

第 8 回 2022 年度英語ライティングコンテスト

【2022 年度テーマ】

Recent political events including the policies for dealing with COVID 19 and the war in Ukraine have highlighted the conflict between global and national interests. Consider one issue in the world today and the role nationalism has played in shaping one country's policy for dealing with this issue. What implications might this have for the future of global cooperation?

【2022 年度入賞者】

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■講評

The top three essays as well as the one that received the special award accurately and appropriately addressed the prompt. These essays also had academically well-developed paragraphs to construct a solid introduction, body, and conclusion. The winner, Ms. Mizuno, discussed how China's shift in their emphasis on economy to prioritizing environmental problems can contribute to solving environmental issues. The essays that did not receive high scores had issues in one or more of the following areas: 1) addressing the prompt, 2) organization in the entire essay as well as in each paragraph, 3) development of ideas, 4) connections of ideas, 5) grammar/expression, 6) format/references. For future competitions, read and understand the prompt well and make sure your essay has all of these points. For those who participated in the competition, thank you for your hard work. We are looking forward to receiving more essays in future competitions.

■入賞エッセイ

入賞者全 4 名のエッセイは、以下ページに公開しております。

第1位 Aoi MIZUNO (水野 葵)

The Impact of China's Economic Development and Environmental Problems on the Resolution of Global Environmental Problems

During the past few decades, China has experienced remarkable economic growth, and its GDP in 2021 was five times higher than the Japanese one. On the other hand, this significant economic growth aggravated the environmental issue in China. Similarly, in Japan, serious pollution problems and the destruction of nature occurred in the process of rapid economic growth late 20th century. However, China is reluctant to tackle reducing carbon emissions and prioritize its economic development. This Chinese attitude is expected to solve the world's environmental problems in the future significantly. This writing focuses on China's necessity to shift from an emphasis on economic development to an environment-friendly economy from a long-term perspective.

Today, China is one of the highest-growth economies in the world, and it has experienced a significant rise in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in recent decades. The population of China is more than 1.4 billion, and the Chinese GDP growth rate is 8.1%. According to statistics from Enerdata, the amount of Chinese energy consumption overtook the U.S. and became the world's largest energy consumer in 2009. Its share of China in global energy consumption in 2021 was 25%, which increased by 1.5% from the previous year. Also, Chinese CO₂ emissions recorded 7.41 tons in 2020,

which is the largest in the world likewise. One of the reasons for the massive amount of energy consumption and CO₂ emissions in China is the steel industry. Its economic growth heavily depends on fossil fuels of coal and oil which led to a considerable amount of greenhouse gas emissions (Riti et al., 2017), and carbon emission causes air pollution in China. Moreover, China already experiences frequent coastal flooding, storm surges, coastal erosion, and saltwater intrusion. According to these results, it is thought that China has prioritized economic growth over environmental issues up until today.

Although China has aggravated the environmental problems, it hesitates to solve them. China was absent from COP26, in which more than 130 countries signed the Glasgow Climate Pact and agreed on the Paris Rulebook. (U.K. Parliament) According to "Summary for Policymakers" from IPCC, net zero CO₂ emission is required to prevent further global warming and rising sea level. The cooperation of the most emitting country is essential to achieve this purpose. Japan, the E.U., the U.K., and the U.S. have declared CO₂ emission reduction goals with specific numbers and are aiming for carbon neutrality by 2050. On the other hand, China had announced that it will convert its CO₂ emissions to a decrease by 2030 and aims to be carbon neutral by 2060. Chinese goal of achieving carbon neutrality has been postponed longer than in other countries. Also, its strategic objectives could be more explicit and active because it needs to show specific numbers

and deadlines.

Global climate goals can only be possible if China achieves a less carbon emission economy because China emits a quarter of the world's CO₂. Unabated climate change could lead to estimated GDP losses of 0.5 and 2.3 percent as early as 2030 (World Bank Group, 2022). In addition, if the amount of CO₂ emissions continues increasing, global environmental problems will become more serious, and numerous wildlife possibly is endangered. Therefore, the need to cooperate in CO₂ reduction is critical worldwide. If China converts to a carbon-neutral economy, it will have an enormous optimistic impact on the world's environment and contribute to resolving the issues. This transition will require a massive shift in resources, innovation, and new technologies to enhance energy efficiency and resource productivity (World Bank Group, 2022). However, China has advanced technology to develop a sustainable, green, and low-carbon society. For instance, China manufactures carbon-neutral products and promotes electric vehicles. Thus, China has the potential to create a sustainable economic community. On the other hand, since China's move to a carbon-neutral economy will result in the unemployment of many workers in the coal industry, other developed countries need to support China's economy and infrastructure to prevent the economic disparity from expanding. Also, they should support China's high-tech industry with cutting-edge technology and knowledge

to cooperate in the transition away from the coal industry.

In conclusion, China needs to peak CO₂ emissions as soon as possible and transition to a carbon-neutral economy soon. China has a massive scale of land and a population. Therefore, it significantly influences the world environment and energy issues. Also, If China's efforts improve global warming, other countries will be more willing to take action. Suppose the government and other developed countries invest more in technology to create green infrastructure in China in the long run. In that case, China's state-of-the-art technology will help it develop a sustainable economy and become the world's leader of carbon-neutral countries.

(790 words)

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第 2 位 Ayaka FUJII (藤井 彩夏)

Fragile Global Cooperation Destroyed by Pandemic

The advent of COVID-19 has thrown the world into turmoil. Many countries closed the border to restrict the movement of people and tried to prevent the spread of the virus. The vaccine was approved and gradually supplied afterward, but the distribution was not equitable. An enormous gap in vaccination rates still exists around the world. Nationalism affected in policies of each country against COVID-19 and vaccines. This paper will clarify the relationship between nationalism and policies regarding vaccines and discuss how international cooperation may change in the future. “Nationalism” has several meanings, but this paper defines nationalism as an ideology that a country promotes unification, independence, and development (Maruyama, 1964).

Nationalism strongly affected the policy of developed countries against vaccines during the pandemic. Developed countries prioritized their own countries and secured enormous amounts of vaccines. The word pandemic means the emergency that viruses spread globally, and most countries demand solutions. Therefore, competition is inevitable. Generally speaking, high-income countries can access vaccines easily in terms of financial strength. To eliminate disparities, WHO, Gavi, and CEPI established an initiative called COVAX. Its system derived from the idea that developed countries could fund and co-purchase vaccines so that developing

countries access them equally. Even though almost 190 countries joined, the disparity did not eliminate. It is because developed countries secured vaccines through bilateral deals. Wealthier countries invest in research for pharmaceutical companies in exchange for priority allocation. For example, the US signed an agreement with Pfizer to invest \$200,000 to gain a supply of 100 million doses of vaccine if the vaccine development succeeds. Besides the US, other wealthier countries secured vaccines in the same way. As a result, 16% of the population obtained more than half of the vaccines (Duke Global Health innovation center, 2021). The phenomenon that developed countries are securing vaccines preceding other countries is called vaccine nationalism.

As the senior commentator at NHK Degawa pointed out, the cause of vaccine nationalism came from political speculation. In research from Bogdandy, any government is subject to enormous pressure to quickly procure a safe and effective vaccine for a possible number of its population (2020). Being trusted by the public is critical for the success as a politician. In other words, leaders cannot obtain a stable position politically unless they can protect citizens through rapid vaccine assurance. Therefore, the movement to secure vaccines quickly is natural from a political perspective. In addition, obtaining vaccines faster is meaningful for international politics. By developing vaccines rapidly in their own country and exporting, countries can maintain prestige in the international community. China was one of the countries that conducted diplomacy through vaccine exports and donations. It exported

vaccines to 63 countries and boosted its influence (Karaskova & Blablova 2021). From these perspectives, vaccine nationalism was politically unavoidable.

In the past few years, social issues such as poverty and global warming are becoming more intense in past several years, and countries around the world have adopted a cooperative attitude to solve problems. Despite having built a foundation for international cooperation over the years, once the pandemic began, countries adopted a policy of prioritizing their own country, and global cooperation collapsed. Surprisingly, vaccine nationalism is not a new phenomenon. During the H1N1 pandemic in 2009, Australia asked the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories, the local vaccine manufacturer to meet domestic demands before shipping vaccines to the United Nations (Riaz, 2021). In other words, the world is repeating the same thing it did 10 years ago, and global cooperation remains unchanged. The world is cooperative in tackling long-term social problems that are less urgent, but is uncooperative in dealing with an urgent and feared pandemic. Currently, the pandemic is nearly ending, and the world is becoming cooperative again, as developed countries have provided vaccine assistance to developing countries. However, if another emergency occurs, global cooperation will collapse again.

This paper concluded that nationalism and vaccine policies of developed countries had a strong relationship from the political perspective, and global cooperation remains unchanged compared to 10 years ago. Politicians are subject to the enormous pressure that they need to save the population from an epidemic. Therefore, they tried to obtain vaccines prior to other

countries and vaccine nationalism occurred. However, vaccine nationalism was inevitable from a political perspective because politicians cannot stay stable unless they can protect the citizen. Even though the world had been getting cooperative to tackle multiple social issues, global cooperation collapsed after the pandemic. The pandemic is nearly ending, and the world is becoming closer again. However, global cooperation will break if another emergency happens. To achieve "global cooperation" completely, it is necessary to find a solution to cooperate globally in an emergency not to repeat the same thing in the future. (785 words)

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第3位 Nozomi TODA (戸田 希美)

Energy Problem

It is said that 70% of all international conflicts are caused by the struggle for energy resource interests. Energy creates wealth disparities, violence, and refugees between nations. Currently, global energy consumption is increasing every year according to the International Energy Agency (2019), global energy consumption in 2040 is expected to increase approximately 1.3 times compared to 2014. A developing country, especially in Asia, will account for much of the increase. In other words, as emerging countries develop, the energy crisis will intensify. How should we deal with limited energy? This essay will discuss policies to deal with energy issues, the role played by nationalism, and the resulting implications for the future of international cooperation. Focusing on Japan as a developed country, the paper will discuss the problems facing Japan and how to solve them.

In referring to Japan's policies, we will discuss the current state of Japan's energy problems. Currently, Japan's energy consumption per unit of real GDP is well below the world average. However, Japan's energy demand itself is increasing with economic growth. Despite this, Japan's energy self-sufficiency rate is generally low given its limited resources in 2019, Japan's energy self-sufficiency rate will be 12.1%, which is low compared to other OECD countries (METI, 2021). In other words, Japan is dependent on foreign countries for most of its energy needs. As the world's energy supply is being depleted by the development of emerging economies, energy dependence on foreign countries is a major risk.

How should Japan deal with limited energy? The nation needs to formulate policies to solve this problem while balancing global and national interests. According to Takahashi (2017: 68-69), this policy can be divided into three objectives. That is, the objectives can be divided into the 3E: economic efficiency, energy security, and environmental sustainability combined. In other words, the objective is for the government to provide a stable supply of energy at low prices and in the required quantities, while at the same time balancing environmental considerations. However, in forming policies to achieve these objectives, resource nationalism arises. Resource nationalism is a movement to strengthen national control of natural resources within a country and is driven by the desire of resource-producing countries to return more of the benefits and profits of their abundant

resources to their own countries (MOFA, 2011). As long as they are at odds with resource nationalism, it is difficult for them to achieve their goal of a stable supply of energy in necessary quantities at low prices. That is why Japan, which is dependent on foreign countries for energy, needs to confront resource nationalism in shaping its policies.

In confronting resource nationalism in other countries, Japan will adopt policies that promote dialogue while fostering trust through the establishment and observance of rules. In dialogue with energy exporting countries, Japan will seek the elements necessary to build a mutually beneficial relationship. For example, for potential resource-producing countries, Japan will finance cooperative projects related to resource development, resource development projects, and so on. In this way, the country tries to come to terms with resource nationalism and solve its energy problems. Japan is also promoting two main policies to solve the fundamental problem of energy depletion. Japan has been working to improve energy consumption efficiency in order to use its precious energy more carefully. In fact, Japan's energy consumption per unit of real GDP is about one-fifth less than that of China and India, and comparable to Europe, where energy conservation is more advanced (METI, 2018). The second is the introduction of renewable energy. International Energy Agency (2021), Japan ranks 49th in the world in terms of the share of renewable energy in total electricity generation, making Japan a country that lags behind in the introduction of renewable energy. To resolve this situation, Japan is promoting the introduction of a feed-in tariff system, under which electricity generated from renewable energy sources is purchased at a fixed price.

Japan's promotion of energy policies that build mutually beneficial relationships will naturally lead to international energy cooperation. This is because multilateral cooperation is important in addition to unilateral efforts to stabilize and streamline the energy supply-demand structure of each country. In fact, the G20, the premier forum for international economic cooperation, adopted a policy of international cooperation to continue energy investment for a stable supply in the future, to utilize clean fossil fuel technologies, and to make energy systems more resilient. Even if it is difficult for a particular country to solve a problem by itself, each country is trying to solve a major problem by implementing various policies. It is important that countries continue to cooperate internationally for sustainable development. This is true whether in developed or developing countries. We hope that various countries will cooperate to solve the world's energy problems in the future. (798words)

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特別賞 Jieun KIM (キム ジウン)

The impacts from IRA: Importance of Global Cooperation

These days, the world is more dangerous than ever. The whole world is facing a "mega-crisis" with "new calamities on top of calamities," including COVID-19, the Russia-Ukraine war, the global food, and climate crises. People must anticipate and respond to these complex crises through ever-faster innovation and global cooperation. The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA), which focuses on responding to climate change, supporting medical expenses, and raising corporate taxes, is one of many issues that put emphasis on the United States. As a matter of fact, this essay will look into the the impacts of the IRA and importance of global cooperation.

In the growing U.S. domestic priority, inflation is intensifying due to the disruption of the raw material supply chain due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. As a result, U.S. President Joe Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) on August 16. Following the semiconductor law, the U.S. inflation-reduction bill is considered the largest support policy ever for climate change as it includes \$374 billion in energy and environmental measures, including a \$437 billion electric vehicle supply policy and eco-friendly energy projects.

However, the inflation reduction bill is expected to have a butterfly effect that negatively affects the spread and expansion of the electric vehicle(EV) market in the United States. Under the IRA, cars eligible for tax credits are only for EVs assembled in North America, and all EVs imported from Europe are excluded. According to the newly announced bill, more than 40% of the minerals in batteries must be produced and processed in the U.S. or FTA countries, and 50% of the core parts must be produced and assembled in North America.

Moreover, the bill may be thought of as a major objective of easing inflation, but its actual purpose is hidden. It is a climate change response policy aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and aims to exclude China from the electric vehicle supply chain. According to new research, China has a huge amount of mineral deposits needed to produce batteries and has served as the world's factory for decades (MINING.COM, 2021). China has shaken the global supply chain with this as a weapon and will continue to be overwhelming in the market (Bhutada, 2022). Therefore, it can be seen that the U.S. has a hidden geographical and policy intended to reduce its dependence on China by bringing core minerals and manufacturing capabilities to the U.S. through IRA law and internalizing them.

In addition, Hyundai Motor, which has the second largest share of the U.S. electric vehicle market, is also in crisis. This is because the proportion of major raw material importers and smelters of Korean battery companies is high in China. Specifically, between January and July this year, Korean companies relied on China for 84.4% lithium hydroxide, 81% cobalt, and 89.6% natural graphite (Park, 2022).

This is just a new bill for one country, the U.S., but it is an important bill that is relevant to the entire world because of the influence of the U.S. Among many countries, especially Korea, there is a lot of concern about damage, so Korea on Nov. 4 sent an official written opinion to the United States regarding an act that excludes Evs assembled outside of North America from tax credits on (S. Korea Sends Letter Explaining Stance on IRA to U.S., 2022). Also, U.S. President Joe Biden and South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol met in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on Nov. 13. The former said that details of the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act need to be formulated with South Korean EV and EV battery manufacturers' contribution to the U.S. economy reflected (U.S. President Biden Mentions IRA at Meeting

With President Yoon, 2022). In the future, not only Korea but also other countries must develop new markets, and vested workers must make sacrifices for job security.

To sum up, the challenge for our world in the future will be to identify the vulnerabilities of the system in various areas and to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other international policies is becoming increasingly important. International cooperation will become even more important. Therefore, opinions from diverse nationalities and fields will be needed to solve the diverse problems we will face in the future. We must have a keen eye to see how the world will change in the future and what will be ahead of us in the changed environment. I believe that the system of education to nurture the future generation will also undergo a major change. Since there is no future in a society of academic cliques any more, there will be a growing trend toward hiring people who have the ability to detect and analyze problems, explain situations, and enhance work motivation in the current work-at-home environment. (787 words)

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