

## The Use of English Words and Sentences in Japanese Anime Songs (Code Mixing and Language Switching in Japanese Anime Songs)

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**Abstract:** As the popularity of Japanese Anime increases over time around the world, many anime fans would have realized a unique tendency in the theme songs of their favorite series: the tendency to mix or replace Japanese song lyrics with English words or sentences. The research surrounding the phenomenon of English words usage inside Japanese song lyrics has been done numerous times by numerous persons from different country, institution and generation prior to this article. And thus, this article is written in order to take part in those researches by means of comparing anime theme songs from different ages, the 80s, the 90s and 2000 and above. The purpose is to compare the frequency and tendency of mixing or replacing Japanese lyrics with English words or sentences.

**Keyword:** code-mixing; language switching; sociolinguistic; stereotype; anime; songs

### 1. Introduction

Anime is Japanese style animated show created with wide variety of stories and genres, created for viewers ranging from child to adult with their respective genres. This wide range of target audiences is one of the many factors why anime is globally well known with millions of fans around the world from many countries. One of anime's selling points lay not only in the stories and animation style and quality, but also in the theme song each titles came with, both as opening or ending themes and insert songs. Anime theme songs, especially from well-selling titles and the ones sang by famous singers or seiyuu, Japanese voice actors/actresses, have been known to be sold as singles in the form of compact disc, blue-ray and many other media.

A part of Japanese entertainment business, anime theme songs, being Japanese songs themselves, have been known to follow the tendency or trends of Japanese pop songs, known also as J-Pop, of inserting foreign language, mainly English language, inside their song lyrics. Albeit not all Japanese songs following this trends and tendencies, many famous ones clearly did. For example, the opening lyrics in a song titled "Endless Story" sang by Yuna Ito which is as follows:

"If you haven't changed your mind  
そばにいてほしいよ Tonight

強がることに疲れたの  
幼すぎたの Everytime I think about you baby  
今なら言える I miss you  
It's hard to say I'm sorry"

The lyrics sample shown above is an example of English words and sentences mixed inside Japanese song lyrics. These samples carries the question, whether or not the English lyrics are relevant as part of the Japanese songs, or there is no relevancies whatsoever, and thus, the English lyrics are purely cosmetics to make the Japanese song a much more modern, trendy nuances to make them more popular among Japanese youngsters. A number of research articles, thesis and journals concerning this phenomenon can already be found in different languages on various sources from the internet and many universities' repositories. While many of the articles discuss the relevancy between the lyrics in English and in Japanese, some other also discuss the application of code-mixing and language switching in such practice. While many among those articles mainly focus on certain song or single, only a few comparing several songs at once to make a contrastive analysis among them.

Therefore, this article is written as an attempt to make comparative analysis about Japanese songs, mainly anime songs, from different ages, i.e. the 80s, 90s and 2000s and above.

### 2. Method

This article will be written using comparative, descriptive analysis method, i.e. the data will be described, analyzed and compared among each other in order to obtain a conclusion which is the answer of the problem/question this article try to solve. Since there are literally thousands of anime songs being created and launched since late 70s, to narrow down the scope of this articles, samples will be taken from mecha (robot) themed anime whose theme songs is specifically created for that anime title, instead of a single song used as a theme song, i.e., the particular song must be the one existed inside the anime soundtracks, instead of a separated single not connected directly to the anime title.

### 3. Results and Discussions

Before we begin analyzing and discussing the sampled song lyrics, the followings are some references about the terminology we will be using in this article concerning language code switching, code mixing, code ambiguation and *gairaigo* (Japanese loanwords from other languages).

#### CodeSwitching

Bullock and Toribio (2009) describe Language (code) switching as a phenomenon where (mostly by bilingual people) an individual systematically or intentionally switching between 2 languages in one conversation, oftentimes using 2 or ore different languages in one sentence during conversations. One of the reasons for this behavior is, according to Benguedda (2017) in her desertation, is to fulfill a certain social functions. Namely, a teacher in class who teaches foreign language (e.g. English to non-english students) while communicating with the students, often switches between languages in order to condition their students' brain to adapt and get used to how different words are correctly pronounced in their learning target languages. In a conversation between bilingual or multilingual colleagues and friends, code switching also often used intentionally because certain ideas, emotions and even concepts can be much easier to convey via different languages. And thus, an Indonesian person who's fluent in English but live and work inJapan can be found constantly switching between languages in her dialogue because the ideas, though, concept and emotion can be conveyed much easier through this method.

#### CodeMixing

While code switching as a habit can be done intentionally and systematically by a person fluent in multiple languages, a person who just learn other language has the tendency to mix some of the words, suffix, clause and phrases of one's native language with other language they're learning. Sihite (2016; Tekir & Akar, 2019) described Code mixing as the use of language elements, i.e. words, phrases and clauses into other languages in a single utterance or sentence without changing the topic, and still following the grammatical rules of the first language.

#### CodeAmbiguation

Takahashi and Calica (2015) taking example from Moody and Matsumoto (2003) described code ambiguation in J-pop lyrics means that parts of the lyrics are written in such a way as could be interpreted both as Japanese and English. In short, certain word that sounds similar in both main and secondary languages can be used in a wordplay which seems ambiguous but in the context of the lyrics actually connected in both language and still relevant with the main idea. One example is the lyrics from a tokusatsu TV series called "Enjin Sentai Go-Onger" that says "Enjin sentai Go-onger, i-2-3-4-GO ONGER, 3-2-1-Lets GO ONGER. GO ON!". In the lyrics, the word GO have is used in both English and Japanese, albeit having different meaning. But in the context of the song, the two words can be used as one similarly. This is the example of Code Ambiguation.

#### Gairaigo (外来語)

Tomoda (2005) described Gairaigo as "A category of Japanese lexicon comprised of words deived from foreign language (outside of China) that retain at least some of the morphological and phonological features of the original language".

In daily use, gairago usually written using katakana, but gairaigo is different from katakanago, which is a foreign language's newly loaned words that hasn't been stabilized in Japanese and still being used in the same manner as the source language.

Here are the analysis and discussion about the following samples of Japanese anime song in which the lyrics contain English words and phrases.

Anime title : Choukousoku GALVION

The Song: Lonely Chaser (Performed by : Riyuko Tanaka)

Lyrics:

夜空焦がす neon-light  
 都会(まち)は踊るよ through the night  
 硝子の摩天楼 横切る  
 dancing people, running people

バック・ミラーが 映し出す  
 蒼い傷跡 memories  
 時間(とき)を追いかけて アクセル  
 city chaser, misty chaser  
 Lonely chaser...

(Don't wanna be missing you, baby)  
 don't you know know know  
 (Dream about you tonight)

Misty (lonely chaser)  
 都会(まち)は今日も 愛を夢見てる  
 虚ろな lonely heart

(Misty) Lonely chaser  
 (Driving for your life, you can't) run away  
 Misty lonely chaser  
 (Driving for your life, you can't) hide away

Misty lonely chaser  
 Ooh! (running too fast)  
 Misty chaser (living too fast)  
 Lonely chaser...

In the lyrics above, the English words covers almost 50% of the whole lyrics. The lyrics “夜空焦がす neon-light 都会(まち)は踊るよ through the night” indicates that the English phrases are part of a whole sentence in Japanese, but the phrasing is still following English language grammatical rules, indicating the practice of Language Code-Switching (CS). The sentence “バック・ミラーが 映し出す 蒼い傷跡 memories” put the difference between the original English words (written in roman alphabets) and gairaigo or Japanese loan words (written in katakana). The rest of the English sentence in the reff part of the songs still written in correct English grammatical rules, albeit the context is still unclear.

Anime title :Jusenki L-GAIM  
 The Song: L-GAIM -Time For L-GAIM- (Performed by : MIO)  
 The Lyrics:

誰か背中抱いててくれ  
 ひとりきりじゃ悲しすぎるから  
 他人(ひと)が見てる夢のようさ  
 確かなものがなんにもないね  
 どうして僕はここに.....tell me why

Show me the way to you (heavy metal)  
 Lead me now where you are (heavy metal)  
 いま いま 駆け抜ける  
 Show me the way to you (heavy metal)  
 Lead me now where you are (heavy metal)  
 いま 愛 胸に抱いて L-GAIM

In the lyrics above, in the part that says “どうして僕はここに.....tell me why”, the English words works as a repetition for the Japanese sentence before it, which indicates it's use to emphasize the singer's emotion. The English sentence in the reff part of the song doesn't contain the same meaning nor is it connected to the Japanese ones. Therefore, it seems to indicate its' function as filler.

Anime Title : Kidou Keisatsu PATLABOR (Mobile Police PATLABOR)

The Song: YOU ARE THE ONE (Performed by : DAIZO)

The Lyrics:

すれ違う 人の波 飛び込んで来た LONELY GIRL  
誰かが 振り向く  
ビル風にあおられて おどけてみせる SILENT DANCE  
昨日を 輝きに変えて

ふと悲しみが 君をたずねる日も  
ステップならし 自分を迷わないで

熱い GLORY まだ見えぬ未来を  
信じた時に 素敵になる Ah もっと  
YOU ARE THE GLORY 今感じるすべて  
そのまま伝えて YOU ARE THE ONE

In this lyrics, both the phrase “LONELY GIRL” and “SILENT DANCE” are part of the Japanese lyrics as they are inseparable and relevant to each other, indicating the practice of Code-Switching between English and Japanese lyrics. While the word “GLORY” in the reff part still unknown in context, for this article, it will be assumed as mere filler.

Anime Title : VANDREAD

The Song : JUSTICE (Performed by : Kudou Aki)

The Lyrics:

Fight for your justice 勇気をだして  
Right! この手に 真実をつかもう  
Fight for your justice 胸を張って  
戦い抜く君が 欲しい

ダイヤモンド磨いているより  
輝ける未来を頂戴

なにはなくとも get up  
スイッチオンが肝心

譲りたくない something new  
求める それが 正義!

Fight for your justice 本気になって  
Right! 真っすぐ 現実に向かえよ  
Fight for your justice 逆流でも  
諦めない君が 好きさ

In the above lyrics, the clause “Fight for your justice” albeit partially, still fit in the whole sentence with the Japanese lyrics, indicating the practice of Code-Switching. The “スイッチオン” phrase is not an English words, but is a gairaigo, as indicated by the katakana.

Anime Title : Haja Taisei DANGAIOH

The Song : CROSS FIGHT (Performed by : Mitsuko Horie & Ichirou Mizuki)

The Lyrics :

CROSS FIGHT CROSS FIGHT  
JUST CROSS FOR LOVE  
熱く 熱く 熱く 戦え ダンガイオー  
ひとつの魂 結んだ  
四人の戦士よ 燃えつくせ  
まごころ彷徨うプラネット

炎の色に染めて  
謎めいた 悲しみを  
焼き砕け 十文字に  
CROSS FIGHT CROSS FIGHT  
JUST CROSS YOUR DREAM  
瞬く光の ダンガイオー

Without knowing the anime the song is a theme for, the phrase “CROSS FIGHT” would have been contextless and thus, meaningless in this lyrics. The phrase, which is also the title of the song, is yelled in the anime by the main character before their 4 ships combine to form the giant robot called DANGAIOH. Therefore, the phrase is not out of context, and functions as a language mixing in the lyrics with the purpose of making the song sounds more suitable for the anime.

#### 4. Conclusion

As shown above, the use of English words or sentences can be categorized as follows:

- 1) A language switching, in which part of or the whole sentence can be replaced with English sentences using the English language grammatical order instead of Japanese grammatical order.
- 2) A language mixing, in which English words are inserted in the Japanese lyrics, but the wordings themselves, albeit still connected and relevant to the Japanese lyric, are using “false” English grammars or broken English pronunciation.
- 3) The English words have no direct connection whatsoever to the main Japanese lyric, in which, even when the English words are removed, the Japanese lyric remain intact and comprehensible.

From age to age, from before the 80s throughout 2010s, the use of English words and sentences in Japanese Pop, Rock and even Rap songs remain consistent and unchanging, even though the music style changes according to the newest trends.

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