

Editorial

At the time of writing, spring has arrived in the countries of the Northern hemisphere. As every year, it brings nature back to life with lawns turning green, spring flowers raising their heads and the first trees being in full bloom. A country that has cherished the latter more than any other is Japan, where viewing the cherry trees blossom has been turned into a national festival. The delicate pinkish petals fall to earth like snow, and finding the perfect day and spot to celebrate this sight, often with a party, is a tradition originally established by the Japanese emperors in the 9th century (McClellan, 2005). Today, this is supported by websites featuring cherry blossom flowering forecast maps that predict how the bloom will spread throughout the country (for example, Japan Meteorological Corporation, 2023).

Of course, Japanese has a word to describe this pastime. *Hanami* does not only have a pleasant sound – its characters, the *kanji*, represent this activity beautifully, too: the word is a combination of two characters, one for ‘flower’ (*hana*花), composed out of strokes for ‘grass’ and ‘change’, and a second from ‘to watch’ (*miru*見る), which combines ‘eye’ and ‘legs’.

Japanese also has words related to *hanami* that are English, or at least somewhat English. *Burūshīto* (‘to blue sheet’) refers to the act of reserving a spot on one of the many popular lawns where the Japanese gather in crowds to watch the blossoms by placing a blue sheet early in the day until the group arrives after work. In fact, Japanese has many such pseudo-anglicisms, called *wasei-eigo* ‘Japan-made English’ in Japanese, that draw on originally English word stock but are difficult, if not impossible, to understand if one relies on English only for their interpretation. Their creation really took off after WW2 (Miller, 1997, Irwin, 2011) and the process is highly productive today. Further examples include *wanpīsu* (‘one piece’, referring to a woman’s dress), *naitā* (‘nighter’, a night baseball game) or the better known *sararīman* (‘salary man’, an office worker).

While studies looking into English spoken by multilingual individuals and in multilingual speech communities all around the world have long come to appreciate such creative language use as one form of identity construction, it has also been

referred to with somewhat derogatorily connotated expressions, such as Chinglish (for uses of English by speakers of Chinese), Denglish (with speakers of German), Taglish (with speakers of Tagalog). In Uganda, this has even led to the rather unfortunate label Uglish.

For the Japanese, however, it appears that just as much as watching nature change they cherish changing English word stock into creative neologisms. At the end of 2022, it was one of these *wasei-eigo* that dictionary publisher Sanseidō chose as their word of the year. *Taipa* is a compound made out of two clippings, both of which are also adapted to the Japanese syllabary *katakana*: *tai* from *time* and *pa* from *performance*. It describes ‘efficient use of time’, a phenomenon observed all around the world, and of course also in Japan, in what has been called ‘Generation Z, born roughly between 1995 and 2010’. In search of optimum “time performance,” they might watch films and drama at double speed or via recut versions that only show major plot points, and skip to the catchy parts of songs’ (Nippon.com, 2022).

How this impacts on Generation Z’s experience of *hanami*, which certainly involves some amount of contemplation, is unknown to us. We hope that our readers will find time to browse through this issue, which among others, includes papers that are concerned with new English expressions and uses:

We are pleased to bring readers six papers submitted for peer review. First, Ksenija Bogetić examines the cryptic use of racist neologisms that have emerged within online incel communities. This ground-breaking research on the language of online alt-right communities and the measures taken to communicate in secret will likely be the first study many *English Today* readers have seen on the subject. Next, Sofia Rüdiger, Jacob R. E. Leimgruber and Ming-I Lydia Tseng introduce a new corpus of Taiwanese spoken English and its relevance to studies of English in East Asia. Seongyong Lee examines the many ways that bilingual punning has been characterized in linguistic creativity and the relevance of *code ambiguation* to English in the Korean context. Saran Shiroza investigates the ideological underpinnings of recent calls to move English-language education into younger groups of students in Japan.

Paula Rodríguez–Abruñeiras details the historical and social contexts related to the use of the expressions *me likey* and *me no likey*. Finally, Gordana Lilić–Krstin, Nadežda Silaški and Tatyana Đurović investigate the extension of meaning in the bound morpheme *-nomics* (as in *economics*) as it is increasingly productive of neologisms.

Rounding out this issue are two short articles. Marko Modiano explores the future of British English in the European Union now that the United Kingdom has left the EU. Finally, Lydia Sciriha and Mario Vassallo investigate the use of English in official and non-official signage in Malta.

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For the editors

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