Reaffirming a Preference for English Loanwords by Japanese Learners

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Abstract

This non-experimental study gauged the English lexical preferences of 545 native Japanese university students. Specifically, this univariate design collated the frequency of English loanword selection in preference to non-borrowed lexical items. A major focus of the study design was instrument validity, addressing the flaws of two previous studies (Brown, 1995; Small, 2002). With keen attention to vocabulary level, the Genius English-Japanese dictionary 5th edition (Minamide, 2014) facilitated the compilation of an initial, sizeable loanword corpus. Subsequent meticulous corpus revisions provided the lexical content for an instrument featuring loanword vocabulary options. The research instrument comprised 50 brief sentences, each with four valid lexical items in a multiple choice format. Thirty sentences included the choice of one English loanword. The combined frequency of loanword selection from an initial study (n = 283) and a replicated study (n = 262) (N = 545) showed an overall relative frequency average of 0.42. Chi-square analyses of the data comparing both studies indicated that differences in lexical selection were significant at p<.05 for 15 of the sentences with loanwords. Some of the limitations of working with nominal data are highlighted. The use of loanwords by native Japanese speakers can impede effective communication in English because they are not always an appropriate lexical choice. To help minimise perceived and pragmatic failure when communicating, Japanese need to be aware of the pitfalls of using loanwords and improve their English proficiency by increasing their lexical range and flexibility.

Keywords: loanwords, gairaigo, validity, lexical choice, lexical frequency, Japanese

Introduction

The use of loanwords has been an increasingly identifiable feature of the Japanese language, especially in recent decades. These types of lexical items known as *gairaigo* 外来語 have derived their forms from different languages (Kay, 1995) and perform various sociolinguistic functions (Rebuck, 2002). Their usage is not only common, but also quite dynamic evidenced in forms whole, blended and clipped, including neologisms which are semantically more Japanese than that of a borrowed foreign language (Kay, 1995). The current study revisits one by Small (2002), who attempted to replicate a study (Brown, 1995) which had poor validity

and questionable methods of data analysis. That is, Brown did not control the word level of the vocabulary items in his testing instrument and he admitted that he did not know the word level of the loanwords he used (Brown, 1995). The main intentions of revising Small's 2002 study were to replicate its original aim and that of Brown (1995), but to redesign a data-collecting instrument with a high level of validity and reliability and to appropriately analyse data within the constraints of doing so at a nominal level. The overall purpose of the current study was to gauge the preference of English lexical selection by native Japanese university students. Of specific interest was whether such students would prefer to select a loanword rather than a non-loanword when presented with four, equally valid lexical choices within a sentence.

The first section discusses aspects of the compilation, refinement, and revision of a loanword corpus created from the Genius English-Japanese dictionary (Minamide, 2014). At each step, the focus was on the validity of lexical items and their potential for inclusion in the research instrument. Next is an explanation of the instrument design, its development and revision after receiving advice from native Japanese speakers. There are examples of seemingly valid lexical items and concepts that are not culturally familiar to Japanese and therefore could not appear on the final instrument. As the data was nominal, analysis was somewhat limited, but there is a report of the relative frequency of loanword choice and chi-square test results for comparing loanword and non-loanword frequency. To generalise, the data indicates a relatively high frequency of selection for some loanwords. The article concludes with some comments about some ways that loanwords can interfere with the clear communication of intended meaning when speaking in English. Implications for native Japanese speakers to demonstrate their English proficiency and express themselves more clearly are to either use loanwords with great care or to use vocabulary other than loanwords.

Corpus Compilation

The instrument in the study by Small (2002) comprised 25 loanwords. However, checking their validity for inclusion in the current study, only seven of these lexical items were of a suitable word level according to the Genius English-Japanese dictionary (Minamide, 2014). This mainstream dictionary assigns word level according to A rank (***) junior high school, 1150 words, B rank (**) senior high school, 3150 words and C rank (*) university, 5300 words (Minamide, 2014, p. viii.). The other headwords in this dictionary do not have an assigned word level.

The process of loanword vocabulary selection to develop a valid instrument was time-consuming and painstaking in the absence of an electronic version, requiring multiple manual checking of the entire printed edition of the Genius dictionary (Minamide, 2014). First, the obvious loanwords were identified, as they appeared in bold print as a headword. The next step was to locate loanwords following a headword in the first sense and listed after another

main Japanese word. Loanwords in bold print were preferred for inclusion and those that appeared in the first four senses of a headword were added. The initial compiled corpus comprised 338 headwords, 385 separate senses and 345 separate katakana forms. It is worth noting that in this corpus, there were three different loanword entries each for *competition*** and *pace***, three senses each for *news**** and *network*** and four senses for *energy****. Some loanwords that might seem to be common and elementary for a native English speaker are rated at university level (Minamide, 2014) and were therefore not included in this corpus. Among 27 such examples were *digital**, *dessert**, *menu**, *vocabulary** and *volleyball**. Similarly, some loanwords for which comprehension is assumed do not feature a word level (Minamide, 2014) and therefore were not selected, such as *caffeine*, *chat*, *noodles* and *vanilla*.

The initial corpus was revised to a total of 269 words; 205 A rank (76.21%) and 64 B rank (23.79%) (Minamide, 2014). An additional 21 loanwords were excluded from the corpus. These comprised country names or their associated adjective forms including nationalities. Other exclusions were city names, imperial units of measurement and most religious references. Some vocabulary specific to particular sports was not included, but a small number of loanwords for sport names, sporting equipment and musical instruments were included because they are familiar to English speakers around the world.

Only single lexical items were considered for selection in the compilation of a loanword corpus. As such, despite suitable word level, various compound forms, or loanblends (Kay, 1995), were not considered. Two loanword + kanji compound examples are shown here in parenthesis with their pronunciation written in romaji and English meaning with vocabulary rank, e.g. X 線 (ekkususen, X-ray**) and スケジュール 帳 (sukejūruchō, diary**). Another compound form is loanword + loanword, e.g. エンジントラブル (enjintoraburu, engine trouble**) and エコノミークラス (ekonomīkurasu, economy class***). These are common compound forms, although there are others, including clipped loanword forms, e.g. ターミナルビル (tāminarubiru, terminal building**), which refers to the main building of a bus terminal or railway station. Moreover, single and compound forms might be examples of 'made in Japan' forms referred to as *waseieigo* 和製英語 that have their own distinct lexical and semantic features in a Japanese context. Two examples of these are ハンドル (handoru) *steering wheel* from *handle*** and despite acceptable word level of the headwords *toast*** and *sandwich*** another example is ホットサンド (hottosando) *toasted sandwich*. Not all single loanword, non-compound forms were considered suitable for the corpus, as their meaning was restricted in Japanese compared to that in English. For instance, the meaning of the word *sink*** is shown as a verb in Japanese (Minamide, 2014), but not the common English noun, e.g. *kitchen sink*.

The corpus was further revised to a total of 128 loanwords, comprising 29 A rank (22.66%) and 99 B rank (77.34%) (Minamide, 2014). The instrument for this study was compiled from a random selection of loanwords from this corpus. Regardless of the loanwords chosen, it was assumed that students in this study would comprehend them.

Instrument Design

Among the assumptions in the instrument design were that Japanese university students should have already studied all the vocabulary featured in the instrument. All vocabulary in the sentence stem and the four, equally valid responses were rank A or rank B vocabulary (Minamide, 2014). This style of multiple choice instrument is unconventional, as there were no distractors or incorrect responses. Nor does this style fit any of the seven multiple choice formats about which Haladyna, Downing, and Rodriguez (2002) describe aspects of validity (see also Haladyna, 2004).

Careless sentence stem construction can lead to a bias in lexical selection. The sentences were quite short, with a range of 6 -15 words and an average length of slightly more than 10 words. This sentence length was deliberate to reduce cognitive fatigue, and to establish a minimum frame of reference for overall meaning comprehension (Moreno, Martínez, & Muñiz, 2015, p. 390). Furthermore, relatively short sentences help to focus attention on the four lexical choices and to move the study along at a reasonable pace.

One of the difficulties in designing the instrument while remaining acutely aware of validity, was finding three plausible alternative lexical choices of a suitable word level to complement a selected loanword. For instance, it is challenging to create a sentence featuring the loanword *button* without direct reference to other fashion items which are also loanwords. Despite probable student comprehension, the word level of the loanword *accessory** was considered too high for this study and so on the instrument, it became a generalised paraphrase *a feature of fashion*. Another issue with the word *button* is that it is a loanword from Portuguese, *botão*, in Japanese (botan, ボタン) (Kay, 1995, p. 71). This differs somewhat phonemically from the English word *button*. The issue is not so much about the semantics of the lexical concept itself, but more about a Japanese speaker realising how pronunciation can affect (fast) comprehension.

Another example for which it is difficult to find suitable alternative lexical choices is the loanword *dam* (damu, ダム). The comprehension of dams as structures and locations might be conceptual rather than experiential. We might not ever visit them and unlike some famous ones such as the Hoover Dam in Nevada, USA, they might not be open for public access. It is possible that one of the alternative lexical options, in this case *valley*, might be preferred. There is a logical association of progression between the higher levels of mountains and the lower levels of valleys and the lexical sequence *mountains and valleys* is more common than the sequence *mountains and dams*.

It would not be valid to ask respondents to choose a popular breakfast beverage from either *milk*, *tea*, *coffee*, or *juice*. Because juice (jyūsu, ジュース) and coffee (kōhī, コーヒー) are loanwords, both could not appear as options within the same sentence. The lexical item *tea*

can seem vague when there are so many varieties. In one cultural context, the prototypical image (see Aitchison, 1992) of tea might be black tea, while in other cultures, it might be green tea. Therefore, the validity and reliability of this item would be questionable if the intended and interpreted meanings differ. This context of culture cannot be underestimated, nor always accounted for definitively or objectively in a second language. What appear to be four distinct seasons in a Japanese context, are not as evident for respondents in tropical or very cold environments. Swimming as an outdoor, recreational activity is associated more with summer than winter. Yet in the northern half of Australia, for example, winter has the most comfortable air and water temperature for swimming.

Another issue for item choice is that respondents might prefer more than one option, or they might not prefer any of the available options. Having to choose an option that does not reflect their true preference results in inaccurate and therefore unreliable data. To use an analogy of airline food, it is not very accurate to say that the favourite food of passengers is a chicken dish simply because that is chosen the most often. To a large extent, airlines determine passenger meal selection by the way they plan their meal services—not because passengers prefer chicken the most, but because they dislike it the least. A degree of 'error' must be assumed considering any lexical selection owing to the cognitive processes triggered by sentence stem construction and among the four answer options, word length, (un)familiarity and placement.

Discarded Examples

As part of the instrument review, a few native Japanese speakers made comments about the sentence style, content and possible lexical choices. This process follows the advice of Price (et al., 2017) for checking sentences. One example soon discarded included the options *token*** (loanword), *ticket****, *money**** and *fee***. The problem was that the use of a token to pass through a turnstile, for example at a railway station, is not a cultural practice in Japan and a token is not a cultural artefact that would be familiar to students, in spite of acceptable word level and a clear example sentence of usage in the dictionary.

In another later discarded example, Japanese cognitive processing favours the lexical item *sea* as a translation of *umi* 海. The lexical concept *beach* is limited in Japanese to the location of sand where the sea meets the land, in contrast to the colloquial expression *at the beach* in English, referring to a generalised area near the sea. In English, one can swim at the beach, but in Japanese one swims in the sea. In addition, in English, one can have a barbecue at the beach, but in Japanese one has a barbecue at the sea. From a Japanese language perspective, the four lexical options beach** (loanword), sea***, ocean*** and coast** would yield unreliable, biased selection.

Reducing Context Effects

To help reduce context effects such as response bias, the instrument comprised a total of 50 sentences, each with four multiple choice options. Moreno, Martínez, and Muñiz (2015) provide a good deal of concise advice for developing multiple choice items. They suggest including only three options, stating that 'many studies have recommended this' (Rodriguez, as cited in Moreno, Martínez, & Muñiz, 2015, p. 391). However, this instrument featured four options to reduce chance selection from 33.3% to 25%. In their extensive review and analysis of multiple choice studies, Haladyna and Downing (1989, p. 55) revealed a .00 difference between three- and five-option formats and that for reliability, generally more options are preferred (1989, p. 58). In the one study they examined that reported validity results, more options apparently increased validity (1989, p. 58).

From four possible vocabulary options, there was one loanword choice in each of 30 sentences. These were randomly mixed with 20 other sentences that featured four non-loanword choices. The aim was to minimise an item-order, or contextual cueing effect where subjects become aware of the activity's focus (Price et al., 2017). The phenomenon and results of positive cueing for multiple choice (medical) tests are discussed by Schuwirth et al. (1996). If subjects realise that one of the four possible responses in most sentences is a loanword, they might be more inclined to choose that response. This would result in skewed loanword frequency selection and therefore affect the accuracy of preferred lexical choices and associated data reliability. The combination at random with 20 non-loanword sentences was for distraction and the frequency of choice for the four equally valid responses in these sentences was not considered for data analysis. There was a balanced number of loanword responses positioned at A, B, C, D. Moreover, for improved reliability, four variations of the instrument were devised, rotating loanword positions in each version. This aspect of instrument design is considered one of the strengths of this study.

Instrument Examples

Sentence examples (1) and (2) show randomly selected items from the instrument. Here and in the Appendix, loanword responses are indicated as choice (a) with an asterisk and the other, non-loanword lexical choices are listed alphabetically. However, as four versions of the instrument were created, the position of the loanword choice rotated in positions a - d. On the instrument, the format of the sentences followed the vertical layout recommended by Moreno, Martínez and Muñiz (2015, p. 391) as the most appropriate to ease comprehension. To see all 30 sentences with loanwords, refer Appendix.

(1) Today, there is the final _____ of the world championship.
a. race* b. competition c. contest d. event
(2) A traditional Japanese meal usually includes _____.
a. soup* b. beans c. meat d. vegetables

For each of the 30 sentences featuring loanwords, the four possible responses were valid and plausible based on a combination of carefully chosen word level, correct syntax and/or contextual semantic relation. Five of the 30 sentences with a loanword choice featured four synonymous responses, as shown in example (3).

(3) The _____ in the restaurant gave us very good service.

a. waiter* b. clerk c. employee d. staff

Random example (4) shows one of the 20 non-loanword sentences on the instrument. Among the lexical features of such sentences were common expressions, idioms and collocations.

(4) She went to bed because she was _____ watching that television program.

a. tired of b. bored with c. not interested in d. not keen on

The information in Table 1 shows that the instrument included four A rank loanwords and 26 B rank loanwords. In addition to one loanword in each sentence, there were three possible non-loanword responses, comprising a total of 40 A rank and 49 B rank lexical items (Minamide, 2014). Note that owing to limited possible lexical options from the corpus, the items *sugar* and *ceremony* featured twice on the instrument; refer Table 1.

Table 1: Instrument Loanword and Non-loanword Lexical Items

Loanword	Loanword in Katakana	Non-loanword Lexical Items		
alcohol**	アルコール	cigarette**	salt**	sugar***
butter***	バター	egg***	milk***	sugar***
button**	ボタン	feather**	flower***	jewelry**
camp***	キャンプ	fish***	run***	walk***
concrete**	コンクリート	brick**	steel**	wood**
curve**	カーブ	area***	neighborhood**	town***
dam**	ダム	bay**	lake***	valley**
diamond**	ダイヤモンド	gold***	pearl**	silver***
lens**	レンズ	brand**	focus**	function**
medal**	メダル	ceremony**	flag***	flame**
Olympic**	オリンピック	famous***	international***	professional**
parade**	パレード	achievement**	celebration**	victory**
party***	パーティー	ceremony**	discussion**	meeting***
peak**	ピーク	busy***	crowded**	popular***
picnic**	ピクニック	drink***	fun***	lunch***
pilot**	パイロット	actor**	doctor***	police***
race***	レース	competition**	contest**	event***
rhythm**	リズム	pace**	pitch**	sound**
robot**	ロボット	machine***	system***	way***
rocket**	ロケット	equipment**	satellite**	technology**
rope**	ロープ	sail***	wheel**	wind***

Loanword	Loanword in Katakana	Non-loanword Lexical Items		
scandal**	スキャンダル	incident**	problem***	trouble***
sofa**	ソファー	carpet**	clock***	desk***
soup**	スープ	bean**	meat***	vegetable***
stress**	ストレス	anxiety**	fear***	worry**
symbol**	シンボル	drawing**	picture***	representation**
tank**	タンク	bag**	bowl**	container**
virus**	ウイルス	disease***	illness**	sickness**
vitamin**	ビタミン	fiber**	mineral**	water***
waiter**	ウェイター	clerk**	employee**	staff**

Conducting the Study

The participants in this study were first year and second year students at the same university and all were native Japanese speakers. The initial study (Study 1) and a replicated study (Study 2) were conducted in April and September 2019, respectively. They were conducted during the first English lesson of the first and second term. The purpose of the exercise was explained as a general vocabulary exercise in which all the answers were correct. There was no oral or written reference to loanwords. It was stressed that the exercise was not a test for course assessment.

Participants filled in an answer sheet custom-designed using Zipgrade LLC (2019) software. For privacy, they did not write their name, but only their course and gender. Participants were instructed to mark only one lexical A, B, C, D choice on their answer sheet for each sentence. One by one, the sentences with the lexical options were shown on a large screen for approximately 15 seconds. It took approximately 30 minutes to conduct the whole study.

Data Analysis

The answer sheets were scanned using Zipgrade LLC (2019) software which compiled frequency counts for all lexical choices. The data in Figure 1 clearly indicates a relatively high frequency of selection for some loanwords. For direct comparison, the relative frequency of the loanwords chosen in Study 1 (n = 283) and Study 2 (n = 262), (N = 545) is arranged from highest, *stress* 0.8 to lowest, *button* 0.22, both in Study 2; refer Figure 1. The loanword average relative frequency for the combined studies was 0.42.

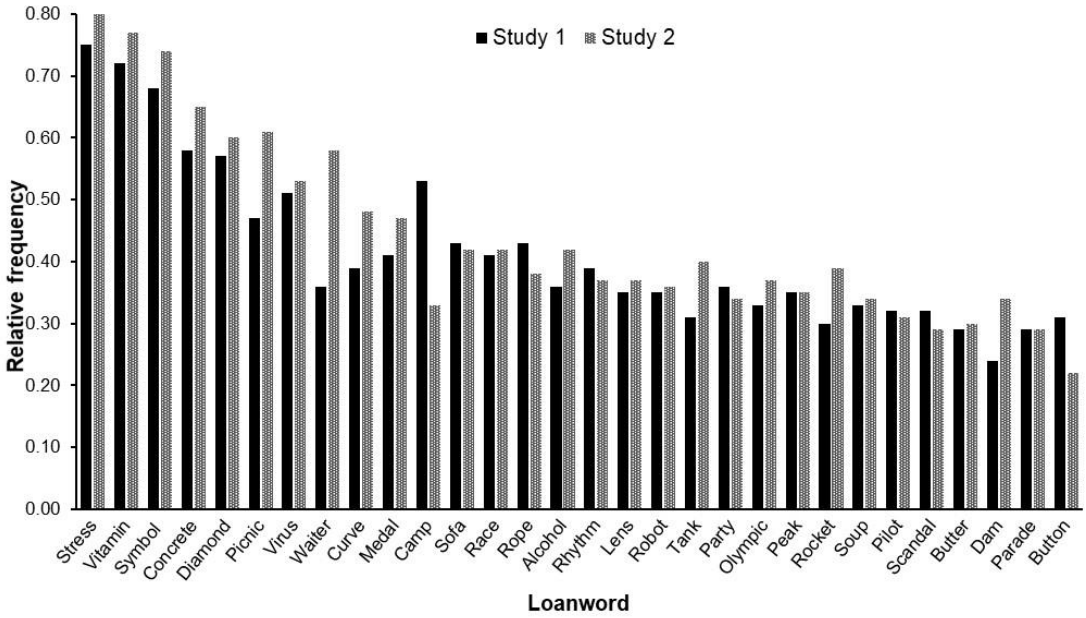

Figure 1. **Relative frequency of loanwords.**

Analysis of the data frequency can reveal statistically significant differences between the selection of vocabulary. A chi-square test of homogeneity (see Wilhelm, 2008) was performed to compare the frequency of the four possible lexical choices (including a loanword) to determine how closely their frequency counts corresponded between Study 1 (n = 283) and Study 2 (n = 262), (N = 545). The chi-square test (X^2) results indicated that differences in lexical selection were significant at p<.05 for 15 of the 30 sentences with loanwords and that differences in lexical selection were not significant at p<.05 for the other 15 of the sentences with loanwords; refer Table 2.

Table 2: Chi-square Test Results

	Significant at $p<.05$			Not Significant at $p<.05$	
Loanword	X^2 (3, N = 545) =	p-value	Loanword	X^2 (3, N = 545) =	p-value
Button	30.45	< 0.00001	Alcohol	2.57	0.46
Camp	23.87	< 0.00003	Butter	0.11	0.99
Dam	33.16	< 0.00001	Concrete	7.19	0.07
Diamond	45.34	< 0.00001	Curve	7.30	0.06
Olympic	22.77	0.00004	Lens	0.67	0.88
Parade	8.32	0.04	Medal	2.19	0.53
Party	10.96	0.01	Peak	4.94	0.18
Picnic	13.59	0.004	Rhythm	2.07	0.56
Pilot	25.67	0.00001	Robot	2.15	0.54
Race	8.07	0.04	Scandal	2.71	0.44
Rocket	55.65	< 0.00001	Sofa	4.37	0.22
Rope	49.35	< 0.00001	Soup	7.71	0.05
Tank	9.37	0.03	Stress	2.88	0.41
Virus	12.34	0.006	Symbol	6.86	0.08
Waiter	26.23	< 0.00001	Vitamin	3.02	0.39

The results in Table 2 show that the null hypothesis, that there is no significant difference at $p<.05$ between the frequency of choosing borrowed and non-borrowed words by Japanese university students when presented with four equally suitable English vocabulary items, can be rejected for 15 of the 30 sentences with loanwords. Statistically, the proportions of frequency were different among the four possible lexical choices. Likewise, the null hypothesis can be accepted for the other 15 of the 30 sentences with loanwords, where the proportions of frequency were not statistically different among the four possible lexical choices.

Working with nominal (categorical) data, performing a chi-square test has a similar purpose to that of an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), with a comparison of differences among two or more groups. However, a significant result from either of these tests only indicates that a significant difference exists somewhere among the groups. Importantly, such a test result does not show where that difference is. Therefore, the chi-square statistic does not specifically reveal that the frequency of loanword choice is significantly different to that of non-loanword alternatives. A post-hoc analysis can reveal the groups that differ significantly from each other. Following a chi-square test, it might be appropriate to conduct the Bonferroni correction. This would specifically compare loanword to non-loanword frequency. It depends on the degree to which a researcher is prepared to test in order to detect some statistical significance. There are statistical limits working with nominal data. At this categorical level, relative frequency, as shown in Figure 1, nears the boundaries of presenting the data for what it is.

Conclusion

The aims of this research were achieved. Keen attention to word level and types of lexical items facilitated the compilation and revision of a carefully prepared corpus. This enabled the preparation of a valid and reliable data-collecting instrument that was then tested and replicated. Reaffirming the main finding of the studies by Brown (1995) and Small (2002), the relative frequency of loanword selection in both the initial and replicated 2019 studies showed an overall preference for such vocabulary selection by native Japanese university students. Although data analysis was restricted in its complexity, this study avoided one of the fundamental flaws in Brown's 1995 study, where ANOVA was performed on nominal data. This also adversely affected the attempted replication of this study by Small (2002). It is apparent that some loanwords were much more commonly chosen, such as *stress*, *vitamin* and *symbol* and others much less frequently, including *dam*, *parade* and *button*. Lexical choice is not only about the lexical item itself but is also influenced by the sentence stem and semantic frame of the sentence. Their consideration and construction were among the main challenges and potential weaknesses of this study and could therefore provide an opportunity for future refinement and validation. In addition, it would be interesting to determine whether there is a similar preference for loanword lexical selection in other languages and what implications this might have for language teaching and learning. As one of the features indicative of discourse style when speaking in English, Japanese might prefer to use loanwords consciously for their convenience, or unconsciously from a lack of awareness, with an assumption that an English speaker will comprehend the meaning these words have in a Japanese context. However, learners need to understand that when communicating in English it is not always appropriate to use loanwords in the same way as in Japanese because their pronunciation, meaning, grammatical forms and usage will almost always vary between these languages. Therefore, if Japanese learners do not pay attention to these aspects of cognition and language production in English, they might suffer pragmatic failure in discourse through inappropriate use of loanwords that impede effective communication.

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Appendix

Instrument Sentences Featuring a Loanword*

1. The _____ jewelry was very expensive.

a. diamond* b. gold c. pearl d. silver

2. It is popular to _____ along the bank of that river.

a. camp* b. fish c. run d. walk

3. I can take great pictures because the _____ of my camera is very good.

a. lens* b. brand c. focus d. function

4. The directors apologized for the _____ at their company.

a. scandal* b. incident c. problem d. trouble

5. The man put his new pet fish in a plastic _____ for a short time.

a. tank* b. bag c. bowl d. container

6. That big park is a popular place to have _____.

a. a picnic* b. fun c. a drink d. lunch

7. The doctor told me to avoid consuming _____.

a. alcohol* b. cigarettes c. salt d. sugar

8. Climbers need to have enough _____ to reach the summit of that high mountain.

a. rope* b. experience c. preparation d. equipment

9. You should always drive carefully around that _____ at night.

a. curve* b. area c. neighborhood d. town

10. The river flowed from the mountains into a _____.

a. dam* b. bay c. lake d. valley

11. The use of _____ has been a feature of fashion for a long time.

a. buttons* b. feathers c. jewelry d. leather

12. To protect your health, you should reduce _____.

a. stress* b. anxiety c. fear d. worry

13. When baking, a common ingredient to mix with flour is _____.

a. butter* b. egg c. milk d. sugar

14. In the future, technology will help to create _____ that make our daily life easier.

a. robots* b. inventions c. ways d. techniques

15. The large red circle on the Japanese flag is a _____ of the sun.

a. symbol* b. drawing c. picture d. representation

16. At the national soccer team's _____, thousands of people cheered.

a. parade* b. competition c. celebration d. final

17. New Year in Japan is a _____ time for travel.

a. peak* b. busy c. crowded d. popular

18. Today, there is the final _____ of the world championship.

a. race* b. competition c. contest d. event

19. A lot of children say that they want to become _____.

a. a pilot* b. a doctor c. a police officer d. an actor

20. A strong building can be constructed using _____.

a. concrete* b. bricks c. steel d. wood

21. The Olympic Games is well-known for its _____.

a. medals* b. ceremonies c. flag d. flame

22. A _____ was held for the new workers.

a. party* b. discussion c. ceremony d. meeting

23. Vegetables contain a lot of ____.

a. vitamins* b. fiber c. minerals d. water

24. A traditional Japanese meal usually includes _____.

a. soup* b. beans c. meat d. vegetables

25. The _____ in the restaurant gave us very good service.

a. waiter* b. clerk c. employee d. staff

26. To help explore space, scientists are developing new _____.

a. rockets* b. equipment c. experiments d. satellites

27. He wore a mask to avoid spreading the _____ he had.

a. virus* b. disease c. illness d. sickness

28. Baseball, tennis and rugby are _____ sports.

a. Olympic* b. famous c. international d. professional

29. Everyone danced when the _____ of the music increased.

a. rhythm* b. pace c. pitch d. sound

30. One of the rooms in the artist's home had a large _____.

a. sofa* b. carpet c. clock d. desk

Author's biography

The author is a professor of English language who graduated M. Ed. TESOL from UNE Australia. He has taught English language for thirty years, first in Australia, then in Japan since 1993 and at Fukuoka University since 2001. His research interests include lexical borrowing, cognitive linguistics and a range of TESOL-related topics.

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