

# The Difference of in-group Modesty between Japanese and Taiwanese

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the difference of norms of modesty between Japanese and Taiwanese. Due to the difference of social structures among East Asian countries, when a person describes his in-group members to an outsider in a modest way, he may represent it in either relative or absolute honorific expressions. Study 1 focused on relative / absolute honorific expressions featuring the comparative linguistics of East Asian countries, and inferred that: when a person describes his in-group members to an out-group target, there is not only linguistic, but also behavioral and psychological differences between customs of Japan and Taiwan. Results of Study 1 indicated that, in Japanese culture, speaker's in-group modesty is promoted when the relationship between speaker and target who belongs to out-group was intimate. Vice versa, it is restrained when it was not intimate. In contrast with Japan, this factor does not influence the in-group modesty in Taiwanese culture. In order to explain this difference, Study 2 studied model of traditional social-structure in Japan and Confucian thoughts in Taiwan. Results of Study 2 indicated that, if there exist "upper public" above one self (in-group) and target (out-group) in Japanese culture, in-group modesty is restrained. However, this factor does not influence the in-group modesty in Taiwanese culture. It was inferred through these studies that Japanese judge in-/out-group according to each family's relation to the nested structure of public. But Taiwanese make the judgment according to one's relation with each "independent family".

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