

英語

(100分)

- [I] 次の文章を読んで設問に答えなさい。[*印のついた語句は注を参照しなさい。] (70点)

It is probably the most over-used word in the United Kingdom: whether they are sorry about the weather or sorry because someone else has bumped into them, chances are your average Briton* has blurted out⁽⁷⁾ at least one apology in the past hour or two. A recent survey of more than 1,000 Brits found that the average person says “sorry” around eight times per day—and that one in eight people apologizes up to 20 times a day. “The readiness of the English to apologize for something they haven’t done is remarkable, and it is matched by an unwillingness to apologize for what they have done,” wrote Henry Hitchings in his aptly-titled* *Sorry!: The English and Their Manners*.

But do the British really apologize more frequently than members of other cultures? If so, what’s the reason for this peculiar verbal tic*... and how bad a habit is it? Getting reliable data on the frequency of apologies in different countries is harder than you might think. “There’s certainly speculation that Canadians and Brits apologize more than Americans, but it’s difficult to study in a way that would provide any compelling evidence,” says Karina Schumann, a psychologist at the University of Pittsburgh who studies apologies and forgiveness. One approach is to ask people what they’d do in a theoretical situation. (X), a recent YouGov* poll of more than 1,600 British people and 1,000 Americans revealed that there would be approximately 15 British “sorries” for every 10 American ones if they sneezed, if they corrected someone’s mistake, or

if someone crashed into them. But the survey found similarities between the British and American respondents, as well: just under three-quarters of people from either country would say “sorry” for interrupting someone. And 84% of Brits would apologize for being late to a meeting, compared to 74% of Americans.

(Y), asking someone what they’d do in a theoretical situation is very different to measuring what they’d do in real life. Take the last example; in the YouGov survey, 36% of British respondents said they would apologize for someone else’s clumsiness, compared to 24% of Americans. But in her book *Watching the English*, social anthropologist* Kate Fox describes experiments in which she deliberately bumped into hundreds of people in towns and cities across England. She also encouraged colleagues to do the same abroad, for comparison. Fox found that around 80% of English victims said “sorry”—even though the collisions were clearly Fox’s fault. Often the apology was mumbled, and possibly people said it without even realizing it, but compared to when tourists from other countries were bumped, the difference was marked.^(c) “Only the Japanese seemed to have anything even approaching the English sorry-reflex*,”^(f) Fox writes.

The origins of the word “sorry” can be traced to the Old English “sarig” meaning “distressed, grieved or full of sorrow,” but of course, most British people use the word more casually. And herein* lies another problem with studying cultural differences in languages. “We use the word ‘sorry’ in different ways,” says Edwin Battistella, a linguistics expert from Southern Oregon University and author of *Sorry About That: The Language of Public Apology*. Brits might say “sorry” more often, but this doesn’t necessarily mean they’re more remorseful.^(d) “We can use it to express empathy*—so I might say ‘sorry about the rain,’” says Battistella. “It might be that British and Canadian speakers use that kind of ‘sorry’ more often, but they wouldn’t be apologizing, per se*. Other researchers

have talked about the use of 'sorry' to communicate across social classes, where you're sort of apologizing for your privilege."

British society values that its members show respect without imposing on someone else's personal space, and without drawing attention to oneself: characteristics that linguists refer to as "negative-politeness" or "negative-face." America, (Z), is a positive-politeness society, characterized by friendliness and a desire to feel part of a group. As a consequence, Brits may sometimes use "sorry" in a way that can seem inappropriate to outsiders, including Americans. The British will say "sorry" to someone they don't know because they'd like to ask for some information, or to sit down next to them — and because not saying "sorry" would constitute an even greater invasion of that stranger's privacy. "Our excessive, often inappropriate and sometimes downright* misleading use of this word devalues it, and it makes things very confusing and difficult for foreigners unaccustomed to our ways," says Fox. Still, she adds, "I don't think saying 'sorry' all the time is such a bad thing. It even makes sense in the context of a negative-politeness culture... Of all the words that a nation could choose to scatter about with such random profligacy*, surely 'sorry' is not the worst."

日本語に
はよく
使う!

There may be other benefits to saying "sorry," too — such as fostering trust. Interestingly, that is true even when people are apologizing not for mistakes they've made, but rather for circumstances beyond their control. In one study, Harvard Business School's Alison Wood Brooks and her colleagues recruited a male actor to approach 65 strangers at a U.S. train station on a rainy day and ask to borrow their telephone. In half the cases, the actor preceded his request with: "Sorry about the rain." When he did this, 47% of strangers gave him their mobile, compared to only 9% when he simply asked to borrow their phone. Further experiments confirmed it was the (あ) about (い)(う)(え)(お), not the politeness of the opening sentence. "By saying 'I'm sorry about the

rain,' the superfluous apologizer acknowledges an unfortunate circumstance, takes the victim's perspective and expresses empathy for the negative circumstance — even though it is outside of his or her control,” says Wood Brooks.

(By Linda Geddes, writing for *BBC Future*, February 24, 2016)

[注] Briton 英国人 (短縮形は Brit)

blurted out (blurt out うっかり口に出してしまう)

aptly-titled 巧みに題された

tic なかなか直らない癖

YouGov インターネットを利用した世論調査会社

social anthropologist 社会人類学者

reflex 反射的行動

herein この点において

empathy 共感

per se それ自体で、本質的に

downright まったく

profligacy 過剰使用

I - A 空所(X)~(Z)に入るもっとも適切なものを次の1~4の中からそれぞれ一つ選び、その番号を解答欄に記入しなさい。

(X) 1 Above all 2 Beside the point

3 By contrast 4 For instance

(Y) 1 However 2 In addition

3 Similarly 4 Therefore

(Z) 1 consequently 2 for the same reason

3 in other words 4 on the other hand

I - B 下線部(a)~(h)の意味・内容にもっとも近いものを次の1~4の中からそれぞれ一つ選び、その番号を解答欄に記入しなさい。

- (a) peculiar
 1 disgusting 2 ordinary 3 orthodox 4 strange
- (b) compelling
 1 fierce 2 hypothetical 3 persuasive 4 stubborn
- (c) marked
 1 carved 2 checked 3 notable 4 subtle
- (d) remorseful
 1 anxious 2 regretful 3 respectful 4 worried
- (e) imposing on
 1 depending on 2 intruding into
 3 looking down on 4 making much of
- (f) constitute
 1 conceal 2 govern 3 justify 4 represent
- (g) excessive
 1 splendid 2 terrifying 3 unrestricted 4 weird
- (h) preceded
 1 decorated 2 introduced 3 strengthened 4 weakened

I-C 波線部 (ア)~(エ) の意味・内容をもっとも的確に示すものを次の1~4の中からそれぞれ一つ選び、その番号を解答欄に記入しなさい。

- (ア) chances are
 1 it is likely that 2 it is inevitable that
 3 it is fortunate that 4 it is unlucky that
- (イ) seemed to have anything even approaching
 1 appeared to react in a way somewhat similar to
 2 looked as though they apologized in quite a different way from
 3 revealed that they would not say "sorry" with
 4 suggested that they apologized in a richer variety than
- (ウ) choose to scatter about
 1 decide to use without much consideration

- 2 arrange the time and place to use
 - 3 exaggerate the meaning of
 - 4 frequently use with negative gestures
- (エ) takes the victim's perspective
- 1 draws the unlucky person's picture
 - 2 blocks the other's sight without warning
 - 3 shares the other's point of view
 - 4 discusses the poor weather conditions

I-D 二重下線部の空所(あ)~(お)に次の1~7の語を入れて文を完成させたとき、(う)と(お)に入る語の番号を解答欄に記入しなさい。同じ語を二度使ってはいけません。選択肢の中には使われないものが二つ含まれています。

Further experiments confirmed it was the (あ) about (い) (う)(え)(お), not the politeness of the opening sentence.

- | | | | |
|-----------|--------|------------|------------|
| 1 apology | 2 into | 3 invading | 4 mattered |
| 5 that | 6 the | 7 weather | |

I-E 本文の意味・内容に合致するものを次の1~8の中から三つ選び、その番号を解答欄に記入しなさい。

- 1 Recent statistics show that one British person in eight says "sorry" about eight times more than people in other cultures.
- 2 A recent poll suggests that a larger percentage of the British than the Americans say "sorry" when they interrupt other people.
- 3 Compared with the result from an online survey, in reality more than double the number of British people said "sorry" when bumped into.
- 4 The British often use the word "sorry" rather casually in daily life, without regard for its original meaning.
- 5 According to some researchers, communication across social classes in Britain is not helped by the use of the word "sorry."

- 6 One reason for the frequent use of “sorry” by the British is that they believe saying the word will soften the shock of invading someone else’s privacy.
- 7 Fox believes the British should stop saying “sorry,” due to the negative-politeness aspects of their society.
- 8 If a British person apologizes for something out of his or her control, it makes the apologizer seem more suspicious.