

High-frequency English-based Loanword Cognates for EFL in Japan

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This article examines the loanwords in Japanese that are based on high-frequency English vocabulary, and it assesses their quality as cognates in EFL. The first part shows that members of around half of the high-frequency word families of the British National Corpus have become commonly known loanwords in Japanese. Next the author evaluates certain aspects of semantic similarity (i.e., semantic type; dictionary definitions) and formal similarity (i.e., shortening) that are highly salient in language transfer and easily assessed, as well as other limitations on loanword usage (e.g., being a bound morpheme). The results suggest that this loanword-based cognate resource is not only large but of good quality. The article concludes by discussing some implications and directions for future research.