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THE IMPACT OF JAPANESE ON THE ENGLISH LEXICON SINCE 1900

Japanese borrowings¹ which have recently been adopted into English have as yet been relatively neglected in current research. The present study sets out to shed light on the impact of Japanese on the English lexicon since 1900. The findings presented in this paper are based on a comprehensive lexicographical corpus of 323 twentieth-century Japanese borrowings retrieved from the Oxford English Dictionary Online. The different Japanese words introduced into English in the recent past will be grouped into various domains in order to give an overview of the manifold subject areas influenced by Japanese during the last few decades.

Key words: *lexicology, lexicography, online dictionaries and corpora in lexicological research, language contact, foreign vocabulary in English, Japanese influence on English*

1. Introduction

1.1 Previous studies on the Japanese influence on the English vocabulary

Investigations of the impact of Japanese on the English lexicon are scarce. The studies by Cannon (1996), Tsuchihashi (1997) and Hayakawa (2014) have to be mentioned here since they represent some of the few analyses which examine, to some extent, lexical borrowing from Japanese which has taken place since 1900.

Cannon's work *The Japanese Contributions to the English Language: an Historical Dictionary* (1996) is a comprehensive sample of words and phrases adopted from Japanese down the ages. A variety of general standard dictionaries were consulted in order to identify direct as well as indirect borrowings from Japanese, encompassing, for instance, the second edition of the *OED* released in 1989, Webster's *Third International Dictionary of the English Language* and new-words dictionaries, such as Tulloch's *Oxford Dictionary of New Words* from 1991. In all, it comprises 1,425 lexical items presented alphabetically in the dictionary section of the book. The dictionary is preceded by two essays: the first essay provides an overview of the chronological distribution of the lexical items taken over from Japanese. In addition, the various borrowings are assigned to 40 semantic areas, ranging from botany, food, sports, religion to politics and sociology, in order to give a rounded picture of the different subject fields from which Japanese words and phrases were introduced into English over the centuries. The second article concentrates on the phonological and grammatical integration of the Japanese-derived words under review. Regarding the number of borrowings entering English in the twentieth century, Cannon (1996: 33-34) comes to the conclusion that

That period [i.e. the twentieth century] witnessed 74 Japanese items added to English in the 1900s, 64 in the 1910s, 77 in the 1920s, down to 54 in the 1930s, and then a jump to 64 in the 1940s. [...] The year 1957 was

highlighted by 14 items (*Minamata disease*). With at least 2 items in every year of the 1960s, we find 12 in 1969, characterized by the 6 relating to sumo (*basho*). The 60 items in the 1970s include 12 in 1970 (*dokusan*). The 66 items added in the 1980s include 9 in 1986 [...]. In the early 1900s we find 8 items in 1990 (*magnet train*).

Cannon's study is illuminating in many respects. Yet it does not offer a detailed analysis of the manifold subject fields and spheres of life influenced by Japanese during the last few decades. The present paper will give a more up-to-date and comprehensive appraisal of the semantic fields from which Japanese borrowings were taken over into English in the twentieth century.

Tsuchihashi's (1997) article, which equally concentrates on the history of the language contact between English and Japanese, only represents a *tour d'horizon* of all the words and meanings introduced from Japanese down the ages. The collection of Japanese borrowings was retrieved from general-purpose dictionaries, such as the second edition of the *OED* released in 1989 and dictionaries of new words, for example *The Longman Register of New Words* from 1989. The study comprises at least some of the borrowings which have been taken over into English since 1900, including, for instance, *origami*, *karaoke*, *bonsai* and *ninja*.

The *Historical Dictionary of Japanese Words Used in English* compiled by Hayakawa in 2014 represents one of the very few recent collections of Japanese words occurring in English. Unlike Cannon's dictionary, Hayakawa's sample of lexical items was collected from a variety of English literature on Japan published between 1580 and 2008. The dictionary entries are arranged in alphabetical order, consisting of a wide range of illustrative quotations taken from various English books. There are also a number of translations from foreign languages among the sources consulted, for example *Crasset's The History of the Church of Japan (1705-1707)* and Titsingh's book entitled *Illustrations of Japan (1822)*, both of which were translated from French into English. As Hayakawa's research is chiefly based on specialized texts about Japan, it remains uncertain to what extent the Japanese words which were identified in this way have become established in English. Hayakawa's work comprises a number of Japanese words which cannot be found in general-purpose dictionaries such as the *OED*. An example is *tokui-waza*, specifying a technique in judo. Obviously, this word has not yet made it into common language use in English. One may thus doubt whether these types of lexical item have assumed the status of borrowings in present-day English.

The reader may observe that some of the studies above rely on a new variety of dictionary, i.e. the new-words dictionary. Examples of these types of dictionary are Reifer's *Dictionary of New Words (1955)*, Barnhart *et al.*'s *Dictionary of New English Since 1963 (1973, 1980, 1990)*, Mort's *Longman Guardian of New Words (1986)*, the two volumes of Ayto's *Longman Register of New Words (1989/1990)*, Algeo *et al.*'s *Dictionary of Neologisms (1991)*, Tulloch's *Oxford Dictionary of New Words (1991)*, Green's *New Words (1994)*, Delahunty's *Oxford Dictionary of Foreign Words and Phrases (2008)*, and others.

Durkin, the deputy chief editor of the *OED*, points out that the lexical items which are listed in the new-words dictionaries will be recorded in the *OED* if they fulfil the relevant drafting criteria.² He emphasizes that “the most important of these dictionaries have been read (or “carded”) for *OED*’s files, and all of them are available for consultation by *OED* editors.”³ Hence, the *OED* will be used as the major source of the borrowings investigated in the present analysis.

1.2 The *OED Online* as a source of Japanese borrowings

The results presented in this paper rely on a careful analysis of the linguistic data collected from the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. The *OED* is currently undergoing its first complete revision. The electronic variant of the *OED* is searchable online at <<http://www.oed.com>>, comprising the Second Edition released in 1989 (henceforth *OED2*), the text of the two volumes of the *OED Additions Series* published in 1993 and 1997, and a substantial proportion of revised and new dictionary entries yielding the Third Edition, or *OED3*. The *OED Online* is being completed every quarter with the findings of the revision work.⁴ The digitalized version of the *OED* makes it possible to perform a comprehensive count of all the lexical items which show a Japanese origin in their etymological descriptions.⁵ With the following search variant the different twentieth-century Japanese borrowings listed in the *OED Online* can be identified: *Advanced Search: Entries containing “Japanese” in “Etymology” and “1900-” in “Date of Entry”*. The data on which the present investigation is based was retrieved from the *OED* in 2016. At that time, the *OED* did not document any word or meaning which had been taken over from Japanese during the twenty-first century.

In all, the sample of Japanese borrowings collected from the electronic *OED* comprised 323 dictionary entries. The lexical items under consideration were classified as borrowed from Japanese as the immediate source language. Hence, the word *tempura*, for instance, “[a] Japanese dish consisting of prawn, shrimp, or white fish, and often vegetables, coated in batter and deep-fried” (*OED2*), was considered a borrowing from Japanese, albeit that it might ultimately go back to Portuguese *tempêro* ‘seasoning’ (see *OED2*).

A multitude of lexical items have been added to the new edition of the *OED3* which is currently being completed. In contrast to the *OED3*, which exhaustively documents the use of a word and the meanings it has adopted from its earliest attested usage up to now, unrevised *OED2* items (and occasionally words recorded in the *OED ADD Series*) do not illustrate the usage of Japanese borrowings in recent years. The present papers will investigate the use of both the twentieth-century Japanese borrowings included in the *OED3* and all the *OED* items which have not yet been subjected to revision. A careful inspection of the linguistic data provided by English corpora, for example the *British National Corpus* as well as newspaper collections available at *LexisNexis*, helped to achieve this objective. The *BNC*, a snapshot of British English language use taken during the later decades of the twentieth century, constitutes a sample of 100 million words illustrating written and spoken language. The documentary evidence is taken from a variety of sources,

including, for example, passages from newspapers, academic texts, journals, letters, and spoken material, such as transcriptions of radio programmes. The *BNC* is therefore suited for the investigation of the contextual usage of recent borrowings from Japanese into English. In *LexisNexis*, too, sufficient linguistic evidence has been compiled to investigate the use of borrowings in present-day English. It encompasses recent editions of English newspapers, ranging from *The Times* (London), *The Guardian* (London) to *The New York Times*.

Before we move on to the subject areas to which Japanese added words and meanings in the recent past, some terminological clarification is required. Let us look at the different types of lexical borrowing which occur among the Japanese-derived words presented in this paper.

1.3 Types of lexical borrowing

The categorization system applied in the present paper is based on the typology of lexical borrowing developed by Carstensen in 1968 for classifying Anglicisms in German. Carstensen's model describes the most essential types of loan influences and is applicable to further language contact scenarios not only that between English and German. I shall confine myself to those cases of lexical borrowing which occur among the Japanese-derived words presented in this study. The following terms will be employed:

a) Borrowing

Borrowing is the common term for a word or a meaning which is adopted from another language. The word can also relate to the process by which new linguistic material (i.e. a word or meaning) is taken over from a foreign language.

b) Transliteration

The majority of words adopted from Japanese since 1900 have been subjected to *transliteration*. The term refers to the process by which the letters or characters of a foreign word are rendered into the alphabet of another language. It may also be used to designate the word transferred in this way. Most of the transliterated Japanese borrowings included in this paper reflect or approximate the pronunciation of their source terms. An example is *bonsai*, which corresponds to Japanese 盆栽. According to the *OED2*, it was adopted into English in 1950.

c) Adaptation

The term *adaptation* is used to refer to the naturalization which a lexical item from a foreign language underwent in order to become integrated into the linguistic system of the target language. The term also specifies the assimilated word itself. An example is the noun *mechatronics*, a comparatively frequent term in present-day English for the domain of technology which combines mechanical engineering and electronics. In the case of *mechatronics* and a number of additional borrowings, the *OED* provides the Romanized form of its Japanese etymon. The *OED* users are informed that the borrowing was adapted from Japanese *mekatoronikusu*, which was ultimately formed from *meka-* (in *mekanikku* 'mechanics') or the shortening *meka* and *-toronikusu* (in *erekutoronikusu* 'electronics') (see *OED3*).

d) Loan translation

In line with Carstensen’s (1968) classification scheme, Schultz (2012: 50) points out that [a] loan translation is the complete, semantically accordant reproduction of each constituent of a foreign word by use of synonymous word forms in the receiving language. The term not only relates to the translation process but also to its “product”.

Among the twentieth-century borrowings from Japanese, *uncanny valley*, for example, may be classified as a loan translation. The nominal phrase is used to designate “the phenomenon whereby a humanoid robot or computer-generated figure bearing a close but imperfect resemblance to a human being arouses a sense of unease or revulsion in a person viewing it” (*OED3*). From the *OED3* it becomes clear that it goes back to Japanese *bukimi no tani*, the title and concept of an article written in 1970 by Masahiro Mori, a Japanese roboticist. The Japanese phrase was coined from *bukimi* ‘uncanniness’, the possessive particle *no* and *tani* ‘valley’ (see *OED3*).

e) Semantic loan

A semantic loan occurs when a sense of a word from a foreign language is transferred to a native word. The English noun phrase *pillow book* serves as an example. The word initially meant “[a] book suitable for reading in bed” (*OED3*). It broadened in meaning under the impact of Japanese *makura no sōshi*, literally ‘notebook of the pillow’, to include the additional sense “a diary or private journal of miscellaneous thoughts and comments, typically written at night” (*OED3*). *Semantic loan* refers to both the assumption of a foreign meaning and the meaning taken over in this way.

f) Hybrid

A hybrid refers to a word or a phrase which encompasses a foreign and an indigenous element. The Japanese borrowing *kobeite*, first recorded in 1950 in English as a technical term for a variety of mineral, serves as an example. The word consists of the element *kobe*, which reflects the Japanese name of a locality in Kyoto, Japan, where the mineral was discovered, and the English ‘native’ suffix *-ite*, which is commonly attached to the names of minerals (see *OED2*).

2. Subject areas and spheres of life influenced by Japanese since 1900

2.1 The numbers and proportions of twentieth-century Japanese borrowings in the various subject fields

As outlined above, the number of recent Japanese borrowings listed in the *OED Online* amounts to 323 words and meanings. The different lexical items were divided into eight main areas and their subcategories, in order to provide an overview of the manifold domains from which borrowings from Japanese were taken over into English in the twentieth century. The categorization of several technical terms is based on the classification in the *OED*. Yet the overall division of the Japanese borrowings into various subject areas is my own.

Here are the numbers and percentages of borrowings in ascending order in the different domains which have been enriched by Japanese since 1900. For each field, a number of illustrative examples of Japanese-derived words are given:

(1) Technology (10 borrowings, i.e. 3.1%)

- (1.1) Transport (1 borrowing, i.e. 0.3%), e.g. *Shinkansen*, n. (1968).
- (1.2) Nautics (2 borrowings, i.e. 0.6%), e.g. *Maru*, n. (1903); *sentoku*, n. (first attested as a name for a type of vessel in *OED2* in 1968).
- (1.3) Manufacturing and Engineering (3 borrowings, i.e. 0.9%), e.g. *mechatronics*, n. (1976); *kanban*, n. (1977); *mokume gane*, n. phr.⁶ (1979).
- (1.4) Electronics and Telecommunication (4 borrowings, i.e. 1.2%), e.g. *emoji*, n. (1997); *keitai*, n. (1998).

(2) Leisure and Pleasure (25 borrowings, i.e. 7.7%)

- (2.1) Tourism (2 borrowings, i.e. 0.6%), e.g. *ryokan*, n. (1914); *minshuku*, n. (1970).
- (2.2) Sports (2 borrowings, i.e. 0.6%), e.g. *keirin*, n. (1957); *Tsukahara*, n. (1972).
- (2.3) Theatre (7 borrowings, i.e. 2.2%), e.g. *onnagata*, n. (1901); *nogaku*, n. (1916); *oyama*, n. (1925).
- (2.4) Cartoons, Comics and Film (7 borrowings, i.e. 2.2%), e.g. *manga*, n. (1951); *anime*, n. (1985); *hentai*, n. (1990).
- (2.5) Games and Leisure Activities (7 borrowings, i.e. 2.2%), e.g. *karaoke*, n. (1977); *Nintendo*, n. (1987); *Sudoku*, n. (2000).

(3) The Fine Arts and Crafts (31 borrowings, i.e. 9.6%)

- (3.1) Music (3 borrowings, i.e. 0.9%), e.g. *nogaku*, n. (1916); *gagaku*, n. (1936).
- (3.2) Literature (4 borrowings, i.e. 1.2%), e.g. *pillow book*, n. phr. (assuming a meaning from Japanese literature in 1928); *waka*, n. (1932); *mono no aware*, n. phr. (1940).
- (3.3) Art (14 borrowings, i.e. 4.3%), e.g. *sumi-e*, n. (1938); *origami*, n. (1948); *tsutsumu*, n. (1975).
 - (3.3.1) Flower Arrangement (2 borrowings, i.e. 0.6%), e.g. *ikebana*, n. (1901); *moribana*, n. (1928).
 - (3.3.2) Jewellery (3 borrowings, i.e. 0.9%), e.g. *mokume gane*, n. (1979).
 - (3.3.3) Cultural Artefacts and Artistic Remains (5 borrowings, i.e. 1.5%), e.g. *dotaku*, n. (1911); *Momoyama*, n. (1929).

(4) Civilization and Politics (34 borrowings, i.e. 10.5%)

- (4.1) Politics (7 borrowings, i.e. 2.2%), e.g. *Minseito*, n. (1927); *Zengakuren*, n. (1952).
- (4.2) War and the Military (12 borrowings, i.e. 3.7%), e.g. *honcho*, n. (1945); *tenko*, n. (1947); *Red Army*, n. phr. (adopting a meaning from Japanese in 1970).
- (4.3) Business, Economy and Finances (15 borrowings, i.e. 4.6%), e.g. *zaibatsu*, n. (1937); *sogo shosha*, n. phr. (1967); *tokkin*, n. (1985).

(5) Gastronomy (39 borrowings, i.e. 12.1%)

- (5.1) Drink (3 borrowings, i.e. 0.9%), e.g. *kombucha*, n. (1902); *shochu*, n. (1938).
- (5.2) Restaurants and Bars (3 borrowings, i.e. 0.9%), e.g. *ryotei*, n. (1953); *izakaya*, n. (1987).

(5.3) Cookery (33 borrowings, i.e. 10.2%), e.g. *wasabi*, n. (1903); *tempura*, n. (1920); *teriyaki*, n. (1961); *ramen*, n. (1962); *tamari*, n. (1977); *napa*, n. (1979).

(6) The Natural Sciences (40 borrowings, i.e. 12.4%)

(6.1) Physics (1 borrowing, i.e. 0.3%), e.g. *Kikuchi*, n. (1934).

(6.2) Geography and Geology (3 borrowings, i.e. 0.9%), e.g. *bai-u*, n. (1910); *Okinawan*, adj. (1940); *andosol*, n. (1958).

(6.3) Chemistry and Biochemistry (4 borrowings, i.e. 1.2%), e.g. *rotenone*, n. (1905); *protoanemonin*, n. (1920); *ibotenic*, adj. (1962).

(6.4) Mineralogy (5 borrowings, i.e. 1.5%), e.g. *ishikawaite*, n. (1922); *ningyoite*, n. (1959).

(6.5) Medicine (10 borrowings, i.e. 3.1%), e.g. *itai-itai*, n. (1969); *Hashimoto*, n. (1935); *yusho*, n. (1969).

(6.5.1) Psychiatry and Psychology (1 borrowing, i.e. 0.3%), e.g. *Morita*, n. (1953).

(6.5.1.1) Parapsychology (1 borrowing, i.e. 0.3%), e.g. *thoughtography*⁷, n. (1931).

(6.5.2) Pharmacology (1 borrowing, i.e. 0.3%), e.g. *kainic*, adj. (1954).

(6.6) Biology (1 borrowing, i.e. 0.3%), e.g. *Okazaki*, n. (1968).

(6.6.1) Microbiology (1 borrowing, i.e. 0.3%), e.g. *Shiga*, n. (1900).

(6.6.2) Zoology (4 borrowings, i.e. 1.2%), e.g. *shubunkin*, n. (1917); *hamachi*, n. (1978).

(6.6.3) Botany (8 borrowings, i.e. 2.5%), e.g. *o-matsu*, n. (1916); *bonsai*, n. (1950); *hijiki*, n. (1970); *shiso*, n. (1985).

(7) People and Everyday Life (48 borrowings, i.e. 14.9%)

(7.1) Animal Rearing (2 borrowings, i.e. 0.6%), e.g. *Akita*, n. (1928); *Wagyu*, n. (1963).

(7.2) Love and Sexuality (2 borrowings, i.e. 0.6%), e.g. *enjo kosai*, n. phr. (1996).

(7.3) Clothing (3 borrowings, i.e. 0.9%), e.g. *mompe*, n. (1908).

(7.4) Health and Vitality (3 borrowings, i.e. 0.9%), e.g. *shiatsu*, n. (1967); *reiki*, n. (1975).

(7.5) Educational System (4 borrowings, i.e. 1.2%), e.g. *terakoya*, n. (1909); *ryu*, n. (1935); *Kumon*, n. (1984).

(7.6) Buddhism (9 borrowings, i.e. 2.8%), e.g. *roshi*, n. (1909); *sabi*, n. (1932); *zendo*, n. (1959).

(7.7) Society, Human Behaviour and Feelings (25 borrowings, i.e. 7.7%), e.g. *o-omi*, n. (1901); *mama-san*, n. (1904); *oyabun*, n. (1948); *uncanny valley*, n. phr. (1978); *hikikomori*, n. (1998).

(8) The Martial Arts (80 borrowings, i.e. 24.8%)

(8.1) Weaponry (5 borrowings, i.e. 1.5%), e.g. *daisho*, n. (1923); *tachi*, n. (1948); *shuriken*, n. (1978). (8.2) Forms, Styles and Ethos of Martial Arts Techniques (9 borrowings, i.e. 2.8%), e.g. *budo*, n. (1905); *kendo*, n. (1921); *aikijutsu*, n. (1955).

(8.2.1) Karate (9 borrowings, i.e. 2.8%), e.g. *shodan*, n. (1913); *yondan*, n. (1913); *makiwara*, n. (1959); *shuto*, n. (1959); *mae-geri*, n. (1960).

(8.2.2) Sumo (11 borrowings, i.e. 3.4%), e.g. *mawashi*, n. (1905); *oshi-dashi*, n. (1940); *oshi-taoshi*, n. (1940); *makuuchi*, n. (1957); *yokozuna*, n. (1966); *sumotori*, n. (1973)

(8.2.3) Judo (44 borrowings, i.e. 13.6%), e.g. *makikomi*, n. (1904); *yondan*, n. (1913); *kesa-gatame*, n. (1932); *uki-waza*, n. (first attested in the 1993 *OED ADD Series* in 1941); *judoka*, n. (1952); *tsugi ashi*, n. phr. (1950), *ippon*, n. (1957).

Of the twentieth-century Japanese borrowings listed in the *OED Online*, 16 words (i.e. 5.0%) cannot be clearly grouped into a particular domain. An example is the adjective *kawaii*, meaning “[c]ute, esp[ecially] in a manner considered characteristic of Japanese popular culture; charming, darling; ostentatiously adorable” (*OED3*). The borrowing was adopted from Japanese in 1965.

2.2 The analysis of Japanese borrowings in the different areas and spheres of life

2.2.1 Technology

As is obvious, the smallest group of borrowings introduced from Japanese during the twentieth century belongs to the ‘modern’ field of technology with its related domains. Technical advance and innovation led to the coining of new terms in these areas, some of which were assumed into English in the recent past. An example is the Japanese borrowing *Shinkansen*, denoting “a railway system carrying high-speed passenger trains, orig[inally] between Tokyo and Osaka”, or “a train which travels on this” (1993 *OED ADD Series*). In a transferred sense, the word can also refer to “a similar train or system elsewhere” (1993 *OED ADD Series*), as is illustrated by the linguistic documentary evidence available in the *OED*:

- “1984 *Railway Gaz. Internat.* Feb. 104/2 With the [Seoul-Pusan] shinkansen postponed, Mr Choi’s attention is now focused on developing a diesel train which can run on the existing track.” (1993 *OED ADD Series*)

Another example is the noun *emoji*, quite a widespread term in English for “[a] small digital image or icon used to express an idea, emotion, etc., in electronic communications” (*OED3*), e.g.

- “2011 *N. Y. Times* (Nexis) 28 Apr. b9 If you’ve downloaded an app for emojis, those little happy faces and icons, you can add it to your list of keyboards in this panel.” (*OED3*)

According to the *OED*, the word was adopted from Japanese towards the end of the twentieth century, i.e. in 1997.

2.2.2 Leisure and Pleasure

The field of ‘leisure and pleasure’ also comprises a relatively small number of Japanese-derived items. It includes borrowings associated with ‘tourism’ (e.g. *ryokan*), ‘sports’ (e.g. *keirin*), ‘theatre’ (e.g. *nogaku*), ‘cartoons, comics and film’ (e.g. *manga*, *anime*), ‘games and leisure activities’ (e.g. *karaoke*, *Sudoku*). *Ryokan* is used to designate “[a] traditional Japanese inn or hostelry” (*OED3*). A perusal of the *OED* quotation evidence reveals that the word is chiefly embedded in Japanese-speaking contexts in English, as in:

- “2005 P. Carey *Wrong about Japan* x. 142 There was a long, long day ahead, ... but we were weary of ... fish ... so we left the ryokan and headed in search of Mister Donut.”

Just like its Japanese equivalent, the borrowing *keirin* specifies a cycling race, and *nogaku* denotes “Japanese Noh drama as a dramatic form or genre” (*OED3*). The latter may also denote the music of this genre. *Manga*, *anime*, *karaoke* and *Sudoku* fall into the category of adopted words which occur

comparatively frequently in corpora of recent usage. Of these, *manga*, *anime* and *karaoke* are often used attributively in present-day English. Examples are *manga series*, *manga images*, *manga illustrator*, *anime film* and *karaoke music*. This is documented by the linguistic material included in the *OED* and English newspaper corpora compiled at *LexisNexis*:

- *The Guardian*, March 23, 2016; headline: “Sherlock Holmes to be immortalised in Japanese manga series; The detective’s latest reboot is based on the BBC series starring Benedict Cumberbatch as the pipe-puffing protagonist and Martin Freeman as his sidekick Watson”

Out in June, *Sherlock: A Study in Pink* adapts the BBC series, which started in 2010, transforming Benedict Cumberbatch’s Holmes and Martin Freeman’s Dr John Watson into classic manga images. Publisher Titan Comics said the release would be the first time the manga series, illustrated by manga illustrator Jay, would be printed in English. (*LexisNexis*)

- *The New York Times*, March 11, 2016; headline: “John Cho, Starring in Every Movie Ever Made? A Diversity Hashtag Is Born”

[...] Recent high-profile casting decisions, including the Scarlett Johansson role in the remake of the Japanese anime film “*Ghost in the Shell*” and Tilda Swinton’s casting as a sorcerer of Tibetan descent in Marvel’s “*Dr. Strange*,” also served as inspiration. (*LexisNexis*)

- “1992 *Premiere* Jan. 59/3 (*advt.*) This new combi player plays hundreds of karaoke music video song titles, hits from the ‘50s through the ‘80s, all with on-screen lyrics.” (1993 *OED ADD Series*)

Sudoku represents the latest Japanese borrowing recorded in the *OED*. The word was introduced into English in 2000. The following *OED3* citation reflects its first attested use in English:

- “2000 *New Pilot Files* (2 of 6) in *braunschweig.newfiles* (Usenet newsgroup) 24 Sept. Sudoku Number Place 0.2 - Freeware Sudoku Number Place is a number puzzle that is simple yet entertaining.”

2.2.3 The Fine Arts and Crafts

Additional domains enriched by Japanese during the twentieth century are the fine arts and crafts. Japan has long been internationally renowned for its arts and crafts. It is thus not surprising that Japanese has provided English with a number of words from these fields in the twentieth century. Borrowings in these areas encompass *gagaku*, adopted from Japanese in 1936 as a designation of “[a] type of Japanese instrumental music performed chiefly on ceremonial occasions at the Imperial court [...]” (*OED2*), and *waka*, another early twentieth-century borrowing introduced into English in the 1930s, specifying “[a] form of classic Japanese poetry, lyrical in nature and developed from the ancient traditional ballads” (*OED2*). Usage examples from *OED2* are:

- “1936 K. Sunaga *Jap. Music* ii. 24 *Gagaku* is the special form of music performed in the ceremonies of the Imperial Court, as well as music and dancing performed on such other occasions as banquets and entertainments.”

- “1968 *Encycl. Brit.* XII. 953/2 The poetic form used - the *waka*, deriving from the earlier folk songs - consists of an alternation of five- and seven-syllable lines, without rhyme, stress, metrical pattern or other technical device.”

This area also includes several common Japanese-derived words. Examples are *origami* and *ikebana*, which are frequently attested in English corpora reflecting present-day language use. A review of the documentary evidence included in the *BNC* and in *LexisNexis* suggests that the two borrowings quite often occur in attributive position, as in *origami tree*, *origami models*, *origami insects*, *ikebana schools* and *ikebana class*:

· Extract from *Today* (1992), London: News Groups Newspapers

A 20ft tall origami tree is currently standing in the Roosevelt Hall of New York’s Natural History Museum. Origami is the ancient Japanese art of paper folding.’ It was lit up by Mayor Dinkins’s wife and the Cookie Monster from Sesame Street,’ a museum curator tells me.’ We estimate the tree is decorated with 15,000 origami models of animals made by hundreds of volunteers.’ This is the twentieth year we have had a tree. It started much smaller with just origami insects. This year we have stars and mobiles, that is models on wire which move with the air current.’ The word origami comes from the Japanese *ori* (folding) and *kami* (paper). (*BNC*)

· *The Independent* (London), November 16, 1992, headline: “Out of Japan: ‘Group-think’ blossoms in flower house”

TOKYO - It is not often that one finds oneself as the only man in a room of 40 or more women, being eyed with the kind of curiosity E T might attract on a stroll across the floor of the London Stock Exchange. But such is the fate of a journalist exploring the inner mysteries of Japanese culture, or, to be more precise, the art of flower- arranging known as *ikebana*.

At the beginning it was all rather intimidating. Having enrolled in a course at one of Tokyo’s *ikebana* schools, I turned up to find a hallway full of flowers and twigs, and a large classroom of women busily snipping, twisting and coaxing blossoms into the most exquisite displays.

Not knowing where to begin, I asked a woman in the hallway for guidance. She looked at me sadly as if I were suffering from temporary dementia, and said: “This is an *ikebana* class.” Perhaps she thought I was looking for the restaurant next door. (*LexisNexis*)

2.2.4 Civilization and Politics

Furthermore, Japanese has served as a source of borrowings in the domain of civilization and politics, encompassing adopted words and meanings associated with politics, war and the military, business, economy and finances. *Minseito*, for instance, refers to “the Constitutional Democratic Party, formed [in Japan] in 1927 [...]” (*OED3*). Since this party was dissolved in 1940, the borrowing is confined to historical contexts in present-day English, as is exemplified by the following *OED3* citations:

- “1956 H. S. Quigley & J. E. Turner *New Japan* ii. 21 The Minseito was somewhat more inclined to liberalism and internationalism.”
- “1994 *Polit. Sci. Q.* **109** 211 The victory of the antimilitary Minseito party in 1936 led to another failed coup attempt.”

The field of war and the military comprises several terms which entered the English language in the context of the 1939-1945 war. *Tenko*, for instance, denotes “a muster parade or roll-call of prisoners” (*OED2*) in prison camps in Japan during the Second World War, as in:

- “1947 J. Bertram *Shadow of War* vi. iii. 190 They drilled us by the hour ... and firmly broke us in to the sacred mysteries of ‘*tenko*’ - the morning and evening muster parade ... that was routine in all prison camps in Japan... In time even *tenko* lost its terrors.” (*OED2*)

There is also the Japanese borrowing *honcho*, originally used among American prisoners in Japan during the Pacific phase (i.e. from 1941 to 1945) of the war of 1939-1945, denoting “the leader of a small group or squad” (*OED3*). The word now mostly functions as a colloquial term in American English for “any person in charge; a manager, a boss” (*OED3*). In this sense, the borrowing is quite frequently recorded in the compound *head honcho*, as in:

- Extract from *New Musical Express* (1992), London: Holborn JEFFREY LEE Pierce is the head honcho of the massively underrated Gun Club, a band of musicians who consistently produce fine records which are then ignored by the world at large. (*BNC*)
- “2008 K. Mahajan *Family Planning* 4 He replaced Mama as head-honcho when he was thirteen and she was recuperating from a difficult pregnancy.” (*OED3*)

The latest twentieth-century Japanese borrowing relating to war and the military is *Red Army* (more fully in *Japanese Red Army*), a semantic loan. The phrase is first recorded in English in 1918, initially denoting “the army of the Bolsheviks during the Russian Civil War” (*OED3*). In later use, it came to refer to “the army of the Soviet Union” (*OED3*), a meaning which now chiefly occurs in historical contexts. From the linguistic evidence included in the *OED3* it becomes clear that *Red Army* assumed a new meaning from Japanese in 1970, designating “[a]n extreme left-wing terrorist organization from Japan, developing from the Red Army Fraction [...] and active in the 1970s and 1980s.” This sense has also become historical in English, as is corroborated by the 2003 *OED3* example:

2003 *N. Y. Times Mag.* 19 Jan. 32/1 By the end of the 70’s, training camps situated in the Libyan desert were home to a virtual model United Nations of malcontents - reportedly including Japanese Red Army ‘soldiers’ next to Yemeni socialists next to members of West Germany’s Baader-Meinhof Gang. (*OED3*)

The highest number of borrowings in the field of civilization and politics are used

with reference to business, economy and finances. In the book *Japan: A Short Cultural History*, Chakravarti (2004: 21) rightly points out that

Once the most culturally isolated of countries, Japan has now emerged as the most industrially advanced country of the world and is now thoroughly integrated with the international economic as well as cultural exchanges. The web of inter-dependence extends throughout the modern world.

In all, English adopted 15 borrowings relating to business, economy and finances from Japanese in the past few decades. According to the *OED*, most of the Japanese-derived words and meanings from this domain were introduced into English during the second half of the twentieth century. This holds for the phrase *sogo shosha*, for instance, which was taken over into English in 1967 as a term for “a very large company [in Japan] that engages in the international buying and selling of a wide range of goods and services” (1993 *OED ADD Series*). The borrowing usually appears in contexts related to Japan, as in:

1972 *Guardian* 16 Oct. 11/1 Japan’s giant *sogo shosha*, or all-round trading companies, are a strictly Japanese phenomenon, unknown in any other country. They are independent firms which buy and sell not just specific goods but almost everything. (1993 *OED ADD Series*)

Similarly, *tokkin*, which was borrowed from Japanese in 1985 in the sense of “a type of short-term corporate investment fund managed by a trust bank, providing a reduction of tax liability and other financial advantages” (1993 *OED ADD Series*), is restricted to contexts associated with Japan. The word often assumes an attributive function in English, as in *tokkin funds*:

- “1990 *Fortune* 7 May 65/2 The drop so far in 1990 has been largely confined to two relatively small groups, foreign investors and so-called *tokkin funds*.” (1993 *OED ADD Series*)

From the 1993 *OED ADD Series* we learn that the Japanese original *tokkin* is an acronym which was formed from the initial elements of *Tok(utei Kin(sen Shintaku*, literally meaning ‘specifically oriented money in trust’.

2.2.5 Gastronomy

A further area enriched by Japanese in the twentieth century is the field of gastronomy, comprising borrowings relating to restaurants and bars, drink and cookery. *Izakaya*, *shochu*, *tempura*, *teriyaki* and *ramen* serve as examples. *Izakaya* is used to designate “[a] type of Japanese cafe or bar serving alcoholic beverages and a variety of small, typically inexpensive, dishes or snacks” (*OED3*), and *shochu* relates to a variety of Japanese spirit. The latter is also attested attributively in present-day English, as in:

- “1980 ‘J. Melville’ *Chrysanthemum Chain* 88 A bottle of cheap *shochu* rotgut.” (*OED2*) The borrowings *tempura*, *teriyaki* and *ramen* specify Japanese dishes. Like *shochu*, they quite frequently occur in attributive position (as in *tempura restaurant*, *teriyaki sauces*, *ramen shop*) in English, as the following examples show:

- “1967 D. Riesman & E. T. Riesman *Conversations in Japan* 223 Donald joined us for lunch at a *tempura* restaurant nearby.” (*OED2*)

· Extract from Trollope, J. (1992): *The rector’s wife*. London: Black Swan [...] When Anna stepped back, she said, ‘I think I’ll go straight home and face and present the larder.’ Tim did not understand. He said, wagging a forefinger, ‘No coffee break till ten-thirty- five!’ At ten-thirty-five, a stout woman in a blue overall with plain, pale-blue collar and cuffs to denote her seniority came up with a clipboard and said, ‘Tim and Anna. Ten minutes coffee.’ Anna said, ‘ I’ll just finish the teriyaki sauces.’ (*BNC*)

“2002 T. Shimoda *Forth Treasure* (2003) 167 The ramen shop where he often ate lunch was in a block of small restaurants ... aimed at the many tourists who visit Kyoto.” (*OED3*)

2.2.6 The Natural Sciences

The natural sciences with their related branches constitute the third largest area influenced by Japanese in the last few decades: 40 twentieth-century borrowings (i.e. 12.4%) can be assigned to this field. The highest proportion of natural science terms belongs to medicine and botany. A significant number of the Japanese-derived items in the natural sciences represent specialized, technical terms (such as *yusho*, which refers to a type of disease, and *protoanemonin*, which specifies a biochemical substance) that might be unknown to most native speakers of English. In addition, several borrowings can be identified in the natural sciences which reflect proper nouns, such as *Hashimoto*, a type of autoimmune disease. The *OED2* informs its users that it was named after the Japanese surgeon Hakaru *Hashimoto*, who first described the condition. The word is used in the genitive or in attributive function in English, as in *Hashimoto’s disease* and *Hashimoto thyroiditis* (see *OED2*). There are also at least some borrowings in the list of natural science terms which have made it into everyday use. *Bonsai*, for instance, was taken over from Japanese in 1950. It belongs to the group of Japanese borrowings which are on everyone’s lips.

2.2.7 People and Everyday Life

‘People and Everyday Life’ represents the second largest domain to which Japanese contributed in the form of new lexical items in the twentieth century. This area comprises 48 words and meanings. The number of borrowings in this field is an indication of how multi-faceted life has become in recent times. ‘People and Everyday Life’ contains borrowings in seven subfields, encompassing words to do with animal rearing (e.g. *Akita*, the name of a breed of dog), love and sexuality (e.g. *enjo kosai*, “a form of paid escort work in which a young woman provides companionship or sexual favours to an older man in exchange for money or luxury items” (*OED3*)), clothing (e.g. *mompe*, relating to types of trousers typically worn by Japanese women), health and vitality (e.g. *shiatsu*, quite a widespread term for acupuncture). Several borrowings used with reference

to the educational system can also be identified among the *OED* entries, such as, for instance, *ryu*, denoting “a style, method, or school of thought relating to a Japanese discipline or art” (*OED3*). The word is also used to designate “an institution or body that teaches such a style” (*OED3*).

In addition, a number of borrowings from Buddhism were assumed into English during the last few decades. Cannon (1996: 66-67) gives an outline of the historical development of Buddhism as a religion and philosophy in Japan:

Brought from Korea in the 6th century, Buddhism became the national religion in the 8th century. Soon the powerful Shingon and Tendai sects, introduced by monks who had studied in China, became dual mainstreams of Japanese Buddhism. In the early Kamakura period Zen became the third major sect, whereupon Japanese Buddhism became distinct from the mainland variety.

Seven of the nine twentieth-century Japanese borrowings in this category are related to Zen Buddhism. Examples are *roshi*, “the spiritual leader of a monastic or lay community; an advanced practitioner of Zen meditation” (*OED3*), and *zendo*, “[a] place for Zen Buddhist meditation and study” (*OED2*).

The list of *OED* items also comprises a substantial proportion of borrowings associated with society, human behaviour and feelings, for example *mama-san*, which was adopted into English at the beginning of the twentieth century (i.e. in 1904) as a synonym for a mother in contexts related to Japan and East Asia, as in:

- “1904 L. Hearn *Let.* 10 Aug. in *Japanese Lett.* (1911) 442 Little Mamma San, - This morning we had a pleasant swimming, the sea being warm.” (*OED3*)

The *OED3* informs its users that the word changed in meaning over time. It later use, it came to refer to “any woman in a position of authority, spec[ifically] one in charge of a geisha-house or bar” (*OED3*). The first attested use of this sense dates from 1946 in *OED3*:

- “1946 *Amer. Speech* 22 55/2 *Mama-san*, the GI term for the madam of a joro house. (Japan.)”

Another example from this category is *hikikomori*, a comparatively recent borrowing. It was adopted from Japanese in 1998 as a term for “abnormal avoidance of social contact; acute social withdrawal” (*OED3*). It is also used to designate “a person, typically an adolescent male, engaging in this” or “a recluse, a shut-in” (*OED3*). *Hikikomori* belongs to the group of borrowings which are restricted to Japanese-speaking contexts, as in:

- “2008 A. Fogel & M. Kawai in A. Fogel et al. *Human Devel. in 21st Cent.* xix. 194 Japanese *hikikomori* are typically adolescents who are shy, sensitive, and intelligent.” (*OED3*)

2.2.8 The Martial Arts

The Martial Arts with their various subgroups is the area on which the impact of Japanese was most intense in the twentieth century: nearly 25 per cent of the words

and meanings assumed from Japanese in recent times belong to this field. The term *martial art* itself represents an early twentieth-century Japanese borrowing. The phrase was assumed from Japanese in 1920. According to the *OED3*, it either goes back to Japanese *bu-gei*, which was coined from *bu-* ‘military affairs’ and *gei* ‘art, craft’, or Japanese *bu-jutsu*, which is ultimately derived from *bu-* and *jutsu* ‘art, skill, technique’. Similarly, the noun *karate* was taken over from Japanese in the recent past. The word is first documented in 1955 in the *OED2*:

- “1955 E. J. Harrison *Fighting Spirit Japan* (ed. 2) vii. 74 Karate resembles both jujutsu and judo.” (*OED2*)

A close review of the borrowings relating to the martial arts reveals that the great majority of them have to do with judo. In all, English adopted 44 judo terms from Japanese. They entered English during the first half of the twentieth century. Cannon (1996: 64) draws attention to the fact that

The West experienced a keen, rising interest in the martial arts from the late 19th century, with London’s first *judo* club formed in 1918. The International Judo Federation was established in Paris, and judo associations existed in most countries by the 1960s. Once judo was added to the Olympics in 1964, the Japanese usually won the competitions, as also for the world judo championships, beginning in 1956.

An essential proportion of the borrowings in this category of *OED* entries are attested in specialized literature on martial arts systems and techniques. *Shodan*, for instance, functions as a technical term in judo and karate for “[a] degree of proficiency equivalent to first Dan or first degree Black Belt” or “a holder of this degree” (1993 *OED ADD Series*), as in:

- “1987 *Fighting Arts Internat.* No. 41. 36/1 The highest graded competitor was to be *shodan* (1st degree black belt).” (1993 *OED ADD Series*)

Another example is *oshi-taoshi*, a sumo term which was taken over into English in 1940. It denotes “[a] winning move in which a wrestler pushes his opponent down to the floor” (*OED3*). The item is mainly recorded in specialized studies on sumo, as is illustrated by the following *OED3* quotations:

- “1940 K. Hikoyama *Sumo* iii. 60 If he throws him down by a violent push, it is called *osi-taosi*, or ‘push-down’.”
- “1985 P. L. Cuyler *Sumo* (1991) 192 When a wrestler is pushed down, whether in or out of the ring, it is called an *oshi taoshi* (pushed down).”

These types of word belong to the group of Japanese borrowings that only the specialist is familiar with.

3. Conclusion

This paper has contributed to current research in the domain of English lexicology. It represents an up-to-date analysis of an essential proportion of the foreign vocabulary entering English in the recent past: the total number of twentieth-century Japanese borrowings recorded in the *OED Online*. As mentioned before, the latest Japanese borrowing identified in the electronic *OED* is the word *Sudoku*, which was first

recorded in 2000 in English. At present, the *OED* does not include any lexical item which was taken over from Japanese in the twenty-first century.

The comprehensive linguistic data offered by the *OED* and further corpora rendered it possible to provide a rounded picture of the variety of subject areas and spheres of life from which Japanese words and phrases have been borrowed into English since 1900. The body of twentieth-century Japanese borrowings comprises 323 words and meanings. As to the percentage of borrowings in the different subject fields, we established that the highest proportion of lexical items can be found in the domain of the martial arts. A substantial number of the borrowings in this field are classified as technical terms which seem to be unknown to the average native speaker of English. An example is *makuuchi*, adopted from Japanese in the 1950s as a specialized term in sumo for “[t]he highest division of wrestlers” (*OED*3). Of the fields related to the martial arts, the domain of judo in particular encompasses a relatively high number of borrowings.

An additional major subject field which comprises quite a large number of Japanese-derived words is the domain of people and everyday life, encompassing the subgroups animal rearing, love and sexuality, clothing, health and vitality, the educational system, Buddhism, society, human behaviour and feelings. The diversity of Japanese borrowings in this category reveals how varied life has become in the recent past.

The borrowings in the natural sciences with their different related domains make up the third largest group of words which were adopted from Japanese in the twentieth century. The influx of natural science terms might be due to progress and inventions in these areas in Japan, which resulted in the formation of new words several of which were subsequently transferred into English.

Concerning the individual subcategories of the different overriding fields, the greatest number of Japanese borrowings are listed in the fields of judo (44 borrowings), cookery (33 borrowings), society, human behaviour and feelings (25 borrowings), business, economy and finances (15 borrowings). This result illustrates that Japanese not only made significant lexical contributions to the English language in the form of technical terms documented in specialized contexts but also in the form of words relating to everyday matters.

Notes

1. A detailed definition of the term borrowing is provided in the terminology chapter of this paper.
2. Durkin email dated 9th February 2010.
3. *Ibid.*
4. For more information about the *OED* revision work, see Durkin (1999: 1-49).
5. For more details on the production and the advantages of a digitalized form of the *OED* see Brewer (2004: 1– 43) and Brewer (2007: 213–57).
6. The grammatical terminology employed in this article relies on Quirk et al.’s *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (2008). For the definition of the term *phrase* see Quirk (2008: 2.3ff and 2.25ff).

7. *Thoughtography* is classified as a technical term in parapsychology for “[t]he production of a visible, usually photographic, image (supposedly) by purely mental means” (*OED3*). According to the *OED3*, the word ultimately corresponds to Japanese *nensha*, itself formed from *nen-* ‘thought, idea’ and *sha-* (in *shashin*, meaning ‘photography’, ‘photograph’). For the meaning and etymology of other unfamiliar borrowings which are part of the above list, see the information which is provided by the corresponding *OED* entries.

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Online resources:

British National Corpus <<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>>
LexisNexis <<http://www.lexisnexis.de/>>

Appendix

In this essay, the following abbreviations are used:

‘...’	meaning
adj.	adjective
n.	noun
phr.	phrase
<i>BNC</i>	<i>British National Corpus</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>OD2</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition</i>
<i>OED3</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary, Third Edition</i>
<i>OED ADD Series</i>	<i>OED Additions Series</i>

Յ. ՇՈՒԼՏ – Ճապոներենի ազդեցությունը անգլերենի բառապաշարի վրա. – Սույն հոդվածում փորձ է արվում ուսումնասիրել ճապոներենի ազդեցությունը անգլերենի բառապաշարի վրա սկսած 1900 թվականից: Հետազոտության արդյունքները հիմնված են անգլերեն ներթափանցած ճապոներեն փոխառությունների համապարփակ բառարանագրական տվյալների վրա, որոնք վերցված են *Oxford English Dictionary* առցանց բառարանից: Հոդվածում ճապոներեն փոխառությունները խմբավորված են ըստ տարբեր ոլորտների (ինչպիսիք են՝ տեխնոլոգիան, գաստրոնոմիան, քաղաքականությունը, պատերազմը և ռազմական ուժերը, գեղարվեստը և արհեստը, մարտարվեստը և այլն), որոնք վերջին մի քանի տասնամյակներում ենթարկվել են ճապոներենի ազդեցությանը:

Բանալի բառեր. բառագիտություն, բառարանագրություն, առցանց բառարաններ և բառագիտական հետազոտության տվյալներ, լեզվական շփում, օտար բառապաշարն անգլերենում, ճապոներենի ազդեցությունն անգլերենի վրա