

**Language contact in Sakhalin:  
Japanese and Korean loanwords in the Russian language**

Valeriya EVSEENKO, Kazuko MATSUMOTO  
The University of Tokyo

This paper introduces some aspects of language contact history on Sakhalin Island, Russia, and loanwords that have entered the local Russian language, paying particular attention to the incorporation of Japanese and Korean languages and dialects into Russian.

The Southern part of Sakhalin, which was then named “Karafuto”, was a Japanese territory from 1905 to 1945. During that period, not only did numerous Japanese settlers arrive, but also Korean workers were forced to fill manual labour shortages in Karafuto, as Korea was annexed by Japan at that time. Japanese was then the dominant language in the society, which resulted in the high proficiency in Japanese among Korean workers as well as some indigenous residents (e.g., Nivkhs, Uilta). After the end of World War Two when Southern Sakhalin became Soviet Russia’s territory, almost all of the more than 380,000 Japanese settlers were repatriated to Japan. However, more than 40,000 Korean workers were not allowed to return. Only after the break-up of the Soviet Union, were Korean survivors allowed to visit and eventually repatriate to Korea, although not many of them chose to do so. Currently in Sakhalin more than 5% of the population are ethnically Korean. There are also elderly indigenous people who are fluent in Japanese, although their small number is dropping every year.

In recent years, the language contact on Sakhalin Island has received some academic attention in Japan and Korea. Previous studies on Sakhalin examined either Japanese language (Asahi 2011) or contact with Japanese and Korean languages (Kim, 2008). However, there are as yet no studies that focus explicitly on the Russian language, addressing the way in which Japanese and Korean words and phrases have been structurally and semantically adopted and adapted in the local Russian variety. This paper, therefore, investigates the incorporation and localization of Japanese and Korean loanwords into Russian language in Sakhalin. Our data consist of 92 Japanese and 177 Korean loanwords collected from 257 Sakhaliners by a means of an internet-based survey. We applied “contact-induced borrowing scale” (Thomason and Kaufman 1988) and “borrowability” (van Hout and Muysken 1994) to our data, while classifying loanwords according to typology of semantic change (Daulton 2008). The results reveal that the sociolinguistic factors, such as ethnicity, influence the use of the loanwords, providing some evidence of dialectal influences from both Korean and Japanese.