



Pavia, 26th October 2024

Review of Doctoral Thesis “The impact of the British-Japanese relations on British English: a diachronic sociolinguistic study” by Joanna Ryszka

The Doctoral Thesis “The impact of the British-Japanese relations on British English: a diachronic sociolinguistic study” by Joanna Ryszka is an excellent work, containing original research and proving to be a very good contribution to new knowledge in sociolinguistic studies.

With this thesis Joanna Ryszka thoroughly highlights the strict connection among language, international relations and historical events, demonstrating, in particular, the impact British-Japanese relations have on the influx of Japanese borrowings into British English as well as on the description of Japan in British texts.

The frame she adopts for her study is highly relevant in the field of sociolinguistics as it confirms how social identities in multiethnic/multilingual relations deeply influence the use of language, leading not only to frequent phenomena of code-switching but also to an ever-expanding presence of foreign terms borrowed from other languages.

This work presents an in-depth empirical, diachronic analysis of a substantial and significant corpus of Japanese borrowings, taken from different sources (i.e. books, newspapers, diaries), analyzed in their distinctive orthographic, phonetic, semantic and morphological features and contextualized within the historical events that took place between 1600 and 2020 and heavily influenced British-Japanese relations.

The research design, questions, hypothesis and methods are clearly stated, and the criteria adopted for the selection of the borrowings under study are well illustrated.

The research content is effectively organized and appropriately described within a solid and properly developed theoretical framework, widely contextualized with respect to previous and present research relevant to the same field of study.

The methodology is sound, the arguments are well-articulated, and the empirical research demonstrates scientific rigor and depth of investigation. Indeed, the

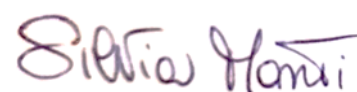
analysis of the selected borrowings in each text taken into consideration always includes: a presentation of the source text contextualized in its specific historical background; an examination of the discursive and linguistic worldview; a thorough orthographic, phonetic, morphological, semantic study of the borrowings to be recognized in the text, with notes also on pronunciation (when available) and etymology.

The discussion of findings is coherent and well-balanced and presents results that throw a special light on some interesting aspects: the strict connection between the history of Japanese borrowings in British English and the history of British-Japanese relations; the relevance of borrowings as an important source of historical information; the influence of social, political, moral, technological and cultural factors on the borrowing of some specific lexemes more than of others; the relevant information borrowings provide from a diachronic point of view on social contacts as well as on the general attitudes people have toward foreign linguacultures.

The study shows an appropriate and effective use of language, characterized by high quality of academic writing, clarity and conciseness of style, perfect spelling and grammar.

The thesis is adequately and widely referenced, and the use of up-to-date bibliography represents an important added value.

Overall, the work presents a high degree of originality, with relevant theoretical implications for future research, and, from a sociolinguistic point of view, further highlights key aspects of multilingual/multiethnic societies where the use of language proves to be a key icon of identity and languages and cultures intermingle thus overcoming linguacultural bridges and creating new important linguacultural dimensions.



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