harmony and in avoiding direct conflict. The person who insists on his or her opinion before the group has reached a consensus is seen as selfish and forward. In addition, to show off one’s ability or knowledge openly makes a bad impression on others in Japan, and such people are considered thoughtless, impolite, and immature. Many people in Japan think that it is better to say nothing than cause misunderstandings or trouble. Silence in Japanese communication is also related to a strong consciousness of social hierarchy within the group and in society at large. In social interactions among

the Japanese, it is essential to consider which person is in a higher or a lower position, depending on his or her age, sex, job status, and so on. It is considered rude for a subordinate to speak out openly against a person of higher rank.

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Even in communication among the Japanese themselves, it is sometimes difficult to understand the actual meaning and function of silence. In communication with people from other countries, silence can become a serious obstacle to intercultural understanding.

For one thing, as has been explained, when the Japanese are silent, it may imply a wide range of meanings, such as consideration or sympathy, modesty, agreement, patience, embarrassment, resentment, lack of forgiveness or defiance, and apathy. This can cause confusion for non-Japanese, as they usually do not have similar cultural values that help them to interpret the meaning of silence. In fact, sometimes they will have totally opposite attitudes and values.

Generally speaking, Western cultures have long emphasized verbal expression and communicating opinions and emotions clearly and openly.

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At the same time, there may be a different concept of time, depending on the communication style. Many people from other countries consider the Japanese communication style, which is characterized by silence and indirectness, as “wasting time.” Japanese society is based on the smooth maintenance of relationships among group members, whereas relationships in the West put more emphasis on individualism, so that time spent in silence or for indirect purposes may be seen as not very productive.

However, Westerners are not always more talkative and frank than the Japanese. In some situations, the Japanese can ask certain kinds of blunt

personal questions, such as “How old are you?” or “Are you married?” Although Western people may consider these kinds of questions impolite or “intrusions of privacy” in Japanese relationships, where people are attuned to depending on one another, personal information of this nature is needed in order to get along with others.

Judging from the above, although there are a number of important cultural differences in communication styles, people may not consciously be aware of them and will judge or criticize others according to their own values or standards of communication. This can be one of the most troublesome obstacles to intercultural understanding.

出典 Adapted from Roger J. Davies & Osamu Ikeno (eds.). (2002). *The Japanese Mind: Understanding Contemporary Japanese Culture*. Boston: Tuttle Publishing. © 2002 Roger Davies and Osamu Ikeno

問 1 以下の問いに各々 100 字以内の日本語で答えなさい。

- (1) Why is silence so common in Japan?
- (2) What causes a problem in intercultural understanding?

問 2 沈黙の利点と問題点についてあなたの体験を交えて 200 字以内の日本語で論じなさい。アルファベットを使用する場合は、1 マスに 2 字書くこととする。

II You are going to stay with a Canadian family in Vancouver for a week during the winter vacation. In the email you got from your host family, they asked, “What do you like to do in your free time? We want your stay here to be as enjoyable as we can.” Answer the email in 80 to 100 words in English.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Williams,

Thank you very much for your email. You asked what I like to do in my free time. I’m going to tell you about it.

Looking forward to meeting you soon!

Best regards,

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