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Difficulties Encountered by the Japanese Language Learners in Using English Loanwords

O.P. Dhanushi Udeshika

Assistant Lecturer, Department of Modern Languages, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka
udeshikadhanushi@gmail.com

Loanwords are defined as the words where both form and meaning are borrowed or assimilated with some adaptation to the Phonological system of the new language. English loanwords have become a considerable part of the contemporary Japanese vocabulary. Loanwords are one of the most difficult pedagogical elements in Japanese language Education. It appears that the most overarching and fundamental source of difficulties is the narrow range of intuitive acceptability when English words are converted into their katakanare presentations. (Jun Xu-2013). Intuition of the learners who are learning Japanese as a foreign Language may differ from the native Japanese speakers. It is clear that the difficulty of acquiring loanwords by the Japanese learners as a Foreign Language is often not fully recognised by the teachers. The students make errors in identifying and writing English loanwords. In Conversation students use original English words. The conversations become unsuccessful, due to the inability of understanding Japanese conversations. This study is an attempt to identify how English loan words have become difficult to be studied when they are acquired by the Japanese learners in Sri Lanka. First English loanwords of Japanese were analysed and were categorised in order to identify the errors. The necessary data were collected using 100 students who were reading Japanese Language at the University of Kelaniya. They were asked to translate English loanwords into Japanese and Japanese words into English loanwords. The analysed results of this study revealed that the most of the students had faced many difficulties in translating those words. In conclusion it was obvious the fact that the main reason behind the issue was that most of the students were not familiar with that English word though English Language is considered as the Second Language in Sri Lanka.

Key words: difficulties, English, Japanese, learners, loanwords