

A Re-examination of Loanwords as an Aid for English Language Learning and Teaching

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Abstract

The impact of loanwords on English vocabulary acquisition has been ubiquitous much-discussed topic in English teaching contexts such as Japan, where the language includes a large number of English-derived words in the form of loanwords. Despite considerable discussion of this issue, however, there is little corpus-based research that provides a descriptive analysis of English-origin words in comparison to their parent words in English. This explanatory study aims to explore the application/implications of a particular loanword in Japanese using a corpus-based approach, and to suggest the pedagogic implications for how loanwords should be treated when teaching English vocabulary in order to make use of this rich linguistic source that is already available in learners' first language.

Keywords: Loanword, Corpus-based study, English vocabulary teaching, Language contact, Cross-linguistic analysis

1. Introduction

In the past century, English has become the de facto lingua franca and is now spoken extensively by people across the world. As English spreads globally, fragments of its lexicon permeate other languages. Japanese is no exception in that it has adopted a large number of English words into its lexicon, enriching the language in the process. Hogan (2003), for example, estimates that around 10 % of the total Japanese lexicon consists of loanwords, with such words comprising 13 % of the words in daily spoken language and up to 25 % of the texts of general-weekly publications. Although loanwords in Japanese derive from a range of foreign languages, English is by far the most prominent source of borrowing, and reportedly accounts for approximately 94.1% of the loanwords in Japanese (Stanlaw, 2004). Due to the pervasive nature of loanwords, especially English-derived words, the impact of loanwords on English vocabulary acquisition has been a topical subject in English language teaching, in the Japanese context in particular. It is often discussed in line with cross-linguistic transfer, in which similarities/congruities between first language (L1)

and second language (L2) lead to positive cross-linguistic transfer whereas discrepancies between the languages causes negative transfer in L2 acquisition. Some claim that loanwords are a rich linguistic source for L2 acquisition because they allow learners to expand their vocabulary and communicate in the target language (e.g., Daulton, 2004, 2008; Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2000), while others consider them a hindrance to L2 learning and communication (e.g., Martin, 2004; Shepherd, 1995).

Despite the substantial scholarly debate on the effects of loanwords on L2 vocabulary acquisition and use, some areas are yet to be fully explored. One of these is the descriptive analysis of loanwords; more precisely, empirical research examining and describing word usage/meaning of loanwords in comparison to their parent words in English is scarce. There is a consensus that linguistic alterations often take place in loanwords during the process of borrowing, which results in divergence in word meaning/usage as well as other aspects of word form (e.g., spelling, pronunciation, and/or morphology). Observations in this area, however, appear to be heavily based on introspection and the individual researcher's linguistic knowledge of the two languages, in this case English (i.e., donor language) and Japanese (i.e., recipient language). To date, little corpus-derived data, which is based on larger quantities of authentic texts and facilitates greater accuracy and consistency of analysis, is available. The absence of this kind of empirical data leads to a lack of objective and reliable information or reference materials on the usage of English in Japanese contexts. In addition, as a result of the lack of such well-grounded information, existing research and discussion on the impact of English-derived words on L2 acquisition and use is sometimes inconclusive. The present study thus aims to explore the word usage/meaning of one English-origin word in contemporary Japanese in comparison to those of its parent word in English, by means of a corpus-based approach. It does not aim to take a position on or to provide evidence for or against the arguments regarding whether loanwords lead to positive/negative transfer in L2 learning. Rather, it contributes to scholarship on English nativised in Japanese contexts via a corpus-based approach and provides pedagogic implications for how English-derived words should be dealt with in L2 teaching in order to make optimal use of them.

2. Background of the Study

There is a widely held notion in the realm of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) that L2 acquisition is different from L1 acquisition in certain respects. Differences include the fact that L2 learners already have L1 knowledge and are more cognitively mature (Schmitt, 2000). Vocabulary acquisition is no exception. Jiang (2004) notes that learning new words in an L2 is different from doing so in one's L1 in the sense that L2 vocabulary acquisition involves the existing L1 conceptual and linguistic systems, whereas in acquiring L1 both the meaning and other properties of the word are learned at the same time through extensive contextualised input. In other words, L2 learners have "already developed conceptual and semantic systems linked to the L1" (Takač, 2008, p.8). This accounts for the fact that L2 learners, especially in the initial stages of learning, often map new L2 words to pre-existing concepts or L1 translational equivalents (Jiang, 2002; Takač, 2008). Takač (2008) points out that a learner's L1 plays a role in this process, depending on the degree of similarity between the languages.

Linguistic distance between L1 and L2 also plays a role in determining the degree of learning burden. It is often the case that where languages are related there is a great deal of syntactic and lexical similarity between the languages, and this makes L2 learning less burdensome. According to Nation (2001), the learning burden of a word is the amount of effort required to learn it, and the degree of the burden depends on how much the new word overlaps with the knowledge of words that learners are already familiar with. Accordingly, similarities between L1 and L2 lexicons make L2 vocabulary learning less burdensome. In this

regard, cognates¹ have often been discussed as facilitators to L2 vocabulary learning and use. Several empirical studies have shown the role of cognates to be prominent in both inferring and learning L2 words (e.g., Anderson & Jordan, 1928; Ard & Homburg, 1983; Lado, 1972; Palmberg, 1985). The positive impact of cognates on L2 acquisition can also be expected of the loanword – ‘a foreign word that has been assimilated to the host language’ (Banta, 1981, p.134). While English and Japanese are not typologically related languages, an enormous number of loanwords or English-derived words are used in daily life in Japanese society, which has led to the consideration of loanwords as a major cue for L2 learning, in a similar way to cognates (e.g., Daulton, 2008; Kay, 1995; Nation, 1990).

In fact, several studies have demonstrated that loanwords help Japanese learners studying English to recognise, infer, and produce English words. Yoshida (1978), for example, is a good example of empirical research that demonstrates the positive influence of English loanwords on a Japanese-speaking child’s English vocabulary acquisition. Yoshida’s data was collected from a seven-month longitudinal observation of a three-year-old Japanese-speaking child, Mikihide, who had recently moved to the United States. The research found that English loanwords helped him to comprehend new English vocabulary and to acquire related English base-words quickly. Whereas Yoshida (1978) studied a young child’s vocabulary acquisition in an English as a second language (ESL) environment, Brown and Williams’ (1985) and Daulton’s (1998) studies deal with young Japanese learners studying English as a foreign language (EFL) in Japan. Similar to Yoshida, both studies also showed the positive effect of loanwords in both receptive and productive vocabulary tasks completed in English. Daulton’s (1998) study, which examined whether or not recall and recognition of lexical items with loanword correlations is better than with non-loanwords, provides further evidence on the issue. The study involved 27 junior-college-level students, who were asked to answer vocabulary questions by filling in blanks for both loans and non-loanwords. The results demonstrated that students performed better with loanwords than with non-loanwords, which suggests that their pre-existing knowledge of loanwords in Japanese can help to improve learners’ acquisition of English vocabulary.

As the literature reviewed above shows, both cognates and loanwords play a positive role in English language learning and use. At the same time, however, attention should be paid to ‘false cognates’ or ‘false friends’ - words that are similar in form but whose meaning is partially or totally different in the L1 and L2. Taking an example from Lamb (1997), the Bulgarian word ‘magazine’ and the English word ‘magazine’ are similar in form but differ in meaning; the Bulgarian word ‘magazine’ is equivalent to the English word ‘shop’ whereas the English word ‘magazine’ signifies a periodical publication. Such discrepancies in meaning between languages can trigger misunderstandings and errors in learners in terms of L2 recognition and production. This view is supported by Millar (2006), who considered the effect of loanwords on Japanese learners’ production of English. He examined a learner corpus, the ICLE-JP,² and compiled words with Japanese loanword equivalents in order to analyse whether the learners’ use of base-words disclosed some of the features of the Japanese loanwords. The results reveal some Japanese-specific usage of English words, in particular meaning narrowing and broadening of the word in the learners’ production in English. For instance, 71.6% of a total of 53 occurrences of the English word ‘heart’ in the corpus was associated

¹ A cognate is a word found in two or more languages that usually has a historical relationship and is similar in form and meaning (e.g., Whitley, 2002). For example, the English word ‘rapid’ has a cognate relationship with the Spanish word ‘rápido’, showing sound-meaning correspondences (e.g., Proctor & Mo, 2009).

² The ICLE-JP corpus, the Japanese component of International Corpora of Learner English (ICLE).

with Japanese loanword usage, and only approximately 28% was base-word-like usage. Whereas the word 'heart' in English signifies a wide range of meanings (e.g., 'biological organ', 'the central part of something', 'emotions', 'character' etc.), in Japanese discourse its meaning is limited to the sense of 'emotions' and 'character' (i.e., 'ハート³ hāto' or 'heart'). Along with meaning narrowing, meaning broadening has also taken place in the process of adoption and use of the word in Japanese. As a consequence, the word 'heart' has acquired Japanese-specific usage, including the meanings of 'mind', 'spirit', and 'will' in English. Millar's (2006) study demonstrates the interference of loanword usage or Japanese-specific usage of English words in learners' L2 production. His findings suggest the need to cultivate learners' linguistic awareness between L1 and L2, as well as formal instruction that pays attention to 'false cognates' or 'false friends', which tend to be overlooked by learners and may result in a further source of errors in L2.

In sum, previous studies demonstrate that loanwords could be both an aid and a hindrance to L2 acquisition. The point here is that the effects of loanwords on L2 acquisition may vary according to the individual lexical item. That is, from the viewpoint of cross-linguistic transfer, loanwords that are identical or at least similar to their parent words in English on phonological and semantic levels, for example, can be expected to lead to positive transfer. In contrast, those that have undergone nativisation and have consequently evolved in various respects are more likely to result in negative transfer. It is therefore necessary to conduct a close linguistic analysis of English-derived words in the recipient language in comparison to their parent words in the donor language before employing loanwords in any SLA research in order to determine the effects of loanwords on L2 acquisition. Such an analysis is also important before loanwords can be widely incorporated into the language learning process as a heuristic tool. There are substantial studies that examine nativisation on a phonological level (e.g., Igarashi, 2007; Quackenbush, 1974). To date, however, there has been little focus on the semantic aspects of nativisation of loanwords in the process of adoption into and/or use in Japanese. Those studies that do exist have only described the changes anecdotally, and have rarely been based on empirical data derived from a corpus and presented in a systematic and informed way. In light of the gaps in the existing literature, this explanatory study examines the evolution of one well-rooted loanword in contemporary Japanese, focusing on its usage/meaning in comparison to that of its parent word in English via a corpus consisting of Japanese newspaper articles published over one year. More specifically, the present study takes the English-derived word 'ダウン daun' (down) as an exemplar to: a) explore whether or not the application and implications of 'ダウン daun' in the Japanese language have diverged from its parent word in English, and if so; b) to gauge how and to what extent. It will then explore potential applications of English-origin loanwords that are available in Japanese in the contexts of English language learning and teaching.

3. The Study

3.1. Data Source

The corpus of texts used in the present study was gathered from a Japanese newspaper, the Mainichi shinbun (The Mainichi) published in 2006. The Mainichi shinbun is one of Japan's major daily newspapers, with the third highest circulation in 2007 after the Yomiuri and the Asahi (Circulation, 2008). Archives of

³ Loanwords, as a general rule, are transcribed using katakana phonetic script, one of the writing systems in Japanese. The English word 'heart', for example, is written with katakana 'ハート hāto', approximating its original sound in English.

the newspaper are available on CD-ROM⁴, which comprise one year's worth of newspaper articles. The CD-ROM for the year 2006 consists of 95,762 articles including 27,906,284 word tokens. This explanatory study has chosen the English-derived word 'ダウン daun', corresponding to 'down' in English, as an example to explore. The word is a well-rooted loanword in Japanese, ranked in the first 300 high-frequency words in the frequency list compiled by the National Institute for Japanese Language ([NIJL], 2008). Likewise, its parent word 'down' in English is also a high-frequency word, ranked in the top 100 high-frequency words in the British National Corpus (BNC). The word 'ダウン daun' was chosen because frequency has practical ramifications in language teaching (see Nation & Waring, 1997; Schmitt, 2000) and, therefore, words that are more frequently used in a language seem to have more direct implications for language learning and teaching. This study analyses a total of 151 occurrences of the word 'ダウン daun' that appear in the corpus.

3.2. Procedure

All Mainich shimbun articles published in 2006 were extracted from the CD-ROM database and saved as a text file. They were then lemmatised or segmented using 'ChaSen' (Matsumoto et al., 2000) morphological analysis software in order to utilise 'WordSmith Tools' (Scott, 2007), a software package designed for corpus analysis. The corpus that had undergone morphological analysis, hereafter referred to as MSC 2006 (i.e., Mainichi Shimbun Corpus 2006), was then analysed by 'WordSmith Tools' (Scott, 2007) to obtain frequency information and concordance lines⁵ for the word under consideration. Once the concordance lines for the word were available, they were analysed qualitatively, with special reference to usage. Classifying words according to their meanings is not always straightforward, and can sometimes be biased by subjectivity. To ensure that the meaning of the word in the corpus could be applied consistently by other researchers, to minimise subjectivity, and to make the analysis more reliable, an inter-rater reliability check was also carried out by three native speakers of Japanese, including the author of this article. All three were asked to read each concordance line and indicate what they thought the word meant in each individual concordance line. If there was no agreement among the three, the word was classified in the 'other' category and excluded from the analysis along with the words that fell into the category 'proper nouns'.

3.3 Analysis

The usages of the word 'ダウン daun' that appeared in MSC 2006, as a reflection of Japanese usage, were examined to determine whether, and if so, to what extent, the usage/meaning of the word had diverged from the parent word *down* in English. Since there is no corpus in English that is comparable to MSC 2006 in construction, the Oxford Dictionary of English ([ODE], 2nd ed.)⁶ served as a reference for English usage.

⁴ It is a commercial product published by Nichigai Associates.

⁵ A concordance is an "index of all occurrences of a particular item in a text or collection of texts, with each instance referenced to the context(s) in which it occurs" (Murphy, 1996, p.53).

⁶ The Oxford Dictionary of English [ODE] was chosen because of its wide coverage of world English, from Canada and the US to the Caribbean, India, South Africa, Australia and NZ. See ODE, 2nd ed., vii. The online dictionary is also available at <http://oxforddictionaries.com/?attempted=true>.

The analysis therefore concentrated on the usage of ‘ダウン daun’ in MSC 2006 and its parent word ‘down’ in English according to the dictionary.⁷

4. Findings

There are 216 occurrences of the word ‘ダウン daun’ (or ‘down’) in MNC 2006. After excluding 27 instances and 38 instances of the word falling into the ‘proper nouns’ or ‘other’ categories, respectively, a total of 151 occurrences of ‘ダウン daun’ were analysed. The findings show that the word ‘ダウン daun’ is used with at least six meanings in contemporary Japanese in the context of MNC 2006. Compared to the parent word ‘down’ in English, which is a polysemous word with 55 entries functioning as an adverb, a preposition, an adjective, a noun, or an interjection (ODE, 2nd ed.), its usage and grammatical categorisation are much more limited in the Japanese discourse. In addition, the findings of this study suggest that the loanword ‘ダウン daun’ has undergone meaning broadening in parallel with meaning narrowing during its adoption into and/or usage in Japanese. Table 1 presents the six observed meanings, along with an indication of whether the meaning exists in English (+) or not (-), the raw frequency of the word for each category, and its meaning distribution.

Table 1

Senses of ‘ダウン daun’ and their distributions in MNC 2006

	Senses	English	<i>N</i>	%
1.	To decline	—	69	45.7
2.	Upend (boxing)	+	56	37.1
3.	Temporarily out of action or unavailable	+	16	10.6
4.	Touchdown	—	5	3.3
5.	To come/feel down	+	4	2.6
6.	Down jackets	—	1	0.7
	Total		151	100

Note. ‘+’ indicates that the meaning of the word also exists in English whereas ‘-’ indicates that it does not. ‘*N*’ indicates the number of occurrences.

⁷ I should acknowledge that this may be one of the shortcomings of this study. As I have noted, however, there are no English corpora that are comparable to the Japanese corpus (i.e., MSC 2006) in terms of construction. In this sense, the analysis in this study falls somewhat short in terms of penetration, because consulting the dictionary for the usage of words in English does not allow one to analyse in full the contexts in which the words in question are used. That said, the lack of English corpora comparable to MSC 2006 only allows us to analyse English usage based on the entries for the word in English dictionaries.

As shown in Table 1, the word ‘ダウン daun’, designates six meanings: ‘to decline’ (1st meaning); ‘upend’ (2nd meaning); ‘temporarily out of action or unavailable’ (3rd meaning); ‘touchdown’ (4th meaning); ‘to come/feel down’ (5th meaning); and ‘down jackets’ (6th meaning). Whereas half of these usages are identical to those of the parent word ‘down’ in English (i.e., 2nd, 3rd, and 5th meanings), the other half (i.e., 1st, 4th, and 6th meanings) are Japanese-specific. Examples of each usage, which have been derived from the corpus, are presented below. In order to make the sentences more intelligible, alternative vocabulary items, if applicable, are supplied in parentheses for the English translation.

The most common usage of the word is ‘ダウン daun’ meaning ‘to decline’, which is a Japanese-specific usage and comprised 45.7% of the total usage of the word in the corpus. Concordance line 28 below, for instance, gives an example of this type of usage.

28. しばらくすると父の給料は不況の影響でダウン。

After a short while, my father’s salary downed [went down / fell] due to the recession.

Here, the word ‘ダウン daun’ is, while a more appropriate word would be ‘to decrease’ or near synonyms such as ‘to go down’ or ‘to fall’ in English.

In addition, the word ‘ダウン daun’ refers to ‘upend’ (i.e., in boxing, touching the ring floor with some part of the body other than the feet), which is the second most frequently used meaning of the word in contemporary Japanese and accounts for 37.1 % of total usage. This usage is identical to the parent word in English, as demonstrated by examples such as concordance line 107:

107. 四回までやや苦戦したが、五回にワンツートの右でぐらつかせ、連打をまとめてダウンを奪った。

Although he had a bit of a tough game against his fellow competitor until round four, he delivered a one-two punch in the fifth round and got him down.

Similar to English, ‘ダウン daun’ also signifies ‘broken down’ or ‘temporarily out of action or unavailable’, as in ‘the computer is down’. This is the third most frequently used meaning of the word in MNC 2006 (10.60 %). Concordance line 100, for example, illustrates this usage:

100. 米国五輪委員会に約1万6000通のメールが殺到してサーバーがダウンする事態に。

The server was down because the American Olympic Committee website was overloaded by 16,000 emails.

Although the frequency of usage drops sharply after the first three meanings, the word ‘ダウン daun’ is also used in the sense of ‘touchdown’, which is specific to Japanese discourse as exemplified in concordance line 110:

110. 古谷は中央を突き、相手のタックルをはじき飛ばしてダウンを次々と更新。

Mr. Furuya attacked in the centre, flicked over his opposite’s tackles, and kept scoring downs [touchdowns].

In this instance, ‘ダウン daun’ or ‘down’ is used in place of ‘touchdown’ in Japanese. This is the fourth most frequent usage; five occurrences, which correspond to 3.3 % of the total usage of the word, are observed in MNC 2006.

The fifth usage of the word ‘ダウン daun’ denotes ‘to come/feel down’. This is a straightforward loanword, in which the usage is identical to the corresponding word in the English language, as in ‘she was down with flu’. There are relatively few instances of this usage (i.e., four occurrences), and it accounts for only 2.6 % of the total usage of the word. Concordance line 16, for example, illustrates this usage:

16. プロジェクトも終盤にさしかかったころ、風邪がはやりだし、スタッフ次々とダウンした。
When the project reached the final phase, a cold was raging, and staff members were down with it.

The least frequently used meaning of the word ‘ダウン daun’ refers to ‘a down jacket’. This usage is peculiar to Japanese and accounts for 0.7% of the total usage of the word. Examples include Concordance line 178:

178. 外出で着用するコートは、シルエットに気を配りたい。暖かく軽いダウンがお薦め「ずどんと太いロング丈は、スポーツ観戦のようでカジュアル過ぎます」と佐藤さん。
We would like to pay attention to a silhouette of a coat for going out. It is recommended to wear a down [down jacket] which is warm and light. Mr./Mrs. Sato says, ‘a coat which is thick and long is too casual, as if you were wearing it for a spectator sport’.

Although both the words ‘ダウン daun’ in Japanese and ‘down’ in English refer to ‘down feathers’ taken from ducks or their nests and used to stuff cushions, quilts, etc., it is only in Japanese discourse that the word also denotes a specific type of jackets –namely, those made from down. In this regard, ‘down’ meaning ‘down jacket’ is considered as Japanese-specific usage.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study show, in line with Aitchison (2001) and Penny (2000), that geographical differences contribute to language change, can produce regional varieties of English, as is the case in Japan. First, its results demonstrate that ‘ダウン daun’ (or ‘down’) is used in Japanese contexts with a much narrower range of denotations than its counterpart in English. This is clearly shown by the fact that there are 55 entries for the word in the ODE (2nd ed.), whereas only 3 of those 55 usages have exactly corresponding meanings in the Japanese language. While the word has thus experienced meaning narrowing, this study reveals that it has also undergone meaning broadening, taking on new meanings in the Japanese context. Based on these findings, the following sections will explore the derivations of the language-specific usage of the word, focusing on new usages/meanings that the word has acquired in Japanese. The implications for English language learning and teaching will also be discussed.

5.1. Derivations of Language-specific Usage

This study observes that the word ‘*ダウン* *daun*’ (or ‘down’) is used in six senses in Japanese discourse, and that half of these are peculiar to the Japanese language and result from meaning broadening. Such language-specific usages include ‘*ダウン* *daun*’ referring to ‘decline’ (1st meaning), ‘touchdown’ (4th meaning), and ‘down jacket’ (6th meaning). The findings suggest that shortening is one of the ways in which loanwords undergo semantic change, generating language-specific usage of the word. These findings reinforce those of the study by Dabo-Denegri (1998) and show that loanwords take on language-specific meanings as a consequence of a shortening of the original words in the donor language. This can account for the derivations of the Japanese-specific usages of ‘down’ as observed in the present study, where in each case the original form in English has been shortened either by ‘ellipsis’ or by ‘clipping’, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Derivations of the Japanese-specific usages of ‘*ダウン* *daun*’

	<u>Word origin</u>	<u>Loanword</u>	<u>Meaning for the Japanese</u>
Ellipsis	to go down	<i>ダウン</i> <i>daun</i>	to go down
	down jacket	<i>ダウン</i> <i>daun</i>	down jacket
Clipping	touchdown	<i>ダウン</i> <i>daun</i>	touchdown

Ellipsis is a practice whereby “in a set phrase made up of two words, one of these is omitted and its meaning is transparent to its partner” (Ullman, 1962, p. 222). This is considered a very common pathway of semantic change (Dabo-Denegri, 1998). The present study identifies Japanese-specific usages of the word ‘*ダウン* *daun*’ that refer to ‘go down’ (1st meaning) and ‘down jacket’ (6th meaning) as examples that fall into this category. That is, both of the English phrases ‘to go down’ and ‘down jacket’ are abridged and represented as ‘*ダウン* *daun*’ (or ‘down’) in Japanese, while retaining their respective original denotations.

Clipping is another type of shortening observed in this study. It refers to the case in which one or more syllables of a single word are dropped; this can occur with either the initial or final part of the word (Sakagami, 2000). This is exemplified by the usage of the word meaning ‘touchdown’ (4th meaning), where the initial syllable of the English word ‘touchdown’ (i.e., ‘touch’) is cut off and shortened to ‘*ダウン* *daun*’ (or ‘down’), still carrying its original denotation.

5.2. Pedagogic Considerations

Not only does the present research shed further light on loanwords in contemporary Japanese and nativised English in general, it also has practical implications in the area of English language learning and teaching in terms of both pedagogy and material/reference development in relation to English-origin words in Japanese. This study suggests, as pointed out by several researchers (e.g., Daulton, 2008; Kay, 1995; Nation, 1990), that loanwords could offer inroads for Japanese learners studying English to gain familiarity with English words and expand their L2 lexicon. This study demonstrates that some usages of the English-derived word overlap with those of its parent word in English. These similarities, which are inherent in

loanwords, can be expected to reduce learning burden. At the same time, however, the findings also suggest the potential pitfalls of Japanese-specific usage of English words for learning English as a foreign/second language, demonstrating that English lexical items, once assimilated into Japanese, are not always identical in usage to its their parent word in English, as a result of nativisation. This further suggests that exposure to loanwords in L1 by itself does not necessarily enhance learners' ability to master the correct usages/meanings of words in English. Owing to the shrinking scope of the reference of loanwords compared to their parent words in English (i.e. meaning narrowing), Japanese learners need to add new meanings that do not exist in Japanese contexts to such words when they use them in L2 contexts. In addition, learners must also be alert to Japanese-specific usages of English lexicon that result in meaning broadening, and refrain from using them in L2 contexts. Acquiring the correct scope of references of words in English, however, seems to be a challenge for learners, mainly because the shifts in meaning of words are much less apparent than other modifications, such as pronunciation and orthography, which are often aurally/visually conspicuous (e.g., Inagawa, 2006; Uchida, 2001; Uchida & Scholfield, 2000). This less obvious modification could cause learners to overlook meaning gaps between the two different language systems if no guidance is provided on this point.

Noticing is important in L2 learning as it is conducive to acquisition. Schmidt (1990, 2001) claims that nothing is learned without being noticed. In a similar vein, Lightbown and Spada (2006) note that noticing the features of the language is an essential starting point for learning the language, although it does not necessarily result in acquisition. It is therefore crucial for language instructors to provide learners with formal instruction that highlights the gaps in word usage between the languages and thus raise their linguistic awareness. In this regard, explicit instruction, such as informing learners of the lexical discrepancies between the two languages and encouraging them to pay more attention to the linguistic properties of the words, would be beneficial. Furthermore, such an explicit approach would be particularly relevant for novice learners, who are not only likely to have less linguistic awareness but are also more likely to reference their L1 in mapping L2 words and/or solving vocabulary problems in the target language (i.e., vocabulary compensatory strategy) in the early stages of L2 learning (Jiang, 2002, 2004; Agustín Llach, 2010).

Drawing learners' attention to the gaps in word usage between L1 and L2 can also be achieved by an inter-lingual comparison, in which the learners are allowed to contrast the usages of the target words with those of the corresponding loanwords in the L1. Viberg (2002), for example, highlights the relevance of cross-linguistic studies of the lexicon between languages in the field of L2 lexical learning. Similarly, Kupferberg and Olshtain's (1996) study suggests that contrastive linguistic input (CLI), which facilitates noticing, is conducive to acquisition. Kupferberg and Olshtain (1996) examined the effect of CLI on the acquisition of compound nouns and relative clauses in English by 137 native speakers of Hebrew, including an experimental group consisting of 70 Israeli learners of English and 67 in a control group. The findings of the study show that the experimental group, which received CLI or explicit contrastive evidence, performed better on both recognition and production tasks than the control group, which received comprehensible input implicitly only. Seen from a psycholinguistic viewpoint, in addition, analysing L1 and L2 appears to be valuable in imparting to learners the deeper cognitive activity involved, which in turn enhances learning. Craik and Lockhart (1972) and Craik and Tulving (1975), proposing the Depth of Processing Hypothesis, claim that the deeper level of analysis produces more elaborate, longer lasting, and stronger traces. One possibility for increasing the quality of the mental processing of the target words is to encourage students to make comparisons of word usage between L1 and L2. In regard to this point, utilising corpora, a practice

that has gained popularity in language pedagogy in recent years,⁸ might be one way to enhance students' learning. Not only does a corpus approach provide a rich language source for learning and teaching materials, it also serves as a learning material/activity in the classroom. The corpus compiled for this study may therefore have pedagogical value in itself, in the sense that learners can work on it as a reference for the English use in L1 and as a source for analysing the linguistic systems of the two different languages.

In terms of vocabulary instruction, Schmitt (2000) claims that 'there is no "right" or "best" way to teach vocabulary' (p.142) and that best practice will be achieved by considering various factors, such as the types of student, the targeted words, and the curriculum. Some researchers advocate avoiding loanwords in L2 language learning and teaching due to linguistic discrepancies between loanwords and their parent words in the donor language, which could trigger L1 interference in L2 contexts (e.g., Martin, 2004; Shepherd, 1995; Sherard, 1986). However, it seems to be more practical to adapt teaching techniques according to the target lexical items and make use of a rich linguistic source already available in learners' L1 rather than to avoid loanwords altogether. Such an approach is necessary, especially considering the nature of L2 acquisition, which involves the conceptual and linguistic systems of L1 to a greater or lesser extent.

6. Conclusion

This study provides insights into English that is nativised in Japanese contexts, with special reference to word usage, and offers a source to complement the data in previous non-corpus-based research, providing evidence directly derived from a corpus that consists of a large sample of data (some 30,000,000 words). The findings of the study show that, as a result of nativisation, the English word 'down' has acquired some Japanese-specific usages during the process of adoption into and/or use in the Japanese language, while also retaining some of the original usages of the word in English. The findings suggests that loanwords may have a propaedeutic effect in English vocabulary acquisition by Japanese learners of English, demonstrating congruities in word usage/meaning between loanwords and their parent words in English. At the same time, however, they also demonstrate the possibility that loanwords may interfere with L2 acquisition or lead to misunderstandings in L2 contexts, due to alternations in meaning that take place during the nativisation process. In light of the findings of this study, it may be worth re-examining the use of loanwords as an aid for English language learning and teaching. Daulton (2004, 2008), for instance, points out that nearly half of the top 3,000 word families of the BNC correspond to common loanwords in Japanese. This considerable overlap between English-derived words in Japanese and their parent words in English is often used as evidence that loanwords are an effective tool for expanding learners' L2 lexicon. However, little study has been conducted to provide empirical data as to the extent to which these vocabulary items are identical in usage to their parent words in English or to provide adequate linguistic descriptions of those lexical items. As the present study shows, there tend to be discrepancies in the word usage/meaning of English words once they are assimilated into the recipient language. Accordingly, the use of English-origin words in English learning and teaching cannot be straightforward, and detailed linguistic analysis of the differences between L1 and L2 languages is required before loanwords are incorporated into teaching and learning practice. For this reason, revisiting 'the list of common loanwords corresponding to the BNC 3000' provided by Daulton (2008) may be of benefit for further research. In addition, from a teaching and learning materials development perspective, such research is important as it can help to compile and develop reference materials concerning English-derived words in Japanese, incorporating information about frequency, genesis of loanword usage, usage context and authentic examples, as the present study has demonstrated. Such

⁸ Applied Linguistics is one of the areas that benefits from corpora (see Hunston, 2002; Leech, 1997; Nation, 2001).

reference materials will foster not only a better understanding of loanwords in the language in general but also learners' linguistic awareness of the differences between the L1 and L2.

Finally, although the present study is only concerned with English-derived words in the Japanese language, its 'architecture' can be applied to other languages. English is used extensively, not only as a medium of communication but also as a source of lexical borrowing and word coinage. As English permeates other languages, it is likely, as is the case in Japanese, that its lexicon will undergo linguistic modifications to accommodate recipient cultures and language systems. It would therefore be interesting to carry out lexical studies that explore the implications/applications of English-derived words across languages. The findings of such studies are likely to shed light on varieties of English around the globe, and will also be able to be used to develop better-grounded materials and approaches for the teaching of English in each local context.

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