

Japanese Loanword Usage Amongst Second Language Students in Australia

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オーストラリアにおける第2言語として日本語を学ぶ
学生の外来語の使用について

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Abstract:

L2 learners who have studied a language in a classroom setting often have a different pattern of usage from native speakers, and this is still the case amongst reasonably advanced learners who are able to communicate in the target language alone. This tendency is especially notable in an overseas setting, where L2 learners do not have much input outside the classroom. This study investigates the use of Japanese loanwords by L2 learners in an overseas setting, where the language norm is different from Japan. This study found that even in an overseas setting, L2 learners would prefer to use the authentic Japanese spoken in Japan as a model, although various overseas factors tend to encourage them to utilise more English words. Japanese native speakers' evaluation of the use of such words was neutral overall, but there are various factors L2 learners should keep in mind when using Japanese loanwords. This study also confirms that the norm in an overseas contact situation is different from an authentic contact situation which is the pattern found in contact situations occurring in the home country.

1. Introduction

One difficulty that all learners encounter when studying Japanese is the usage of Japanese loanwords.¹ Although the Japanese believe that non-native speakers of Japanese can easily understand loanwords, the opposite is usually the case (Fukao 1979, Hayashi, Oya, Khan, Nishio, and Mizutani 1987, Nishihara 1986, Quackenbush 1977, Takahashi, Wallace, Wong, Chan, Mizutani, and Miyaji 1962). This is an especially important issue when learners are studying Japanese outside Japan due to limited input from classes and study materials and the fact that students often have only limited opportunities to use the language outside of the

classroom (Yorozu 2001). This study investigates Japanese loanword usage amongst L2 learners.

Students who are studying Japanese outside Japan may hear some Japanese from Japanese speakers other than their teachers. However, little research has been done on the use of loanwords in an overseas situation. Masumi-So (1983) investigated Japanese loanword usage among Japanese sojourners and first generation immigrants in Melbourne, Australia² and showed that a significant number of English loanwords are used in Melbourne Japanese. Masumi-So found that Japanese people in Melbourne speak differently from Japanese people in Japan with regard to the use of loanwords, employing more English words pronounced in the Japanese form. Thus, the Japanese language that students hear outside the classroom may be different from the standard classroom variety. In Masumi-So's paper the everyday speech pattern for Japanese people in Melbourne was called the "Overseas Japanese Pattern" while the pure Japanese pattern found in Japan was termed the "Authentic Japanese Pattern" (1983:70). These conventions are followed in this paper.

Overseas Japanese/English language mixing patterns may be different in a country where many second generation Japanese immigrants live. Nishimura (1995, 1997) studied the mixing patterns practiced by second generation Japanese immigrants in Toronto, Canada and San Francisco, USA. One interesting and significant difference between the pattern found amongst sojourners and first generation immigrants in Australia and the second generation Japanese in Nishimura (1995, 1997) is that the Australian study found only word level mixing, while Nishimura's study revealed that switching of various syntactic items was also possible. Nishimura (1995) also found that her participants changed their mixing patterns depending on interlocutors. Thus, learners of Japanese may hear different types of loanword usage depending on the norm of Japanese language spoken in their locality or by their acquaintances.

Although language variation is common and natural, it is also subject to an interlocutor's judgement (Haig and Oliver 2003). When Japanese native speakers

hear the use of different types loanwords from their norm, how would they evaluate it? Would they expect L2 learners to use the same norm as native speakers or a different norm?

The objectives of the current investigation include:

- (1) To investigate L2 learners' usage of loanwords in Japanese, focussing on their deviations from the Japanese norm (cf. Neustupny 1985a), and their attitudes toward loanword use.
- (2) To investigate how Japanese speakers evaluate L2 learners' usage of loanwords when they are deviations from the Japanese norm.

2. Procedure

The data on which this study is based consists of ten base interviews in pairs between ten Australians (A1-A10) and ten Japanese (J1-J10) and twenty individual follow-up interviews. All of the Australians selected were either majoring or had majored in Japanese at an Australian university, with at least four years of Japanese study. At the time of the interviews, eight students were enrolled in undergraduate courses in the Department of Japanese Studies, one was studying at Master's level in the same department and one had completed an Honours degree in Japanese the previous year. The Japanese participants were all overseas students. There were some variations amongst the Japanese participants in terms of their length of stay in Melbourne, ranging from twenty-three days to two years and eight months. Seven of the Japanese were studying at postgraduate level, the other three at undergraduate level.

In the base interviews, the Japanese participants were given a sheet of questions to read in English, which were then to be put to the Australians in spoken Japanese. The questions were written in English so that they would not affect the speech of the Japanese participants. The questions were categorised into three main areas: studying Japanese, pastimes (e.g. travel, favourite singers, eating, sports) and university life. All of the base interviews were taped with the participants' consent, and then transcribed and analysed.

Follow-up interviews were conducted immediately after the base

interviews except for one Australian participant who was seen the next day. In the follow-up interviews, each individual participant was asked questions concerning loanword usage in the base interview. The Australians were mainly asked for reasons for using deviant loanwords or for their avoidance of loanwords and whether they could substitute the appropriate Japanese forms for those words. The Japanese participants were asked to evaluate the Australians' use of deviant loanwords and what appropriate forms could have been substituted for those deviations. Follow-up interviews were conducted in the participants' native language, i.e. English for the Australians and Japanese for the Japanese. All of the follow-up interviews were also taped.

3. Results

In total, 312 loanwords were found in the base interviews. 51% of the loanwords were correctly used. In this section, loanwords which were found particularly in Overseas situations and Contact situations (cf. Neustupny 1981) are investigated, i.e. Overseas loanwords, deviations and avoidance.

3.1 Overseas Loanwords

The following seven words are examples of Overseas loanwords:

1. Japaniizu kurabu (Japanese club) (A5 and A8)
2. Aatsu (Arts) (A9)
3. intabyuu (job interview) (A6)
4. (reberu) li (Level E) (A6)
5. Shitii (city centre) (A5)
6. Onaazu (Honours degree) (A8)
7. shea suru (to share) (A9)

The first three words can be replaced by the Japanese words; Nihon(go) kurabu, bungakubu, and mensetsu respectively, although the Overseas loanwords are widely used among Japanese residents. In the follow-up interview, it was discovered that A5 and A8 thought the term Japaniizu kurabu was inappropriate,

although it is used at the university. They would call the club Nihon kurabu (A5) and Nihonbu (A8). This example reveals an L2 learners' tendency to use as much pure Japanese as possible.

Regarding Aatsu (Arts), J9 argued that Aatsu could be mixed up with Art by the Japanese, thus even in Australia it would be more correct to say bungakubu (Arts) to a Japanese person. However J9 said she would say Aatsu to L2 speakers. This example reveals a Japanese inclination to use "foreigner talk" to non-Japanese people.

It is also acceptable to use the last four words in Australia as part of the Japanese language as there are no Japanese words to replace them. Consequently, the Australian participants used these words appropriately. They can also be used in Authentic situations, but some explanation would be necessary in order to clarify their meanings. This is because the implied concepts do not exist for these words in an Authentic situation. Example 4 is a loanword of the university variety, and Examples 5 to 7 are considered to be Australian varieties. (Reberu) Ii (Level E) is used at the university to describe the students' level of Japanese language study. It means the fourth year level. In an Authentic Japanese situation, it would have to be followed by an explanation.

Onaazu (Honours degree), used by A8 in the interview, is very difficult to translate into Japanese because of the difference between the Japanese and Australian educational systems. The word could be used for the fourth year of the Japanese Bachelor's degree, but Honours seems to be regarded more highly. This could be due to the relatively low numbers of students who are permitted to enrol in an Australian Honours course. There is a Japanese translation for Honours, which is Yuutoo gakui, but it is still difficult to decode the meaning. The term Yuutoo gakui is probably not used at all in Australia. In an Authentic Japanese situation, the same concept does not exist. However, when referring to the Honours in Japan, the above mentioned Japanese translation or the loanword Onaazu would be used with an adequate explanation in both cases. J8 commented that in Australia, the use of Onaazu is appropriate but that it would depend on one's addressee and that

Yonensei (fourth year students) could be used in place of the loanword Onaazu.

3.2 Deviant Loanwords

There were numerous categories of deviation in loanword usage. Those identified in this study include the use of English, lexical deviations, phonological deviations, accentual deviations, morphological deviations (eg. baikin instead of baikingu for smorgasbord), and semantic deviations. The most prominent deviation is the use of pure English words with English pronunciation, which made up 77.4% of the total deviations, followed by phonological deviations at 14.4%. Lexical deviations (5.5%) and semantic deviations (2.7%) are relatively rare, however, they are closely related to English deviations as they are the result of influence from English. Lexical deviations such as Parisu (Paris) occur when participants simply apply Japanese pronunciation to an English word which would not be accepted even as an Overseas loanword. Semantic deviations, on the other hand occur when the semantic range of Japanese words and their English equivalents do not overlap (Suzuki 1990a, 1990b), as in paamanento no faasuto (permanent first baseman). The Japanese participant confessed he imagined “perm” and could not understand the meaning.

The Australian participants in this study have used the deviated loanwords as lexical mixings and those deviations did not affect the syntactic structure of the sentences. In this sense, the participants’ Japanese was more like the Japanese used by sojourners and first generation immigrants in Masumi-So’s study (1983), rather than that of the second generation Japanese immigrants in Nishimura (1995, 1997). The main difference between the participants in this study and first generation Japanese immigrants is the pronunciation of English words when blending into Japanese

3.2.1 English

Pure English words were the most common deviant loanwords. One hundred and thirteen English words were used by the Australian participants. A large proportion of the English words appeared to be used in both the Authentic and

Overseas situations with appropriate phonological adoption, especially in the case of proper nouns. Proper nouns are the most commonly used English words consisting of 43.4% of the total English usage, followed by words of an Australian context (23%), such as the names of Australian sports (e.g. Aussie football), education related terms (e.g. Master's preliminary), and words which are used more predominantly in the Australian context such as "junk food" and "shift work". Even amongst the words that were suspected to have been used because the participants did not know the Japanese equivalents or for convenience (i.e. 23%), half of them can be accepted as Japanese terms if the pronunciation is adjusted. All of the English words were used syntactically as if they were Japanese NPs, except for two phrases: "excuse me" and "I mean". There were also ten English words which were used with special functions. These ten words will be examined below, followed by the reasons for their use elucidated from the follow-up interviews.

3.2.1.1 Self-Correction

It was observed that the Australian participants occasionally reiterated words in English that they had originally uttered in pure Japanese. One observed characteristic of this self-correction was that the speakers were conscious of their English usage. In total there were six such cases found in this study, and three functions were found, namely: 1) query, 2) confirmation, and 3) distinguishing from a Japanese word. One example for each function is shown below:

- 1). Ki, kin'yuu ka naa. Business finance to yuu kamoku. (A6) [query]
 (B, business finance, isn't it? It's a subject called business finance).
- 2). Sore wa mezurashii, rare. (A7) [confirmation] (It's rare, rare).
- 3). Ano, nani ka, ano, take de, take ja nakute, nan te yuu, cane, cane ga aru deshoo. Take to chotto chigau. (A9) [distinguishing from a Japanese word]
 Um something, um, made of take (bamboo), not take really... how do you say... cane, you know cane. It is a bit different from take (bamboo).

The words noted in the above examples did not require reiteration in English as the Japanese terms used initially were perfectly comprehensible and needed no clarification. In Example 2, J7 remembered A7's use of "rare" in English and

wondered whether it was truly necessary to attempt to verify the Japanese word via the English word.

3.2.1.2 Imitation of Japanese Speakers

Imitation of the Japanese speakers was another reason for Australian speakers to use English words in Japanese. However, the Australian participants employed English pronunciation while Japanese used Japanese pronunciation. Examples of this are given below.

Table 1: Imitation of Japanese Speakers

	Japanese participant	Australian participant
1	<i>Dansu uizu a Urufu</i> (J1)	Dance with a Wolf (A1) ³
2	<i>Iyaa tuerubu</i> (J2)	year twelve (A2)
3	<i>chuutaa</i> (J4)	tutor (A4)
4	<i>full taimu</i> (J9)	full time (A9)
5	<i>digurii</i> (J9)	degree (A9)

In the above examples, the term “Year twelve” was the only pure English word which was used by A2. In the follow-up interview, A2 mentioned that he merely repeated the word which J2 uttered. A2 stated he usually prefers to use kookoo no sannensei (third year in high school), and does not use juuninensei (year twelve), which means he follows the terminology used in the Japanese educational system.

3.2.1.3 Summary of English Usage

The Australians’ attitude and usage of English words in the place of the appropriate loanwords are summarised below.

A. Problems with lexicon:

- Lack of vocabulary (A1, A4, A8, A9 and A10),
- Difficulty due to inability to master phonological adjustment (A3),
- Difficulty due to translation (A3 and A6);
- Inability to recall (A1)

B. Promoting factors

- Australian setting (A3, A8 and A9)
- Addressees (A1, A3, A4, A8 and A9)
- Topics (A3)
- Level of fusion of the loanword (A3, A6 and A9)

C. Lack of concentration

- Fatigue (A1)
- Concentration on context rather than on pronunciation (A1 and A4),
- Self talk (A6);

As summarised above, Australian participants used English to replace their lack of competence and concentration. In addition, there are several important factors which encourage L2 learners to use English.

Firstly, A3, A8 and A9 stated that the fact they were in Australia made them use English in the place of loanwords. Secondly, the belief that Japanese in Australia can understand English worked as a promoting factor. A9 also mentioned that it is more efficient to use some English words to Japanese people who have a similar background to the speaker, for example, when they are graduates from the same university. Thirdly, European, American or Australian topics influence L2 learners to use English words even though they are speaking in Japanese. Lastly, L2 learners are influenced by how common they think a loanword is in Japanese. A3 and A6 added that they adapt English for some proper nouns, especially personal names because they are embarrassed to pronounce them in Japanese.

3.3 Avoidance

3.3.1 Deviations and Alternatives

It is sometimes more comprehensible and convenient for both Japanese and Australian speakers to use loanwords, including Overseas loanwords instead of pure Japanese. Direct translations from English to Japanese does not suffice in many cases. Below are nine examples of the avoidance of loanwords (cf.

Neustupny 1985a) by Australian speakers when it would have been better to have used them.

Table 2: Avoidance of Loanwords

Japanese words used	Loanwords avoided
1 juku mitai na tokoro (A2) (adult education centre)	adaruto ejukeeshon sentaa
2 Kippu (A3) (airline ticket)	chiketto
3 Kookoo hachinensei (A5) (year 8) (should be “kookoo ninensei”) Chuugaku no ninensei (A10) (year 8) Chuugaku ninensei (A6) (year 8) Kookoo no ichinensei (A10) (year 10) Kookoo gonensei (A1) (year 11) Sannensei (A10) (year 12) Juuninensei (A5) (year 12)	iyaa eito iyaa eito iyaa eito iyaa ten iyaa irebun iyaa tuerubu iyaa tuerubu
4 Nihongo no kurabu (A10) (Japanese club) Nihon (go) kurabu (A4 & A6) (Japanese club)	Japaniizu kurabu
5 Saishokushugisha (A4) (vegitarian)	bejitarian
6 Iisutaa yasumi (A5) (Easter holidays)	Iisutaa horidee
7 menzeiten (A5) (duty free shop)	duutii-furii (shoppu)
8 kagi no keesu (A5) (key case)	kii keesu
9 kareshi (A8) (boyfriend)	booifurendo

All the Examples, except for Example 2, which has a semantic problem (*kippu* does not include the meaning of “airline ticket”) were noted as the avoidance of loanwords, but they appear to be acceptable. Appropriate usage of loanwords depends on one’s generation, level of education, and circumstances as well as the preference of the speaker (cf. Stanlaw 1982). The usage of these words exemplifies the characteristic L2 learner tendency to prefer to use pure Japanese rather than loanwords. It can also be said that the Australian subjects did not have the ability to distinguish which words would suit an Australian situation and which would be more appropriate in a Japanese situation.

J4, J5 and J8 evaluated the Australians’ avoidance of loanwords positively, but this also depends on the words. Individual differences also affect the Japanese participants’ evaluation, for instance, J5 would use *menzeiten* (duty free shop), while J7 uses both *duutii-furii* and *menzeiten* in Australia.

The use of the term *kagi no keesu* (key case) by A5 also indicated a useful

function of loanwords in the overseas situation. J5 stated that his image of kagi no keesu is not a flat object as A5 meant, but a thicker case. He thought the most suitable term for this might be kagi ire, yet he does not believe that either term presents the correct image for the object A5 had in mind. It might be considered as an effective attempt to employ a loanword equivalent kii keesu, as the loanword carries an ambiguous meaning. (Yamamoto 1989).

3.3.2 Self and Other Corrections

There were three cases where the Australian participants restated English words or loanwords in pure Japanese in their own speech, and another three cases after their Japanese counterparts used loanwords. Examples of self-correction are shown in Table 3, and other corrections in Table 4 below.

Table 3: Self-correction

	English words or loanwords	Pure Japanese words
1	tafu (Authentic loanword) (A2)	hageshii (tough)
2	HSC (Overseas loanword) (A8)	kookoo sannensei (year 12)
3	Nursery (English) (A10)	ki no mise (shop for trees)

Table 4: Other-corrections

	Japanese informants	Australian informants	English
1	Chainiizu (J2)	chuugoku ryoori (A2)	Chinese food
2	Mejaa (J2 and J9)	senkoo (A2 and A9)	Major
3	Puroguramu (J6)	bangumi (A6)	Program

The examples of self correction do not seem to be necessary, since all three words (with an appropriate pronunciation adjustment) are used in every day speech by Japanese people in Australia. There was no negative evaluation made by the Japanese participants with regard to the self and other corrections. However one Australian participant (A9) commented that she noticed that J9 occasionally used English words instead of Japanese. A9 thought that J9 used English because A9 was Australian. As Skoutarides (1981, 1986) pointed out, the usage of English is one of the most overtly marked characteristics of Japanese “foreigner talk” in

Australian-Japanese contact situations. This is an important phenomenon to note as it might affect the Japanese speech patterns of Australians.

3.4 Japanese Evaluative Behaviour

As noted in the introduction, one of the objectives was to investigate the Japanese participants' perceptions of their Australian counterparts' usage of loanwords, particularly their deviant usage. Various researchers have already commented on this issue. In this section an attempt is made to summarise some of their findings.

Ishiwata argues, the Japanese often use pure foreign words in their Japanese speech as well as Japanese loanwords (Ishiwata 1985). However, Shibata (1990) and Quackenbush (1979) argue that learners of Japanese must use English loanwords with Japanese pronunciation and according to Japanese rules of usage. The data surprisingly shows that not all of the Japanese participants reported evaluating the Australians' usage negatively. J1 and J2 did not notice Australian deviant loanwords, which may be due to the fact that these Japanese informants are not highly conscious of language components such as pronunciation, or else because the Australian participants' competence in Japanese was very high. The latter explanation would fit A2's situation, as his pronunciation of loanwords was nearly native. J1 also said it was remarkable that an Australian could speak Japanese that well, admitting that it was even natural for a non-native speaker to make mistakes. J3, J4, J6 and J7 also stated that they did not evaluate the Australians' usage negatively, because they are accustomed to hearing deviations. The previous statement suggests that deviant loanword usage is common amongst L2 learners. J5 stated that A5's pronunciation of words other than loanwords in Japanese was not in accordance with pronunciation rules, thus it was natural that A5's pronunciation of loanwords varied. J4 and J8 stated that because Australians are non-native speakers of Japanese, they do not evaluate Australians' usage negatively. This is similar to J1's view, mentioned above. Lastly, J4, J5, J8 and J10 stated they would not evaluate the Australians usage negatively as long as it was comprehensible. J7 commented further that she would not be opposed to

Australians using English terms when speaking in Japanese, as she herself employs Japanese pronunciation for Japanese words in English. J9 even stated that because Australians are non-native Japanese speakers, it sounds more natural for them to use the English pronunciation for loanwords.

The norms of contact situations are not identical to the norms of native situations (Neustupny 1985a). The fact that Australians are non-native speakers is accepted as one reason for them to use English or deviant loanwords in Japanese. J6, J7, J8 and J10 commented that they would evaluate a Japanese or a Japanese returnee from overseas who employed English pronunciation for loanwords very unfavourably. They believe loanwords should be pronounced following the Japanese norm by Japanese natives. A foreignness factor seems to assume a high prominence, with a strong version of “foreigner talk” being applied by Japanese participants irrespective of the fluency of the L2 learners’ Japanese (Neustupny 1985b). J6, J7, J8, J9 and J10 stated that they also tended to employ a high number of loanwords or English words pronounced in Japanese when their addressees are Australians.

J10 stated she tends to avoid using the perfect Japanese pronunciation for loanwords to Australian addressees because she fears they may not understand her. According to J7, the use of English words in Japanese is also used as a strategy by Japanese, especially when talking to Australians who have low competence in Japanese, as pointed out by Neustupny (1985b). In Australia, Japanese frequently employ an even greater number of loanwords or English words pronounced in Japanese, when talking not only to Australians but also to other Japanese (J1, J2, J6, J8 and J9). Some Japanese even go as far as utilising pure English words in Japanese.

However, there are some cases in which the Japanese participants believe there are limitations in the permissible use of English by L2 learners. J6 and J9 stated that the use of English depends upon the addressee. In addition to this, J6 stated that the context should be considered. J6 also stated that it cannot be helped, as often English is uttered so naturally by native English speakers, but that the

words should not necessarily be pronounced with a strict English pronunciation. J3 actually queried A3's ability to pronounce loanwords in Japanese syllables. This suggests that, J3, did, in fact, negatively evaluate the deviations of his Australian partner, despite his claim that he would not mind as long as he could understand them.

Conversely, other Japanese participants clearly evaluated English usage negatively. For instance, J3 and J9 stated that generally normal Japanese people would not understand the deviations that were observed. J9 also commented that unfamiliar place names are very hard to understand when spoken in English and that of course Japanese syllables are much easier for them to comprehend. J8 confessed that she did not understand some of the English words used by A8 but did not ask for clarification in order not to interrupt. Something unexpected emerged as well, J9 mistakenly thought that A9 corrected her Japanese pronunciation by pronouncing the same loanword in English, which in fact A9 had not intended to do. J3 also queried whether A3 could actually pronounce loanwords properly. One would still expect, though, that if an Australian's competence of Japanese was near native, Japanese people would expect him or her to pronounce loanwords properly.

4. Conclusion

In this study it was observed that while the Australians had acquired the Japanese language in classroom situations, and also to some extent in Japan, they had not been influenced by the way in which Japanese people speak in Australia. This may be because Australian students do not have much contact with Japanese people in Australia. It is also possible that they do not trust the authenticity of spoken Japanese in Australia. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that several students noticed that Japanese people speak differently in Australia than in Japan, eg by using a lot of English words when they talk to non-Japanese or even to Japanese people.

The Australian participants knew of the existence of certain Overseas loanwords such as *miruku baa* (milk bar) (A1) and *shea suru* (to share) (A9), yet they did not include some other loanwords as Overseas loanwords if they were able

to be replaced by a pure Japanese word, for example, *Aatsu* (Arts) (A9), but treated them as lexical deviations. However, the notion of Overseas loanwords varies even amongst Japanese native speakers in Australia. In addition, the Australian participants frequently did not know whether a word was an English word, a lexical deviation, an Overseas loanword or an Authentic loanword.

Although this study was conducted in Australia, its conclusions will most likely have a much wider applicability. In general, it is not recommended that L2 learners imitate overseas Japanese residents to any large extent, because they commonly use lexical deviations. As L2 learners have difficulty in distinguishing whether a word is an acceptable loanword or an English word, adopting English words in Japanese is not appropriate for L2 learners. Even though the words may be phonologically adjusted, Japanese listeners may interpret this as an indication of the students' lack of competence. Some Overseas Japanese terms would be also seen as an indication of low competence if used by L2 learners. Therefore, advanced Japanese language students like the ones who participated in this study need to be conscious of their loanword usage and the way that the Japanese evaluate their use of English and loanwords.

Notes

- ¹ The definition of loanwords in this paper is "words which were imported from European languages and are written in katakana" (Ishiwata 1983: 16). Some newly adopted non-Euro-American katakana words like "chogori" (Korean traditional clothes) are also included as loanwords.
- ² Australia's Japanese communities are small especially outside Sydney and Melbourne and 56.1% of Japanese residents in Australia are sojourners such as businessmen, not permanent residents (see Hatano, 1997).
- ³ Should be "Dances with Wolves".

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