

大阪大学予想問題 第1回

次の英文を読んで、以下の設問に答えなさい。

When a familiar voice calls our name across a crowded room, we immediately recognize that a particular sound is being used to single us out. Names are so deeply embedded in human language and culture that we tend to regard them as an exclusively human invention. Yet
5 observations of dolphins, elephants, parrots, and other social animals have prompted a provocative question: Do some nonhuman species possess something (i) analogous to names? The answer depends not merely on what sounds animals produce, but on which features we consider indispensable to the concept of naming.

10 Bottlenose dolphins offer some of the most compelling evidence. During the first months of life, each dolphin develops a distinctive sound pattern known as a “signature whistle.” This whistle differs acoustically from those of other group members and remains relatively stable over time. Dolphins frequently emit their own signature whistles when
15 separated from companions, apparently enabling others to identify the caller. More strikingly, they sometimes imitate the whistles of absent individuals. In playback experiments, dolphins have responded more (ii) vigorously to the whistle of a familiar companion than to that of an unfamiliar animal. These findings imply that the whistle does more than
20 convey the caller’s emotional condition. It may function as a vocal label referring to a particular individual even when that individual is not physically present.

This possibility is noteworthy because many animal signals are inseparable from immediate circumstances. An alarm call may indicate
25 the presence of a predator, while a mating call may reveal the caller’s physical condition. A name, by contrast, appears to operate with some independence from the situation in which it is uttered. If one dolphin reproduces another’s signature whistle to attract that animal’s attention, the sound may designate a specific social partner rather than a general
30 category, an emotional state, or an external threat. (A) This capacity to refer beyond the immediate context is often regarded as an elementary form of symbolic communication.

Evidence from elephants is intriguing but more ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾equivocal. African elephants communicate through low-frequency vocalizations that travel over considerable distances. Recent analyses suggest that some calls vary systematically according to the individual being addressed. When researchers played recorded calls to elephants, the animals sometimes reacted more promptly and intensely to calls thought to contain labels directed at them. However, it remains uncertain whether elephants intentionally ^(iv)coin such labels, acquire them through social interaction, or merely recognize complex sound patterns associated with particular relationships. A signal may transmit information about identity without functioning as a name in the fuller sense of the term.

Parrots present a related but different case. Some wild parrots acquire individually distinctive contact calls from members of their social group rather than generating them entirely on their own. Parents may modify their calls when interacting with chicks, and the young birds subsequently adopt similar patterns. Because these calls are socially transmitted rather than purely innate, some researchers have likened the process to naming. Critics, however, caution that the calls may serve mainly to announce the caller's own identity. A genuine name, according to this stricter view, must also be usable by others wishing to refer to or address the individual concerned.

The controversy exposes a deeper conceptual difficulty. Human names attract attention, distinguish one person from another, permit reference to someone who is absent, and remain comparatively stable across changing circumstances. They are also bestowed and maintained through social convention. An animal signal may fulfill some of these criteria while failing to satisfy others. If researchers ^(v)stipulate that a nonhuman naming system must exhibit every feature of human names, they risk overlooking rudimentary forms from which more elaborate naming practices could have evolved. Yet if the definition includes any signal that conveys identity, the term becomes so ^(vi)indiscriminate that an animal's scent or coloration might also qualify as a name.

The disagreement cannot be resolved simply by collecting more recordings. Human language is often treated as the standard against which all other communication systems are measured, but this comparison may be misleading. Dolphins live in fluid societies in which individuals repeatedly separate and reunite. Elephants maintain bonds across vast distances, while parrots inhabit crowded and acoustically

complex communities. Each species faces different communicative problems, and its signaling system has evolved under different social pressures. ^(B)We should not expect animal communication to reproduce human language in miniature.

- 75 The most illuminating question, therefore, may not be whether animals possess names in precisely the same sense that humans do. It may be more fruitful to ask which components of naming occur in different species and what social purposes they serve. Individual vocal labels would not erase the profound differences between animal
80 communication and human language. Instead, they might suggest that the human name is one exceptionally elaborate solution to a challenge shared by many social creatures: how to recognize, locate, and refer to particular individuals in a changing social world.

設問(1) 下線部(i)～(vi)の語句の本文中での意味に最も近いものを、(イ)～(ニ)から1つ選び、記号で答えなさい。

(i) analogous to

(イ) separate from

(ロ) similar to

(ハ) made from

(ニ) better than

(ii) vigorously

(イ) actively (ロ) calmly (ハ) correctly (ニ) secretly

(iii) equivocal

(イ) uncertain

(ロ) convincing

(ハ) irrelevant

(ニ) invisible

(iv) coin

(イ) preserve

(ロ) recognize

(ハ) invent

(ニ) repeat

(v) stipulate

(イ) assume (ロ) require (ハ) discover (ニ) deny

(vi) indiscriminate

(イ) too broad

(ロ) too complex

(ハ) too unfamiliar

(ニ) too limited

2026 年度対応 大阪大学予想問題

設問(2) 下線部(A) This capacity to refer beyond the immediate context とは、イルカのどのような能力を指すか。本文の内容に従い、45 字程度の日本語で説明しなさい。句読点も 1 字に数えます。

設問(3) 下線部(B) We should not expect animal communication to reproduce human language in miniature. と筆者が述べるのはなぜか。本文の内容に即して、70 字程度の日本語で説明しなさい。句読点も 1 字に数えます。

設問(4) 本文の内容と一致するものを、次の(イ)～(ト)から 2 つ選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (イ) Bottlenose dolphins are born with fixed signature whistles that are identical to those of their parents.
- (ロ) Dolphins sometimes reproduce the signature whistle of an absent companion to attract that individual's attention.
- (ハ) Most animal signals refer to particular individuals independently of the immediate situation.
- (ニ) Researchers have established that elephants deliberately invent vocal labels for members of their social groups.
- (ホ) Some parrots acquire distinctive contact calls through interaction with other members of their group.
- (ヘ) Critics believe that a call announcing its producer's identity must always be regarded as a genuine name.
- (ト) The author argues that animal communication systems are incomplete copies of human language.

本文語数:約 610 語

時間配分を目安

- 本文読解:8～9 分
- 設問(1) 語彙問題:2～3 分
- 設問(2) 45 字記述:3 分
- 設問(3) 70 字記述:4 分
- 設問(4) 内容一致:2～3 分