

Loanwords in the Media

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キーワード

[外米語] loanwords ・ [(外米語)] gairaigo ・ [日本語] Japanese ・ [語彙] vocabulary
[メディア] media

We will examine loanword use in the Japanese media, with a focus on its comprehensibility. First we will see the important role that the media plays in the unilateral introduction of new Western (mostly English) vocabulary. Next we will review research on how well these words are understood by the Japanese public. Following that will be a discussion of the non-information uses of loanwords in advertising. Finally the usage of Western loans within the Mainichi Shimbun newspapers in 2001 will be analyzed.

The Disseminators of English in Japan

The majority of Japanese, themselves, do not borrow words from foreign languages, but simply use what has already been borrowed by others. Quackenbush (1974) illustrates :

The borrowing was done by someone else, and they awoke that morning to find it an accomplished fact. And what had happened was not so much a 'process' as an 'event' (p. 60).

That is, nearly every foreign word is first introduced to the Japanese public by what Quackenbush describes as "a very small number of individuals," with most Japanese people having never heard or read the word before, and having "no role whatever to play in its borrowing."

It is typically the media personnel, copy-writers, journalists, translators and academics who are the active borrowers (Loveday, 1996 p. 103). Thus the most common source of socio-cultural contact with the English language in Japan is the mass media, for instance, fashion magazines and commercial advertisements of modern technology (Haarmann, 1984).

Whereas Anglicization in the speech community arises mainly from needs to fill lexical gaps for concrete things,¹ it is in marketing and media where the most intensive Anglicization is found (Loveday, 1996 p. 157). The pace of Anglicization is accelerating as consumer trends reflect more

1) Sinification (the use of Chinese characters) is the preferred method for encoding abstract Western concepts.

and more Western standards (Gonzalez, 1995 p. 11), and already the use of Western words in the media exceeds that of colloquial Japanese. Once introduced by the media, they achieve some level of general intelligibility. Naturally, it is the most useful loanwords that are the likeliest to make the transition to wide acceptance and use. Some may come to fill lexical gaps the public had been previously unaware of. The public's first contact with new loans will be probably written but sometimes oral (Loveday, 1996 p. 103) — rarely both. That is, a given Western word typically enters Japanese through only one channel.

Borrowing is done often without any explanation. The public's tolerance for this presumptuous use of unknown foreign words is much higher than in English-speaking countries. In regards to Japan's uninhibited use of *gairaigo*, many linguists refer to the principle of "total availability" (e.g. Miller, 1967 p. 249 ; Park, 1987 p. 34). Park (1987) writes :

Since the end of World War II, and particularly during the occupation of Japan by English-speaking troops, total availability has been exercised. Today any English word is fair game for Japanization (p. 34).

That is, any person — with the inclination to borrow a word and the platform from which to disseminate it — can. This is as true in writing as in public speaking.²

Scientific terminology can also be disseminated by mass-media channels, but its currency tends to be more restricted and limited to passive understanding (Loveday, 1996 p.102). Another characteristic of such technical jargon in Japan is that it tends to maintain its original semantics ; creative coinages are rare, probably because of a strong orientation to the external linguistic model (p. 103). Even technical words can eventually become common loanwords. Loveday (1996) writes :

Certain items from the ever-expanding English-based scientific and technical vocabulary pass into wider employment in the community as the inventions and materials they refer to are integrated into daily life (p. 101).

However, "As well as being disseminators," Loveday (1996) writes, "media can be educators in regard to English borrowings" (p. 111). When a loan is used that is likely to be unfamiliar to a general audience, devices such as translational paraphrases can be employed. For the most complex terms, a whole program or article may be devoted to explaining it. However, dissemination paired with education is the exception.

The more powerful tools for spreading a word are simple repetition and even ubiquitousness. For instance, as the language of commercials is fashionable and wide-spread, it has considerable impact on the shaping of future colloquial Japanese (Haarmann, 1984 p. 120). Haarmann (1986)

2) According to E. M. Quackenbush (1974), Japanese writers have been using Chinese words in this way, "... as long as Japanese has been written," in part accounting for the exceedingly large number of loans of Chinese origin during all historical periods (p. 66).

writes :

Language usage in Japanese mass media is not a fact of minor importance but, on the contrary, one of the main features in the mosaic of modern Japanese culture (p. 120).

Loveday (1996) asserts that Japanese consumers being “confronted with a deluge of products bearing Anglicized names” is the most important result of Japan’s economic expansion, from a language-contact perspective (p. 103). Kay (1995) posits that Japan’s highly-developed mass media has the capacity to popularize new foreign loans quickly : “Japan has a highly literate population, and there is a wide variety of goods in the shops” (p. 75). Tomoda (1999) writes :

Elite groups in the media, government and academia play a role in the introduction and dissemination of new *gairaigo* derived from prestigious languages which is analogous to that played by earlier elites. However, the activity of the mass media in disseminating new terms, coupled with almost universal basic English-language education, has resulted in a rapid absorption of new *gairaigo* (p. 251).

Yet the ultimate effect of English loans in advertising on the broader language is not clear. On the one hand, the effect of the most radical, active introduction and dissemination of English vocabulary done by the media has limited effect in the general linguistic community, whose linguistic needs involve lexical gaps for concrete objects (Loveday, 1996 p. 157). On the other hand, although it is true that new loans are often perceived with but a vague comprehension, that such a use might facilitate a deepening understanding is possible. Takashi (1990) writes :

... One of the main characteristics of the commercial language is its tendency to innovate ... And it is impossible to determine in a study of current advertising language which lexical items prove to be nonce-words and which ones will enjoy at least a brief popular use (pp. 229-30).

In fact, a number of researchers have proposed criteria for differentiating loanwords from those that are borrowed only temporarily or just once, however this process is plagued with methodological problems (Takahashi, 1990 p. 329).

The Comprehensibility of *Gairaigo* in the Mass Media

The preponderance of English-based product and shop names, as well as the extensive use of English for public signs and posters, would imply that the general public, in the words of Loveday (1996) is :

... expected to understand, accept, and be attracted by, fairly intensive Anglicization, even where the satisfaction of everyday needs is concerned (p. 104).

Yet if *gairaigo* are incomprehensible to foreigners (because of the various linguistic transformations they have undergone), it is also true they are not always well understood by the Japanese themselves (Shibatani, 1990 p. 151). Although most loanwords are concrete nouns, Tomoda (1999) reports an increase in the number of more difficult-to-understand *gairaigo*, such as verbs, adjectives, abstract nouns, terms used principally for effect and strings of loanwords (p. 239). For the most part, new English expressions are introduced in the media without the audience having the necessary knowledge to understand them. Quackenbush (1974) writes :

People who write articles and advertising copy for women's magazines, special interest journals, and the like, often subordinate intelligibility to other concerns and consciously employ numerous words and expressions from foreign languages, particularly English, in the full knowledge that these words will be totally strange to most of their readers.

... Words like these do not 'filter into' Japanese — they are created deliberately and sprung on an unsuspecting public (p. 66).

Indeed, because of the flood of "raw, unassimilated foreign words," Suzuki (1987; cited in Blair, 1997) worries about the fragmentation of society into groups with reduced mutual intelligibility. Indeed, the extensive use of loans by the Japanese government compels Tomoda (1999) to write :

... New *gairaigo* can function as a form of officialese or jargon which serves to retain information with a Japanese elite (p. 248).

Moreover, Iwasaki (1994) reports that there is "... considerable variation in the knowledge of English (borrowings) among the Japanese" (p. 261). The speed of borrowing, and the technical nature of many of the items, creates a situation where all Japanese do not necessarily understand their meanings. As they are not written with Chinese characters — which are meaning-based — loanwords can be quite opaque. Miller (1967) states that the "writer's motto" in Japan has always been "Let the reader beware" (p. 245).

In 1973 the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) conducted a survey of the comprehension of foreign loanwords (Shibatani, 1990 p. 152). One hundred *gairaigo* were shown to the respondents together with five possible meanings for each. Although all test loanwords were presumed to be naturalized — e.g. *konpurekkusu* (< inferiority complex); *ego* (<egoism); *arerugii* (allergy); and *boryuumu* (< volume/size) — about 40 percent were misunderstood by half the respondents.

The NHK survey results showed a great deal of variation in comprehension related especially to the respondents' educational and occupational backgrounds, as well as to their age. Rural housewives (in their forties and fifties) averaged 40 percent, compared to a group of nursery school teachers (late teens and twenties), a group of urban housewives (thirties and forties) and a group of male company employees (twenties and thirties), who all scored about 60 percent.

The survey also verified that, when loanwords had been assigned semantically shifted meanings, Japanese tended to understand only these and not the original English ones. For

example, 47 percent of the respondents chose the shifted, Japanese meaning “a person who has a hobby” as the meaning of mania. According to Tomoda (1999) :

This demonstrated a gap in perception between the NHK researchers and the general public in the degree to which certain words had been accepted (p. 239).

Another survey showed that 81 percent of Japanese respondents reported having encountered loanwords or foreign words on TV or in newspapers that they did not understand (Ishino, 1996 ; cited in Kubota, 1998 p. 297). In a subsequent NHK survey, the recognition and comprehension of 15 words that were commonly used in the media without explanation was assessed with 1329 subjects. The average recognition rate was 77 percent, while the comprehension rate was only 50 percent. According to Uchida (2001) :

This result showed that people were not always familiar with the frequently used cognates, and they did not necessarily comprehend the meaning of the loanwords they recognized (p. 25).

English words used in the media often exist at or beyond the public's level of comprehension, and often are not listed in even extensive loanword dictionaries. Such marginal words abound in advertising and certain other contexts (Loveday, 1996 p. 78). Haarmann (1984) believes that the Japanese language of the mass media, because of how it uses loanwords, has to be considered as a special variety distinct from colloquial Japanese (p. 110).

Resistance to foreign borrowings is relatively low in Japan (e.g. Loveday, 1996 p. 213); what exists is believed to result from confusion about their meanings and the increasing number of difficult-to-understand items. Tomoda (1999) believes this leads to the *perception* that loans are overused (p. 239). She writes :

Concern over the use of new loan-words need not be associated with a xenophobic world view, but may simply reflect concern over the use of words with unclear or confusing meanings (p. 246).

She clarifies :

The locus of concern is difficult to isolate but a major factor may lie in the gap between the ability of the public to understand the meaning of novel gairaigo and their level of exposure to such words in the media (p. 250).

She reports that contemporary borrowing patterns focus on the adoption of words that have an emotional appeal, which accounts for the preponderance of loanwords in advertising and the mass media (p. 231).

The Semantics of *Gairaigo* in Advertising

In advertising in particular, lexical-item comprehension is often not the goal — an emotional response is. Tomoda (1999) writes :

One of the attractions of gairaigo is semantic fluidity. The user is not tied to any specific definition while being able to make statements which aim to impress the receiver (p. 246).

This practice is well established in the media. Haarmann (1984) writes :

Especially in commercials, many texts and expressions are used which an ordinary Japanese does not understand ... The Japanese tv watcher or magazine reader does not expect to understand all the foreign elements, but it is the subjective impression of 'modern fashionable style' which makes him accept such a usage ...(pp. 109, 110).

In advertising we find many instances of not lexical borrowing, *per se*, but innovative language mixing and switching (e.g. *nonce* borrowing), where words are momentarily borrowed by individuals in order to create certain effects (Hatch & Brown, 1995 p. 172). For instance, if an advertiser is employing English to merely create an atmosphere — such as modernity and sophistication — there is no expectation that the words themselves will be understood. In fact, unknown English words may have the strongest impact exactly because of their novelty (Iwasaki, 1994 p. 265). Quackenbush (1974) concurs that, “Actually many of the borrowed words that appear in advertisements are there just because they are not known to the readers to whom the advertising is addressed” (p. 65).

Although the vast majority of Japanese are monolingual, English and other Western languages, *per se*, have great appeal. Tomoda (1999) writes :

A common factor in the images invoked by these gairaigo is a feeling of unreality which seems linked to the vagueness as well as to the newness of these terms (p. 243).

Meanwhile, because the native language is used mainly for communication, it sometimes lacks freshness. It follows that in the introduction of certain products, the mother tongue does not appeal to people's emotions. Instead, the Japanese mass media fully exploit the affective and nuance-carrying nature of loanwords to advertise products. According to Haarmann (1984), since the Japanese have stereotypical ideas toward specific cultures, each foreign language “evokes the intended stereotype in the consumers' mind” (p.104). For example, English words are frequently employed to give the consumers confidence that the products have a practical use, are of high quality, and enjoy international appreciation. Therefore, English words are employed to name sportswear, stereos, cars, alcoholic drinks, etc. Japanese fashion in particular is full of loanwords (Haarmann, 1986). Shibatani (1990) writes :

This kind of advertising copy takes advantage of the psychological effect that foreign loanwords bring about in the mind of potential buyers, who are often attracted to the fashionableness or newness of those foreign expressions, even though they may not fully understand them (p. 152).

Haarmann (1986) agrees that :

Japanese bilingual texting is meant to create specific moods and to appeal to people's emotions rather than to their foreign language proficiency (p. 120).

Loveday (1996, p. 214) summarizes the motivations for loanword use by the media as a set of four planning choices :

- upgrading/Westernizing
- compensating (for lack of real L2 ability)
- obscuring (e.g. euphemisms for politeness)
- intentional miscoding (e.g. for humor)

In most cases, "That the message should be wholly intelligible to community members is not necessary, since its primary function is decorative" (p. 106).

Meanwhile Takahashi (1990) distinguished five function types of loans in her study of advertising (p. 330). A total of 5556 loanword tokens were found: 1523 tokens from television commercials and 4033 from print advertising. She found, too, that the most common usage of a loan was as a decorative "special-effect giver" (p. 331).

**Loanwords in Advertising —
Uses, Frequency and Percentage of Tokens**

Fuctional Catgery	Number of Occurences	Percentage
Special-Effect Giver	2506	45.10%
Brand name	1408	25.30%
Lexical-gap filler	883	15.90%
Technical term	737	13.30%
Euphemism	20	0.40%
Unidentified	2	0.04%

Haarmann (1986) perceived that the use of English loans in advertising is quite different from their use by the public. Regarding all domains of Japanese society, including not just the media but also public and private life, he found more than 30 social functions of English. In contrast to loan use in the media, in the public :

Only a minority of uses of these social functions could be labeled as 'fashionable use of English', whereas most reflect conventional standards of language use which have a tradition of many decades (p. 108).

He concludes ...

The use of English and other foreign languages, therefore, is 'impersonal', because it is not reflected in the language use of the Japanese speech community (p. 112).

Not only does loanword use in the media often exist separately from loanword use in the populace, it is not uncommon for Western words in the Japanese media to be used in ways dissimilar to how the words are used abroad. Haarmann (1986) writes :

It is not the intention of Japanese mass media producers to imitate the patterns of language use in the respective foreign countries; rather, they follow 'Japanese' guidelines of foreign language preferences and techniques of their application (p. 108).

It is in advertising where one meets such contradictory expressions as *mekanikku-na dijitaru kurokku* ("mechanical digital clock") and *gendaiteki de antiku-na dezain* ("modern antique design"). Other such examples include the most popular sports drink in Japan, unattractively named (for English speakers) "Pocari Sweat." And there is a micro bus called the "Delica," whose name native speakers would associate with either "delicatessen" or even worse "delicate."

Loanword Usage in News — the 2001 Mainichi Newspapers

We have seen the important role that the mass media play in introducing and disseminating Western words. We have also seen that because of this unilateral process, especially recent introductions are largely not understood by the public. In fact, the precise-meaning-bearing potential of words is often sacrificed for psychological effects that depend on the novelty and obscurity of lexical items, as in advertising.

Given this linguistic environment, it is not surprising to find that newspapers, despite being a form of mass communication, are not so discriminating about the intelligibility of the Western loans they use. Therefore, frequency data based on an examination of word usage in newspapers should not be assumed to indicate general recognition or comprehension by the public. In newspapers, too, one can evidence for the liberal borrowing of Western words, although its nature is different.

Following is an examination of the Western loans used during a recent year in a major Japanese newspaper.

The Data

The Mainichi Shimbun (literally "daily newspaper") is a nationally-distributed, Japanese-language newspaper. An extensive word-frequency list was obtained with the assistance of the Keihanna Human Info-Communication Research Center (Nara prefecture, Japan). It is based on the complete set of 2001 Mainichi newspapers. It includes data from sentences followed by a *kuten* (the Japanese version of a period). Therefore there were no headlines included, and there were

no ads. There were 48,097,418 characters in the corpus, or if one averages there to be two characters in Japanese to make the equivalent of one English word, then it was roughly a 24,000,000-word corpus.³ The morphological analyzer was “ChaSen.”⁴

The resulting frequency list of *katakana* types ran to almost 13,000; from *tero* (terrorism) with 11,584 occurrences to words like *inkurain* (incline) with one occurrence. Another list was produced of the 2000, most-common, *katakana*-word types not recognized by ChaSen. Although proper nouns dominated this “unknown” list, it also contained a relatively small number of loanwords.

Frequency data from such a newspaper survey of Japanese should suggest general word frequency, however, one must consider the mass media’s liberal approach to foreign words, which leads to frequent usage of little-understood items, including idiomatic usage.

Procedure

An extensive sampling was conducted of the complete *Mainichi* newspaper frequency list, taken from the around 13,000 occurrences of “known” (i.e. recognized by ChaSen) *katakana* types⁵ and the top-2000 “unknown” ones. Altogether, 1231 of the approximately 15,000 *katakana* types were sampled and tested.⁶

Japanese university students were asked whether they understood the Japanese samples items in a self-appraisal test. The choices available (in Japanese) to the students were :

- + “I understand it.”
- “I don’t understand it.”
- ? “I haven’t never heard it, but I can guess its meaning.”

Each set of 100-loanword samples was tested with 10 students. Only a “+” answer was accepted as a positive response. If three or more subjects gave “-” or “?” responses, the word was considered to not be commonly understood.

The reliability of the subjects was verified by using 10 nonsense words for every 100 loanwords. In virtually all cases, subjects could reliably recognize nonsense words.

The vocabulary was separated into two types : 1) words that had appeared in the *Mainichi*

3) There is no token count, because Japanese measure text with “*ji*,” (e. g. Chinese letters, and *hiragana* and *katakana* letters) or sometimes computer file size (where one Chinese character usually occupies 2K, and other syllabary 1K).

4) ChaSen version 1.0 was officially released in 1997 by the Computational Linguistics Laboratory, Graduate School of Information Science, Nara Institute of Science and Technology (NAIST). It is a free Japanese morphological analyser. Source : <<http://chasen.aist-nara.ac.jp/>>

5) As *katakana* is the syllabary in which loanwords almost always appear.

6) This was not a normal ‘random’ sampling. The *katakana* forms chosen for testing had correlated to word families in the British National Corpus and the BNC 3000 frequency list (Nation, in preparation). However in terms of comprehensibility, these words are likely to be roughly representative of all of the loans used in the newspapers.

newspaper and also in one or both dictionaries of common Japanese loanwords — Motwani's A Dictionary of Loanwords Usage (1991) or Kamiya's Tuttle New Dictionary of Loanwords in Japanese (1994) ; 2) words found in the Mainichi newspaper but not in either of the dictionaries.

Results

Of the 1231 words sampled, about one quarter was not recognized by Japanese young adults :

Groupings of Loanwords, Number of Types, Number and Percent Recognized, Number and Percent Unrecognized			
	number of sampled words	number and percent recognized	number and percent unrecognized
(one or both loanword dictionaries)	(847 types)	(658 types) (77.5%)	(189 types) (22.5%)
the 2001 Mainichi newspaper	609 types	377 types 62%	232 types 28%
both of the above	622 types	555 types 89%	67 types 11%
all Mainichi sampled words	1231 types	932 types 75.5%	299 types 24.5%

Discussion

This result would seem to confirm the liberal usage of Western loans.

Strictly speaking, a nonce borrowing is a one-time affair — an arrangement of convenience. It can be avoidable, as in when an appropriate L1 form is available, or when Sinofication (creating a new combination of Chinese characters to describe a concept) is possible. But if the story involves foreign countries or modern society, it is indeed likely that a Western nonce borrowing will be used.

By comparison, idiosyncratic usage is topic-specific and harder to avoid, especially when the terminology used to describe a thing has already been established. It is affected by the attention given the topic and its longevity. Once the terminology has been introduced into a topic's discussion, if repeated, it is then best described as an idiosyncratic usage. If a word is then used more often and in a wider range of situations, it has moved away from idiosyncratic usage and into the linguistic mainstream.

While the official policy of NHK is to avoid unfamiliar and opaque foreignisms in the language of its announcers, and to accompany loanwords with a Japanese explanatory phrase where necessary, the general media community observes no absolutist rules in this matter — such judgements are left to individual program writers and producers (Loveday, 1996 p. 160). Another weakness of the NHK's policy towards loanwords was revealed in their own surveys with the public. Namely, there is considerable variation in comprehension levels in the population and mere familiarity with a word does not imply its comprehension (Tomoda, 1999 p. 240).

It is unclear what would motivate the deliberate use of nonce borrowings in journalism, except that it has been observed that Japanese tend to use loanwords in order to impress others (e.g. Miura, 1979 p. 13). Indeed, as Tomoda (1999) writes :

The current dominance of English as a source of loan-words reflects its current prestige status (p. 249).

It appears that the only type of mass media that, by custom, strictly requires its loanwords to be understood by most if not all readers is newspaper editorials. According to Iwasaki (1994) :

Newspaper editorials do not exploit the considerable variation in the knowledge of English among the Japanese. Rather, they cope with the variation by using mainly established borrowings and by adding glosses to nonce borrowings in order to maintain intelligibility (p. 261).

Thus it can be assumed that the use of nonce borrowings is less frequent than that found in advertising. In Japanese news stories — and apparently in Japanese editorials — the focus is likelier to be on relaying information, not on influencing the emotions of the reader. Nonce borrowing is unlikely to have contributed to the one quarter of items not recognized by Japanese young adults. They would, by definition, be low frequency anyway.

A partial explanation is more likely to be found in the idiosyncratic usage of loanwords. Newspapers present an ideal linguistic environment for idiosyncratic usage. They include topics that will be covered again and again as the stories develop, requiring the repeated use of key terminology. Hwang & Nation (1989) have verified that running stories provided more repetitions of topic-related, low-frequency words. Despite having appeared on a high-frequency list, many words are better considered as technical words, rather than high-frequency words per se, because they are proportionally more frequent in a specialized area — i.e. the news of a given period or of a specific topic — than in the language as a whole. Moreover, loanwords related to a wide variety of advanced (if not esoteric) scientific fields appear in newspapers every day (Honma, 1995 p. 47).

World events clearly dictate lexical choices. An examination of the top 100 words in the list of words “known” by ChaSen revealed this distribution of words :

Types of Words, Occurrences by Type, and Top-Five Words and their Occurrences

type of word	# of words	most frequent and occurrences	2nd most frequent and occurrences	3rd most frequent and occurrences	4th most frequent and occurrences	5th most frequent and occurrences
general	67	<i>tero</i> terrorism (11,584)	<i>kilo</i> kilo (gram/ ometer (7378)	<i>doru</i> dollar (5114)	<i>biru</i> building (4297)	<i>shisutemu</i> system (4124)
place related	27	<i>roshia</i> Russia (5326)	<i>ajia</i> Asia (4070)	<i>washinton</i> Washington (3855)	<i>afugani- sutan</i> Afghanistan (3805)	<i>afugan</i> (3612) Afgan
other proper noun	4	<i>busshu</i> Bush (4817)	<i>maikaru</i> Michael (1180)	<i>iezu</i> AIDS (1024)	<i>yakuruto</i> Yakult (1012)	n/a
erroneous or unknown	3	<i>ku</i> (2825)	<i>ru</i> (2010)	<i>ri</i> (1479)	n/a	n/a

It is not surprising to find that in 2001, the most frequent loanword corresponds to English terrorism. It is also fair to say that if Japanese *tero* were not well known prior to 2001, it is indeed successfully disseminated today. That *tero* and related words reached such high frequencies in the short period following the September 11 terrorist attack is remarkable. This indicates how the mass media can quickly elevate a idiosyncratic borrowing far into the linguistic mainstream given sufficient repetition.

A majority of the words on the “unknown” list were proper nouns — names of people and less-known places in the news. Not surprisingly, the top four words on this list were also related to terrorism, while the fifth word corresponds to the, the most common word in English but not a commonly-recognized loanword:

‘Unknown List’ : Top Five Words and Occurrences

word	English Equivalent	occurrences
<i>tariban</i>	Taliban	5609
<i>binradin</i>	Bin Laden	2089
<i>usama</i>	Usama	1058
<i>arukaida</i>	Al Qaeda	786
<i>za</i>	the	652

Conclusions

While there is a profusion of everyday loans in the Japanese media, there are likewise a large number of poorly comprehended items whose uses range from marketing decoration to idiosyncratic usage. In newspapers, world events can impel previously obscure Western words into the everyday Japanese lexis. Tomoda (1999) writes :

Viewed from a long-term perspective, the increase in gairaigo usage and its emergence as the principal engine of word generation is likely to be the most significant change in the Japanese language during the twentieth century (p. 249).

And, when one considers the larger linguistic situation, its possible that nonce borrowings — whatever their motivation — are *the* propelling force and, one by one, initiate the lexical evolution of the Japanese language.

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