

AN ANALYSIS ON ENGLISH LOANWORDS IN AKB48 SONGS

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Abstracts

There are vast amount of English loanwords in Japanese language than other languages. It is in contradistinction to the fact that Japanese language itself has a distant difference in terms of phonology, syntax, pragmatics and discourse from English. Certainly, the borrowing of English words in Japanese language involves some loanword transformations in order to fit its language system. In order to discover those, first, the researcher reviews the relevant literature of the loanword transformations in Japanese. Then, the researcher analyses the types of loanwords transformation from English loanwords production of 5 AKB48 songs. Document analysis was used in this research. The result shows that phonological transformation is the dominant type used in the songs.

Keywords: loanwords, loanwords transformations

Introduction

There are many words in English that derived from other languages, for example restaurant, hamburger, shampoo etc. This phenomenon are also happened in other languages, including Japanese. Loanwords are called *gairaigo* (外来語) in Japanese which literally means “coming-from-abroad words”. A loanword (LW) is the term for a word that borrowed from source language and incorporated into a recipient language in a process known as language borrowing (Ringbom, 1987). Furthermore, Otake (2008) elaborates that “words are borrowed from another language in order to fulfill a need: to name something new that has no name in the language, to express something with a different nuance than is possible with the original term, or to enhance the status of the speaker by use of the borrowed word”.

Most LWs typically refer to technology (e.g., engine) or are names for new artifacts (e.g., taxi), rather than basic vocabulary (e.g., eat, moon) or function words (e.g., the) (Daulton, 2014). They can keep a strong foreign connotation, or be used without regard to origin. It is common for LWs to experience various adaptations, and they are not necessarily used as in their source language. The use of LWs does not imply a deficiency in the phonological system or in the syntax of the recipient language, so it can be concluded that the words borrowed from a source language with a different phonology and syntax will

be changed to fit the requirements of the recipient language. This is what happened in Japanese loanwords.

In the process of borrowing words in Japanese there are some changes or transformations. The transformation is defined as the type of change occurred in the process of borrowing the words (Daulton, 2008). Daulton (2008) proposed 5 types of loanwords in Japanese, namely phonological transformation, shortening, hybridisation and coinage, grammatical transformations and semantic change.

The object of this research is five songs performed by Japanese native singers group AKB48. AKB48 (derived from Akihabara 48) is a female Japanese idol group produced by Akimoto Yasushi. They have their own theater in Akihabara (a district in Tokyo) where they perform regularly (generasia.com,-). Up until now, it has released 45 singles (43 major singles and 2 indie singles), 6 studio albums, and 32 stage albums (12 regular stage albums and 20 as Studio Recordings Collection) (Wikipedia). Despite having released songs in Japanese language, many of which deliberately insert English-based loanwords. This research sampled 5 songs of AKB48, namely Ame no Pianist, Eien Pressure, Heart gata Virus, Majisuka Rock and Roll and Melon Juice. Those songs are chosen because its obviousness of English words usage in their title which indicates of English-based loanwords insertion.

In conducting this research, the researcher tries to answer two inquiries. They are: How are the types of loanword transformation occurred in Japanese language?. Then, how are the types loanword found in 5 AKB48 songs?

The researcher often encounter English-based loanwords during the study of Japanese language. Somehow, the researcher finds words such as *デフィカト* (difikato - difficult), *キーホルダー* (kiihorudaa - key holder), *トランプ* (toranpu - playing card), *バター* (bataa – butter) difficult to interpret. That experience is in accordance to Daulton’s account that “English-based loanwords are indecipherable when written and typically incomprehensible when spoken” (2008). From that experience, it becomes researcher’s interest to study English-based loanwords production in foreign language especially in Japanese language.

Literature Review

Major transformation occurred in English words when becoming Japanese loanwords (Daulton, 2008). According to Daulton, those adaptation from the English word to the loanword is classified into five types. They are: phonological transformation; shortening and other morphological changes; hybridisation and coinage; grammatical transformations; and semantic change. According Daulton

Phonological transformation

“Loanwords are initially marked as foreign by retaining close to their original pronunciations and spellings. English loanwords in Japanese are phonologically transformed and almost always transliterated. That changes are obvious as the phonological

system of the two are quite different; English uses a much larger inventory of phonemes and allows quite elaborate consonant clusters, which are absent in Japanese. English vowel and consonant sounds absent in Japanese must be represented by rough Japanese equivalents. This process has both consistent and systematic elements, and irregular and innovative ones as well. In addition, as Japanese is a consonant/vowel (CV) language, consonant clusters are broken up by the insertion of vowels (a process known as anaptyxis or vowel epenthesis), and final consonants and consonants coming at the end of syllables are generally not allowed. For example, the word “English” becomes *ingurishu*.”

Shortening

“Shortening, also known as clipping or truncation, is common because loanwords tend to be long. When English words are assimilated into Japanese, all spoken consonants except ‘n’ must have a vowel attached to them to make a proper Japanese syllable, thus the fast food franchise ‘McDonalds’ becomes ‘makudonarudo’. Because each mora in Japanese takes about the same length of time to pronounce, in theory, pronouncing *sutoraiku* takes five times as long to say as strike (Uchida, 2001a). Back clipping is the most common means of shortening, and other examples include *depaato* (department store) and *masukomi* (mass communication). Fewer words have their first syllables cut, such as *hoomu* (platform) and *neru* (flannel), and rarely middle syllables are omitted, as in *boorupen* (ballpoint pen).”

Hybridisation and coinage

“Hybrids (also known in English as loanblends and in Japanese as *konshugo*) are formed by combining Western words with native Japanese words and words of Chinese origin. Hybridisations such as *dai-hitto* (Japanese big + English hit) and *nouveau-dai* (French new + Japanese era) make compounds of European bases and Sino-Japanese nominal bases. These hybridisations can also occur between different European languages, such as *bakansu-uea* (French vacances _ English wear). They include very common words such as that for an American person *amerika-jin* _ ‘-jin’ () being the kanji affix for person.”

“Creative coinages using Western elements are common. Newly created expressions combining existing *gairaigo* have been referred to as ‘pseudo-loanwords’ (Stanlaw, 1987). One example is *sukinshippu* (skin _ -ship), denoting (normal) physical intimacy, usually between parent and child; however this is not a combination of skin and -ship, but rather an original variation of the English word “kinship”. Another example is *baajin-roodo* (‘virgin road’), which refers to the red-carpet aisle trod by a bride and her father in a church wedding. It is in this realm that linguistic confusion between native speakers of English and that of Japanese often peaks, and such creations are derided as ‘Japlish’ or ‘Engrish’.”

Grammatical transformation

“Grammatically speaking, the Japanese equivalents of many English adjectives are effectively nouns plus -na {as in ‘romanchikku na’ (romantic)}, and the equivalents of

many English adverbs are nouns plus *-ni* {as in ‘romanchikku ni ’(romantically)}. These converting devices are uniquely reserved for the grammatical integration of loanwords, making morphological changes unnecessary in the loan-bases. Practically any loanword can be verbalised. This is done so easily by adding *-suru*, which some refer to as the ‘magic power of *suru*’ (Sato, 1995: 134). For example, the loanword noun *enjoy* (based on the verb *enjoy*) becomes ‘*enjoy suru*’ (‘to enjoy’). Gerunds can be verbalised, as in ‘*jogingu suru*’ (literally ‘to jogging’), and *_as* with *enjoy*, above *_verbs* can be (redundantly) verbalised as in ‘*arenji suru*’ (‘to arrange’). Verb forms can also be obtained from nominal loan-bases by applying Japanese verbs, as in ‘*paama wo kakeru*’ (‘to perm one’s hair ’). Rarely loanwords are innovatively inflected in ways usually reserved for native words. This unorthodox suffixation is a favourite of nonstandard registers such as youth slang. Examples include ‘*paniku-ru*’ (‘to panic’) and ‘*nau-i*’ (now *_* adjectival inflection). A few other verbs do not require any affix since they naturally end with *-ru* sounds (after assimilation), making them immediately compatible to the Japanese inflectional system. These include *daburu*, meaning ‘to double’ or ‘to repeat a year’, and *toraburu*, meaning ‘to meet with trouble’.”

Semantic change

“Semantic Shift: In extreme cases, the meaning of a loanword and the English word on which it is based are completely dissimilar. An example is the loanword *kanningu* (cunning), which has the meaning of ‘cheating on a test’. Such semantic shift is rare, although colourful examples are conspicuous.”

“Semantic Restriction: Also known as ‘semantic narrowing’ or ‘semantic specialisation’, this phenomenon accounts for the loanword *sutoobu* (stove), which means only a room heater in Japanese, not a device for cooking. Semantic restriction allows new cultural distinctions without expanding the meanings of existing words, as in Japanese *okaasan* (mother) versus English-based *mazaa*, which refers only to Catholic nuns. Semantic restriction is the most common type of semantic change throughout the world, as loanwords are usually borrowed to fill specific lexical gaps (Hatch & Brown, 1995).”

“Semantic Extension: Here, the loanword includes more meanings than its original borrowed word. The loanword *handoru* (from handle) has a variety of meanings in Japanese, from the steering wheel of a car to the handlebars of a bicycle. Semantic extension is relatively rare in Japanese.”

Method

This study dealt with loanword production analysis which focused on the identification of loanword transformation types in Japanese. From the sources where the data were collected, this study could be classified into document analysis. Document analysis is described as a method of research utilized to written or visual materials for the aim of identifying specified characteristics of the material or a project that focused on analyzing and interpreting recorded materials within its own context (Ary & Razavieh, 2002). The

forms of material which were used in document analysis were various. It can be textbooks, newspapers, speeches, television programs, etc. From the description of document analysis, English-based loanwords in the lyrics can be classified into spoken materials. The song lyrics were utilized because the researcher wanted to identify the type of loanword transformation. In this case, this study utilized AKB48 song lyrics as the research materials. The title of the songs are namely, *Ame no Pianist* (Rain's pianist), *Eien pressure* (eternal pressure), *Heart Gata Virus* (Heart Shaped Virus), *Majisuka Rock and Roll*, and *Melon Juice*.

Findings and Discussion

From the five music videos, the researcher lists the LWs as follows:

They are: phonological transformation; shortening and other morphological changes; hybridisation and coinage; grammatical transformations; and semantic change.

First, the researcher analysed the loanwords used in *Ame no Pianist* (Rain's pianist). From the song, there are five loan words found namely, *biru*, *pianisuto*, *merodii*, *konchureto* and *sofaa*. The researcher found that *biru* was classified into a loanword that underwent the process of shortening. The word *biru* is borrowed from "building" in English. According to Daulton, loanwords tend to be long, so they will be shortened. It is the same as a loanword *depatoo* from department store. The other loan words *pianisuto*, *merodii*, *konchureto* and *sofaa* which respectively borrowed from pianist, concert and sofa were classified into phonological transformed loan words. By taking a look from their English origin, it can be seen that the loanwords are transformed nearly the same as the origin. It is as what Daulton argues that the phonological transformed loanwords are created by retaining close to their original pronunciations and spellings.

Second, the researcher found four loanwords in *Eien pressure* (eternal pressure). They are *puresshaa*, *guruupu*, *imeeji*, *dameeji* which respectively means pressure, group, image and damage. By analysing from the origins, the researcher grouped them into phonological transformed loan words. It was based on the Daulton's account that phonological transformation loanwords require the closest pronunciations and spellings to the originals.

Third, the researcher found six loanwords in the song *Heart Gata Virus* (Heart Shaped Virus). They are *taipu*, *haato*, *uirusu*, *meeru*, *rabu* and *songu* which respectively means type, heart, virus, e-mail, love and song. The word *meeru* was classified into shortening type of loan word as from its origin word was e-mail. Instead of becoming *imeeru*, the first vowel was omitted and shortened into *meeru*. The rest of the loanwords are categorized into phonological transformed loanwords.

Fourth, the song *Majisuka Rock and Roll*. The researcher noticed five loanwords in this song. Those loanwords are *rokkunrooru*, *shoo*, *taimu*, *puraido*, *yankii*, *gan* which respectively mean rock and roll, show, time, pride, Yankee, and gun. The researcher classified all of those loanwords into phonological transformed loanwords. As the previous song that had been discussed, the loanwords in this song featured the closest pronunciation and spellings.

Finally, the researcher Meron, Juusu. In this song, the researcher only found two loanwords, namely *meron* and *juusu*. They were the same as the title: Melon Juice. They were categorized into loanwords with phonological transformation

Conclusion

From the finding and the analysis of the loanwords used in five songs of AKB48, the researcher concluded that most of the loanwords underwent the process of phonological transformation. There were only 2 loanwords that underwent the process of shortening.

The next problem was “What are the benefits of applying positive reinforcement in SMP Pangudi Luhur 1 Yogyakarta?”. Based on the questionnaire and interview results, there were three benefits of positive reinforcement. The benefits were higher enthusiasm in learning, better comprehension of the materials, and increasing students’ confidence. In conclusion, applying positive reinforcement gave many benefits for the seventh grade students in SMP Pangudi Luhur 1 Yogyakarta to increase their motivation in learning English.

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