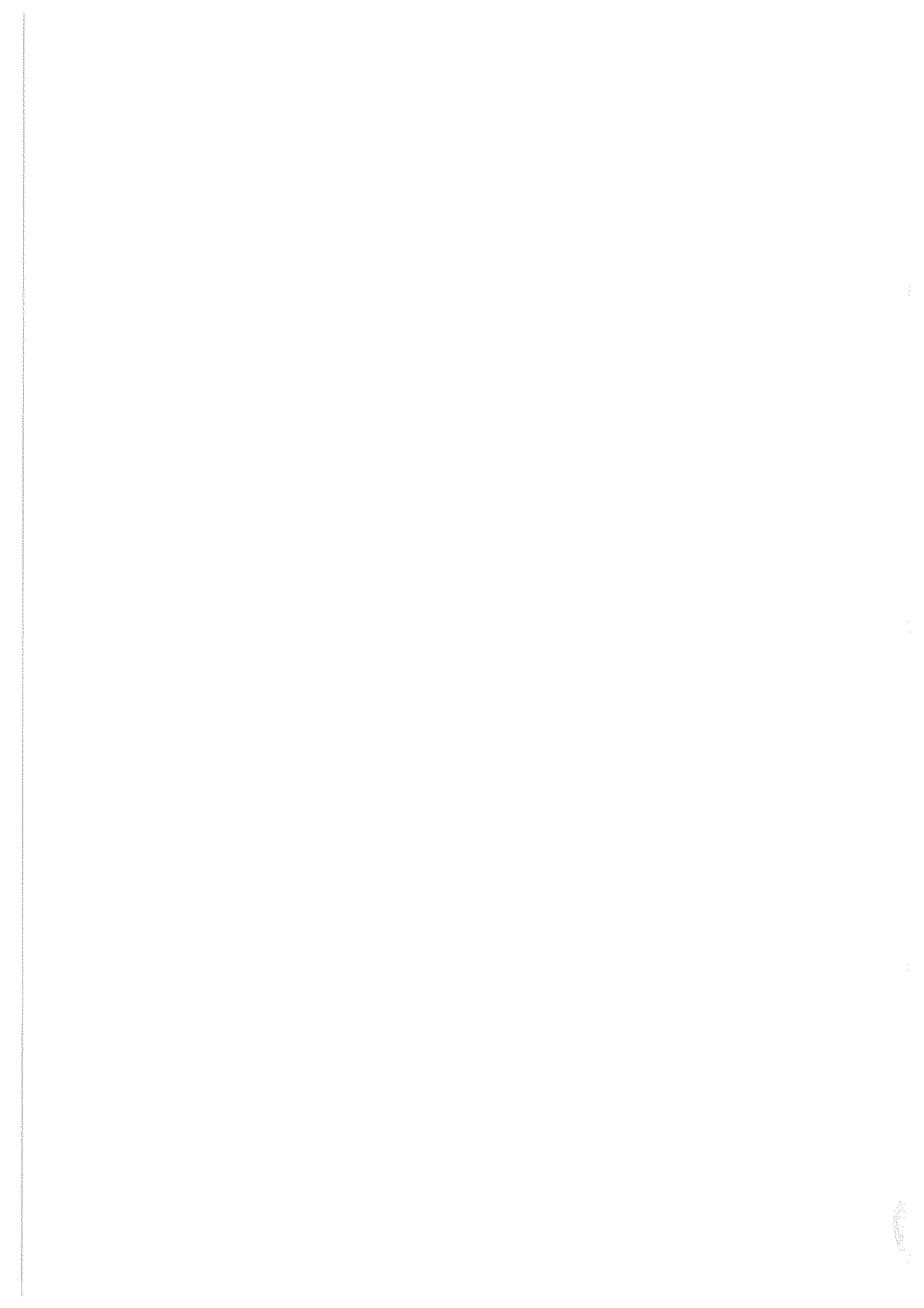


Me? Aggressive?

Communicative Choices in 20 Situations - Japan and US-

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Kimberly Forsythe

SANSHUSHA



本書は、私の日米調査研究、“Communication Styles in Assertiveness-Evoking Situations among Men and Women in Japan and the United States”の結果を元に、アメリカ人の Kimberly Forsythe さんが20のエッセイに仕立てた、斬新にして肩のこらない日米文化比較論です。

社会科学の場合、調査結果を説明するのに唯一の正解というものはなく、いろいろな解釈が可能です。その点、Kimberly さんは意外な結果も見事に説明づけてくれています；皆さんが別の解釈をしたり異議を唱える余地は大いに残されているのです。エッセイに触発されて、クラス・ディスカッションが盛り上がることを期待しています。

ではここで、私の調査に関して、本書を使う際に必要な予備知識を少し述べておきましょう。アンケート調査は、1995年春、日本人は関西圏を中心に394人に、アメリカ人は西海岸北部の州を中心に180人に行いました。年齢は、学生を除く22歳から60歳までで、30および40代が7、8割を占めました。

26の状況を設定して（本書はそのうちの20を取り上げています）、選択肢を5ないし4つ作りしました。それぞれの選択肢は英語では、**assertive, aggressive, indirect, nonverbal**, そして **passive responses** となります。そして、各状況でどんな言動を取るかを、現実の選択 (real choice) と理想の選択 (ideal choice) に分けて選んでもらいました。本書に掲げたグラフは、Unit 9と20が「理想の選択」で、それ以外は「現実の選択」の結果を日米男女別に分けて表わしています。グラフの番号は、質問の選択肢の番号と対応しており、数値はすべてパーセントです。

それぞれの選択肢をもう少し詳しく説明しましょう。アサーティブな言動とは、自分の考えや気持ちを率直にその場で言うことで、アメリカでは、自分も他人も共に尊重する望ましいコミュニケーションスタイルと考えられています。アグレッシブ（攻撃的）な行動は、他人のことを考えず自己主張する点で、アサーティブと区別されます。間

接表現は、「遠慮」や「察し」という特徴をもつ、いわゆる「日本的」なコミュニケーションスタイルに欠かせないものでしょう。ノンバーバル表現は、言葉ではなく態度で示すコミュニケーションです。受け身は、「自分の気持ちや考えを胸におさめて、言動に表わさない」という反応です。

さて、状況によっては、日米男女間で意外とも思える結果がでました。詳しいことは本文に譲るとして、どうしてこんな結果がでたのか、皆さんには、ぜひ、Kimberlyさんと一緒に考えて頂きたいのです。今回の調査で、「学生」を「大人」からはずしたのは、学生は一般成人とは意識も言動も異なるとの仮説を立てたからです。だから、学生の皆さんが、それぞれの場面でどのような選択をするのかは、私にも興味のあるところです。Kimberlyさんが、日本社会で活躍しているアメリカ人女性の目から結果を分析し、また自分ならどうするかを考えたように、皆さんもそれぞれの立場と経験からエッセイを書けば、とてもユニークなものが出来上がるはずですよ。英語の学習は、そういった目的のための一手段でもあります。情報を読み取り、相手の考えを理解し、自分で考え、それを表現すると言う知的作業に、本書が大いに役立つことを願っています。

1997年 春

山田真規子

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UNIT 1

Responding to Lateness



● 待ち合わせの時間にいつも遅れてくる友人にうんざりした時

- ① 自分の気持ちをはっきり言って、それから注意する
- ② 激しく非難する
- ③ ほのめかし、いやみ等で遠回しに非難する
- ④ 言葉に出さず、態度で示す(顔をしかめる、返事をしない等)
- ⑤ 言動に表わさず、心にとどめておく

Traveling through a variety of countries will quickly teach you that the meaning of being “on time” varies from culture to culture. In some developing countries I’ve visited, it isn’t unusual for a long-distance bus to
5 leave two or three hours after its scheduled departure time. Though this situation is often completely unacceptable for us as visitors, the locals may not even bother to get upset.

This is not the way things usually work in Japan and
10 the United States. But there do seem to be certain people who are more prone to being late than others. And although consistently being ten or twenty minutes late might not seem like a big deal to the one who is always late, it is often extremely annoying for the
15 person who is waiting for them.

Once, when I was about twenty minutes late meeting

●UNIT 1●

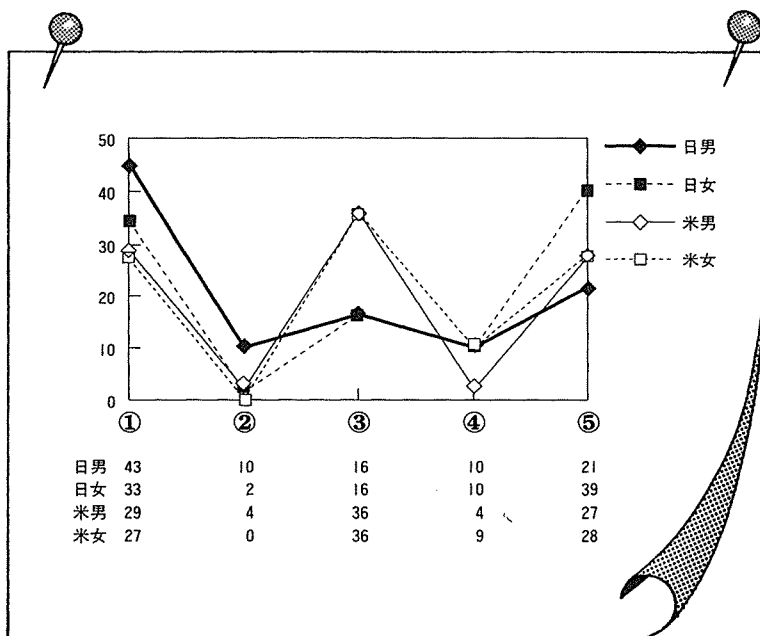
an American friend, the friend asked, “What was more important than being on time for me?” Although I was a habitually late person, no one had ever confronted me so directly before. It certainly made me think about how inconsiderate I had been, and from then on, I made every 5 effort to be on time for my friend.

According to the survey results however, it was the Japanese who preferred such an assertive response to a late friend. The most common response of the Americans was to express their feelings indirectly. But I don't 10 think this choice indicates that timeliness isn't as important in America as it is in Japan. Rather, I think for this particular question, the *indirect* way of using sarcasm or hints might actually be more aggressive than it seems at first. Though sarcasm isn't an important part of commu- 15 nication techniques in Japan, it's used in a variety of situations to get a variety of effects in the West. Of course sarcasm can be very funny, but it can also be very



biting and hurtful. When someone is angry and they use sarcasm to express their feelings, the result can often be far more emotionally painful than if they just “gave it to you straight.”

- **NOTES:** the locals 「地元の人々」 **get upset** ここでは「(計画が)狂わされる」 **prone to** 「～しがちな」 **a big deal** 「大したこと」 **biting** 「辛らつな、痛烈な」 **give... straight** 「～を率直に伝える」



EXERCISES

A. 本文を読み、正しければ○、誤っていれば×を入れなさい。

1. () The importance of being on time doesn't really vary from country to country.
2. () In a country where timeliness is not so highly valued, usually both the people of that country and its visitors get very upset when, for example, transportation is late.
3. () According to the essay, most of the American respondents said they deal with a late friend using very straight, direct comments.
4. () According to the essay, being on time isn't as important in America as it is in Japan.

B. 本文を読み、次の質問に英語で答えなさい。

1. What can be said in general about people who are always late?
It can be said that _____
2. According to the survey results, what country's people would be most likely to ask a question like, "What was more important than being on time for me?"
According to the survey results, _____
_____ such a question.
3. What change in behavior did the author make after being confronted directly with her habitual lateness.
After being directly confronted with her lateness, _____

UNIT 2

Refusing a Superior's Request



家族と何かを計画していた休日に上司が仕事をするよう頼んできたが、休日出勤するまでもないと感じた時

- ① 理由を説明して断る
- ② 相手の判断を批判し、自分の権利を主張して断る
- ③ 言い訳を並べて遠回しに断る
- ④ 断れずに、内心いやいや応じる

Much has been published, both in Japan and abroad, about Japan's exhausted company workers. It's explained that "salarymen" must often stay late at work even if they have nothing to do, because they have to
5 wait until their bosses go home before they can leave. Furthermore, when the corporate men do leave their offices, they don't go home to their families, rather they're obligated to go drinking with co-workers until it's time to stumble onto the last train of the night. And
10 of course the media loves to remind us about Japan's problem of death from overwork.

Americans also have to work overtime and go to business dinners. However, most Western companies understand the importance of spending time with family
15 and having enough time to relax and pursue interests outside of work. And unlike in Japan, Americans take

● UNIT 2 ●

their vacations when they want to, not just around the national holidays.

In a country like Japan, where many businessmen are only able to have dinner with their families once or twice a week and many don't take advantage of the paid 5 vacation time they do have, official holidays are a precious thing. Therefore, it's understandable that if a superior asks an employee to work on a holiday, the employee might not give in very easily, especially if he or she has already made plans to be with their family. 10

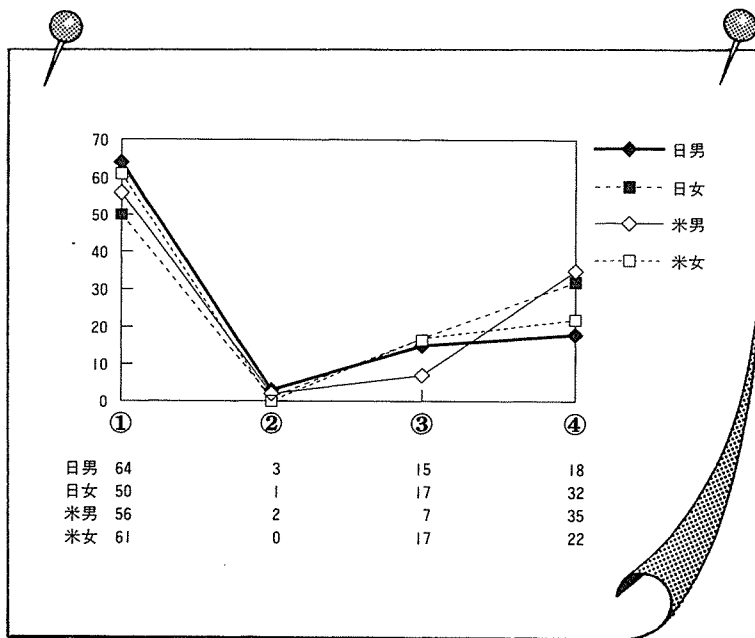
The survey results supported this, saying that the majority of Japanese men would refuse to work, and honestly explain why. But about one-third of American men — more than any other group — said they'd reluctantly agree to work on the holiday. 15

I had trouble coming up with an explanation for this surprising result. I finally decided that it might be due to the following: It's unusual for an American company to



make demands that would interfere with family, so if an employee were asked to work on a holiday, there would probably be a very good reason. So maybe the American men felt that in such an unusual situation, it would
5 be appropriate to go to work.

- **NOTES:** be obligated to... 「～せざるを得ない」 death from over-work 「過労死」 take advantage of... 「～を利用する」 a paid vacation 「有給休暇」 give in 「(要請に)折れる, 従う」 come up with 「考え出す」



EXERCISES

A. 本文を読み、正しければ○、誤っていれば×を入れなさい。

1. () According to the essay, some people living outside of Japan probably know about the long working hours of Japanese company employees.
2. () According to the essay, unlike the Japanese, Americans hardly ever work overtime or go out to dinner with colleagues.
3. () The essay implies that many Japanese take their vacations around national holidays.
4. () According to the essay, American companies generally understand the significance of family and leisure time.

B. 本文を読み、次の質問に英語で答えなさい。

1. According to the essay, when company workers don't go home after work, what are they probably doing?
They _____

2. How did the majority of Japanese men respond to this survey question?
They said they _____

3. According to the essay, what is it unusual for American companies to do?
It's unusual for them to _____

UNIT 3

Refusing a Friend's Invitation



親しい友だちからある集まりに誘われたが、
関心が無くて行きたくない時

- ① 本当の理由を言って断る
- ② 言い訳を並べて遠回しに断る
- ③ 言葉に出さず、態度で示し（気が乗らないそぶり、顔つき等）、相手に伝わることを期待する
- ④ 断れずに、内心いやいや応じる

You are having lunch with your best friend and they ask you, “What are you doing next weekend?” You reply that you don’t have any plans. Your friend has two free tickets to an organ recital next weekend and says,
5 “I know how much you love concerts, and I’d really be happy if you could come with me.” Well, it’s true that you do enjoy rock concerts, but a solo organ concert doesn’t interest you at all. Unfortunately, you’ve already said that you’re free.

10 Regardless of the event, turning down a close friend’s invitation can be difficult. On one hand, you don’t want to hurt their feelings. On the other hand, they *are* your best friend and you should be able to be honest with them. Furthermore, if you accept their invitation and do
15 something you don’t want to do, you could end up resenting them.

●UNIT 3●

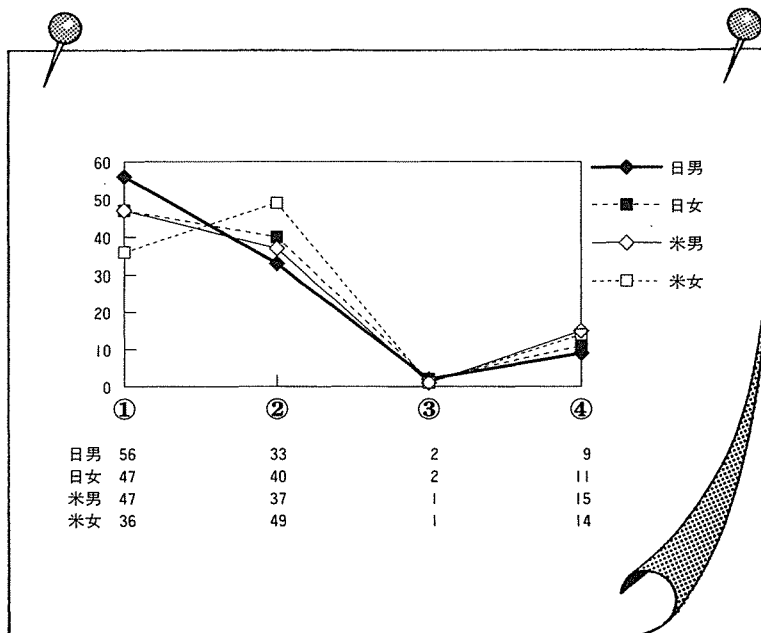
You must decide whether it's more important for you to be true to yourself, or for you to make your friend happy. Also, you must put yourself in the place of your friend and consider how *you* would like to be treated in the situation. It's natural for people to be concerned 5 about upsetting a friend. But let's assume your friend really doesn't want to join you for a certain event. Do you want your friend to do something or go somewhere with you just because they are afraid of making you angry or hurting your feelings? 10

In my opinion, the most interesting result of this survey question was the response given by the Japanese men. They chose an honest, assertive approach to handling this situation more often than any other group. I can only guess that most Japanese men are so busy 15 with work that they must be selective in how they spend their free time. Their leisure time is too precious to spend it doing something they don't really want to do.



When one's priorities are clear, it's easier to be clear and direct about what you want and what you don't want. Perhaps that's a good lesson for us all.

- **NOTES:** free 「ただの」 (p.14 L4) 「ひまな」 (p.14 L9) if you could come with me 「もし一緒に行けるなら」 go ではなく come であることに注意 turn down 「断る」 end up ... ing 「結局は～することになる」 put oneself in the place of ... 「～の立場に立って考える」 a good lesson 「良い教訓」



EXERCISES

A. 本文を読み、正しければ○、誤っていれば×を入れなさい。

1. () According to the essay, you should always be honest with your best friend.
2. () According to the essay, it's natural to worry about hurting a friend's feelings.
3. () According to the survey results, Japanese men are most likely to honestly refuse a friend's invitation if they're not interested in going.
4. () The essay suggests that Japanese men don't have a lot of leisure time so they must be sure to spend it wisely.

B. 本文を読み、次の質問に英語で答えなさい。

1. According to the essay, what could happen if you agree to do something with your friend that you don't want to do?

You could _____

2. Why does the essay suggest putting yourself in your friend's shoes?

It suggests doing that so you can consider _____

3. According to the essay, what is easier to do when your priorities are clear?

It is easier to _____

UNIT 4

Asking for Things to be Returned



友だちに貸した物（本や音楽テープのたぐい）を返して欲しいので
繰り返しそう言ったが、返してくれない時

- ① 自分の気持を説明して、返してほしいとはっきり言う
- ② 激しく非難する
- ③ ほのめかし、いやみ等で遠回しに言い、返してくれることを期待する
- ④ これ以上何か言うのをあきらめるが、心にとどめておく

As the saying goes, “Neither a borrower nor a lender be.” It’s good advice, but few of us actually follow it all the time, especially with our friends.

When a friend doesn’t return something they’ve borrowed, it’s usually because they’ve forgotten, or it has “slipped their mind.” But since we know their forgetfulness is not intentional, it can be a little uncomfortable for us to be very demanding with them when asking for our item back. What is the lender to do?

Often, if the problem isn’t taken care of right away, the situation can become a little complicated. First, the borrower forgets to return the item. Because the lender is a friend, he or she doesn’t want to be too pushy, so maybe the lender gently reminds the borrower about the item. As in the case of this survey question, let’s say the borrower again forgets to return the item. Perhaps a