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(*wasei-eigo*) Expressions

Arthur D. MEERMAN  
Katsuo TAMAOKA

久留米大学外国語教育研究所紀要  
第16号 2009年3月 抜刷

Excerpt from *Bulletin of*  
*The Institute of Foreign Language Education*  
*Kurume University*, No. 16, March 2009

# Japanese University EFL Student Understanding of Commonly-used Japanized-English (*wasei-eigo*) Expressions

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## Abstract

The present study examined the extent to which 92 Japanese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students studying at the university level understand that commonly used *wasei-eigo* expressions are not correct forms of expression in English speaking nations. Students were asked to identify the meaning of 35 *wasei-eigo* expressions by selecting an equivalent English expression from among four possible choices. Despite expectations, participants in the present study showed high correct response ratios for a majority of the items. 62.86 percent of *wasei-eigo* expressions showed over an 80 percent correct ratio. Three items were truly low in overall correct percentage. However, so long as new *wasei-eigo* expressions continue to enter the Japanese lexicon at a rapid rate, existing lists will need continuous updating. The difference between *wasei-eigo* and the equivalent expression in natural English will require continuous attention in EFL classrooms at all levels of English education in Japan.

Keywords: Japanized-English, loanwords, Japanese university EFL students, item response theory

## 1. Purpose

For the same reasons that clothing embroidered with a Chinese character, or a Japanese kanji tattoo seems 'exotic' to many in the West, Japanese society has a fondness for English words or sentences based on aesthetic appeal alone. This especially seems to be the case with the younger generation, whose capacity to borrow standard English for their own communicative or fashion-related needs seems limitless. Japanese marketing firms have helped to create this popularity, and have created an enormous variety of advertisements, products, labels and clothing marked with English phrases. Many popular Japanese songs and television themes feature phrases in English amongst the mostly Japanese lyrics, while English words are often injected into morning radio broadcasts to the extent that even non-Japanese speakers can often divine the subject of conversation. A common feature of this assimilated English, however, is that its original meaning and usage have been revised, reinterpreted and become disjointed during the process. Although coined from English, *wasei-eigo* (Japanized-English loanwords) are nonsensical in a non-Japanese context. The extent to which Japanese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students studying at the university level understand that commonly used *wasei-eigo* expressions are in fact not correct forms of expression in English speaking nations is therefore of interest to EFL instructors in their quest to teach correct forms of production as well as comprehension.

The popular usage of *wasei-eigo* in mainstream Japanese society provokes mixed reactions and even excites emotions. From a lighter perspective, *wasei-eigo* combines multiple elements of otherwise familiar English words to create a new expression that appears to be English but is unrecognizable, amusing or inexplicably bizarre to a

native English speaker. Native English speakers visiting or living in Japan invariably view Japanized-English words with bemusement upon initial contact, and upon learning what it is to which these creative adaptations are supposed to refer. In the arena of English education, Ozaki (2005) and Wakiyama (1985), considered these loanwords to be a good opportunity for students to increase their English vocabulary, although these authors described and warned of the dangers of incorrectly using of *wasei-eigo* for genuine English communication.

On other hand, when English words are incorporated into many languages, language enthusiasts and purists often look down on this phenomenon, terming it (depending on the importing language) 'Japlish', 'Denglisch', 'Franglais' or similar new terms. It is common for a genuine English expression, particularly those comprised of more than one word, to be used to mean something completely different from its original meaning. Consequently, language teachers in this country aiming to help students achieve natural fluency soon find the tenacity with which these 'incorrect' expressions imbed themselves in the Japanese lexicon to be an annoying inhibitor in their work. Yamada (1995, 1996) describes in detail the negative effects of mistaken infusions of *wasei-eigo* on effective written and oral communication.

The point of the present experiment is not to articulate either a positive or a negative view of Japanized-English expressions, but rather to determine if students understand what it is that *wasei-eigo* expressions are referring to and whether or not they are able to distinguish it from natural and correct English. Should students prove unable to distinguish *wasei-eigo* from natural English expressions, pedagogical implications for EFL curriculum in Japanese classrooms can be drawn. If Japanese students are able to effectively

use *wasei-eigo* for communication in Japan, this is no problem; however, in order to facilitate meaningful communication in mainstream English speaking societies, it is important that they are able to distinguish native English from *wasei-eigo*, which is one important aspect of achieving fluency in English. Therefore, the present study examined the extent to which Japanese EFL students studying at the university level understand that the most common *wasei-eigo* are in fact not correct forms of expression in English speaking nations.

## 2. Background

Pervasive use of the *katakana* phonetic script has made it widely possible for Japanese society to accept various alphabetic loanwords, especially borrowed from English, into the national language. These are commonly-known as *gairaigo* (literally, 'foreign loanwords') in Japanese. Although a majority of loanwords, especially those standing alone and used to describe tangible objects, maintain almost the same meaning of the original, many meanings were altered from the original and replaced with new one in a way native English speakers would not readily recognize or understand. These loanwords are called *wasei-eigo*: *wasei* (和製) means 'made in Japan', and *eigo* means 'English'; *wasei-eigo* (和製英語) therefore means 'English made in Japan', but is commonly known in English as 'Japanized-English loanwords' (e.g., 'bed town', 'race queen' and 'open car'). These words can be heard and seen with great frequency in mass media: newspapers, radio, television and the Internet abound with interviews and commentary replete with Japanized-English loanwords and expressions.

Shibasaki, Tamaoka and Takatori (2007) classified *wasei-eigo* into

four categories. The first is a type of *wasei-eigo* where Japanese have assigned meanings to individual words that are different from their original English meanings. These are also commonly known as 'false friends'; for example, the word 'juice', meaning 'drink derived from fruits or vegetables' in English, can refer to 'soft drink' or 'carbonated drink' in Japanese. Second, a type of *wasei-eigo* originally spelled longer in English, but shortened for use by Japanese. For instance, 'depart' meaning 'to leave' in English is used as an abbreviation for 'department store' in Japanese. Third, a type of *wasei-eigo* which does not exist in English created new in Japanese. For example, the word 'nighter' does not exist in English, but was created in Japanese as referring to a baseball game which is held at night, usually expressed as 'night game' in English. The fourth category comprises a type of *wasei-eigo* which is created by giving a new meaning to combinations of two or more English words. For examples, 'paper driver' is produced by combining the two existing English words 'paper' and 'driver' and used to refer to 'a person who has a driver's license but never drives'. Mistaken usages of genuine anglicisms falling in the first to third category types are easily detected by native English speakers. However, the fourth type of *wasei-eigo* gives native English speakers pause to search for meaning. (Does 'paper driver' mean a newspaper delivery person? A paper doll shaped like a driver? A driver who likes reading a paper?) The fourth type of *wasei-eigo* is very popular among Japanese since it is usually easy to pronounce and effortlessly produced by combining two English words, despite the fact that 1) the words are not commonly paired in genuine English, and 2) selections of words themselves may not be based on an accurate understanding of their true meanings from the very beginning.

Confusion surrounding the use of *wasei-eigo* is not limited to native

speakers of English however. While many Japanized-English expressions are eventually incorporated into mainstream Japanese parlance for the long term, the temporal nature of others soon renders them outdated (e.g., high miss, or 'spinster' and now-y, or 'trendy'), and thus difficult to understand for following generations of Japanese themselves. Knowledge of yet others is relatively limited to specific social circles (e.g., *otakku*, or 'trendy nerds') pastimes pursued by a certain demographic (e.g., computer games, action figure collection), and so on. These new English terms are generally short-lived, as they are used more fashionably than meaningfully. In any case, Japanese EFL students are commonly surprised to learn that expressions they had thought to be natural are in fact of little use in communicating with a native speaker of English.

### 3. Test approach for investigating Japanese EFL students' understanding of *wasei-eigo* expressions

Previous research exists on student understanding of *wasei-eigo* expressions in the case of American and Korean students both with and without Japanese learning experience. Shibasaki, Tamaoka and Takatori (2007) investigated what kinds of Japanized-English loanwords American native English speaking participants can understand through inference. They created a series of multiple-choice test questions comprising 20 commonly-used *wasei-eigo* expressions selected only from the fourth type of *wasei-eigo* (discussed above). Shibasaki et al. found that previous experience with studying Japanese helped participants to successfully infer the meaning of unknown Japanized-English loanwords.

*Wasei-eigo* is difficult for Asian students outside of Japan who are studying the Japanese language, for example those in China or Korea,

as these expressions are based on the English language and are not generally encountered in every day communication. However, these Asian students usually study English prior to Japanese, so it is assumed that their knowledge of English, accompanied with Japanese vocabulary, will assist to correctly infer unknown *wasei-eigo*. To test this assumption, Tamaoka, Hyunjung, Chi and Shibasaki (2008) investigated the extent to which native Korean speakers understood the meanings of 28 well-used Japanized-English loanwords. In their study, the rich vocabulary group showed higher scores than the weaker vocabulary group, which in turn produced higher results than the group with no learning experience. These contrasting results suggest that rich Japanese vocabularies enhance capacity to infer unknown Japanized-English loanwords. In both the Shibasaki Tamaoka and Takatori (2007) and Tamaoka, Hyunjung, Chi and Shibasaki (2008) studies, a multiple-choice test of *wasei-eigo* understanding seems to properly predict the extent of comprehension. In addition, Tamaoka et al. (2008) reported a Cronbach's alpha reliability index to be very high at 0.888 for 28 questions conducted with 104 Korean participants. Therefore, the present study utilized the same approach, but with Japanese students learning English to examine their understanding of correct English equivalents for selected *wasei-eigo* expressions.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Participants

A total of 92 native Japanese speakers learning English as a foreign language at the university level participated in the present study, among whom 32 participants were female and 60 were male



students. The average age for all participants was 20 years and 4 months with a standard deviation of one year and 0 months, ranging from the youngest of 18 years and 9 months to the oldest of 25 years and 5 months.

## 2.2 Test Construction

To construct a set of stimuli totaling 35 items, Japanized-English expressions were obtained in part from the aforementioned studies of Shibasaki, Tamaoka and Takatori (2007) concerning native English speakers learning Japanese, and Tamaoka, Hyunjung, Chi and Shibasaki (2008) dealing with native Korean speakers learning Japanese. Items consisted of incongruent (meaning something in Japanese but not in native English, e.g., *virgin road* for 'wedding aisle') rather than congruent (meaning the same thing in Japanese and English; e.g., *bestseller* for a successful novel) two-word compounds. 'False friends', single words which have merely had their meaning or form changed (i.e., *wear*, *talent*), abbreviated (*handi*; *regi*) or otherwise altered (*manshon*; *famicon*) were not included in the experiment. The present study also consulted volumes on Japanized-English (Kawaguchi, 2004; Ozaki, 2005; Tanabe, 1990; Wakiyama, 1985; Yamada, 1995, 1996) as well as multiple Internet web sites. Understanding of all Japanized-English items was investigated through multiple-choice questions (one correct answer out of four choices). For example, a participant had to choose one correct answer appropriately explaining the Japanized-English expression, 'paper driver', with four explanations provided as potential native-English equivalents: (1) a person who has a driver's license but never drives, (2) a driver who likes reading a paper, (3) a newspaper delivery person, and (4) a paper doll shaped like a driver.

The correct answer is (1). If the participant selected (1), s/he would receive one point. Since understanding of 35 Japanized-English items was solicited in the same way, the maximum score was 35.

To control for the possibility that participants would err based on a failure to understand the meaning of certain vocabulary embedded in each of the four response choices, all words in each choice were checked for inclusion in the Genius 3 English Dictionary to ensure prior familiarity with terms. In a very limited number of instances, where simplifying the language used in possible response choices was deemed to render an item too easy, Japanese translation was provided in brackets, such as with, 'a jockey's (騎手の) girlfriend'.

### 2.3 Procedure

The test was pilot tested with a group of 10 fourth-year students (8 native Japanese, 2 native English). Revisions of items, both in terms of *wasei-eigo* expressions and the wording of some English choice options was conducted in accordance with comments and particularly problematic or unclear meanings. Subsequent to these revisions, the Japanized-English test was administered in the last 30 minutes of regular class periods. This length of time was allotted based on the trial test, during which the test was completed within 25 minutes, and allowed sufficient time for participants to complete the questionnaire at their own pace.

### 3. Descriptive statistics and reliability of Japanized-English test items

A distribution of 92 participant scores with a normal curve is depicted in Figure 1. The average score of 92 participants was 26.24 with a standard deviation of 3.85. The maximum score was 34 while

the minimum score was 16. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was 0.677. The test data analysis program (TDAP) version 2.0 (Ohtomo, Nakamura & Akiyama, 2002) predicted a reliability coefficient of 0.800 if the number of test items would be increased to 67, assuming performance levels on the existing 35 items continued unchanged. To reach a reliability coefficient of 0.900, 150 test times were required. Although this reliability was not that high as Tamaoka et al. (2008), it is reasonably high enough to further investigate item by item.

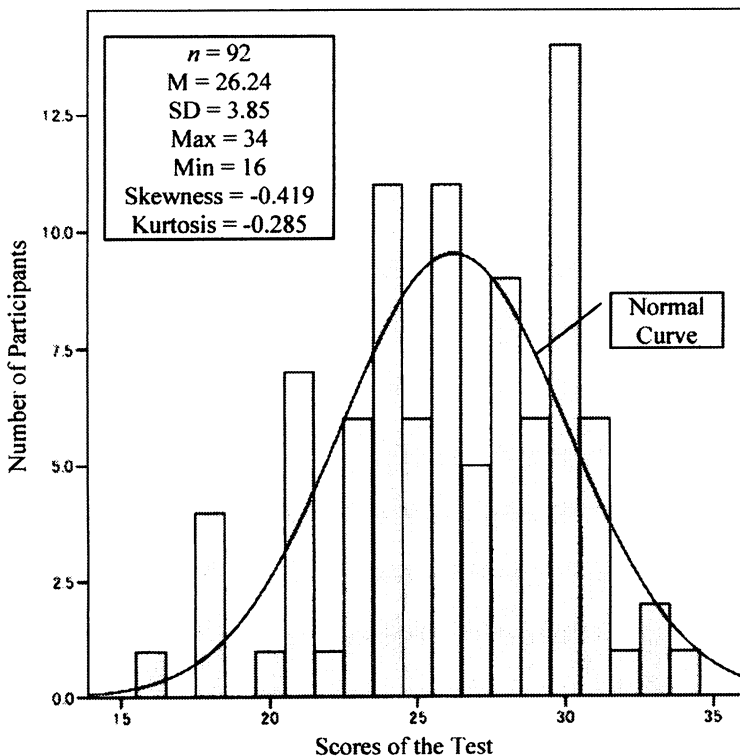


Figure 1 Distribution of Participant Test Scores

The scores of 92 participants showed -0.419 skewness, indicating a slightly longer distribution on the left side. (Skewness refers to the extent to which data is skewed from a symmetric pattern of normal distribution, with '0' indicating perfect symmetry. If skewness is larger than 1, the distribution is significantly deviated from the normal curve.) The present study showed kurtosis of -0.285, indicating slightly less spread distribution in comparison with a normal curve. (Kurtosis shows the width of a distribution spread: '0' for a perfect match with a normal distribution, minus figures for less spread and plus figures for larger spread.)

#### 4. Item analysis for *wasei-eigo* expressions

The 35 *wasei-eigo* items were analyzed using TDAP version 2.0 (Ohtomo, Nakamura & Akiyama, 2002). Using one parameter Rasch Model (see Nakamura, 2002) for item response theory (see Ohtomo, 1996; Toyoda, 2002), this statistics software provides three indices of item difficulty index (hereafter, DIFF), discrimination power index (hereafter, DISC) and an actual equivalent number of options (hereafter, AENO). The Rasch Model can provide reasonable indices with a sample size of 100, so that it is useful for practical teaching/learning settings at high schools and university classes. The result for the 35 items of Japanized English is reported in Table 1.

Table 1 Items Analysis Results for Japanized-English Test Items

Japanized-English	# of corrects	DIFF	DISC	AENO
desk work	92	1.000	0.000	1.000
after service	92	1.000	0.000	1.000
one-room mansion	92	1.000	0.000	1.000
dead ball	92	1.000	0.000	1.000
paper test	92	1.000	0.000	1.000
gender free	92	1.000	0.000	1.000
home doctor	92	1.000	0.000	1.000
new half	91	0.989	0.039	1.062
guard man	90	0.978	0.372	1.073
paper driver	89	0.967	0.087	1.179
manner mode	89	0.967	0.329	1.122
recycle shop	88	0.957	0.371	1.167
race queen	87	0.946	0.308	1.281
virgin road	87	0.946	0.366	1.208
open car	86	0.935	0.352	1.359
silver seat	83	0.902	0.089	1.510
front glass	81	0.880	0.371	1.579
man to man	80	0.870	0.046	1.640
my pace	80	0.870	0.360	1.600
morning call	76	0.826	0.485	1.574
my boom	75	0.815	0.416	1.850
live house	74	0.804	0.350	1.863
skinship	73	0.793	0.353	1.859
three size	70	0.761	0.379	2.080
morning service	70	0.761	0.418	1.828
golden hour	69	0.750	0.436	1.993
model room	67	0.728	0.191	2.239
one pattern	67	0.728	0.547	2.085
doctor stop	60	0.652	0.404	2.474
pair look	59	0.641	0.540	2.778
bed town	54	0.587	0.326	2.429
rope way	52	0.565	0.294	2.819
time service	21	0.228	0.348	3.691
two shot	19	0.207	0.209	2.989
romance gray	16	0.174	0.238	3.607

Note:  $n=92$ . DIFF = Item difficulty index. DISC = Discrimination power index.  
AENO = Actual equivalent number of options.

Prior to investigating each test item, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated for three indices, with results shown in Table 2. All three correlations were significant. The correlation between DIFF and DISC showed a significance of -0.358 at the 0.05 level. Similarly, the correlation between DISC and AENO revealed a significance of -0.450 at the 0.01 level. Since the correlation between DIFF and AENO was extremely high at -0.967, it was considered that these two indices were essentially measuring the same thing; therefore, only the two indices of DIFF and DISC will be examined hereafter.

**Table 2 Index Correlations**

Type of Index	1	2	3
1. Item Difficulty Index (DIFF)	-		
2. Discrimination Power Index (DISC)	-0.358 *	-	
3. Actual Equivalent Number of Options (AENO)	-0.967 ***	0.450 **	-

*Note* :  $n=35$  (test items). \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The DIFF index indicates how well participants performed on each test item. A score of 1 is the highest, showing a 100 percent correct response rate, while a score of 0 percent refers to no correct responses. Thus, DIFF ranges from 1 to 0. In the present test, all 92 participants correctly answered the correct meaning of seven Japanized- English expressions as shown in Table 1. These are 'desk work', 'after service', 'one-room mansion', 'dead ball', 'paper test', 'gender free' and 'home doctor'. For these seven items, DISC is 0.000 while AENO is 1.000. Apparently, it was not difficult for the student respondents to correctly identify equivalent, proper English expressions for these items.

The ideal DIFF figure, indicating maximum information, is 0.500. However, the present study used a four-choice response format (25

percent of random correct chance), meaning that the best DIFF figure becomes 0.625 calculated by  $0.500 + 0.500 \times 1/4$ . Participant understanding of only four items (i.e., 'doctor stop', 'pair look', 'bed town' and 'time service' satisfied this ideal level (considering the range of plus and minus 0.100). These four items displayed a good difficulty level as test items. The DISC index provides information as to the extent a particular test item can discriminate all participants, ranging from a minimum of 0.000 to a maximum of 1.000. DISC figures for the above-mentioned four items ranged relatively widely, from 0.540 to 0.294. Appropriate difficulty does not always guarantee discrimination power in terms of participants' test performance.

The three items, 'time service', 'two shot' and 'romance gray' received only low scores. These items were thus judged to be very difficult items. Since these were difficult, the resultant DISC figures were also very low, indicating low discrimination power.

## 5. Cluster Analysis for Japanized-English Items

A hierarchical cluster analysis was used to determine characteristically homogeneous groups of 35 *wasei-eigo* question items as answered by 92 Japanese EFL students. As previously noted, in that DIFF and AENO figures are highly correlated (see Table 2), these two indices may have measured the same aspect of *wasei-eigo* characteristics. Therefore, the present study used only the DIFF and DISC indices for the cluster analysis. Using Ward's method, a hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted with all 35 *wasei-eigo* items. Distances between items were calculated using squared Euclidean distance coefficients. With this approach, the maximum score becomes 25 points. By drawing a score of 18 as a borderline to

separate homogeneous groups, three clusters were identified. Results of the cluster analysis are depicted in Figure 2 by plotting each item by its DIFF and DISC scores.

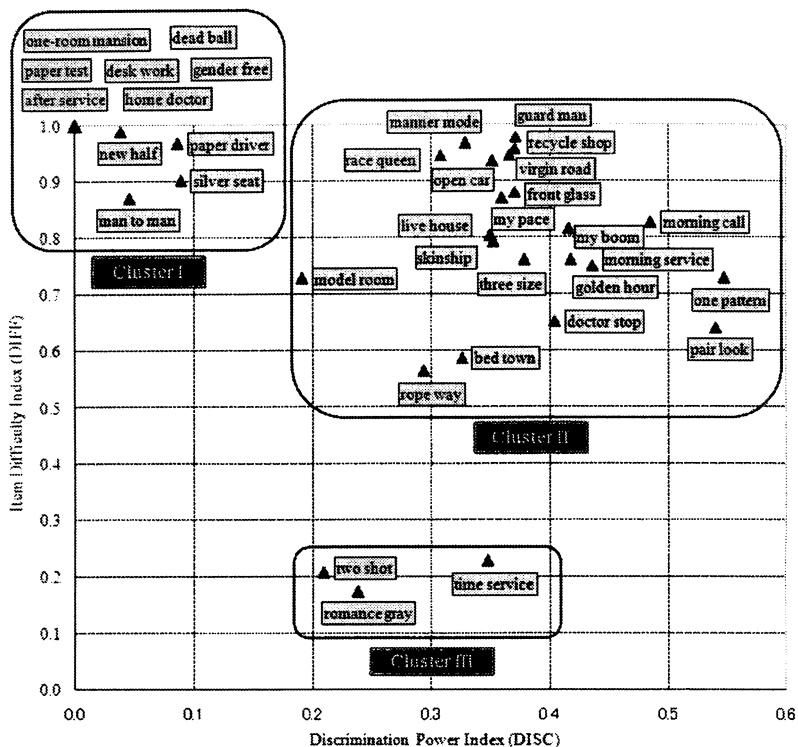


Figure 2 Plotting of Japanized English test items using the DIFF and DISC indexes

Note 1: Cluster analysis was conducted with all 35 items using the Ward Method.

Note 2: Distances between items were calculated using the squared Euclidean distance.

As drawn in Figure 2, cluster I contains those items which were better understood by participants. These items are located in the group in the upper-left quadrant, indicating not only that their descriptions or equivalent English expressions were correctly



identified, but also that their responses were not confused by incorrect choices. In this sense, these 11 *wasei-eigo* items were understood by almost all participants equally. Japanese ESL students could easily guess correct English equivalents for *wasei-eigo* expressions such as 'paper test', 'desk work' and 'paper driver', in that they are commonly encountered at the university age level, as well as they are well-accepted alphabetic loanwords used in the Japanese language in general. Cluster II in the upper-right quadrant of Figure 2 consists of 21 *wasei-eigo* expressions, constituting a majority of the test items. While these items also displayed relatively high correctness ratios, each showed a reasonably strong discriminating power over 92 EFL students. For example, 'rope way' and 'bed town' were likely to be misunderstood by a certain number of EFL students, while a large proportion of students correctly responded to these items. The group of items in Cluster III is depicted in the bottom-centre of Figure 2. These three items of 'two shot', 'time service' and 'romance gray' were poorly understood by a majority of Japanese ESL student participants. Since many students did not answer these items correctly, their discrimination power naturally gets weaker. If 'two shot', for example, takes its literal meaning, it could be 'to shoot two people' or 'to take a photo twice'. Alternatively, guessing from a cocktail 'shooter', 'two shot' might be understood as referring to two portions of different alcoholic drinks served in a single glass.

## 6 General Discussion

Due to the large number of Western concepts imported into Japanese culture during modern times, Japanese has adopted a great deal of vocabulary from the English language as alphabetic

loanwords (for more details on loanwords, see Daulton, 2008). When these loanwords resemble their original forms and meanings are recognizably similar between English and Japanese, they are considered 'cognates'. The idea of 'cognates', originally proposed by Anthony (1953), has been thoroughly investigated by various scholars. Fundamentally, the larger the number cognates between the first language and the target language (usually the second, or importing language) is, the better the performance of the target language acquisition (e.g., Ard & Homburg, 1992; de Groot & Keijzer, 2000; Palmberg, 1985, 1987; Ringbom, 1983, 1987). Although a majority of alphabetic loanwords in Japanese can be regarded as cognates (e.g., ガイダンス /gaidansu/ for 'guidance', レインコート /reinkooto/ for 'raincoat', カリキュラム /karikyuramu/ for 'curriculum'), there are some loanwords do not share the same meanings between Japanese and English. These loanwords are often labeled as *wasei-eigo*, Japanized-English which confuse Japanese EFL students during reading an authentic English passage. Therefore, the present study tested Japanese EFL students at the university level as to their knowledge of what *wasei-eigo* expressions are intended to mean by asking them to identify equivalent expressions from among four possible choices written in native, natural English.

The item difficulty index (DIFF) in Table 1 shows ratios for correct responses among the 92 EFL student participants. At the top of the list, 'desk work' indicated a DIFF value of 1.000, meaning that this item reflected 0 percent of incorrect responses, or 100 percent of correct responses. Also as shown in Table 1, despite our expectation of low achievement for EFL student understanding *wasei-eigo*, participants in the present study showed high correct response ratios for a majority of the items. Results indicate that all students correctly answered seven *wasei-eigo* items including 'desk work', 'after service',

'one-room mansion', 'dead ball', 'paper test', 'gender free' and 'home doctor'. Among these, 'after service' and 'gender free' were particularly expected to be difficult. The word 'service' in English has multiple meanings such as military service and service in church. 'After service' can be interpreted various ways such as 'food provided after the mass at church' and 'assistance provided to soldiers after their military retirement'. The expression 'gender free', which is often used in a boutique as 'this T-shirt is gender free' (meaning that it is unisex) in Japanese dialogue, has an abstract meaning of 'equality for men and women'.

In addition to the above-mentioned perfect-response rates for 7 *wasei-eigo*, 9 items were answered with over 90 percent accuracy, including some assumed-difficult ones such as 'new half', 'virgin road', and 'paper driver'. These 16 items with over a 90 percent correct ratio consist of 45.71 percent of the *wasei-eigo* expressions tested in the present study. Counting items with over an 80 percent correct ratio, six more *wasei-eigo* are included to total 22 items, or 62.86 percent of the total 35 *wasei-eigo* expressions. Furthermore, equivalent meanings for the next 6 items were correctly identified between 70 and 80 percent of the time by the 92 students. Only three items (classified as Cluster III in Figure 2) were truly low in overall correct percentage. These were 'time service', 'two shot' and 'romance gray'. The *wasei-eigo* 'romance gray' received the lowest correct percentage of 17.39 percent (indicated in DIFF of 17.4 in Table 1). This item may not be familiar to young Japanese university students who are likely not yet full consumers in society or at an age when they can appreciate linguistically creative depictions of graying hair.

Although the Japanese EFL students in the present study showed a high accuracy ratio for a majority of *wasei-eigo* items, as for English

education, *wasei-eigo* expressions are seen as incorrect usage and are hence to be wary of. So long as new *wasei-eigo* expressions continue to enter the Japanese lexicon at a rapid rate, existing lists will need continuous updating. Accordingly, the difference between *wasei-eigo* and the equivalent expression in natural English will need to be addressed in EFL classrooms in at all levels of English education in Japan (including attention to cognates which share congruent meanings between English and Japanese).

It is obvious that a complete lesson on *wasei-eigo* versus natural English would prove interminable; given the high number of new expressions already in existence, and the rapidity with which new ones are developed and entering mainstream communication, the contents of these lists will have to be organized in terms of expression frequency and importance. Mixed emotions notwithstanding, *wasei-eigo* is very much embedded in Japanese parlance and will continue to find a voice in the students who bring it into the ESL classroom for correction.

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## 英語を外国語として学習する日本人大学生による 頻出和製英語の理解

アーサー・D・ミアマン

玉岡 賀津雄

外国語からの語彙の借用はどの言語にもみられ、日本語にも英語から多くの語彙が入っている。日本人の多くが、英語からの借用語がもともと英語であり、当然、すべて英語でも使用できるものと思い込んでいるようである。そこで本研究では、英語を外国語として学習する日本語を母語とする92名の大学生に対して、和製英語が、英語としては正しい表現ではないことをどのくらい分かっているかを調査した。和製英語の正しい英語での表現または正しい意味を含む四者択一の35問からなるテストを被験者である学生に課した。その結果、大半の22種類の和製英語が80%以上の被験者に正しく判断された。しかし、いくつか判断の難しいもの(特に、'time service'、'two shot'、'romance gray')もあった。和製英語が増加している現状で、和製英語とその正しい英語での表現についてリストを英語の授業でも提示し、正しい表現を指導する必要がある。