H&SS Senior Honors Thesis

The Use of English in Japanese Advertising

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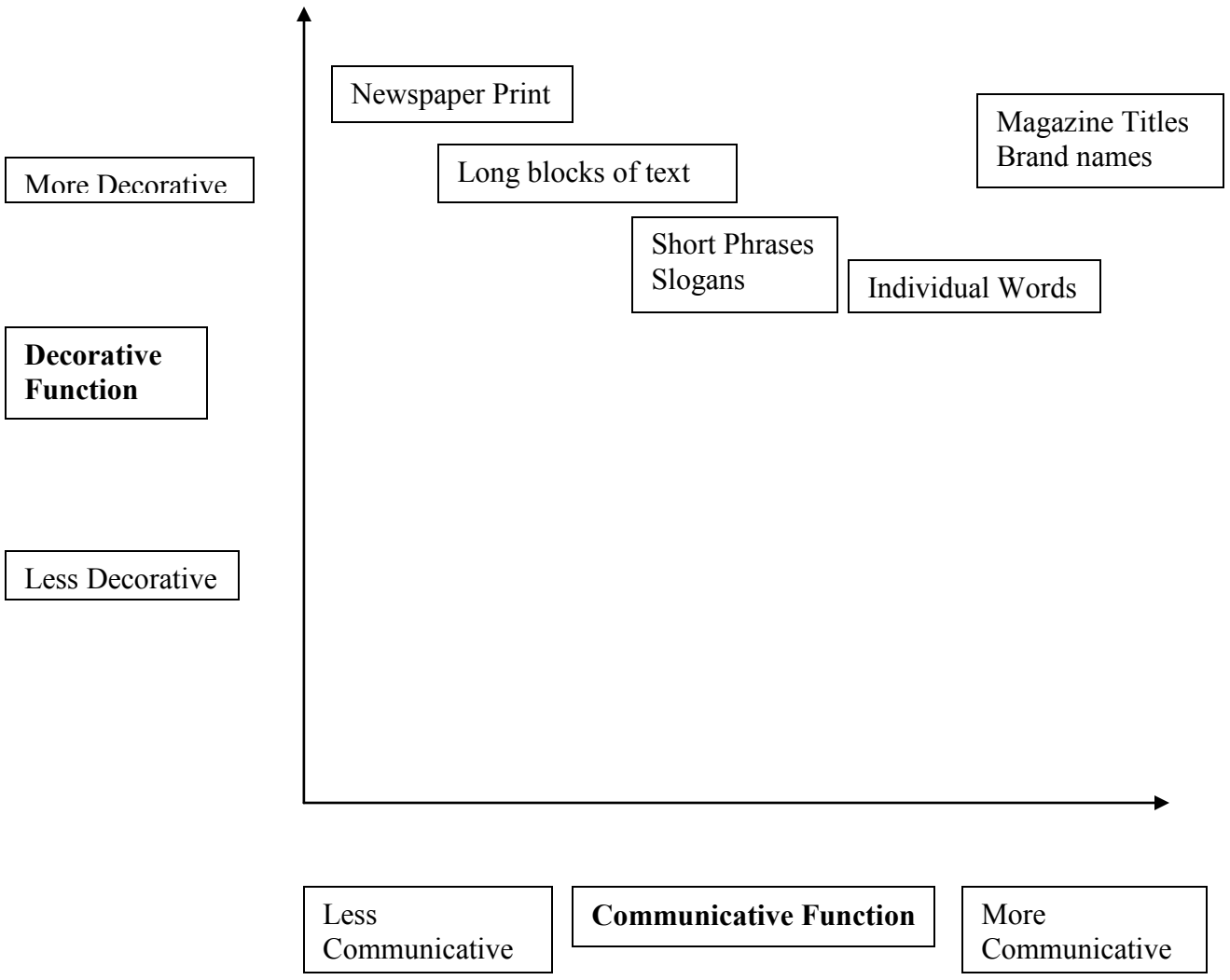
Abstract:

The incredible prevalence of English in Japanese media – both in written and spoken form – is at first baffling to a native English speaker. Phrases that seem to make no sense or that are not relevant to what they are attached to are nevertheless seen everywhere: on t-shirts, as part of television advertisements, and in Japanese magazines. Some commentators have argued that the English in Japan is not meant to be understood and that it acts purely as decoration. I argue in this paper that the English found in Japanese media is more complicated than that; sometimes it is mainly decorative but sometimes it is able to communicate as well. I propose that English in Japanese media can be thought of as having two dimensions, one dimension being its decorative function and one dimension being its communicative function. I use this paradigm to analyze the English, or words written in the Roman alphabet, found in Japanese television and magazine advertisements, as well as in the editorial layout of Japanese magazines.

1. Introduction

The English used in Japanese media can be understood to serve two main functions: a decorative function and a communicative function. The decorative function of the English incorporates characteristics such as font size, font color, and placement on the page. In this sense the English functions visually, and does not need to be read or understood. The second function that the English has is its communicative function. English words which can be read and understood by Japanese people are able to communicate their meaning and are therefore highly communicative, whereas words that cannot be read or which are not expected to be read do not have much of a communicative function and are mostly decorative. English is studied by most Japanese people for a period of at least six years in school (Martin 50), so at least some of the English that I investigate can be reasonably assumed to be understood by Japanese people. On the other hand, even six years of study does not translate to fluency, and there are English words or phrases which probably are not able to communicate their many levels of meaning and nuance. While all of the English in Japanese media serves some sort of decorative function, the communicative function of the language varies by example. In general, I conclude that as a linguistic element loses its communicative function, it takes on more of a decorative function. Below are the examples of English that I will investigate in this paper plotted on a graph with the vertical axis representing decorative function and the horizontal axis representing communicative function:

Decorative/Communicative Graph



2. Literature Review

Before discussing the English elements I found in Japanese media and my analysis of them, I would first like to discuss how this issue has been tackled by other authors. Two of the authors, John Dougill and Barbara Hyde, argue that the English in Japanese media is mostly decorative and has little communicative power. Kyoko Takashi also focuses on the decorative function of the English but allows for a wider interpretation of its function, even in regards to decoration. Finally Brian Moeran, Katsumi Hoshino, and Sean Mooney are three authors whose work supports the idea of the decorative/communicative paradigm for understanding English in Japanese media.

In his article "Japan and English as an alien language", John Dougill argues that English found in Japanese advertising has no communicative function: "Apparently, the English is never even read, even by students and teachers of the language: it is purely decorative" (Dougill 18). He does admit that English meant to communicate is found in Japanese media, but only when it is "functional English", that is, English on signs or notices (Dougill 20). However here Dougill is referring to English meant to communicate to foreigners. I argue, on the other hand, that English can be found in Japanese advertising which is communicative even to the Japanese public. While the decorative function of English in Japanese media is certainly prevalent, the power the English has to communicate cannot be wholly ignored. Barbara Hyde similarly sees English as being empty of communicative function.

In the article "Japan's emblematic English", Barbara Hyde argues that "public English" found in Japan is not able to meaningfully communicate to its audience: "Perhaps too the English visible in their everyday environment…is equally useless…precisely because it is so functionally unlike real English – divorced from a real speaker and a real listener and any real communicative

purpose" (Hyde 16). If people are not using such English to communicate with other people, then the only way this English exists is as part of a medium which is necessarily one-way; the billboard or TV talks at us. If the English in Japanese advertisements is not used at all for communication between people, then in one sense it loses its communicative function, according to Hyde. This is especially true for English words that are used in advertisements but that are not used in everyday language. These words must have more of a decorative function because they are necessarily less familiar to the Japanese consumer. Though Hyde and Dougill argue that English in Japanese media is not able to communicate, Kyoko Takashi allows for slightly more of a range of function.

In her article "English elements in Japanese advertising", Kyoko Takashi recognizes that the English that is prevalent in Japanese media does not serve only one purpose. While other commentators have observed that written English communicates more of a modern feel than written Japanese, Takashi writes that it has a more abstract function: "Another important function such elements perform is to catch the audience's attention" (Takashi 45). In other words, one of the reasons that English is used is that it is simply so different from Japanese that it stands out and attracts attention. Both communicating a modern feel and grabbing the reader's attention are decorative functions of the English elements but they rely on the fact that the language is perceived in different ways. For an English element to catch the reader's attention, it does not even need to be recognized as being written in English; all it has to do is be different from whatever is around it. However, to convey a sense of modernity, an English word does need to be recognized as being written in English, since the sense of modernity comes from the fact that English is a Western language and the West is thought of as embodying modernity. In

this way, while Takashi focuses on two decorative functions of English, her observation illustrates how there is a continuum of communication that English elements can have.

Takashi goes on to say that the purpose of catching a reader's attention is true not only of written text, but of the spoken word as well: "elements pronounced according to English phonology are more conspicuous than ones pronounced according to Japanese phonology" (Takashi 45). This also suggests the use of a communicative spectrum, since Japanese has "5 to 10 percent of ordinary daily vocabulary" being composed of loan words borrowed mostly from English (Stanlaw 12). There are therefore words which do not exist as loan words in Japanese, which when pronounced with an English phonology will be less understood than words which do exist as loans and are pronounced with an English phonology. The distinction between these two categories begins to illustrate the potential for using the decorative/communicative graph to describe English in Japanese media.

In contrast to Dougill, Hyde, and Takashi, the work of the next three authors begin to show the usefulness of thinking of some of the English elements in Japanese media as being partially communicative. In Brian Moeran's article "When the poetics of advertising becomes the advertising of poetics", he describes a Japanese advertising slogan which incorporates both English and Japanese, and the English is most likely able to communicate:

Good taimingu

Good kyashingu (Moeran 34)

(Good timing/Good cashing)

In this advertisement, the word "good" in both lines is written in English, and the two words "timing' and "cashing" are borrowed from English and are written in katakana. In this case "good" is such a simple word that it is hard to believe that its purpose is purely decorative – that it does not communicate any meaning whatsoever. In fact, the way the advertisement is written, the word has to communicate its meaning, or else the slogan makes little sense. If the word "good" were not understood, then the slogan would read "timing, cashing" and would not get across much meaning to the consumer. The fact that words written in English are sometimes meant to be actually read, or at least understood, shows that English in Japanese advertising is not purely decorative, as Dougill describes, but rather acts more communicatively on occasion.

Sean Mooney makes the observation that there is a difference between English which is understood by the Japanese consumer and that which is simply used for decoration:

> While some foreign celebrities appearing in TV commercials may speak a few lines in Japanese, the majority who have lines usually give them in English. This has given rise to an ongoing debate on whether average consumers understand what is being said, but it is commonly agreed that whether they do or not is irrelevant. This line of reasoning argues that the debate is academic, since Japanese viewers are not concerned with what is being said in English. In most cases the lines are very short and consist of only very basic English, and the Japanese audiences can usually grasp the meaning of the words. On the other hand, when the dialogue is lengthy and/or uses complicated English, the English is simply considered to add atmosphere to the commercial (Mooney 32).

Mooney makes the crucial observation that when the lines of English are shorter they can be understood by Japanese readers and that this is different from English which is more complicated

and therefore less likely to be understood. The conclusion I draw from this observation is that English which is more readily understood needs to be thought of and categorized differently than purely decorative English. Finally, Katsumi Hoshino uses a paradigm to describe the semiotics of products which is very similar to my approach to the categorization of English in Japanese media.

In the book *Marketing and Semiotics*, Katsumi Hoshino writes about products as signs: "…a product, as a sign…is composed of the following two meanings for consumers…a) Denotive meaning involves a product's surface meaning, which mainly implies its technological and functional meaning.…b) Connotative meaning involves a product's deep and hidden meaning, which tacitly suggests a non-material and imagistic meaning (Umiker-Sebeok 45). While Hoshino is describing how a product itself can be perceived in two ways, the language written on a product, such as a brand name can be thought to have the same properties. This is because he is writing about products acting themselves as signs, and so the signs on a product must also be important to his analysis. The paradigm that he suggests – a distinction between denotive meaning and connotative meaning – can be extended to an analysis of the English used in Japanese advertising. The denotive, or functional meaning can be thought of as a word's communicative function, and its connotative, or immaterial meaning can be thought of as the word's decorative meaning. An English word can function communicatively to describe what a product is, while at the same time it can function decoratively and express what the product connotes.

The previous literature suggests that there are a range of opinions regarding the English used in Japanese advertising. Some authors like Dougill and Hyde argue that English is purely decorative, while other authors such as Takashi and Mooney recognize a broader range of

meaning. Finally, Hoshino suggests a paradigm for understanding products which can just as easily be used to think about English in advertising. While my analysis departs from some of the authors mentioned in this section, I have tried to build upon and make use of their observations.

3. Dentsu Interview

In order to understand how English functions in Japanese advertising, I had the opportunity to go to Dentsu, the largest advertising agency in Japan and the world (Tungate 188), and interview some of the people who actually make the advertisements that I have been studying. I interviewed two copywriters, one television commercial planner, and one person who works in research (Dentsu interview). When I asked the four people who worked at Dentsu why there was so much English in Japanese advertising and what function it served, I received many of the same answers independent of each other. Three of the people I interviewed used the word かっこいい (cool) when describing the connotation that written English has as opposed to written Japanese. In addition one of the copywriters I interviewed said that kanji and katakana were うるさい, or "noisy". He thought that they cluttered up the page, whereas English had a much cleaner feel. The fact that they all had similar answers with regards to the connotations English has suggests the importance of the decorative function of English, even if the English is able to communicate as well.

Indeed, when confronted with this specific question of whether English functions more decoratively or more communicatively, the people I spoke to at Dentsu consistently said that English is used more for its decorative function rather than for its communicative function. The person working in research told me that English is symbolic and visually stands out, and that is

probably the reason it is used so often in the editorial layout of magazines. In the same vein, one of the copywriters said that he thought English is not meant to communicate meaning, and editorial layout is meant for 雰囲気 or "atmosphere". The people I spoke to at Dentsu focused on the decorative function of the English in Japanese media rather than on its possible communicative function when explaining the reason for the use of English.

Another topic that came up was the grammatical mistakes present in much of the English that is used in Japanese advertising. Although Dentsu does not have a separate department devoted to proofreading all advertising containing English, the television commercial planner and the copywriters I spoke to said that they frequently ask their native English speaking friends to proofread their work. According to the television commercial planner who I spoke to, one of the reasons for this anxiety regarding what was being produced in English originates from the Kanebo tagline "For Beautiful Human Life" (Mooney 55). That was an example of a Japanese company using a slogan in English that sounded strange to native speakers. It was remembered within the Japanese advertising community as an example of why copywriters needed to have their work proofread in order to avoid embarrassment. Though the people I spoke to conveyed the importance of the decorative over the communicative functions of English, still they were concerned with their work making sense in English. In effect, they understood the communicative power that English had on native speakers, so they were not solely concerned with the decorative function of the English they were using.

Even with the dominance of the decorative function of English that the people at Dentsu mentioned, one of the copywriters explained the many different ways English could function decoratively, and sometimes even communicatively. First he gave examples of boxes which had a newspaper article design, meaning that random newspaper articles were put together in a

collage and then that pattern was used for the outside of the box. The English there was clearly too small to read, and indeed even when this pattern is used in the US, it is meant to convey a texture and not the actual content in the newspaper articles used. However even as part of newspaper print, the language used is crucially not Japanese. After all, Japanese is written vertically and Japanese newspaper print can be distinguished from English newspaper print. In other words, even when words serve a purely symbolic purpose, the choice of which language to use is not trivial.

The next example the copywriter gave was the English that is written on some t-shirts that can be seen in Japan. Unlike the newspaper texture, here the English is big enough to read. But if the English words are read, they don't seem to make much sense: "You Smile/Thank You For/Wonderful Feeling/Happiness/Infected/An important/thing is not visible" (Dentsu interview). What the two previous examples have in common is that the English in both cases is not meant to be read. While the English in the latter example can be read, it doesn't end up making sense, so it can be assumed that it is only meant to add a certain kind of texture to the shirt, just like the newspaper print did.

An interesting distinction the copywriter made was between the texture-adding capabilities of English and the ability of English to act simply as a flourish, or accent to a design. He used an analogy of buttons on websites to explain this function. A button on a web page does not need to look 3D. The screen is a flat surface composed of pixels – so too can the button on the screen be a flat rectangle composed of pixels. However web designers know that if a button looks like it sticks out in the middle then people are more likely to push it. English can be used in a design in the same way. This explains the use of short words here and there in Japanese advertising, something that will come up in my discussion of Japanese magazines.

Words written in English stand out and encourage the reader to look at a certain section of the magazine. This type of English can also be placed on the decoration/communication graph. Whereas English in newspaper print is completely decorative, this usage of English is closer to having a communicative function because it is easier to pick out the words than it is to pick out the words from the newspaper print. If the words are easier to distinguish, then they are more likely to be read, giving them more potential for communication.

Having the chance to speak to four people who work at Dentsu was a rare opportunity to go behind the scenes and hear the perspectives of the people who choose what types of English go into Japanese advertising. Overall the people I spoke to thought that English used in Japanese advertising is used mostly for its decorative rather than its communicative purpose. They observed that English is "cool" compared to Japanese and that it stands out on the page. At the same time though, the copywriter who described the different ways that decorative English is used illustrated that there are still major differences in it use. English as part of a newspaper print is fundamentally different from an individual English word used as a flourish. In the next two sections I will take the observations from the previous literature and my interviews at Dentsu and attempt to apply them to Japanese magazines and television advertisements.

4. Japanese Magazines

In discussing the use of English in Japanese media, I begin by analyzing the English used in Japanese magazines. This is because in comparison to television, the medium of the printed page is less complex; while a television commercial involves moving images and sound in addition to still images, that is essentially all a magazine advertisement is – a still image on a

page. I will first discuss the men's fashion magazine *Leon* because it has many advertisements for foreign brands which use the Roman alphabet. Then I will turn to women's fashion magazines so that I can contrast the foreign advertisements to Japanese fashion brands' advertisements. Finally I will discuss two magazines on culture which feature English in their editorial layout. In the following examples, the decorative and communicative functions of English are present, and the way they interact can be seen as well.

Men's Fashion

Leon

The only words written in the Roman alphabet on the cover of the men's fashion magazine *Leon* is the title, the word *yen*, and the web address (www.leon.jp) (*Leon* cover).

(*Leon cover*)

In addition there are subtitles in *katakana* that show Japanese people how to pronounce the name of the magazine. There are both decorative and communicative reasons for a title of a magazine such as *Leon* to be written in the Roman alphabet (Even though "leon" means "lion" in Spanish, the fact that it is written in the Roman alphabet is most important). The decorative function of the word is apparent precisely because the word is written in the Roman alphabet. Everything else on the page is written in Japanese, so the title being different catches the reader's attention. In this way, the language that the word is written in serves a function very similar to that of its font size and font color. As with any magazine cover, the title is in a much larger font than any of the other words. Furthermore, the font color is black on a light blue background. By making the title be in high contrast to the background color, and by writing the title in a very large font, the magazine makes its title the most eye-catching part of the cover. The reason for this is obvious from a business perspective; a magazine wants its customers to be able to recognize the brand immediately and be able to associate the brand with the magazine in the future. This same reason can be attributed to the choice of which language to write the title of the magazine in. Because the Roman alphabet looks so different from the three Japanese writing systems, a title written this way similarly catches the reader's attention. This can be thought of as the decorative function of the title. In addition to its decorative function, the title also serves a communicative function.

The title's communicative function can be seen by considering the presence of the web address and the subtitle in katakana. First, the presence of the web address suggests that the magazine expects a certain percentage of its readers to see that address, remember it, and then type it into a computer to go to the website. In effect, the title has to communicate its written

form so that the reader can go to the website. Furthermore, what was once a one-way form of written communication – the English title being "read" or at least seen – now has elicited communication the other way; the reader is prompted to write, or type, the English into an address bar or a search engine.[1]

The katakana subtitle suggests a similar communicative function that the title serves, although this time the communication involves sound – the listening and speaking of the title. The subtitle in katakana explains to the reader the title's correct pronunciation. This illustrates a few things. First, it shows that there are some difficulties regarding writing the title of a magazine in a non-native language. The English title may be effective as a decorative element on the page, but if the reader does not know how to pronounce the title, then they cannot ask for the magazine at a book store, nor can they speak about the magazine with other people. Furthermore, if a potential reader were to hear about the magazine from one of their friends, without the subtitle they might not be able to recognize the magazine on a bookstore shelf. The katakana subtitle essentially connects the two main ways a brand can be communicated – through sound and through image. This is especially necessary when the language that the title is written in differs from the language that the title is spoken in. The presence of both the katakana subtitle and the web address suggest that in addition to a decorative function, the title of a Japanese magazine written in English also has a communicative function.

The decorative function of English in advertisements can be seen by looking not only at Japanese brands but at foreign brands which have advertisements targeted toward Japanese audiences. Although these brands are foreign, their advertisements sometimes feature Japanese writing. It makes sense for any advertisement in a Japanese magazine to feature Japanese

[1] It could also be the case that since most URLs are written using the roman alphabet, company names and magazine names are more often being written in the Roman alphabet. With the huge use of search engines to navigate toward websites however, such a relationship may not exist anymore.

writing, since the audience is Japanese, however in addition there is also a lot of English used in these advertisements. Many foreign brands use English in their advertisements even if the brand is from a non-English speaking European country. This shows that one of the decorative functions of English is to connote a Western image. Whether the brands are European or American, English serves a decorative purpose in suggesting a Western style or atmosphere. The fashion brands at the beginning of *Leon* illustrate this phenomenon.

The December 2010 edition of *Leon* begins with seven advertisements for foreign brands before getting to the table of contents. The seven brands appear in the following order: Cartier (France), Polo Ralph Lauren (US), Dolce & Gabana (Italy), Hermes (France), Burberry (England), Sisley (Italy), and Louis Vuitton (France) (*Leon* 2-14). All of these brands are European or American and can therefore be thought of as Western brands, but they use language in different ways. Some of the advertisements use practically no language at all. The Polo, Dolce & Gabana, Burberry, and Louis Vuitton advertisements consist only of their brand name and the background image of a male model wearing clothing from that brand. For these advertisements there is not much choice involved in the use of English – the brand names are written in English because that is how they are always written and consistency contributes to the strength of brand name recognition. Nevertheless, the English of the brand names in these advertisements is similar to the English of the title of the magazine. The brand names have a decorative function in that they look characteristically Western, making them stand out from the rest of the magazine. Like the title of the magazine though, they also have a communicative function, that of brand recognition. In the case of such well established brands, the brands have both a highly communicative and a highly decorative function. If they recognized, then they are successful at communicating their meaning, but they are also perceived as an image, just like the

brand logo and so are highly decorative. The other advertisements in *Leon* are more complicated, since the text they use consists of full sentences.

The Cartier and Sisley advertisements have English taglines, even though they are not American or British brands (*Leon 12-13*).

(*Leon 12-13*)

(*Leon 12-13*)

The Cartier ad contains the tagline "How far would you go for love". Sisley's is shorter: "Let it flow/Manhattan. NYC. Lower East Side." Neither of these companies are brands from English-speaking countries but they utilize English taglines in advertisements that target Japanese customers. Moreover, the Sisley advertisement is especially interesting because Sisley is part of the Benetton group, an Italian company, but it is being associated with New York City. It is true that Benetton is a global brand and that it has stores all over the world, but a Japanese person encountering this advertisement would most likely assume that the brand was American, specifically one from New York. Both of these companies – Cartier from France and Benetton from Italy – use English taglines in their advertisements for both decorative and communicative

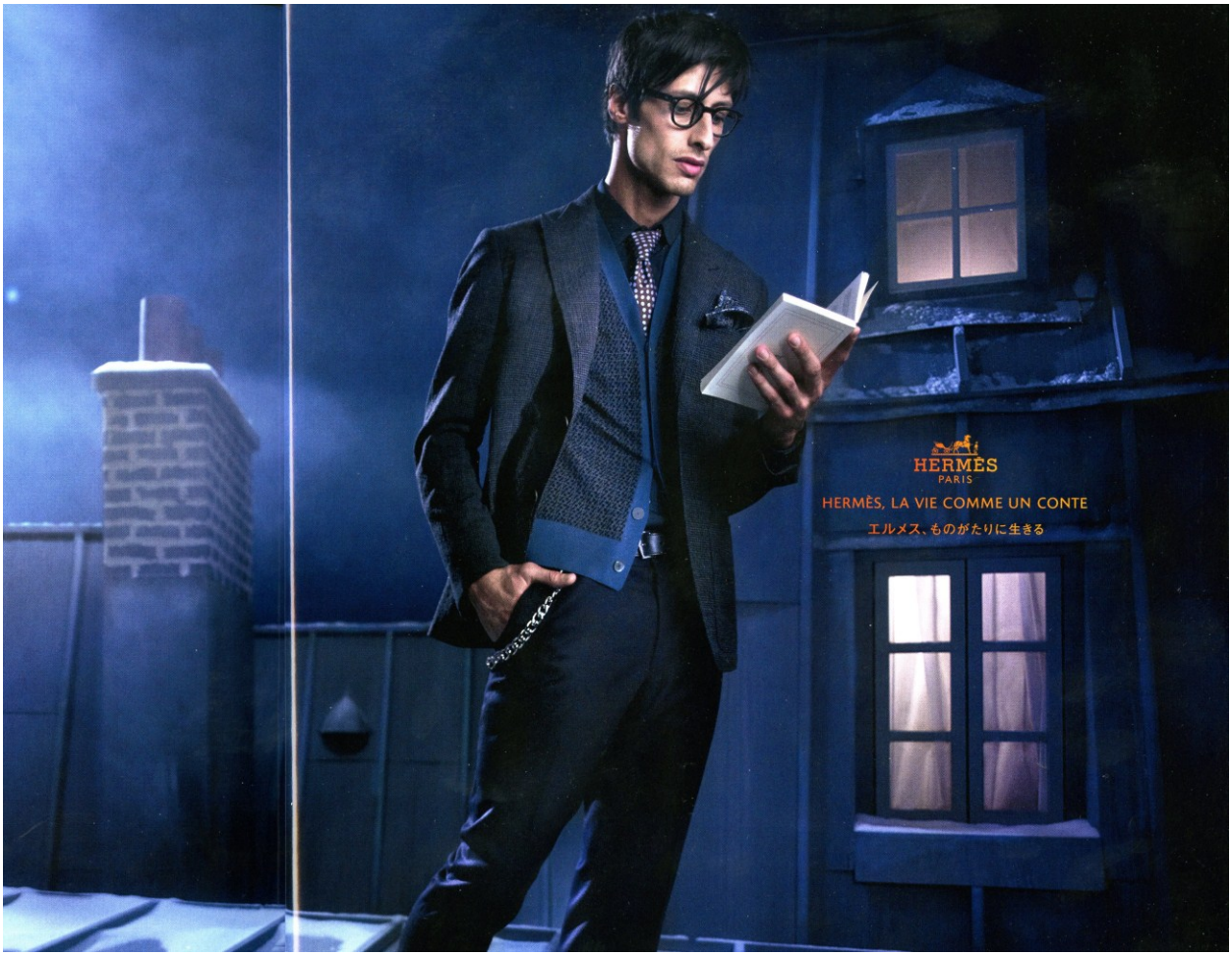
reasons, but in contrast to the advertisements with only brand names, the English communicates less because it is more complicated and therefore harder to understand.

In contrast to the advertisements with their brand names as the only text present, the mostly decorative function of the English in Cartier and Sisley's taglines is decorative precisely because it may not be communicative. That is, if the taglines were completely communicative, then they would be able to communicate to a Japanese reader exactly what they meant. However, looking closely at the taglines, the English reveals itself to be not so easy to understand. For example, "NYC" may be recognizable, but it is unclear that "Lower East Side" would mean anything to a Japanese reader. Similarly "Let it flow" obviously corresponds to both the washing machine in the background and the attitudes evinced by the models, but this double reference would probably be lost on readers. "How far would you go for love" from the Cartier advertisement (*Leon 2-3*) is not such a complicated sentence, but considering the effort that may be involved in reading it, many Japanese readers would probably skip over the tagline altogether. Furthermore, as with the Sisley tagline, "How far would you go for love" can have multiple connotations that are probably lost on Japanese readers. Does it ask how much one would spend for love, or does it ask the distance one would travel to find such a special gift? There are multiple interpretations of this type of tagline for a native speaker, but it is unclear if the same type of complexity can be communicated to non-native speakers.

In addition, in this advertisement, the relative font sizes of the different pieces of text corroborate the idea that Japanese readers skip over some of the English that they encounter in magazines. The brand name "Cartier" is written in the largest font and is in stark contrast to the dark background. The tagline is in less of a contrast to the background, and finally the word "Love" is written in a font size in between the font size of the brand name and the rest of the

tagline. Therefore most readers will notice the brand name first, whether or not they skip over the tagline, and for the readers who do not read the tagline, at least they will be encouraged to read the word "Love", a quite simple word and one that I am assuming most Japanese people are able to read. Because parts of the English used in these two advertisements ("NYC" and "Love") are more likely to be able to communicate their meaning than other parts of the advertisements (the meanings and connotations of the two taglines), the English is partially communicative and partially decorative. It is less communicative than brand names but more communicative than some of the examples that will follow.

The Hermes advertisement is the only one which uses any Japanese or any non-English language (*Leon 8*).



(*Leon 8*)

The tagline is in French – "Hermes, la vie comme un conte" – and its apparent translation is written in Japanese directly beneath it: "エルメス、ものがたりに生きる" or "Hermes, life as a fairy tale". While it is unclear how much of the Cartier or Sisley taglines are read by Japanese customers, there is probably a very small number of Japanese readers who are able to read the French tagline, which makes it understandable why the tagline is fully translated into Japanese. The fact that the French tagline is translated into Japanese whereas the English taglines in the Cartier and Sisley advertisements are not suggests that the English taglines are thought to be at least partially communicative while the French tagline is not communicative.

At the same time, the decorative function of the French tagline is apparent because of the presence of both the tagline and its translation. Since the Japanese translation communicates the meaning of the French tagline, there must be some other purpose served by leaving the French text in the advertisement. If the meaning of the tagline, or its communicative function, was all that was important, then there would be no need to include the tagline in French at all. However the tagline does more than just communicate the meaning of the sentence "Hermes, life as a fairy tale". The French writing serves a decorative purpose by invoking an image – the mystique of France and the French language.

For someone who cannot read French at all, the French tagline becomes purely an image, in the same way that the model and the background are just images. Whereas the katakana subtitle of the title of the magazine acts as a bridge between written English and spoken Japanese, the subtitle to this French tagline has a completely different purpose. Assuming that Japanese people will not be able to read the French tagline, the Japanese subtitle is what they are reading, while the French tagline is something they see. In this case the Japanese translation bridges the image the French text invokes to the actual meaning of the words. In the Hermes advertisement, the decorative and communicative functions of language are split, with the French text being completely decorative and its Japanese translation existing solely for communication. There are other examples of English used in Japanese media which are similarly meant purely for decoration, but by considering a much less widely read language such as French, we can begin to differentiate between the decorative and communicative functions of non-native languages.

Finally, there is an advertisement in the middle of *Leon* which illustrates how English functions when it is part of an advertisement for a Japanese brand and is surrounded by Japanese

text. This example is from an advertisement for a packaged curry rice product made by the company Otsuka (*Leon 166*).

(*Leon 166*)

The English in the ad is the phrase "Just! my size" at the bottom half of the page. First, it can be noted that an exclamation point is used without regard to its grammatical correctness. Whereas a native speaker of English may find this usage strange, for a Japanese person the exclamation point may be simply about conveying a mood of excitement. However, the English words communicate more than just a mood – they also communicate their meaning as well. This is illustrated by the fact that the whole point of the ad is that the product being advertised is not too large of a portion.

This concept is conveyed in many ways in the advertisement. First, the main image in the middle of the advertisement depicts two boxes – one of curry and one of rice – that bought together can make the curry rice dish, and these two packages are sitting inside a belt. The picture conveys the idea that buying these products will not make you gain too much weight. In addition, the concept of "just my size" is written in the ad in many different ways in Japanese as well. At the top of the ad, a Japanese line of text begins "自分サイズで…" (with your preferred size…). Then, right next to "Just! my size" is the main Japanese text:「マイサイズ」シリーズ (My size series). However, unlike the text at the top of the page which was written partially in kanji characters and partly in katakana, this time the Japanese text is written completely in katakana and it basically instructs the reader how to read "my size" to its right.

Of course, "my size" in English is not that difficult for a Japanese person to read. However, by writing the same phrase in Japanese to its left, the creators of the advertisement have made the English phrase more accessible to its readers. In doing so, the copywriters have helped ensure that the text and message of their advertisement are received in a consistent way. Because the English phrase also appears in Japanese, if an advertisement for the same product

were on television or radio, a Japanese person could hear "mai saizu" pronounced in Japanese and make a stronger connection to this magazine advertisement than they might have otherwise.

If the phrase in Japanese communicates the same message as the tagline in English, then there is a natural question of why the Japanese phrase is not sufficient on its own, without "Just! my size" being written in English at all. This question can be answered by considering the decorative function of the English tagline. In this advertisement the English is eye-catching and it stands apart from everything else on the page. With an exclamation point more for conveying a mood than for grammatical correctness, the English in the advertisement clearly serves at least partially for a decorative purpose. This type of short English tagline has a similar balance of decorative and communicative function as those English taglines mentioned earlier in the fashion advertisements. The shorter the tagline and the simpler the English, the clearer it is that the English used in an advertisement is able to communicate its meaning as well as conveying a visual, decorative mood.

Women's Fashion

Blanc, Closet, and Fudge

Just as European fashion brands in *Leon* used English taglines, Japanese fashion brands use English as well, for many of the same aesthetic reasons. As mentioned earlier, one of the decorative functions of English involves communicating a European aesthetic in an abstract, visual way. This is especially true for Japanese fashion brands, since they do not have the recognizable European brand name that brands like Cartier or Hermes have. In essence, the English that is to convey a European mood must work harder for a less well known Japanese brand than for an established European brand. Furthermore, even if the Japanese brand is

recognized, it will be recognized as a Japanese brand with a European style rather than as a European brand. The first examples of this type of decorative English come from the women's fashion magazine *Blanc*.

In *Blanc*, the first two advertisements are for Japanese clothing brands and the advertisements in no way suggest that they are Japanese brands. The first is a brand called "ViS" and on the page is written the web address: www.visjp.com (Blanc inside cover).

(Blanc inside cover)

There is some Japanese writing at the bottom of the page in very small font, explaining the hours and telephone number of customer service, but nonetheless the absence of a brand

name or a tagline written in Japanese is significant. The second advertisement is for a brand called “Cledran” (Blanc 2).

CLEDRAN

something that
we cannot part with.

CLEDRAN OSAKA
1F 4-4-5 MINAMIKYUHOUJIMACHI CHUO-KU OSAKA 541-0058 JAPAN
TEL 06-4704-2263

CLEDRAN TOKYO
1F 3-15-4 JINGUMAE SHIBUYA-KU TOKYO 150-0001 JAPAN
TEL 03-6438-1935

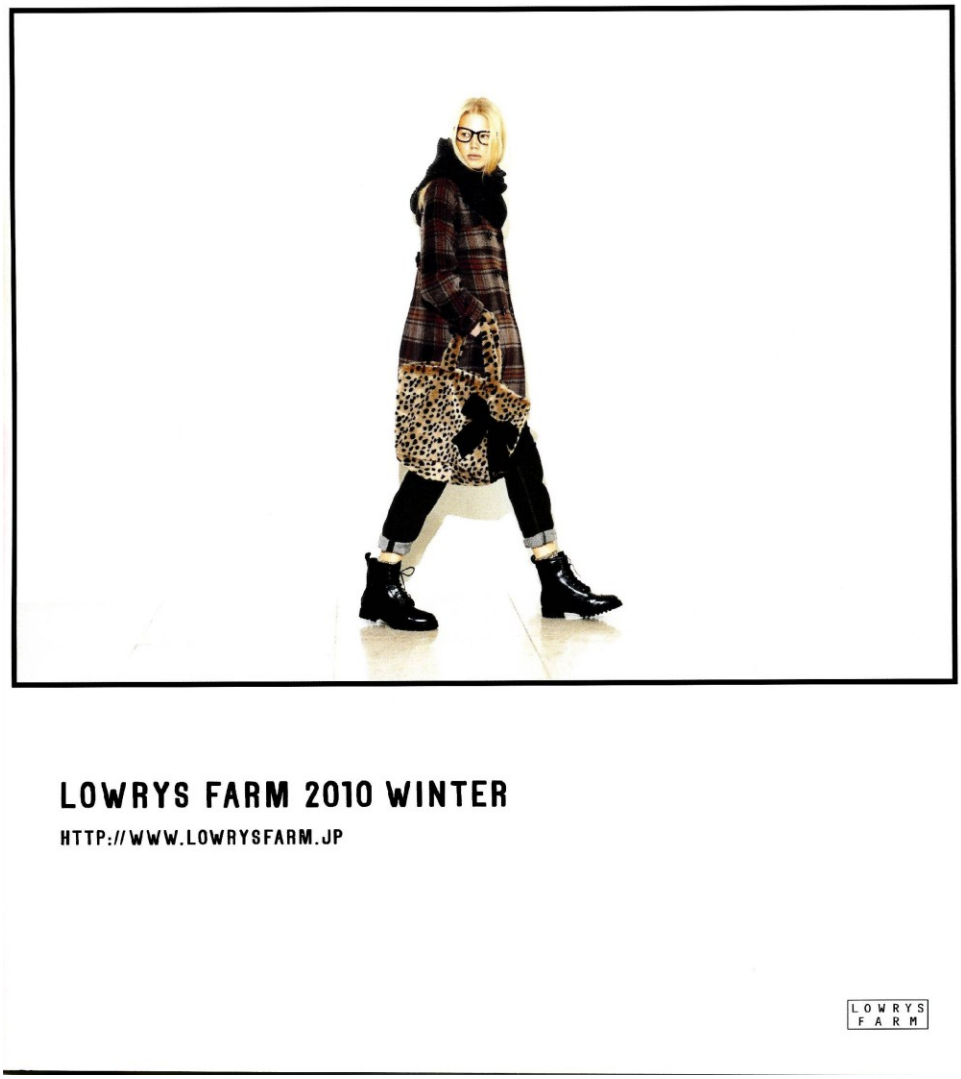
CLEDRAN CO.,LTD.
1F 4-4-5 MINAMIKYUHOUJIMACHI CHUO-KU OSAKA 541-0058 JAPAN
OFFICE 06-4704-2261

www.cledran.com

(Blanc 2)

Cledran has slightly more English in its advertisement than ViS does; the Cledran advertisement has the slogan "something that we cannot part with". In these two advertisements the prominence of English and the lack of corresponding Japanese helps one understand the function that the English in these advertisements serve. For one, the English encourages Japanese people to place these fashion brands in the same category that foreign fashion brands are thought of as being part of. In these advertisements the English used does not have a decorative purpose because it stands out but rather because it fits in with the English used in other foreign fashion brands. The English is still eye catching, but decoratively it is meant to create an association between these brands and other fashion brands that are already thought of as being European. Because these brands are not as easily recognizable as brands like Cartier and Hermes, the English in their advertisements are less communicative and more decorative. In effect, because a word like "Cledran" is not as easily recognized, the words looks more foreign to a Japanese person and is therefore more like decoration.

In the magazine *Closet*, the same phenomenon occurs, where a Japanese brand has an advertisement in which there is only English and no Japanese, with no indication that the brand is Japanese. The first advertisement in the magazine, on the inside cover, is for a brand called Lowrys Farm (Closet inside cover).



(Closet inside cover)

The advertisement is just a large black outline with the photograph of a woman walking, with her clothing being the main focus of the photograph. At the bottom right corner of the page is the brand name, “Lowrys Farm”, contained in a box. Underneath the photograph in larger letters is the text “Lowrys Farm 2010 Winter”, and beneath that is a web address in

English. In this ad, there are only three pieces of writing, they are very short and they are all in English. Two things are going on here. First, the ad benefits from the fact that there is so little clutter on the page. The eye is drawn to the photograph of the woman, and the brand name is written three times for the customer to discover. This is one explanation for the lack of any explanatory text in Japanese. At the same time however, the choice of using English and no Japanese in the advertisement is due to the European aesthetic that is created. With this choice, the advertisement mimics the style of European fashion brands. Just as with "Cledran" and "ViS", the exclusive use of English downplays the brand's origin through the decorative function of the English text.

In the last set of examples taken from women's fashion magazines, I investigate the use of English words that are derived from words that have gone back and forth between English and Japanese. In general, I think that the greater number of times a word has gone back and forth, the less communicative power it will have. This is because there may be confusion regarding where the meaning of the word comes from – its English meaning or the meaning of the Japanese word it was taken from.

The first example of this occurs in the magazine *Fudge.* Halfway through the magazine there is a section in which the fashion choices of regular young women are featured, and next to each girl's picture is a box with the prices of each item of clothing that they are wearing. The phrase "Coordinate Data" is written at the top of each box (Fudge 53).

(Fudge 53)

To a native English speaker this phrase does not seem relevant to the clothing that the data represents. Next to the word “data”, the word “coordinate” would seem to suggest the coordinates on a graph. However upon closer inspection, it is clear that the word “coordinate” is meant to have the meaning of the verb “coordinate”, as in “color coordinate”. What has happened is that the English verb “coordinate” has been borrowed into Japanese, becoming the

loan word “ko-do-ne-to” written in katakana. From there, the word was rewritten in English with the intention of having it retain the meaning it had when it was a part of the Japanese language. It is true that Japanese readers may not have the same kind of confusion at understanding the meaning of “coordinate” in this context that native speakers of English might have. However, there is still some amount of effort involved in understanding that the meaning of the English word is tied up in its usage in the Japanese language. Therefore, when the meaning and usage of a word travels back and forth across the two languages, the communicative function of an English word decreases, thereby increasing the importance of its decorative function.

Another example of this is found on the front cover of the same magazine. On the bottom part of the cover of *Fudge* there are three lines of text (Fudge cover).

(Fudge cover)

First there is a line written in Japanese: 「世界中のお洒落さん 200 人を徹底スナップ」(the complete snapshots of 200 fashionable people around the world). Beneath this is the line "World Snap" in English, and then the final line of text is in English as well: "London Paris NY Tokyo". The word that is interesting here is the English "Snap." The word "Snap" in English

corresponds to the word スナップ(sunappu) in the Japanese line of text. スナップ(sunappu) is a word borrowed from English, meaning snapshot. However when it is put back into English, it is turned into the word "Snap" while still retaining the meaning of "Snapshot" from which the word originally came, before it was borrowed back and forth. Compared to the previous example of "coordinate", the borrowing here probably does not diminish the communicative power of the English word "Snap". This is because it is written directly beneath the Japanese word, and it is such a simple word that Japanese readers should have no trouble recognizing that its meaning is meant to come from the Japanese word スナップ(sunappu). As is the case with much of the English that I investigate in this paper, the shorter the English phrase and the simpler the English word, the easier it is for English to function communicatively in Japanese media. This is true in this specific instance of the difference between the confusion that might arise regarding the meanings of "snap" and "coordinate".

Editorial Layout

Brutus

In addition to the English present in advertisements found in Japanese magazines, there is also a whole subset of English found in magazines but not in advertisements. This English exists as part of the editorial layout of magazines, and is used as part of the table of contents, section headers, and other parts of magazines which are not advertisements. Just like the English found in advertisements, this English has decorative and communicative functions. Furthermore, many of the same trends that were mentioned previously operate here as well, such as the fact that when a word is simpler and more easily understandable, that it will function in a more communicative way. At the same time, some of the English used in the editorial layout,

for example section headers, tend to have a prominent decorative function, signaling to the reader that they are reading a specific section of the magazine. For examples of English used in the editorial layout of magazines, I will first discuss the culture magazine Brutus.

On the front cover of *Brutus*, in the bottom left-hand corner, there is a red circle with Japanese and English text written on it explaining that there is a special section in this magazine featuring important people of 2011 (Brutus cover). The magazine uses the English phrase "Key Persons 2011" to notify the reader of this fact. Then later in the special section, the same English phrase is used on every other page to indicate to the reader that the section she is reading is about 2011's most important people (Brutus 59-74). The phrase serves to make the distinction between this section and the rest of the magazine. While the editors could have chosen to use a different language to write the section header, their choice of English was most likely informed by the decorative power of English. English used as decoration stands out, and this is one of the purposes of section headers; as long as they are easy to notice, the reader will have an easier time navigating the magazine.

The same tactic is used at the beginning of the magazine, where different sections are marked in the top left-hand corner by words in English. "Celeb" is used to mark off the section about celebrities and "party" does the same for one about recent trends and high profile parties (Brutus 7-9).

Et tu, Brute? Party 明日の流行、今宵まる分かり！

学生たちがデザインした
ボッテガ・ヴェネタの家具が
ついに日本初お披露目！

1 森泉さん。2 浦浜アリサさん。3 水原希子さん。「全身ボッテガ・ヴェネタです。昆虫モチーフのチョーカーがカワイイでしょ。」4 KIKIさん。5 野宮真貴さん。6 ブランド初の腕時計の発表も。（BVX）予価1,974,000円。7 鈴木志麻さんデザインの《Tube with Inner Luxury》。8 左から：浦原裕博さん、里香さん夫妻。「上質な家具は、子供たちが大きくなったらかな～」（亜座さん）。9 左から：《META Brisee》、《META Arm Chair》。10 折り畳み式の《Camp Bed》。11 高田彩実さんデザインの《Origami Side Table》。

イントレチャートを
贅沢に使った家具は
どれも素敵でした！

Bottega Veneta Cocktail Party

この春、ミラノサローネ国際家具見本市でお披露目されたボッテガ・ヴェネタの新作ホームアイテムが、ついに日本でも公開に。それを記念したカクテルパーティが賑やかに行われました。

注目は、日本の学生と同ブランドの職人とのコラボレーションによって生まれた、3点の家具です。これは東京大学大学院で准教授を務める建築家・千葉学さんの研究室の学生たちによるデザインコンペティションの結果、実現に至ったもの。「これまでボッテガ・ヴェネタさんが作ってきたものと違う視点でなにができるのかというプレッシャーの中、最終的にはどれも素晴らしい出来栄えで、本当によかった」とは千葉さん。

会場にはコンペティションの受賞者3人も来場し、ゲストに直接作品を紹介。「家具としての利点を褒めてもらった」（高田彩実さん）、「おおむね良好な反応でホッとしました」（藤本健太郎さん）など、手応えを感じていたようでした。また、ほかの新作ファニチャーについても、「高級感がありながらカジュアルな雰囲気が新鮮」（KIKIさん）など、みなさん、じっくりと観賞していた様子。そのためか、ゲストの滞在時間が長く、家具はもちろん、小物や洋服なども含め、自分が欲しいものを真剣に探している姿が印象的でした。

左から：コンペに協力した『Casa BRUTUS』亀井靖重編集長、受賞者の藤本健太郎さん、高田彩実さん、鈴木志麻さん、千葉学さん。

Title	ボッテガ・ヴェネタ カクテル パーティ
Date	2010年10月29日㈮
Time	19時～21時30分
Place	ボッテガ・ヴェネタ 銀座
Attendance	約300名

photo / Yoshiyuki Obuchi text / Hiroya Ishikawa

(Brutus 7-9)

The font of these words also supports the idea that they are meant to catch the reader's attention. The font is unusual – its rounded modern shape sets this text apart from the rest of the text on the page. This is supported by what one of the copywriters at Dentsu said to me, which was that English allows more experimentation with design and the use of different fonts for copywriters

than does Japanese (Dentsu interview). This wider freedom accorded to copywriters using English is relevant to the way in which the words "Party" and "Celeb" have both decorative and communicative functions as section headers. These two words are simple and common, so they have a communicative function – that of communicating the content of the section that they represent. At the same time though, they communicate symbolically through their font, color, and placement on the page. Because copywriters have more freedom to play with the fonts of English words, they are encouraged to use these words as section headers and in other parts of the editorial layout of the magazine, because they are able to make the words stand out as much as they want, which supports the decorative function that a section header must have. I will end this section on the presence of English in Japanese magazines by discussing how English tends to be placed on the page, that is, where it is placed in relation to other elements. This will be done by taking examples from the editorial layout of the magazine *Circus*.

The Placement of English in Magazines

Circus

The placement of the English that is used in Japanese magazines intersects in interesting ways with both the decorative and communicative function that the words embody. English words used throughout the magazine *Circus*, including the title, can be understood better by observing where they are placed and the way they are similar to or different from the Japanese text that surrounds them.

First, most of the English words found in *Circus* are placed at the top of a page or the beginning of a section. This is most apparent in the way that the title of the magazine itself is written in English (Circus cover). While it is obvious that the titles of magazines are going to

appear at the top of the page and be written in a much larger font than the rest of the text on the cover, this placement is representative of how most of the English in the magazine is used. Just as the title *Circus* catches your eye, being written in a large, bright yellow font on a black background, so does much of the English in Japanese magazines serve to catch your eye and indicate the beginning of a new section.

English used in this way is found on the first few pages of the magazine. There is a section which features Arisa Sato, a model who appears on television (Circus 1).

(Circus 1)

In the middle of the first page of this section, the word “Tokyo” is written in English and underneath it is the phrase “Date 07”. Beside “Tokyo” is written in Japanese 東京デート散歩 (on a date, strolling through Tokyo). Beneath these English and Japanese phrases are the model’s name and some credits (hair and make-up, etc.). The English “Tokyo/Date 07” is

placed at the beginning of the section, which reinforces its decorative function of standing out and signaling symbolically to the reader that a new section has begun. Not only is the English phrase the first thing on the page, but it is also the on the first page of the section, so this English acts as a sort of title.

This English is in contrast to English which is at the beginning of paragraph-like chunks of language but which do not function so strongly as titles or headers. An example of this is the word "profile" above Arisa Sato's name at the end of the section (Circus 5).

(Circus 5)

"Profile" is in white on the backdrop of a red arrow pointing at her name. The arrow is also slanted, so the word is slanted relative to the paragraph. While both the word "profile" and "Tokyo/Date 07" are placed at the beginning of the text on their respective pages, there are differences in the functions that they serve. "Tokyo/Date 07" is in much larger font than the

Japanese text that it is in front of, and since it is at the beginning of the section as well, it serves as a header. On the other hand, "profile" is much more decorative. It is almost as if the word just makes the arrow more noticeable. While they both function more decoratively than communicatively, the word "profile" has more of a decorative function because it is less noticeable and less important. Whereas the title of a magazine, the section header, or the brand name in an advertisement is central to the ideas being communicated and therefore must communicate themselves, other words such as "profile" can be placed at the top of a section and still function mostly decoratively.

English can also be placed at the beginning of many small parts of text on a page. In a section of *Circus* devoted to money management, the page is split up into small paragraphs, each with a different piece of advice (Circus 20-21).

(Circus 20-21)

The section is titled “上手にお金と付き合う キーワード１０” (ten keywords for successfully managing your money). Below the Japanese text is the word “keywords” in English and the illustration of a key. At the beginning of each paragraph is a title written in Japanese, and then just like the title of the whole section, there is the English word “keywords”, the key illustration, and the number of that piece of advice. Because these three elements – “keywords”, key illustration, and number – are placed in the same way as the title of both the section and the individual paragraphs, the three elements in effect become one symbol. They are always placed together, so it is easy to think of them together. In contrast, the Japanese text is different for each paragraph and for the section title. Therefore the Japanese text encourages people to actually read it, whereas the English text can more easily be seen as a symbol and not read. Perhaps the English meaning of “keywords” is read and understood once, but after that it is probably glossed over and seen as just a symbol like the illustration of the key. In this way, the placement of English – at the beginning of each paragraph and always next to an illustration and a number – decreases its communicative function and increases the importance of its decorative function.

The placement of English in the editorial layout of Japanese magazines can also be analyzed along with other previously mentioned characteristics such as font color. This proves interesting regarding the English in a section of *Circus* about saving money (Circus 30-31).

お金に関するサラリーマンINTERVIEW

年収400万円台の人で

貯金1000

総額1430万円

CASE 02

野田哲也さん（仮名）

DATA

社会人11年目（34歳）
メーカー系エンジニア／独身
年収450万円
月収21万円（手取り）
総資産……1430万円
（2010年12月末現在）
資産内訳……700万円、ゆうちょ貯金 116万円、財形貯蓄 600万円

貯金額を大公開！

ゆうちょ銀行に116万円（写真上）、メインバンクに697万円（写真下）の残高。ほかに毎月5万円の財形を行なっている。現在、株式などの金融商品には手を出していないが、今後は挑戦してみるつもりだと言う。

残高が増えていくことが趣味になっている

給料は手取りで21万円。そこから食費や交際費を除いた金額が毎月の貯金に回っています。平均すると月に約10万円。節約して必死に貯めているという感覚はありません。というのも、もともと浪費家タイプではなく、物欲が皆無。しかも恋人もいない……。奮発してプレゼントを買うということもないですし、幸か不幸か、お金が貯まる要素がそろっているんです（笑）。毎月、増えていく通帳の残高を見るのが快感で、いまとなってはRPGをしているような感覚ですね。また、家電の買い替えのときは必ずリサイクルショップに引き取ってもらうようにしています。自治体で処分してもらうとなると回収料を徴収されますが、無料もしくは買い取ってもらえるので、利用しない手はありません。

貯金年表

2000年 165万円（貯金額）
大学新卒で現在の会社に入社。財形55万円／年、銀行預金110万円／年を基本に貯蓄をスタート

2002年 355万円（貯金額）
車を購入し140万円を出費

2003年 510万円（貯金額）
入社4年目で貯蓄額が500万円を超す

2006年 915万円（貯金額）
車を購入し100万円を出費

2007年 1080万円（貯金額）
入社8年目で貯蓄額が1000万円を超す

2010年 1430万円（貯金額）
現在メインバンクの銀行預金700万円。社員寮を退出する12年までに、預金1000万円を目指す

総額1400万円

CASE 03

荒井弘幸さん（仮名）

DATA

社会人18年目（36歳）
ホームヘルパー／独身
年収240万円
月収20万円（手取り）
総資産……1400万円
（2010年12月末現在）
資産内訳……新生銀行（定期預金）485万円、みずほ銀行（定期預金）800万円、中古マンション運用 年間約100万円など

貯金額を大公開！

マンションなどを買うときはすべて一括払い。貯金があればこそだが、金利がかからないメリットは大きい。「現在はホームヘルパーとして働き、月収は15～6万円ですが、不動産の家賃収入が月8万円ほどあるので、貯金もできています」（荒井さん）

貯金年表

1993年 貯金なし
高校卒業後、印刷関係の会社に就職

1997年 1000万円（貯金額）
会社員を続けながら居酒屋などのアルバイトを複数掛け持ち、5年間で1000万円を貯める

2000年 1500万円（貯金額）

2001年 900万円（貯金額）
1Rの中古マンションを600万円で購入

2002年 1200万円（貯金額）

2003年 900万円（貯金額）
所有する中古マンションを700万円で売却
新たに500万円の中古マンションを購入する

2005年 1200万円（貯金額）
国内株を購入するが10万円の損失→売却

2010年 1400万円（貯金額）

生活費をしっかり抑え貯めたお金を不動産に

20代でとにかくがむしゃらに働いて貯めた貯金1000万円が、今の資産の元手になっています。会社員をしつつ、休日にはバイトを掛け持ちしたりして、若さに物を言わせてほぼ休みなしで働きました。特に趣味もなく、何より当時は働くことが楽しかったんです。貯金のコツはやはり無駄遣いをしないこと。私は、昔から月の生活費は5万円以内で抑えています。毎日自炊して、贅沢をしなければ十分やっていけますよ。

財テクの中心は不動産投資です。株にも手を出したのですがライブドアで損失を出したのを機にやめました。現在、サラリーマン大家として埼玉県に2つの中古物件を所有。年間100万円ほどの利益を上げています。不動産投資は家賃の滞納や不払いなど面倒なこともたくさんありますが、手間をいとわない私の性格には合っているのだと思います。

(Circus 30-31)

The section is split into three stories of people who have saved money. Each story has in depth description, but off to the side is a pink bubble which condenses the details of that person's story into a few lines of data. Inside the bubbles are the English words "data" and "case". "Case" is written on the side of the bubble and is perpendicular to the rest of the text, while "data" is

appears above the details of the example, which are drawn within a square. The word "data", "case", and the square are all maroon, whereas the thought bubble is pink and the words in Japanese are in black. Whereas the name of the person whose story it is and the details of their story are in high contrast to the background, the English is written in a much closer shade to the background of the bubble. The Japanese text has the highest contrast and is therefore most likely to be read. On the other hand, the words "data" and "case" have more of a decorative purpose and more easily blend in to the background. They also have a functional purpose in separating the details of the example from the person's name in Japanese. In this way they have much the same purpose as the maroon outline around the details of the example. This functional purpose can be thought of as closer to a decorative purpose than a communicative purpose, since the meaning of the English words is less important than where they are placed and what color they are written in.

The final example of placement and font color in editorial layout comes at the end of the magazine, where eight pages are devoted to various recommendations and pieces of advice (Circus 110-120). At the top of each page in a small green box is the subject of the column, and in order they are: "Book!", "TV!", "Comic!", "Cinema!", "DVD!", "Music!", "Game!", "Stationery!", "Amusement!", "Electronics!", "Cook!", and "Manner!". Each word is in white on a green background and each has an explanation point next to it. Each word is also at the top of each section and is the only English present on the page.

These words have both a decorative and a communicative purpose. The fact that they are all at the top of the page in a little green box suggest that they communicate symbolically that a new section has started, just as was the case with the beginning of the magazine. Your eye does not need to do so much work to find the next section; all it needs to do is find the next green

box and then start reading. Furthermore, just as was the case with the curry rice advertisement, the exclamation point has a very visual meaning; it suggests an exclamation without communicating any specific meaning. We have started to see how many different elements such as punctuation, font style, font size, color, and placement all suggest certain ways of receiving English text. It is also starting to be clear that all of these factors are important to both the English used in advertisements and the English used in editorial layout, and are not exclusive to either medium.

At the same time that these words are functioning decoratively, they are also communicating meaning because they can be expected to be read. Words like "TV" and "DVD" can certainly be read by a Japanese reader, since that is the way that the words are used whenever they are written in Japanese. Words like "Book", "Music", "Game", and "Cook" are short and very common, so are not difficult to read, but are still less communicative than "TV" and "DVD". The words "Amusement" and "Stationery" may be more difficult. In this way, there is a spectrum of comprehension difficulty, while all the words are used in the same way to denote the beginning of a new section of the magazine. While their decorative functions are all very similar – they each start a new section in the same way – their ability to communicate are very different, considering their differences in frequency in Japanese language. This suggests that when words have both decorative and communicative functions, as almost all of the English that I look at does, the placement of a word can be associated with its decorative function, and its communicative function can be thought of separately.

The English present in the magazine *Circus* illustrates how the placement of English on the page intersects with its decorative and communicative functions. English tends to be placed at the top of the page, at the beginning of sections, and at the beginning of smaller paragraphs.

The placement of the words also works together with other design elements such as font color. Finally, as was seen with the section headers at the end of *Circus*, the placement of an English element can be thought of as more relevant to the decorative function of the word, while its communicative power can vary independently of placement, based on frequency in the language. As is the case with other design factors, the placement of English is one way of trying to sort out the relative importance of the decorative and communicative functions of English used in Japanese magazines.

In discussing the many examples of English found in advertisements and the layout of the Japanese magazines *Leon, Blanc, Closet, Fudge, Brutus, and Circus*, I have tried to show the reasons for plotting certain English elements in certain places on the decorative/communicative graph. I hope it is also clear from the examples that such a graph is needed. That is, there has to be a more complicated framework for thinking about the English used in Japanese media than just that it does not matter what is written in English since no one will read it anyway. Now I turn to the English found in a more complicated medium, that of television commercials which are comprised of moving images and sound.

5. Television commercials

Written English

In the same way that television is a more complex medium than the printed page, the English that is used in Japanese television advertisements is similarly more complex. Whereas magazine advertisements can only include written English, television advertisements can include both written and spoken English. I begin by analyzing television commercials that feature only written English, as this will serve as a transition between the magazine medium and the

television medium. Then I will move to commercials that feature both written and spoken English. Throughout I will try to explain how these forms of English can also be plotted on the design/communication graph.

One common way written English is featured in a Japanese television commercial is through a company's slogan. Many Japanese companies have slogans in English, an example of which is Honda's "the power of dreams" (Honda slogan). These slogans usually come at the end of the advertisement, mirroring the way English tends to be set apart in Japanese magazines. The first commercial with written English I will discuss is a commercial for Pocky, a Japanese candy company.

Pocky is a popular Japanese snack, a thin cracker in the shape of a stick and covered in chocolate. In one television commercial for the snack, there is no spoken English, but there is written English at the end of the commercial (Pocky commercial). Underneath the brand name "Pocky" is the phrase "stick to fun", which is also found on Pocky's website, pocky.jp (Pocky slogan). There are multiple levels of meaning associated with the phrase, and not all of these meanings are likely to get across to the Japanese viewer. This suggests that the phrase does not have a completely communicative function, but rather has a partial communicative function and a partial decorative function. Decoratively, the slogan is probably written in English rather than Japanese because the brand name "Pocky" is written using the Roman alphabet. Since the brand name and the slogan are at the bottom right hand corner of the screen, and right on top of one another, having them both written in English is less distracting to the viewer and is consistent with the style of the writing. They are both in the same font and written in the same color, so the choice of using English rather than Japanese to write the slogan is decorative in that sense.

At the same time however, some meanings of the slogan can be assumed to get across to the viewer, so the slogan is partially communicative.

The simplest communication of meaning that the slogan gets across is the meaning of individual words, especially that of "stick" and "fun". The word "stick" is clearly associated with the shape of the chocolate snack. Many other elements of the commercial communicate this characteristic of the snack as well; the vertical stripes in the background are the same color as the chocolate, and the narrator also describes the snack as long and thin. The defining characteristic of Pocky is its shape, so it makes sense that the verb "stick" was chosen for the slogan, since the noun "stick" can easily be associated with the snack. "Fun" is also a word that can easily communicate meaning, and the meaning of the word is similarly supported by other aspects of the commercial, such as the model appearing to have fun dancing with the Pocky snacks. Individually the words are not complicated and for at least a certain percentage of viewers we can assume that their meaning is successfully communicated.

But there is another level of meaning that the English slogan embodies, which is the meaning of the entire phrase "stick to fun". A native English speaker understands that the expression "stick to…" means "do only…". "Stick to fun" is understood to mean "do only things that are fun". But this level of meaning is probably lost on some Japanese viewers. Some evidence for this is the fact that the slogan is translated on the bottom right hand corner of its Japanese website (Pocky slogan). いつも楽しいことといっしょ！(Always around fun things). If the phrase could communicate its meaning on its own, then there would not be a need to provide a literal translation. In this way, there is partial communication occurring through the use of an English slogan in a Japanese television commercial. Individual words may communicate meaning and association with other elements of a commercial, while the

overall meaning of the phrase could be lost. This is consistent with the idea that shorter phrases are able to communicate better to Japanese audiences than longer ones, and therefore shorter phrases appear farther to the right on the communicative/decorative graph.

Furthermore, the analysis of the Pocky slogan illustrates how hard and complex it is for Japanese brands to use English in their advertisements. If a company chooses to use a slogan that has multiple levels of meaning in English then it has to accept that some of the meaning will be lost on Japanese viewers. On the other hand, a company can choose to use a slogan that has a strange meaning from the perspective of a native English speaker but which communicates more efficiently to Japanese viewers. For example, instead of "Stick to Fun", Pocky could have chosen something like "stick fun" which perhaps communicates the meanings of the individual words more efficiently, without worrying about writing a natural sounding phrase. Although the copywriters from Dentsu expressed anxiety about what they wrote in English, and although they made use of native speakers as occasional proofreaders (Dentsu interview), sometimes an expression written in English that sounds good to a native English speaker may not work as well as a less natural sounding expression for the Japanese market. Understanding how effectively English can communicate to Japanese viewers can be potentially useful for Japanese companies trying to communicate to its viewers in the most effective way possible. The next commercial I will discuss is one in which an individual English word is used rather than an entire slogan.

In a commercial for Mister Donut, a Japanese donut chain, the English is again present at the end of the commercial (Mister Donut). On the screen are three phrases on top of one another: 新ドーナツ/5.20/DEBUT. The first phrase means "new donut" and the second is its release date. The first question that arises in thinking about the choice of the English word *DEBUT* is why it is written in English. This same question can be asked of all of the English

that I have been writing about, but it is an especially relevant question considering the fact that "debut" is a word which has been borrowed into the Japanese language. The word is usually written in katakana and pronounced in a Japanese way. In other words the people who made the commercial decided to write the word in English when they had practically the same word available in Japanese. The choice of using the English word can be explained by looking at its decorative function.

In the commercial, the Roman alphabet serves to set the word apart from the other two phrases placed on top of it. The three phrases divide the screen into three parts and in this way communicate meaning effectively. The date stands out because it is written only in numbers and similarly the word *DEBUT* stands out because it is written in the Roman alphabet. At the end of the commercial the company wants to get across three important pieces of information; there is a new type of donut, it is coming out on May 20th, and this will be the first time that it comes out. According to one of the copywriters I spoke to at Dentsu, the word *DEBUT* functions similarly to the word "now" or "new" in that it has become a convention to use the English spelling of the word rather than its katakana counterpart (Dentsu interview). Here is where the communicative function of the word becomes apparent. For words that are always written in English as a kind of convention, the word can be assumed to communicate its meaning fully. This is because these are words that are always written in English and therefore appear often enough for Japanese readers to learn what they mean. In this sense the word communicates its meaning as much as it would have if it had been written in katakana. In this case, the word *DEBUT* has both high communicative and high decorative functions.

In a commercial for lipstick from Shiseido, there is similarly English written at the end of the commercial, but this time the English is narrated as well (Shiseido). The brand of lipstick is

called “Maquillage”, and at the end of the commercial the words “Touch!/Maquillage/Touch!” appear on top of a shot of lipstick being applied to lips. As the narration moves to each word, there is a certain effect given to each written word. When the voice says “touch”, the word “Touch!” becomes italicized, and when the voice says “Maquillage”, that word shines for a moment. The second time the voice says “touch”, the same italicization occurs. Finally, as “touch” is being said, the lipstick touches the lips in the shot. Of course, these effects could have been applied to Japanese written words on the screen, but it is more fitting that they are written in English. The effects on the words are clearly meant to grab the viewer’s attention, and the use of English instead of Japanese is intended to have a similar effect. The types of special effects used on the words suggest that they have a high decorative function, that of grabbing the viewer’s attention.

The question of how communicative the words are is also an important question. Considering the fact that “touch” is a word borrowed into Japanese, it can be assumed that Japanese people know the meaning of the word. However the word “maquillage” is much harder and more unusual. It means “cosmetics” in French, but is being used by Shiseido as a brand name. Japanese viewers may associate meaning to the French word based on its use as a brand name, rather than understanding the generic meaning of the word. Furthermore, the meaning of the word “touch” is also somewhat unclear. Does the word represent a further sub categorization of brand name, or is it simply being used as narration for the background images? In addition, the first “touch” may just be narration while the second “touch” may be modified by “Maquillage”, as in “Maquillage touch”. Finally, while most italicizing slants words to the right, when “touch” is italicized in this commercial, it slants to the left. The unusual italicizing

coupled with the use of exclamation points and the somewhat unclear meaning of the words strengthens the idea that these words are more decorative than communicative.

The written English present in the three previous commercials show a similarity to the English found in Japanese magazines. As seen by the Pocky example, meaning can be communicated at the level of the individual word, while the meaning of the phrase as a whole is lost. This suggests that the shorter the phrase, the more communicative it is. Words can both be highly decorative and highly communicative, as in the word *DEBUT* and this is more likely the case for a single word rather than a phrase. Finally, even with words that are easy to understand like "touch", when there is some ambiguity as to what the word is referencing, the decorative function of the word can be thought to have more importance than its communicative function. As with English in Japanese magazines, there is a range of functions for written English in Japanese television commercials. Although there was some narration in the Shiseido commercial, I will now turn to commercials which make full use of spoken English as well as written English, and investigate how the decorative and communicative functions of the words are affected.

Spoken English

As I mentioned earlier, a television commercial is a more complex medium than a magazine advertisement because it incorporates moving images and sound. This is especially relevant when considering the decorative and communicative functions of English which is not only written on screen but which is also narrated for the viewer.

In a car commercial for the Toyota Vitz, there are many different ways in which English or a Western aesthetic is communicated. First, the background music is the song "Sunday

Morning" by the American band Maroon 5, sung in English (Toyota Vitz). In contrast, the narration of the commercial is in Japanese and the two actors appear to be Japanese people. However the setting of the commercial brings it back to a Western aesthetic, since the two main actors are at a dinner party with everyone else being Westerners. Already there is a complex mix of Japanese and Western styles; the background music and the setting appear to be Western while the main actors are Japanese.

The actress in the commercial speaks in Japanese, but while she is speaking some of what she says appears on screen. She pronounces the brand name of the car – "Vitz" – twice. The first time she says the word Vitz, the word appears on screen in the Japanese katakana spelling. The second time she says it, it is written in the Roman alphabet. This can be thought of as a process of teaching the viewer a brand name written using the Roman alphabet. When it is written in Japanese the viewer can read the word and learn the pronunciation of the brand name. The second time, it is written in English so that the viewer associates the sound of the brand name with its written English form. Though "Vitz" is a foreign-sounding word, it is given a Japanese pronunciation so that Japanese consumers can speak about the product with other people. This is similar to the way Japanese magazine titles like *Leon* have subtitles so that readers know how it is pronounced. In this commercial the word "Vitz" essentially has two subtitles – one in written Japanese and one in spoken Japanese. By the time the word written in English is understood to be the brand name of the car, it is able to communicate, but before it is understood in this way, it serves a decorative purpose. This is similar to the way the English title of a Japanese magazine seen from afar and not recognized will be purely decorative, appearing in large font at the top of the cover. When it is recognized as a brand however, the communicative function takes over and it is able to get across its meaning.

This is one way a television commercial is more flexible regarding how words can be made more communicative even though they are written in the Roman alphabet as opposed to in Japanese. When a word on screen that is written in English is pronounced in Japanese, the Japanese viewers have two different ways to understand the word – through text and sound. However, there are different ways that words can be read aloud, and the narration affects the way words are perceived. When the actress says 特別な VITZ「I'LL」誕生 (*tokubetsu na VITZ "I'LL" tanjou*) or "presenting the special VITZ I'LL", she is speaking with a completely Japanese accent. The brand name Vitz does not sound like a Japanese word and the version "I'LL", while its meaning is not explained in the commercial, clearly comes from the English contraction. And yet even though these two words are not Japanese, they are pronounced as if they are loan words that have been adopted into the Japanese language (such as biiru or konsaato for *beer* or *concert*). In a way, the commercial is attempting to add a new word to the dictionary; the brand names are to be thought of as Japanese words. While the words function decoratively because they do not look like Japanese, they function communicatively because they are pronounced as if they are Japanese, and the viewers are encouraged to think of them in that way.

English that is purely decorative and has no communicative function is found in the commercial as well, in the form of the Maroon 5 song in the background. While it is true that song lyrics in general are hard to distinguish, no matter what language they are in, it is certainly true in this case, where the song lyrics are in a non-native language of the viewers of the commercial. This gives the English in the song a decorative function in the same way that the English in newspaper print as a pattern has a decorative function. The individual words are hard to pick out of the song in the same way that the individual words on the newspaper are hard to

pick out. Rather than communicating explicitly, the English in the song is more like a texture, working together with the Western atmosphere of the dinner party (which uses no language) to create an overall Western aesthetic. This English with a purely decorative function helps reinforce the partially decorative function of the brand names. In other words, although the brand names need to communicate their meaning, the decorative choice of writing them in English is reinforced by the decorative function of the English in the song.

In another Toyota commercial, words written in English and foreign sounding brand names are put right next to each other, and they are able to communicate in different ways. At the end of this commercial for the Toyota Corolla, the words "ALL NEW カローラ誕生" (presenting the all new corolla) appear on screen (Toyota Corolla). What is written is a mix of the Roman alphabet, katakana, and kanji. The first two words, "All New", fit into the category of words written using the Roman alphabet as part of convention. As the copywriter at Dentsu said, some words such as "new" are always written in English and so the Japanese public is quickly able to understand their meaning (Dentsu interview). Next to "All New" is "Corolla" written in Japanese and then "presenting" written in Japanese as well. However the whole phrase is pronounced in Japanese, even the English words "All New". This Japanese narration reinforces the words' ability to communicate. "All New" has a decorative function due its relative location in the phrase, but its communicative ability is strengthened due to the narration. Television commercials allow more flexibility in using words for both decorative and communicative reasons. In the next commercial, English is written and spoken, with an English pronunciation rather than a Japanese one.

A commercial for ski equipment features a Japanese song in the background while three foreigners do a skit. The narration includes words such as "Sale" and the brand name "Victoria"

and unlike the earlier commercials this time the words are pronounced in a Western way (Victoria Ski). It is unclear whether the narrator himself is Western or Japanese, but what is important is that his voice sounds American. It is interesting that the brand name is pronounced with an American accent because in the previous commercials the foreign sounding brand names were turned into Japanese loan words and were probably easier for Japanese people to learn how to pronounce. In this commercial the decorative function of both the written and spoken English – the fact that it sounds and looks different than Japanese – is more important than the potential communicative functions of the words. The commercial focuses on communicating the Western aesthetic associated with skiing rather than worrying about whether all the Japanese viewers will be able to remember how to pronounce the English brand name. The last two examples I will analyze are Toyota commercials in which more English is pronounced in an American rather than a Japanese accent.

In a 2010 Toyota MarkX commercial, the narration has both English pronunciations and Japanese pronunciations of loan words, at the same time that the Roman alphabet is used alongside Japanese writing on screen (Toyota MarkX). The phrase "Samurai X" is pronounced in an American accent by the narrator. Then when the Japanese actor provides some narration, he speaks in Japanese and pronounces words that appear in English on the screen with a Japanese accent. He pronounces the phrase "New Mark X" with a Japanese accent while it appears in English on the screen. Other commercials for the same car are similar in that the narrator pronounces phrases in English, such as "X for Men" or "New X Go!" while the actor pronounces "Mark X" in Japanese (Toyota "New X Go" and Toyota "X for men). Even if the brand name is written using the Roman alphabet, it is pronounced at the end of the commercial in Japanese so that the Japanese consumer will know how they should pronounce it. The words that are

pronounced in English have more of a decorative function because their distinctive pronunciation adds a stylistic effect to the commercial, whereas the words that are pronounced with a Japanese accent are meant to be more communicative.

Finally, a commercial for the Toyota Vanguard mixes English and Japanese the most out of all of the commercials that I viewed (Toyota Vanguard). First, the phrase "Tough and Gentle 7-Seater" appears on screen and is pronounced by the Japanese actor in a Japanese accent. Then he says the name of the car, "Vanguard", in what sounds like an attempted American or European accent. Immediately after that the words ヴァンガード、誕生 (presenting Vanguard) are on screen and are pronounced in a Japanese accent. In this commercial there is English written in the Roman alphabet pronounced with a Japanese accent, there is the brand name of the car, "Vanguard", written only in Japanese but "Vanguard" is pronounced with both an English and a Japanese accent, right after one another. When this is combined with the fact that the brand name Toyota is a Japanese name but is written in English, and the fact that the Toyota logo is in the shape of the letter "T", this commercial exemplifies the way television commercials have an incredible variety in the way English is used through both image and sound. As in the previous commercial, the fact that the word "vanguard" is pronounced with an American accent suggests that it functions decoratively. However, at the same time, the word is immediately afterwards pronounced with a Japanese accent and is written in Japanese, so the English sounding "vanguard" is able to have more of a communicative function than it would have had otherwise. When there are so many different elements of language in a television commercial, the different elements work together, influencing how well they can communicate to the viewer, even when they are in non-native languages.

6. Conclusion

In this paper I have tried to develop a method for understanding how English functions in Japanese media. While it is tempting to argue that English is a non-native language and therefore has a purely decorative function, an analysis of the wide variety of uses that English can have in both television and magazines suggests otherwise. Some English is more easily understood by Japanese people, and this tends to occur when the English is written in short phrases or individual words, rather than in blocks of text. Since there is a range of comprehensibility of English, I have proposed thinking of English in Japanese media as having two dimensions – one representing decoration and one representing communication. Previous authors and many of the people I talked to at Dentsu stressed the decorative function as being more important than the communicative function of English. Nevertheless, the distinctions they made between different types of decorative English leant support to the idea that the communicative dimension is not non-existent. I hope that the examples I discussed in Magazines and television commercials illustrate the great complexity of the interaction between Japanese viewers and a non-native language that they encounter every day. Further research is needed to find out exactly how well the English in Japanese media is able to communicate to Japanese people. In this paper I only present one possible way of thinking about this issue which acknowledges that some English is understood and some English is not understood by the Japanese public. If the paradigm I suggest is tested and supported by data gathered in the field, such as interviews or surveys of Japanese consumers, it could provide a way for linguists to characterize how non-native languages influence cultures and individual people. This in turn could be used as a tool by advertisers, giving them a better understanding of what types of

English are able to communicate to Japanese viewers and what types are not able to communicate. I hope that the decorative/communicative paradigm that I have developed in this paper will provide insight into the intersection between language, culture, and meaning.

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