

I 次の英文を読んで設問に答えよ。

Japan is the native home of the euphemism. Softening the blow of bad news is an essential function of the Japanese language. Many times, I would have preferred the frank, direct answer, but this was simply not forthcoming in an Asian society.

When Mariah Carey came to Japan—like most American pop idols, she is explosively popular there—we raced over to the ticket booth to buy seats for her show. “I’ll take five tickets for Tuesday night,” I said. The ticket seller responded as follows: “*Okyaku-sama, sore wa chotto....*” In English, that would be “Honorable customer, that’s a little....” That was all she said. “Honorable customer, that’s a little....” To any Japanese, this conveyed a crystal-clear message. But I was too stupid to catch on. “Five for Tuesday,” I repeated. “Honorable customer,” the ticket-seller replied, speaking slowly this time so this dull-witted foreigner could comprehend, “please excuse me, but that may be a little difficult.” We went on along this line for some time before I figured out the reason it would be difficult to sell me tickets for Tuesday was that all the tickets for Tuesday, and for every other performance, had been sold days before I got to the window. It would have been unspeakably rude for the ticket lady to come right out and tell me that, however, so she launched into her polite indirect language until I finally caught on.

As that experience suggests, it is considered impolite in Japan to come right out and say the word “no,” even if “no” happens to be the correct answer. At a summit meeting once, Bill Clinton leaned over to Boris Yeltsin and warned him to be on guard when negotiating with the Japanese prime minister. “He says ‘yes’ when he means ‘no,’” Clinton noted. The remark was picked up by a microphone and

prompted a temporary trans-Pacific diplomatic crisis. The Japanese took serious offense at this suggestion that their prime minister was a liar—but, in fact, Clinton was right. All Japanese people avoid saying “no,” not because they are dishonest, but because saying a flat “no” might cause disappointment and ill-feeling. It might disturb the *wa*. So the Japanese fall back on their stock of euphemisms: “That may be difficult.” “Honorable customer, that’s a little....” “Excuse me, but....”

As long as both sides of the conversation understand what’s going on, there’s no problem. But when a politely vague Japanese and a frankly direct American get talking, this can be the stuff of international incidents. U.S.-Japan relations were sour for years during the Nixon administration after Richard Nixon* asked Prime Minister Sato Eisaku* to open Japan’s rice market to American imports. The prime minister hesitated for a moment, and then said, “Zensho itashimasu.” A translator told Nixon literally what the words (7) meant: “(2).” The excited Nixon went back to Washington and declared victory on the rice issue. Sato, meanwhile, assured everybody in Japan that he had said “no.” And indeed, any Japanese would know that “*Zensho itashimasu*” is the same thing as “no.” Anyway, the rice market was opened to imports a mere twenty-eight years after the conversation—a few months before (3) Nixon’s death.

There’s something mechanical—in fact, something arguably artificial—about all the flowery language that marks normal communication in Japan. When the loudspeaker in the subway apologizes every thirty seconds for keeping me waiting, I know that it’s just a tape recording apologizing to me. When a ticket seller says, “Honorable customer, that would be a little difficult,” I know she’s just repeating a phrase her boss told her to use. After a few decades of such flowery language, people may not even hear it anymore. Even so, the (4) language makes a difference.

Hardly anybody on an airplane is really listening when the flight attendant's prepare-for-landing announcement, "Please return your tray tables and seat backs to their full upright position," floats out over the loudspeaker. But suppose the same announcement came out in words like "Get those damn seats up where they belong, and I mean NOW!" It would make a difference, not in meaning, but in feeling. It would destroy the *wa* within that airplane. If the woman behind the ticket window finally got tired of the polite formula "Honorable customer, that's a little...." and said instead, "Forget it, you idiot, we sold out weeks ago," the meaning would be essentially the same, but the feeling wouldn't.

This is the purpose of all the verbal rituals in East Asia societies: to maintain good feeling, to make everybody feel satisfied, so the overall group can continue to function in a state of harmony. And it works. Good manners and polite language are catching—as are rudeness and cruelty. Listening to the complicated language of polite communication all around me in Japan, I used to feel that I was living in the middle of one of those speeches on the floor of the U.S. Senate: "It is with the greatest respect to my distinguished friend the senior senator from California that I rise to say she is unfortunately totally wrong." There is a certain deliberate excess of courtesy, and it sounds about the same whether you hear it on the Senate floor in Washington or the subway platform in Tokyo. In both places, this decorative language is used for the same purpose. It soothes feelings. It avoids anger. It preserves the *wa*.

To violate the harmony of the group, to disturb the *wa*, is shameful, and shame must be avoided at all costs.

*Richard Nixon 米国第37代大統領(1969-74)

*Sato Eisaku 自由民主党総裁, 首相(1964-72)

問 1 下線部(1)の ‘euphemism’ の訳語として最も適切なものを下から一つ選び、記号で答えよ。

- (ア) 遠回しの表現
- (イ) 写実主義
- (ウ) 格言
- (エ) 嘘

問 2 下線部(ア)の日本語に対して、(2)で通訳が用いたと思われる英文を下から一つ選び、記号で答えよ。

- (ア) I promise you that we will accept your proposal in the future.
- (イ) I think it very difficult to carry out your proposal.
- (ウ) I think that it is a very good idea to do what you have proposed.
- (エ) I will give your proposal positive consideration.

問 3 下線部(3)の “mere” に著者が込めている気持ちを、日本語で述べよ。

問 4 下線部(4)の内容を日本語で説明せよ。

問 5 以下の(ア)～(オ)で、本文の内容と合っているものにはTを、間違っているものにはFをそれぞれ書け。

- (ア) マライヤ・キャリーの火曜日のコンサートチケットは売り切れていたが、それ以外の曜日のチケットは残っていた。
- (イ) ビル・クリントンはボリス・エリツィンに、日本の首相の ‘yes’ と ‘no’ はあいまいだから、無視するようアドバイスした。
- (ウ) チケット売り場の従業員は、自分の上司にいわれたように応答しているに過ぎない。
- (エ) アメリカの飛行機の搭乗員のアナウンスは、時にはかなり乱暴な口調になることがある。
- (オ) アメリカの上院の会議の場でも、日本と同じような言葉遣いが用いられている。

II 次の英文を読んで設問に答えよ。

Death is a fact of life that every child must face. For some, the death of a goldfish is their first exposure; for others, it is the death of a grandparent. In many cultures, death is viewed as a natural occurrence, and no attempt is made to separate it from everyday life.⁽¹⁾ Our culture, on the other hand, remains very uneasy about the whole thing. People tend to die in institutions, not at home with family present. We use indirect expressions to talk about death: “He kicked the bucket... went to sleep... bought the farm”—anything to distance us from the reality that, in fact, he *died*. And we wonder whether young children would be too stressed by attending the funeral.

If adults are uncomfortable (ア) the notion of death, it is no wonder that many are even more confused about how to help children deal with it. Some would prefer to deny the whole thing. That dog lying motionless at the side of the road? “He’s just resting. He’s fine. What did you learn in school today?” Others choose to avoid the concrete and focus solely (イ) the imaginary: “The angels came and took Grandpa and now he’s up in heaven with Grandma.” Still others try to avoid the question altogether: “Don’t you worry about what death is. No one is going to die soon. Where do you get such ideas?”

Like most things in life, children can best learn to deal with death when their parents answer their questions at their level and treat it (ウ) a natural subject to talk about. Obviously the impact and meaning of a child’s first exposure to death depend on a number of circumstances: how old the child is and her developmental level of understanding, what and who died and how close he was to the child, the cause of death and whether it was expected or sudden.

In the preschool years, children’s ideas about death are influenced⁽²⁾

by the magical tendencies of their thinking in general. Children this age may believe, for example, that death is reversible and that the dead person will come back someday. They are too young to understand death's finality. They also tend to feel responsible for everything that happens in their world, including death, and may fear punishment for unkind thoughts they had about the dead person or animal. They may also view death as "catching," like a cold, and worry that someone else will soon die. They tend to think in very concrete terms: "How will Uncle Bob breathe if he's in the ground?" Parents can help a child (エ) being equally concrete: "Uncle Bob won't breathe anymore. He also won't eat with us anymore or brush his teeth."

It should be emphasized to children at this age that they (オ) no way caused the death and that death is a part of the life cycle. Parents should also help their child deal with grief by acknowledging that losing a friend or grandparent is very sad and that it is sad to think that person won't be coming back. By dealing with their own feelings, parents can help the child deal with her feelings.

問 1 下線部(1)を和訳せよ。

問 2 下線部(2)の具体例を日本語で三つあげよ。

問 3 下線部(3)を和訳せよ。

問 4 本文中の(ア)～(オ)に入る最も適切なものを、各語群から一つ選び、番号で答えよ。

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|-----|----------|----------|---------|----------|
| (ア) | (1) from | (2) with | (3) on | (4) to |
| (イ) | (1) into | (2) for | (3) of | (4) on |
| (ウ) | (1) as | (2) to | (3) for | (4) with |
| (エ) | (1) with | (2) in | (3) by | (4) for |
| (オ) | (1) of | (2) by | (3) on | (4) in |

Ⅲ 下線部を英訳せよ。

1.

学生時代はよく学びよく遊べ、と言う人が多い。しかし、私は、このことばは不用意に使ってはいけないと思う。なぜなら、このごろの学生は、学ぶという
ことは教室で授業を受けること、そして最小限の勉強で試験を受けて卒業単位を
そろえることだと考えているからである。実際には、教室で教えられることなど
は僅かなものであって、いわば学びのきっかけを与えるにすぎない。

2.

A : 生物は存在しなければならぬから、生存を脅かす脅威というものは、おそらくすべて不安とか恐怖というものになる。

B : どうやったらそこから逃れられるのかというのが、知性の芽生えるきっかけ
になったような気がしますよね。

A : そう、恐怖というのは非常に根源的なものです。

B : すごく古い人間の時代からの感情なんでしょうね。

A : 恐怖というのは、予測できないものに対して生じるんです。

B : わからないから怖い。

A : わかってしまえば怖くない。