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学位論文題目	Constructing Models of Japanese Conversational Indirectness on the Basis of Empathy and Nonverbal Social Skills 共感及び非言語的社會スキルに基づく日本人の会話の間接性のモデル構築
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論 文 の 内 容 の 要 旨

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Introduction

In the field of intercultural communication studies, indirect communication styles practiced by Japanese people have gained attention among scholars both inside and outside of Japan. Cross-cultural studies have indicated that Japanese people use indirectness to maintain harmony with others and have a negative attitude toward direct communication. The reason has been associated with their communication apprehension (e.g., Klopff, 1984).

Indirectness by Japanese people, however, is not necessarily caused by communication apprehension and a lack of assertive communication skills. Rather, not stating

messages clearly or directly is an indicator of having sensitivity for others (Kim, 2002), can be a sign of strength as a mature human, and indicates social competence in Japanese society (Miyahara, 2004). Therefore, it is meaningful to examine Japanese indirectness based on empathy (*omoiyari*; e.g., Travis, 1988) as an influential factor, while also taking the influence of nonverbal elements into consideration. More specifically, the influence of nonverbal elements should be considered in dynamically analyzing the process of Japanese indirect communication.

Given the problems mentioned above, this study primarily clarified how Japanese people's empathy (*omoiyari*) had an influence on indirectness in relation to nonverbal skills through structural equation modeling analysis. Further, gender differences were examined by multigroup analysis based on the establishment of measurement invariance of each measurement scale.

One of the theoretical models that can explain the message processing is Ishii's (1986) *enryo* (reserve) and *sasshi* (sharp-guess-work) communication model. Ishii's model describes the process of how Japanese people process indirect or ambiguous messages in interpersonal interaction. In this model, a sender's consciousness of *enryo* produces ambiguous messages, and a receiver attempts to interpret those messages with their sensitivity using *sasshi*. By applying the fundamental idea of Ishii's (1986) model, the author proposed his own hypothetical models by using the variables of conversational indirectness (interpretation and production), emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity, emotional (nonverbal) control, and empathy.

Taking a possible flow of message processing into consideration, two types of hypothetical models were proposed for the dimensions of the production and the interpretation of indirect interaction. One was termed *considered indirectness*, which refers to cases in which indirect messages are cautiously produced or messages are interpreted through emotional control. It was described by the paths from emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity to conversational indirectness interpretation / production operating via emotional (nonverbal) control. The other was spontaneous indirectness, that refers to cases in which indirect messages are exchanged and emotional control functions as a reaction. It was described by the paths from emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity to emotional (nonverbal) control via operating conversational indirectness interpretation / operation.

Methods

Toward the hypothetical models of considered and spontaneous indirectness, structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, and simultaneous multigroup analysis were performed for gender comparison based on the results of SEM. A total of 609 Japanese undergraduate students participated in this study. There were 364 women (59.8%) and 295 men (40.2%). The mean age was 19.80 ($SD = 2.01$) (women = 19.75 / $SD = 2.36$ men = 19.89/ $SD = 1.33$).

The measurement scales of the *Conversational Indirectness Scale* (Holtgraves, 1997), the *Emotional (Nonverbal) Sensitivity Scale* (Riggio, 1989), the *Emotional (Nonverbal) Control Scale* (Riggio, 1989), and the *Empathic Experience* (Kakuta, 1994) were used. In order to perform SEM and multi-group analyses, a series of preliminary analyses were conducted. First, the sample was randomly split into two groups, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed for one group, and the results of the EFA were tested by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the other group. Second, the measurement invariance of each scale was tested by using a multigroup mean and covariance structure (MG-MACS) analysis. Third, the hypothetical models of Japanese conversational indirectness were examined by SEM analysis for clarifying indirect message processing common across genders. Fourth, based on the establishment of measurement invariance, a simultaneous multi-group analysis was conducted on the results of the SEM analysis to specify gender-specific effects in each hypothetical model.

Results

As preliminary analyses, first, the factor structures extracted by EFA could be confirmed by CFA in each measurement scale. Then, in the MG-MACS analysis of each measurement scale for examining the establishment of measurement invariance across genders, full scalar invariance could be established in the scales of conversational indirectness and emotional (nonverbal) control. Partial scalar invariance could be established with the scales of empathic experience and emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity.

Second, the results of the SEM analysis regarding the hypothetical models indicated that the paths mainly focused on were significant both in *considered indirectness* and *spontaneous indirectness*.

Third, toward the results of the SEM analysis, simultaneous multi-group analysis was conducted. A chi-square difference test of the structural weights and the covariance in every path in each hypothetical model indicated invariance across genders. However, focusing on gender differences in the main hypothetical paths, non-significant paths were found only among the women's group. In the interpretation dimension, the effect of emotional (nonverbal) control on conversational indirectness interpretation in *considered indirectness* and the effect of conversational indirectness on emotional (nonverbal) control in *spontaneous indirectness* interpretation did not show significance. Likewise, in the production dimension, the effect of emotional (nonverbal) control on conversational indirectness production in *considered indirectness* and the effect of conversational indirectness production on emotional (nonverbal) control in *spontaneous indirectness* did not show significance.

Findings and Conclusion

First, regarding the interpretation dimension, in *considered indirectness*, the results of the SEM analysis indicated that Japanese people tend to both produce and interpret indirect messages on the basis of emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity via emotional (nonverbal) control. In addition, in *spontaneous indirectness*, it was found that Japanese people tend to both produce and interpret indirect messages on the basis of emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity and then to control their emotional displays.

In gender comparison, in the interpretation dimension of *considered indirectness*, it was found that men tend to sensitively read another person's emotions, and then interpret another person's indirect messages, while women tend not to interpret another person's indirect messages after controlling their own emotional displays. In the interpretation dimension of *spontaneous indirectness*, it was found that men tend to sensitively read another person's emotions, to interpret another person's indirect messages, and then to control their emotional displays, while women tend not to control their emotional displays after interpreting the indirect messages of others.

As for the production dimension of *considered indirectness*, it was found that men tend to read another person's emotions, to control their emotional displays, and then to produce indirect messages, while women tend not to produce indirect messages after controlling their emotional displays. In the production dimension of *spontaneous indirectness*, it was found

that men tend to read another person's emotions, to produce an indirect messages, and then to control their emotional displays, while women tend not to control their emotional displays after producing an indirect message.

Although this study clarified how Japanese people process indirect messages by using structural equation modeling analysis, there were mainly three limitations. First, because priority was given to establishing validity, this study used measurement scales of conversational indirectness and nonverbal social skills developed in the United States. Second, all of the participants were undergraduate students. Third, since this study used a trait approach to focus on a single person's tendency to communicate indirectly, the influence of other factors, such as the traits of others one is communicating with and contextual issues, were not taken into consideration.

Future studies on Japanese indirectness could usefully extend the results of this study in three ways. First, the influence of various contexts on indirectness should be taken into consideration. Second, qualitative research, such as discourse analysis or content analysis, should be performed along with quantitative data. Third, the misattribution of meaning in indirectness should be examined.

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審査の結果の要旨

1. Academic background and purpose of this thesis

It is frequently noted by both Japanese and non-Japanese scholars in the field of intercultural communication that Japanese people tend to prefer an indirect, rather than a direct, communication style. A common explanation for the use of an indirect communication style in Japan is that it helps to maintain a sense of group harmony. The indirect communication style is sometimes regarded negatively, however, particularly by non-Japanese scholars, on the ground that it is ambiguous and seemingly indicates a lack of assertiveness on the part of Japanese communicators. Kazuya Hara's thesis offers a more positive interpretation of the indirect communication style of the Japanese, however, seeing it as exhibiting sensitivity towards others, best expressed by the Japanese concept of *omoiyari* (empathy). In other words, in the context of Japanese culture, indirectness may be regarded not as a weakness, but rather as a sign of strength, maturity, and social competence.

Building on Satoshi Ishii's internationally recognized *enryo-sasshi* (reserve-guesswork) model of Japanese communication, Hara examines conversational indirectness among Japanese communicators in relation to both empathy and nonverbal communication skills. Whereas most previous studies of the Japanese indirect communication style adopt a humanistic or theoretical approach, in this thesis Hara develops hypothetical models of indirect communication which can be empirically tested and statistically analyzed. Employing recognized measurement scales in the field of intercultural communication, Hara conducted a survey of Japanese undergraduate students to refine the models in a way that accurately reflects how indirect communication is used in interpersonal interactions among Japanese. On the basis of structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis and simultaneous multigroup analysis, Hara is also able to offer a comparison of the different ways in which Japanese males and Japanese females communicate indirectly.

2. Theoretical frameworks of the thesis

After introducing the main themes of the thesis in Chapter 1 (reviewed above), the next four chapters (Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5) consider several theoretical frameworks which may be employed when analyzing the indirect communication style of Japanese. Each of these chapters includes a comprehensive literature review, together with critiques. Hara's main contention is that Japanese forms of indirect communication are often misunderstood by non-Japanese, and can be better appreciated if they are understood as being motivated primarily by *omoiyari*, i.e., consideration for others. Hara's thesis is the first study to statistically examine the effect of *omoiyari* on the Japanese indirect communication style. Before presenting his methodology and empirical findings, however, Hara critically reviews the theoretical frameworks he will use for the construction of his own hypothetical models of the Japanese indirect communication style.

2.1. Ishii's *enryo-sasshi* model

Satoshi Ishii's *enryo-sasshi* model of the Japanese communication style suggests that both *enryo* (reserve) and *sasshi* (guesswork) have an influence on the production and interpretation of indirect messages. *Enryo* functions as a filter that prevents a speaker from sending messages which might give negative feelings to a listener, while *sasshi* serves to help

a listener interpret messages that have not been directly expressed by a speaker. Ishii's *enryo-sasshi* model provides the basis on which Hara constructs his own hypothetical models of Japanese indirect communication, discussed in Section 3 below.

2.2. Conceptualizing *omoiyari*

As mentioned above, the term *omoiyari* can be used in a variety of ways with different connotations. Although *omoiyari* is frequently translated into English as either *sympathy* or *empathy*, Hara argues that the Japanese concept of *omoiyari* includes elements of both empathy and sympathy, and is aimed at reducing the psychological burden of others (i.e., situations in which others may feel embarrassed or "lose face") and maintaining mutual interdependence in relationships. Hara's more comprehensive definition of *omoiyari* covers both the intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions of the term, allowing both the psychological and behavioral aspects of *omoiyari* to be investigated. From a psychological perspective, *omoiyari* can be regarded as the intentions that a communicator has towards others. From a behavioral perspective, *omoiyari* can be regarded as the specific forms of verbal and nonverbal communication which a communicator uses to express those intentions to others.

2.3. Critiques of conversational indirectness

Hara then offers critiques of various theories of conversational indirectness from the perspective of pragmatics, basing his discussion on Grice's theory of conversational implicatures, and on Austin's and Searle's speech act theory. Indirectness occurs when there is a difference between the intended meaning of an utterance and its sentence meaning. A correct interpretation of the utterance involves the listener being able to decode its intended meaning, rather than its sentence meaning. Thus, following Holtgraves, Hara identifies two dimensions of indirect communication: (1) a production dimension, which concerns how indirect messages are encoded by speakers; and (2) an interpretation dimension, which concerns how indirect messages are decoded by listeners. On the basis of this analysis, Hara is able to examine *enryo* in the context of the production dimension and *sasshi* in the context of the interpretation dimension.

2.4. Nonverbal social skills

Hara then applies Riggio's framework of nonverbal social skills to an examination of the Japanese indirect communication style. Three types of nonverbal social skills are identified: (1) nonverbal expressiveness, which refers to the ability to communicate one's emotions to others nonverbally; (2) nonverbal sensitivity, which refers to the ability to interpret the nonverbal displays of others; and (3) nonverbal control, which refers to the ability to regulate one's own nonverbal displays. Nonverbal expressiveness is associated with the production dimension of indirect communication, while nonverbal sensitivity is associated with the interpretative dimension of indirect communication. Nonverbal control is associated with making judgments about when it is appropriate or inappropriate to display one's emotions to others. With regard to the latter, Hara notes that the Japanese communication style often involves a marked difference between the actual emotions a person might have and how those emotions are displayed.

3. Hypothetical models of the Japanese indirect communication style

In Chapter 6 Hara proceeds to develop his own hypothetical models of the Japanese indirect communication style. In constructing the models Hara attempts to integrate the theoretical frameworks previously discussed into a single set of models.

3.1. Construction of the models

Hara identifies four variables which interact with each other in indirect communication: (1) *empathy (omoiyari)*, defined as consideration for others, particularly to reduce the psychological burden of others and to maintain mutual interdependence between communicators; (2) *emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity*, which refers to the ability to sensitively interpret the indirect messages of others; (3) *emotional (nonverbal) control*, which refers to the ability to regulate one's own nonverbal behavior when responding to others; and (4) *conversational indirectness*, which includes both the production and interpretation dimensions of indirect communication. Whereas previous studies have been primarily concerned with how indirect messages are produced rather than with how they are interpreted, Hara's thesis is the first study to simultaneously examine both the production and the interpretation dimensions of conversational indirectness in a single set of models.

By examining the causal relationships among the four variables, Hara further identifies two possible flows of message processing. In *considered indirectness* senders and receivers control their emotional displays *before* producing and interpreting messages. In *spontaneous indirectness* senders and receivers control their emotional displays *after* producing and interpreting messages.

Hara combines the two pairs of considered indirectness and spontaneous indirectness, on the one hand, with the production and interpretation dimensions of indirect communication, on the other hand, to produce four hypothetical models. In each of the models empathy (*omoiyari*) and emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity are correlated (i.e., mutually influence each other) and have a direct effect on both conversational indirectness interpretation and emotional (nonverbal) control. The differences in the models concern whether the indirectness is considered or spontaneous, and whether the interpretation or the production dimension is under investigation. The four hypothetical models are as follows:

(1) *Considered indirectness interpretation*: In this model emotional (nonverbal) control has a unilinear (one-way) influence on conversational indirectness interpretation.

(2) *Spontaneous indirectness interpretation*: In this model conversational indirectness interpretation has a unilinear influence on emotional (nonverbal) control.

(3) *Considered indirectness production*: In this model emotional (nonverbal) control has a unilinear influence on conversational indirectness production.

(4) *Spontaneous indirectness production*: In this model conversational indirectness production has a unilinear influence on emotional (nonverbal) control.

3.2. Hypotheses about gender differences in indirect communication styles

Hara reviews studies of gender differences in communication styles, which contend that while females tend to be more relationship-oriented and concerned with intimacy and expressiveness, males tend to be more task- and information-oriented and concerned with social status, power, and instrumental issues. On the basis of his own models, Hara hypothesizes that women will rank higher overall than men in terms of the correlation between empathy and emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity and in the path from empathy to conversational indirectness. With respect to each of the four models introduced above the following hypotheses are made:

(1) *Considered indirectness interpretation*: It is hypothesized that women will rank higher than men in the paths from empathy and emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity to emotional (nonverbal) control, while men will rank higher than women in the path from emotional (nonverbal) control to conversational indirectness interpretation.

(2) *Spontaneous indirectness interpretation*: It is hypothesized that women will rank higher than men in the path from emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity to conversational indirectness interpretation, while men will rank higher than women in the path from conversational indirectness interpretation to emotional (nonverbal) control.

(3) *Considered indirectness production*: It is hypothesized that women will rank higher than men in the path from emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity to emotional (nonverbal) control, while men will rank higher in the path from emotional (nonverbal) control to conversational indirectness production.

(4) *Spontaneous indirectness production*: It is hypothesized that women will rank higher than men in the path from emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity to conversational indirectness, while men will rank higher in the path from conversational indirectness to emotional (nonverbal) control.

4. Methodology

To test the hypotheses just mentioned and the validity of the proposed hypothetical models (see Section 3.1 above), Hara conducted a survey among Japanese university students. How the data was collected and analyzed is presented in Chapter 7.

4.1 Conducting the survey

A survey of 609 Japanese undergraduate students enrolled in communication courses at universities in the Kanto area of Japan was conducted. Of these participants, 364 were women and 245 were men. A composite questionnaire was assembled, utilizing the following measurement scales: Kakuta's *Empathetic Experience Scale*, Holtgraves' *Conversational Indirectness Scale*, Riggio's *Nonverbal (Emotional) Sensitivity Scale*, and Riggio's *Nonverbal (Emotional) Control Scale*, for a total of 69 items. The scales originally written in English were translated into Japanese, using the back-translation method to verify the accuracy of the translations.

4.2 Statistical analyses of the data

For each of Hara's hypothetical models, structural equation model (SEM) analysis was used to measure the effects of the relevant variables on other variables. Gender comparisons were made on the basis of a simultaneous multigroup analysis to identify gender-specific effects in each of the models. A series of preliminary analyses were conducted for each measurement scale. First, the sample was randomly split into two groups, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed for one of the groups; the results of the EFA were confirmed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Second, the measurement invariance of each scale was tested using multigroup mean and covariance structure (MG-MACS) analysis to establish configural, metric, and scalar invariance. Measurement invariance was assessed on the basis of differential item functioning (DIF). While it is now considered "mandatory" to confirm measurement invariance in intercultural surveys, Hara's thesis is perhaps the first to test measurement invariance intraculturally between gender groups. The results of these analyses are reported in Section 5.1.

5. Findings and conclusions of the research

Based on the data collected and the statistical analyses described above, in Chapters 8 and 9 Hara proceeds to present the results of the analyses, a discussion of the results, some limitations of the study, and some directions for future research.

5.1 Results of the statistical analyses

The results of the statistical analyses discussed in Section 4.2 above are presented in Chapter 8. As for the preliminary analyses, the factor structures extracted by EFA could be confirmed by CFA for each measurement scale. In the MG-MACS analysis full scalar invariance across genders was established for the scales of conversational indirectness and emotional (nonverbal) control. Partial scalar invariance could be established for the scales of empathy and emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity. The results of the SEM analysis indicated that the main paths of the hypothetical models were significant for both considered indirectness and spontaneous indirectness. Based on these results, a simultaneous multigroup analysis was performed, which established invariance across genders for each path in each of the models. With respect to gender differences in the main hypothetical paths, non-significant paths were

found only in the women's group. These paths were removed, while all other paths of the original hypothetical models were retained, resulting in each case in a reconfigured and more parsimonious model.

5.2 Discussion and significance of the findings

The results of the statistical analyses just described supported the following conclusions for each of the reconfigured models.

(1) *Considered indirectness interpretation*: It was found that while Japanese in general tend to interpret indirect messages on the basis of emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity operating via emotional (nonverbal) control, there is a greater tendency among women not to control their emotional displays before interpreting indirect messages and a greater tendency among men to exhibit a high degree of emotional (nonverbal) control.

(2) *Spontaneous indirectness interpretation*: It was found that while Japanese in general tend to interpret indirect messages on the basis of emotional (nonverbal) sensitivity and then to control their emotional displays, there is a greater tendency among women not to control their emotional displays after interpreting indirect messages and a greater tendency among men to exhibit a high degree of emotional (nonverbal) control.

(3) *Considered indirectness production*: It was found that while Japanese in general tend to sensitively read others' emotions, control their emotional displays, and then produce indirect messages, there is a greater tendency among women not to produce indirect messages after controlling their emotional displays and a greater tendency among men to produce indirect messages after controlling their emotional displays.

(4) *Spontaneous indirectness production*: It was found that while Japanese in general tend to sensitively read others' emotions, produce indirect messages, and then control their emotional displays, there is a greater tendency among women not to control their emotional displays after producing indirect messages and a greater tendency among men to control their emotional displays after producing indirect messages.

The results largely confirmed the hypotheses about gender differences presented in Section 3.2. In each of the reconfigured models, it is also clear that men tend to control their emotional displays more than women.

5.3 Limitations and directions for future research

At the end of Chapter 9, the final chapter, limitations of the thesis are noted and directions for future research are suggested. One limitation was that the measurement scales used to analyze the data were developed in the United States; there is a need to develop measurement scales from an emic (i.e., Japanese) perspective, which can then be compared with measurement scales from other cultures. Second, data was collected only from Japanese undergraduate students; there is a need to collect and analyze data from participants from a wider range of backgrounds and generations; such research may also indicate how younger Japanese are more or less indirect than older generations. Third, the study confined itself to a trait approach and did not take other factors, such as the traits of others and communication contexts, into consideration; examining with whom one is communicating and in what social situations could provide a more comprehensive analysis. Additional specific suggestions for future research include utilizing multiple forms of qualitative research, such as discourse analysis and content analysis, in addition to quantitative analysis, and investigating not only successful, but also unsuccessful, cases of indirect communication.

6. Overall assessment of the reviewers

Having examined Hara's thesis thoroughly, the reviewers conclude that the thesis makes a significant and original contribution to an understanding of the Japanese indirect communication style. The overall structure of the thesis demonstrates that Hara is able to present his research in a clear and logical fashion. Hara has also demonstrated that he is familiar with the relevant literature on verbal and nonverbal indirect communication, and related topics, in both English and Japanese. The models developed by Hara exhibit an ability to construct original theories in the field of intercultural communication, while his empirical research and statistical analyses exhibit an ability to conduct independent research in the social sciences. Hara was especially competent in his use of statistical methods to analyze the data he collected, and in interpreting the results. The conclusions that Hara draws from his study are clearly discussed, establishing his main point that *omoiyari* indeed has a significant effect on the indirect communication style of Japanese. In addition to making a significant contribution to the study of indirect communication among Japanese from a theoretical and an empirical perspective, the thesis also provides useful knowledge to non-Japanese who may

communicate with Japanese people in intercultural contexts. For all these reasons, the reviewers recommend that Kazuya Hara's thesis, "Constructing Models of Japanese Conversational Indirectness on the Basis of Empathy and Nonverbal Social Skills," be approved by the School of International Politics, Economics, and Communication at Aoyama Gakuin University for the degree of Ph.D.