

# WORDS OF JAPANESE ORIGIN IN ROMANIAN DICTIONARIES OF NEOLOGISMS AND RECENT WORDS

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**Abstract:** In this study, we discuss the status and features of the words of Japanese origin in Romanian, based on Romanian dictionaries of neologisms and recent words. Several studies on different types of dictionaries of European languages show that, in recent decades, most borrowings into Western languages from a language outside the Western cultural space come from Japanese. A careful analysis demonstrates that this tendency can be also identified in the recent lexical dynamics of the Romanian language. First, we outline the context and objectives of the paper and discuss some terminological issues. This is followed by a short historical background and a presentation of the Romanian dictionaries used to collect the corpus. Quantitative information is provided regarding the data from each dictionary. Finally, we proceed to a qualitative analysis of the data.

**Keywords:** Romanian, Japanese, lexical borrowing, assimilation, dictionaries of recent words

## 1. Introduction

In the present-day globalized society, Japan and its culture have penetrated the world through food, cinema, literature, visual arts, and the martial arts. In this context, which is also marked by a strong cultural diplomacy, the impact of the Japanese language on other languages has become a reality. Recent studies on dictionaries show that, in the last decades, the Japanese language has become an important source of borrowings for European languages.

In one of the recent studies devoted to Japanese dictionaries, Otake (2010) points out that the Japanese language has recently contributed the highest number of new vocabulary items to English, for a language outside the Western cultural space. A look at the update of *The Oxford English Dictionary Online* (OED Timelines) for June 2021 reveals that, among the newly recorded lexical items, there are no less than five items of Japanese origin only for the first letter of the alphabet (*amae*, *amakudari*, *amazake*, *amigurumi*, and *anago*). Audureau (2019) points out a similar situation regarding French. Investigating the new words in the 2017, 2018, and 2019 editions of *Le Larousse* and *Le Robert*, he notices that, as a source of loanwords, English is followed by Japanese and Italian. In the 2021 selection of new words in the present online edition of *Le Petit Robert*, there are six items of Japanese origin: *anime*, *daikon*, *kombucha*, *mangaka*, *mochi*, and *tataki*. For both English and French, researchers identified a frequent attributive use (sometimes called ‘the adjectival use’) of Japanese loanwords as a sign of the degree of their naturalization/assimilation. For instance, Doi (2013) offers a series of examples for English, such as *sushi* bar, *tatami* room, *azuki* bean, *tempura* bar, and Sarale (2008) for French, such as *vague-tsunami* ‘a tsunami wave’, *ambiance-zen* ‘a zen ambience’.

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Most of the studies concerned with the influence of Japanese in European languages are based on the example of Japanese loanwords in English and French. However, we have also found studies on Japanese loanwords in Portuguese (Kono 2001), Slovenian (Shigeori-Bukar 2011), and Romanian (Dimitrescu 2000-2001). In this paper we look at the influence of Japanese on Romanian, using as data dictionaries of neologisms and recent words. We have limited our study to the situation of dictionaries because we judge that the role of dictionaries in standardizing the form and meaning of words of Japanese origin is highly significant. However, we are aware that numerous other terms of Japanese origin can be found in usage (in social media, advertising, television) without being yet recorded in these dictionaries.

Regarding terminology, traditionally, concepts such as “loanword”/ “borrowing”/ “transfer” or “neologism” are used to refer to lexical enrichment by introducing linguistic materials from other languages, but also to better describe the rapidly changing language in the global world. To this effect, researchers have introduced new concepts such as “recent borrowings”, “recent words” or “new words”. However, in this paper, we have decided to use the phrase “words of Japanese origin” in order to indicate the Japanese words recorded in our corpus. In our approach, this phrase covers any item of Japanese origin that has entered the Romanian lexicon, directly or via other languages. We choose this term because, as will be shown, the Japanese terms that have entered the Romanian language display a very low degree of assimilation, most of them mainly functioning as foreign words.

## 2. Words of Japanese origin in Romanian

### 2.1. Background and short history

As different types of dictionaries prove, starting in 1900, borrowings from Japanese began to be identified in many European languages. For a quick look at the situation of the first words of Japanese origin in Romanian, we have consulted *Enciclopedia română* [= The Romanian Encyclopedia] published by C. Diaconovich in 1898 and the first bilingual dictionary, *Dicționar român-japonez* [= The Romanian-Japanese Dictionary] compiled by Radu Flondor in 1940. We were able to identify a number of words of Japanese origin in these works.

For instance, one of the oldest words of Japanese origin seems to be *Aino* (for the Ainu people, the indigenous people of Northern Japan). It appears in this form both in the *Enciclopedia română* [= The Romanian Encyclopedia] and in the *Dicționar român-japonez* [= The Romanian-Japanese Dictionary]. In later dictionaries, we find it in the form *Ainu*. These dictionaries indicate that this word has entered the Romanian language via French and English. Other words of Japanese origin found in the *Romanian-Japanese dictionary* (1940) are *kimono*, *sake*, *samurai*, *taifun* or *yen*. There are also proper names (names of cities) such as Yokohama or Yokosuka. These Japanese words are nouns, and they are recorded as follows “*kimono*, -ul (*s.n*) /*kimonouri*”. The notation *s.n.* means neuter gender noun, and the form /*kimonouri*/ is the plural, according to the Romanian language system. As can be seen, Japanese nouns are assigned a gender, and their plural form is indicated.

Historically, most of the words of Japanese origin that have entered the Romanian language are not direct transfers but were “re-borrowed” via French or English. In recent years, the direct transfers from the Japanese language have slightly increased in the context of the intensification of bilateral relations between the two countries and in the wake of globalization. The data from dictionaries indicate that direct transfers increased after 2000. For instance, in our corpus, words as *chado* or *manga* are attested from 2006 or 2007. Due to this tendency, we can also find examples of different forms of the same word because of their double origin, usually French and Japanese, or English and Japanese, as in the case of *funami* and *tsunami*. The first one is an older form, but still in use, which presents a higher degree of assimilation, while the second is a more recent form. As we will emphasise, in most of our corpus most of the words of Japanese origin are identified as “cuvânt japonez” ‘Japanese word’, and they are not assigned grammatical marks in Romanian.

## 2.2 The corpus

As a corpus for our investigation, we have used two editions (1997 and 2013) of the *Dicționar de cuvinte recente* [= Dictionary of recent words] or *DCR* by Florica Dimitrescu and the *Dicționar actualizat de neologisme* or *DAN* [= Updated dictionary of neologisms] by Florin Marcu, from 2019. We did not use separately the first edition of *Dicționar de Cuvinte Recente* [= Dictionary of recent words] because it appeared in 1982, and it covers the period 1961-1980, a period when Romania was not so open to the influence of international lexis. This dictionary includes a highly limited number of Japanese loanwords (*amakudari*, *ikebana*, *karate*, *kogai*, *omozukai*, *tsunami*, *bunraku*, *joruri*, *shamisen*, *sake*, and *keplon*) which are also included in the second edition. The second edition of *DCR* covers the period 1980-1996 and includes 5628 entries (among them 1885 are new items compared to the first edition). The third edition covers the period 1997-2012 and comprises 9875 entries (among them, 4853 are new, compared to the second edition). We can notice a huge increase in the number of recent words in a relatively short period of time in the third edition. As we will show, the same can be said about the words of Japanese origin.

The *DCR* is, in our opinion, the most important work on recent words in Romanian. In all three editions, the author has exclusively used the written media as a corpus. As the author shows in the *Introduction* of the third edition, she included in her concept of recent words three types of items: the borrowings from other languages, the new words formed internally by combining already existing items, and the new meanings added to old words.

The borrowings, in their turn, are classified into three categories:

- (i) loanwords (words frequently used at least in some fields)
- (ii) borrowings with a more limited usage  
words of foreign origin that are not adapted to the Romanian language system and have the same form as in the source language.

Every word is explained and illustrated by three examples extracted from the Romanian written media.

On the other hand, the *Dicționar actualizat de neologisme* or *DAN* by Florin Marcu has more than 70.000 entries. This significant difference in the number of entries in comparison to *DCR* is explained by the fact that Marcu's corpus includes a larger variety of sources, such as previous dictionaries, media, and literary works. The words are briefly explained and no examples are offered. Both dictionaries give the origin of the words and information on their first attestation in Romanian. They also point out the issue of the multiple origins of some loanwords.

In our effort of listing the words of Japanese origin in these dictionaries, we have encountered some important challenges. For some words of Japanese origin, the dictionaries indicate only the language through which they entered Romanian. For example, the word *pokemon* in *DAN* is considered an English word. In reality, the word is coined in the Japanese language using English material (English loanwords in Japanese). Another situation is found in *DCR*, where a word like *Go* (a strategic game, originating in China) is considered a Chinese word. However, *Go* is the truncation of the Japanese word *Igo*, which is the name created by the Japanese, based on the Chinese name. In addition, *Go* has entered the Romanian language via the Japanese culture.

Due to the above reasons, we have included in our list of words of Japanese origin, words like *pokemon* or *Go*. Consequently, our list includes several words that are not considered of Japanese origin by the authors of the dictionaries in our corpus. For the sake of space, we did not add the definition of words of Japanese origin in the text of the article, because most of them are common also in English. Instead, we have added in an appendix the alphabetic list of words of Japanese origin, accompanied by short definitions compiled by us.

### 3. The data

#### 3.1 The status of words of Japanese origin

First, we have looked at the situation of the source languages of borrowings in the three dictionaries, which is shown in Table 1. The first column shows the source languages in the second edition of *DCR* (1997), the second column shows the source languages in the third edition of *DCR* (2013), and the third column shows the source languages in *DAN* (2019):

Table 1. Source languages in *DCR* (1997, 2013), *DAN* (2019)

<i>DCR</i> 1997	<i>DCR</i> 2013	<i>DAN</i> 2019
American English	Chinese	Arabic
Bulgarian	Dutch	Brazilian
Hebrew	Hebrew	Celtic
English	Hungarian	Chinese
French	English	Dutch
German	French	Hebrew

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Greek	German	English
Italian	Greek	French
<b>Japanese</b>	Italian	German
Latin	<b>Japanese</b>	Greek
Hungarian	Latin	Icelandic
Polish	Polish	Italian
Portuguese	Portuguese	<b>Japanese</b>
Russian	Russian	Latin
Scandinavian languages	Scandinavian languages	New Greek
Spanish	Spanish	Norwegian
Swedish	Swedish	Hungarian
Ukrainian	Ukrainian	Polish
		Portuguese
		Provençal
		Russian
		Sanskrit
		Scandinavian languages
		Spanish
		Swedish
		Ukrainian

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A first important observation is that Japanese is recorded as a source of borrowings in all of them (as underlined in the table) in contrast, for example, with Chinese, which appears only in the last two. It seems that Japanese remains a constant source of borrowings through time.

As can be seen, the number of source languages is significantly increasing in 2019. There are 26 languages compared to the 18 languages in 1997 and 2013. New languages from countries geographically far from Romania are included. Some languages, such as Bulgarian, disappear, and Arabic, Chinese, Dutch or New Greek are added. Equally, for the first column, we can notice that Japanese is the single non-European language recorded. We can say that, back in 1997, the Romanian media did use a high number of loanwords from European languages, but none of these came from non-European languages, except those of Japanese origin. This can be regarded as an indication that Romania has shown from the very beginning a special interest in Japan, which was reflected in the linguistic dimension as well.

### 3.2 The second edition of *DCR* (1997)

In the second edition of *DCR* (1997), we have identified 29 words of Japanese origin. It is worth noticing that, even though this number may seem limited, it is much higher than the number of Portuguese loanwords (7 words) or Bulgarian loanwords (2 words) listed in the same dictionary.

Table 2: Words of Japanese origin in *DCR* (1997)

<i>amakudari</i>	<i>Hiroshima</i>	<i>judocan</i>	<i>koka</i>	<i>omozukai</i>	<i>tatami</i>
<i>bonsai</i>	<i>ikebana</i>	<i>kabuki</i>	<i>Minamata</i>	<i>shamisen</i>	<i>tsunami</i>
<i>bunraku</i>	<i>joruri</i>	<i>kamikaze</i>	<i>ninja</i>	<i>shinkansen</i>	<i>yakuza</i>
<i>haiku</i>	<i>judo</i>	<i>karate</i>	<i>nippon</i>	<i>shogun</i>	<i>yuko</i>
<i>hibakusha</i>	<i>judoka</i>	<i>kogai</i>	<i>Nô</i>	<i>sushi</i>	

In Table 2, we can notice a large proportion of terms from martial arts (*judo*, *judoka*, *judocan*, *karate*, *nippon*, *koka*) and traditional arts (*bonsai*, *bunraku*, *haiku*, *kabuki*, *shamisen*, *ikebana*, *Nô*, *joruri*). All the important forms of Japanese theatre are included. Two proper names appear in the dictionary: *Hiroshima* and *Minamata*.

Another important detail regarding *DCR* is the fact that Japan is also mentioned in numerous examples given in the dictionary, including examples offered for words of other origins than Japanese: *Japonia* ‘Japan’ is used 24 times, the word *japonez* ‘Japanese (as a noun or adjective)’ is used 56 times and the word *nipon* Japanese (as a noun and adjective) is used 9 times. Also, in most of the examples, Japan is associated with scientific and technical innovation as in the example for the new word *suprarapid* ‘superfast’: *rețeaua pe care circulă trenurile suprarapide [...] urmează să fie extinsă în următorii ani în Japonia* ‘the network on which superfast trains run is to be expanded in the near future in Japan’.

These facts support the idea that the image of Japan in Romania is positive and appealing. Certainly, this image contributes to the introduction of words of Japanese origin in the Romanian language.

### 3.3 The third edition of *DCR* (2013)

The table below contains the Japanese loanwords in third edition of *DCR*:

Table 3. Words of Japanese origin in *DCR* (2013)

<i>aikido</i>	<i>hibakusha</i>	<i>karaoke</i>	<i>miso</i>	<i>seiza</i>	<i>tempura</i>
<i>ainu</i>	<i>hikikomori</i>	<i>karate</i>	<i>moribana</i>	<i>sensei</i>	<i>Terrashima</i>
<i>amakudari</i>	<i>hiroshimă</i>	<i>karateka</i>	<i>Nihon jiu-jitsu</i>	<i>seppuku</i>	<i>tofu</i>
<i>anime</i>	<i>ikebana</i>	<i>karatist</i>	<i>ninja</i>	<i>shamisen</i>	<i>tokiot</i>
<i>bonsai</i>	<i>ippon</i>	<i>karoshi</i>	<i>nippon</i>	<i>shiatsu</i>	<i>tsunami</i>
<i>bunraku</i>	<i>insei</i>	<i>kata</i>	<i>Nô</i>	<i>shinkansen</i>	<i>umami</i>
<i>chado</i>	<i>jiu-jitsu</i>	<i>kempo</i>	<i>omozukai</i>	<i>shogun</i>	<i>yakiniku</i>
<i>chanoyu</i>	<i>judo</i>	<i>kendo</i>	<i>origami</i>	<i>shogunal</i>	<i>yakuza</i>
<i>dan</i>	<i>judocan</i>	<i>koan</i>	<i>otaku</i>	<i>sudoku</i>	<i>yuko</i>
<i>dojo</i>	<i>judoka</i>	<i>kogai</i>	<i>ronin</i>	<i>sumo</i>	
<i>Go</i>	<i>kabuki</i>	<i>koka</i>	<i>ryotei</i>	<i>surimi</i>	
<i>haiku</i>	<i>kaizen</i>	<i>maki</i>	<i>sake</i>	<i>sushi</i>	
<i>hibachi</i>	<i>kamikaze</i>	<i>manga</i>	<i>sashimi</i>	<i>tatami</i>	

In the 2013 edition of *DCR*, we identified 72 words of Japanese origin. We can easily notice that, in addition to the words related to martial arts and high culture, social phenomena of contemporary Japan (*karoshi*, *hikikomori*), Japanese food (*maki*, *sashimi*, *sushi*, *surimi*), as well as terms of Japanese business model (*kaizen*) or Japanese popular culture (*anime*, *manga*, *otaku*), are included. The author registers as Japanese loanwords fully assimilated only eight words: *karateka*, *karatist*, *kempo*, *ninja*, *sake*, *tokiot*, *shogunal* and *Terrashima*. *Karateka*, *karatist*, *kempo*, *sake* and *Terrashima* are marked as nouns, and the author indicates their grammatical gender, according to the Romanian language system. For *karatist* the dictionary indicates also the feminine form *karatistă*. *Tokiot* and *shogunal* are marked as adjectives. The other 64 words have the indication *cuvânt japonez* (Japanese word). The author indicates the fact that they are nouns, but that they are not assigned a gender.

### 3.4 DAN (2019)

The words of Japanese origin in *DAN*, the most recent dictionary in my corpus, are listed in the table below:

Table 4. Words of Japanese origin in *DAN* (2019)

<i>aikido</i>	<i>gheișă</i>	<i>kaiten</i>	<i>kendo</i>	<i>obi</i>	<i>shogun</i>	<i>tatami</i>
<i>ainu</i>	<i>Go</i>	<i>kakemono</i>	<i>kendoka</i>	<i>omozukai</i>	<i>shogunal</i>	<i>tofu</i>
<i>amakudari</i>	<i>haiku</i>	<i>kaki</i>	<i>koka</i>	<i>origami</i>	<i>shogunat</i>	<i>tokiot</i>
<i>aucuba</i>	<i>harakiri</i>	<i>kami</i>	<i>koto</i>	<i>pokemon</i>	<i>sudoku</i>	<i>tsuga</i>
<i>banzai</i>	<i>iaido</i>	<i>kamikaze</i>	<i>kumite</i>	<i>ricșă</i>	<i>sumo</i>	<i>tsunami</i>
<i>bonsai</i>	<i>ikebana</i>	<i>kana</i>	<i>makemono</i>	<i>ronin</i>	<i>sushi</i>	<i>ukiyo</i>
<i>bunraku</i>	<i>jiu-jitsu</i>	<i>karaoke</i>	<i>Mikado</i>	<i>ryokan</i>	<i>șintoism</i>	<i>yakuza</i>
<i>Bushido</i>	<i>judo</i>	<i>karate</i>	<i>Minamata</i>	<i>sake</i>	<i>șintoist</i>	<i>yen</i>
<i>chimono</i>	<i>judocan</i>	<i>karateka</i>	<i>netsuke</i>	<i>samurai</i>	<i>taifun</i>	
<i>dan</i>	<i>judoka</i>	<i>karatist</i>	<i>ninja</i>	<i>sashimi</i>	<i>taiko</i>	
<i>daimio</i>	<i>kabuki</i>	<i>katakana</i>	<i>Nô</i>	<i>sen</i>	<i>tanka</i>	

We have identified 74 words of Japanese origin in *DAN* (2019). There is a large coverage of Japanese martial arts, more words regarding Japanese religions, words related to the Japanese writing system, Japanese food, and Japanese past times. We have also noted assimilated forms such as *chimono*, *gheișă*, *ricșă* or *șintoism*. Most of the words are nouns, and the author assigns a gender in all cases, even if its use may seem, at times, awkward in Romanian.

## 4. The analysis of the data

### 4.1 Functions

The words of Japanese origin identified in our corpus seem to fill a lexical gap, being primarily used to indicate artifacts, cultural elements or systems of Japan which

have no correspondence in the target language and cannot be translated. It is also likely that in some contexts, words of Japanese origin may acquire a stylistic function, because, as shown before, Japan is usually associated with innovation and progress.

## 4.2 The degree of assimilation

We were able to identify only a limited number of words of Japanese origin, which are phonetically, graphically or morphologically adapted to the standards of Romanian. We will discuss below such adaptations.

### 4.2.1 Spelling

As can be seen in Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4, there are few assimilated words in terms of spelling and pronunciation. Most of the words of Japanese origin (97 of 111) are written in their original Romanized form (in the Hepburn system), even if they included letters or groups of letters uncommon in Romanian, such as <k>, <y>, <ts>: *karate*, *yakuza*, *tsunami*. A good illustration of this tendency of preserving their original form is the high number of words beginning with <k> (21). In native Romanian, there are few words beginning with, or containing, <k>.

Based on their assimilated form, we have noticed some adaptations that are shown below. For instance, /a/ in word-final position is sometimes changed to /ă/

- (1) *geisha* or *gheișă*;

The fricative [ʃ] is most frequently rendered by <sh>, but in some cases it is spelled with Romanian <ș>:

- (2) *shinto*, but *șintoism*;

The affricate [ts] is most frequently rendered as *ts*, but in some cases by Romanian <ț>:

- (3) *tsunami* or *țunami*;

The groups of letters <ki>, <ge> are rendered sometimes by Romanian <chi> or <ghe>:

- (4) *kimono* or *chimono*, *geisha* or *gheișă*;

The letter <y> turns into Romanian <i>

- (5) *iaido*



## 4.2.2 Morphological adaptation

### 4.2.2.1 Lexical categories and the grammatical gender of nouns

Most of the words of Japanese origin in our corpus are nouns, and some of them are assigned a grammatical gender as for Romanian nouns, which is, in most the cases, the neuter gender. Consider the following examples:

- (6) a. *judo* s.n. (sport) – sport olimpic, asemănător cu luptele, originar din Japonia [...] (din jap., fr., engl. *judo*)  
‘*Judo* = noun, neuter gender (field of sport) – Olympic sport, resembling wrestling, originating in Japan [...] (from Japanese, French, English *judo*)’
- b. *kendo* s.n. (cuv. Jap) (sport) – artă marțială japoneză în care se folosesc săbii de bambus ținute cu ambele mâini  
‘*Kendo* = noun, neuter gender, (Japanese word), (field of sport) – Japanese martial art in which bamboo swords are used with both hands’

Some of the words of Japanese origin are registered both as nouns and adjectives, as shown below:

- (7) a. *ninja* *ninja*; luptător *ninja* ‘ninja fighter’  
b. *yakuza* *Yakuza*; filme *yakuza* ‘*yakuza* movie’  
c. *ainu* *Ainu*; etnicii *ainu* ‘*Ainu* ethnics’

As we have already shown, two words are recorded only with adjectival use: *shogunal* and *tokiot*, both of them being formed with Romanian suffixes. We have identified in *DCR* (2013) a feminine noun derived from the proper name *Hiroshima*, defined as below: *hiroșimă* putere de distrugere echivalentă cu cea abătută asupra Hiroșimei ‘a destructive power, equivalent with that launched on Hiroshima’.

The great majority of words of Japanese origin can be considered lexical borrowings, but *DCR* (2013) points out, as an exception, a suffixoid of Japanese origin, with a restricted use. An example is the word *Terrashima* registered by *DCR*. As Dimitrescu (2000-2001) explains, this word is formed with the noun *Terra* combined with *-shima* which may be considered a suffixoid of Japanese origin. *Terrashima* is used with the meaning of ‘the whole world destroyed as Hiroshima was destroyed’, and is formed by parallelism with an older formation, namely *Ceaușima*. *Ceau-* comes from the name of Romanian dictator *Ceaușescu* and *-șima*, refers to the district in Bucharest that was destroyed entirely by *Ceaușescu* in the 1980s.

### 4.2.2.2 Suffixation

We have found some cases of Japanese nouns which have received Romanian suffixes, as shown below:

- (8) the suffix *-ist* (a specialist in, a follower of, as in *idealist* ‘idealist’ or *dentist* ‘dentist’)  
 a. *karatist* < *karate* + *-ist*  
 b. *șintoist* < *șinto* + *-ist*
- (9) the suffix *-ism* (names of ideological schools, literary currents, as in *classicism* ‘classicism’)  
*șintoism* < *șinto* + *-ism*
- (10) the suffix *-an* (occupational or status appurtenance, as in *țăran* ‘peasant’)  
*judocan* < *judoka* + *-an*
- (11) the suffix *-at* (institutionalization, as in *regat* ‘kingdom’)  
*shogunat* < *shogun* + *-at*
- (12) the suffix *-ot* (member of, as in *mafiot* ‘member of the Mafia’)  
*tokiot* < *tokio* + *-ot*
- (13) the adjectival suffix *-al* (fitting into a functional or qualitative category, as in *experimental* ‘experimental’)  
*shogunal* < *shogun* + *-al*

Most of the suffixes are agentive ones (and in Romanian languages agentive suffixes are also added to nouns). Based on the data, we can say that there are agentive nouns with Japanese suffixes borrowed as such, and agentive nouns formed with Romanian suffixes. Below we have provided the list of agentive nouns that we have identified:

- (14) *judocan* s.m. (sport) – sportiv care practică luptele judo ‘sportsman who practices the judo fights’
- (15) a. *judoka* s.m.inv. (sport) – persoană care practică sportul judo ‘a person who practices the sport of judo’  
 b. *karateka* s. (cuv. jap.sport) – practicant de karate ‘karate practitioner’  
 c. *kendoka* s.m. – sportiv care practică kendo ‘sportsman who practices kendo’
- (16) a. *karatist*, -ă, s.m.f. – luptător de karate ‘karate fighter’  
 b. *șintoist* ă, adj. s.m.f. – adept al șintoismului ‘shinto follower’
- (17) *tokiot* s.n. – locuitor din Tokyo (Tokyo inhabitant)
- (18) *hibakusha* s. – supraviețuitor al bombardamentelor atomice ‘atomic bomb survivor’

*Judoka*, *karateka* and *kendoka* are agentive nouns formed from the names of sports with the Japanese suffix *-ka*, borrowed as such. The Japanese suffix *-ka* can be added to nouns denoting different activities, occupations or sports names as in *shosetsuka* ‘writer’ < *shosetsu* ‘novel’ + *-ka*, forming agentive names. In some cases, these Japanese agentive nouns are doubled by agentive names created from the same Japanese noun but with Romanian suffixes, such as *judocan* which is a doublet of *judoka* or *karatist* which is a doublet of *karateka*. The agentive noun with a Romanian suffix was also formed for an inhabitant of Tokio, *tokiot*. Another Japanese agentive suffix is *-sha* in *hibakusha*.

We have summarized the situation below:

Table 5. Forms based on suffixes

Form with original suffix	Forms with Romanian suffixes
<i>judoka</i>	<i>judocan</i>
<i>karateka</i>	<i>karatist</i>
<i>kendoka</i>	–
<i>hibakusha</i>	–
–	<i>șintoist</i>
–	<i>tokiot</i>

It seems that the words attested from older times, such as *judo* and *karate* do have double forms of agentive nouns, but words attested only recently, such as *kendo*, have only the Japanese form.

#### 4.2.3 Lexical fields

Based on our data, we can identify some specific lexical fields to which most of the words of Japanese origin belong. As in the past, words recently borrowed from Japanese, as well as from English, are numerous in sports terminology. Martial arts are well covered, and we can see that there are not only the names of different martial arts (*aikido*, *iaido*, *jiu-jitsu*, *judo*, *karate*, *kempo*, *sumo*), but also techniques of training or sitting (*kata*, *kumite*, *seiza*), ranking and arbitration systems (*dan*, *koka*, *yuko*), places and participants in training (*dojo*, *tatami*, *sensei*, *karateka*, *judoka*, *kendoka*). Some well-assimilated words, such as *karatist* or *judocan* belong to this field.

The field of traditional arts and crafts has also been enriched by recent words. In the field of food culture, a great variety can be noticed. Words for different dishes and ingredients (*sushi*, *tempura*, *sashimi*, *tofu*, *miso*, *sake*, *surimi*) but also for flavours (*umami*), and even for the places where traditional Japanese food is served (*ryokan*, *ryotei*) are recorded. The newest lexical field seems to be that of popular culture and other Japanese past times, which are largely practiced in Romania: *anime*, *karaoke*, *manga*, *otaku*, *pokemon*, *go*, *sudoku*, *origami*. Words in this field are attested after 2005 (DCR 2013, DAN 2019).

These words reflect the interest of Romanians, as well as of Europeans in general, in Japanese popular culture. If in the past it was the traditional culture which attracted lots of people, nowadays the Japanese lifestyle, Japanese food, and Japanese popular culture are especially popular with Romanians.

#### 4.2.4 Meanings

As we have shown, generally, the words of Japanese origin fill a lexical gap. That means they are mostly used with their basic meaning. However, we have noticed an expansion of meaning and the emergence of figurative usages in the case of some words

of Japanese origin. For example, in *DAN* (2019), two meanings are indicated for *chimono*: ‘robe with very long sleeves; cut of women’s clothing in which the sleeves and waist are one piece’. In this assimilated form, *chimono* does not refer to the Japanese traditional costume anymore, but to a rather casual and comfortable interior cloth.

The word *tatami* has three meanings in *DCR* (2013) and two meanings in *DAN* (2019): ‘Japanese traditional mat used as a bed’ (*DCR* 2013); ‘Delimited space for martial arts’ (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019); ‘Straw bedding for the beach’ (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019).

As can be seen, the last meaning is a new one, created in Romania. Additionally, in *DAN* (2019) only the last two meanings are recorded. It seems that the usage of martial arts is the most common in the Romanian language. However, the most radical changes are to be noticed in the case of *tsunami*. *DCR* (2013) registers six meanings. The first meaning is the usual one, in the field of geology, as in: *o serie de valuri seismice, cunoscută sub numele de tsunami* ‘a series of seismic waves, known as tsunami’. However, the *DCR* (2013) lists another 5 figurative meanings, shown below:

- (19) a. ‘wave, invasion’  
*tsunami de concedieri* ‘a tsunami of firings’
- b. ‘irrestible force’  
*tsunami-ul tenisului mondial* ‘the tsunami of international tennis’
- c. ‘shock’  
*Un tsunami antropologic* ‘an anthropological tsunami’
- d. ‘calamity’  
*tsunami al comunismului* ‘the tsunami of communism’
- e. ‘shudder of catastrophic effects’  
*Odată trecut tsunamiul care a declanșat încăierarea* ‘once the tsunami that provoked the fight has ended’

## 5. Conclusions

In this study, we have investigated 111 words of Japanese origin registered in three important dictionaries of neologisms and recent words. Based on these data, we were able to note that the number of words of Japanese origin has been increasing in the Romanian language in recent decades, and that this situation is partially reflected by dictionaries.

The most frequent function of these words is that of filling a lexical gap. Most of the words (109 out of 111 words) are nouns, but some are adjectives or both (*shogunal*, *shintoist*, *moribana*).

The words of Japanese origin undergo a minimal phonetic adaptation. At the same time, they generally undergo a morphological adaptation, being assigned a grammatical gender according to the Romanian language (e.g. *karate* – noun, neuter gender).

The most recent lexical fields to which the words of Japanese origin belong are popular culture and pastimes (e.g. *anime*, *manga*, *karaoke*). Finally, there are some limited examples of meaning changes and of occurrences of figurative meanings (e.g. *tsunami*).

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## Appendix

### List of words of Japanese origin in *DCR* (1997, 2013) and *DAN* (2019)

- aikido* = modern Japanese martial art (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- Ainu* = indigenous people of Northern Japan (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- amakudari* = a practice where Japanese senior bureaucrats retire to high-profile positions (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- anime* = Japanese animation (*DCR* 2013)
- aucuba* = *aucuba japonica* (plant) (*DAN* 2019)
- Banzai* = Long live the emperor! (*DAN* 2019)
- bonsai* = the Japanese art of growing dwarf trees (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- bunraku* = Japanese puppet theatre (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- Bushido* = The way of the warrior (samurai), the moral code of samurai (*DAN* 2019)
- Chado* = The Way of Tea (Japanese tea ceremony) (*DCR* 2013)
- Chanoyu* = Japanese tea ceremony (*DCR* 2013)
- chimono* = kimono, a Japanese traditional costume (*DAN* 2019)
- daimio* = powerful feudal lords in Japan (*DAN* 2019)
- dan* = ranking system to quantify skill level in martial arts (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- dojo* = hall or place of training in martial arts, school of martial arts (*DCR* 2013)
- gheishă* = geisha, Japanese female performance artist who entertains guests in teahouses (*DAN* 2019)
- Go* = strategic board game imported from China (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)

*haiku* = Japanese short poem that consists of three lines of 5, 7 and 5 syllables (DCR 1997, 2013, DAN 2019)  
*harakiri* = abdomen cutting, ritualistic suicide (DAN 2019)  
*hibachi* = Japanese traditional brazier (DCR 2013)  
*hibakusha* = the surviving victims of the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki (DCR 1997, 2013)  
*hikikomori* = social withdrawal, young people who become recluses (DCR 2013)  
*Hiroshima* = a city destroyed by the first atomic bomb launched on Japan (DCR 1997)  
*hirošimă* = a destructive power equivalent with that launched on Hiroshima (DCR 2013)  
*iaido* = Japanese martial art using a sword (DAN 2019)  
*ikebana* = the Japanese art of flower arrangement (DCR 1997, 2013, DAN 2019)  
*insei* = internal system for traditional arts (DCR 2013)  
*ippon* = highest score a fighter can achieve in Japanese martial arts (DCR 2013)  
*jiu-jitsu* = self-defence martial art (DCR 2013, DAN 2019)  
*joruri* = chanted recitative with shamisen accompaniment (DCR 1997)  
*judo* = modern Japanese martial art, Olympic sport (DCR 1997, 2013, DAN 2019)  
*judocan* = judo practitioner (DCR 1997, 2013, DAN 2019)  
*judoka* = judo practitioner/performer (DCR 2013, DAN 2019)  
*kabuki* = a classical form of Japanese theatre, dramatic performance and traditional dance (DCR 1997, 2013, DAN 2019)  
*kaiten* = suicide craft used by the Imperial Japanese Navy (DAN 2019)  
*kaizen* = concept referring to business activities that continuously improve all functions (DCR 2013)  
*kakemono* = hanging scroll painting (DAN 2019)  
*kaki* = Japanese persimmon (DAN 2019)  
*kami* = Shinto deities (DAN 2019)  
*kami-kaze* = Japanese pilots who in World War II made deliberate suicidal crashes into enemy targets (DCR 1997)  
*kana* = syllabaries used to write Japanese syllables (DAN 2019)  
*karaoke* = entertainment where people sing along to recorded music (DCR 2013, DAN 2019)  
*karate* = a martial art developed in Ryukyu kingdom (DCR 1997, 2013, DAN 2019)  
*karateka* = karate practitioner (DCR 2013, DAN 2019)  
*karatist* = karate practitioner (DCR 2013, DAN 2019)  
*karoshi* = sudden death due to overwork (DCR 2013)  
*kata* = a pattern of martial arts movements (DCR 2013)  
*katakana* = one of the three Japanese writing systems (DAN 2019)  
*kempo* = the name of several Japanese martial arts (DCR 2013)  
*kendo* = modern Japanese martial art that uses bamboo swords (DCR 2013, DAN 2019)  
*koan* = a question used in Zen practice to test students' progress (DCR 2013)  
*kogai* = protest movement for the environment (DCR 1997, 2013)  
*koka* = arbitration system in martial arts (DCR 1997, 2013, DAN 2019)  
*koto* = Japanese zither (DAN 2019)  
*kumite* = one of the three sections of karate training where a person trains against an adversary (DAN 2019)

- makemono* = a painted scroll unrolled horizontally (*DAN* 2019)
- maki* = a type of sushi wrapped in dried seaweed (*DCR* 2013)
- manga* = Japanese comic books (*DCR* 2013)
- Mikado* = a former title of the Emperor of Japan (*DAN* 2019)
- Minamata* = a neurological disease caused by mercury poisoning (*DCR* 1997, *DAN* 2019)
- miso* = Japanese seasoning, a paste of soybeans (*DCR* 2013)
- moribana* = modern style of flower arrangement (*DCR* 2013)
- netsuke* = miniature sculpture usually of carved ivory used to attach a medicine box or pipe to the sash of a man's traditional dress (*DAN* 2019)
- Nihon jiu-jitsu* = see jiu-jitsu (*DCR* 2019, *DAN* 2019)
- ninja* = a warfare expert in feudal Japan (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- nippon* = martial art practiced with protective gear (*DCR* 1997, 2013)
- Nô* = major form of Japanese classical drama (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- obi* = a sash, a belt worn with traditional clothing or uniforms of martial arts (*DAN* 2019)
- omozukai* = the main puppeteer in Bunraku controls the head and right hand of the puppet (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- origami* = a Japanese art of paper folding (*DCR* 1997, *DAN* 2019)
- otaku* = a young person obsessed with popular culture (*DCR* 2013)
- pokemon* = anime characters (little monsters) (*DAN* 2019)
- ricșă* = a two- or three-wheeled cart pulled by one person (*DAN* 2019)
- ronin* = masterless samurai in medieval times (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- ryokan* = a type of Japanese traditional inn with tatami-matted rooms (*DAN* 2019)
- ryotei* = traditional high-class Japanese restaurant serving Japanese cuisine (*DCR* 2013)
- sake* = Japanese rice wine (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- samurai* = hereditary military nobility (*DAN* 2019)
- sashimi* = Japanese delicacy of fresh raw fish and soy sauce (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- seiza* = the formal traditional way of sitting in Japan (kneeled position) (*DCR* 2013)
- sen* = Japanese coin; 100 sen is the equivalent of 1 yen (*DAN* 2019)
- sensei* = teacher or master (*DCR* 2013)
- seppuku* = a form of ritual suicide of the samurai class (*DCR* 2013)
- shamisen* = three stringed traditional Japanese musical instrument (*DCR* 1997, 2013)
- shiatsu* = finger pressure, massage technique based on Chinese traditional medicine (*DCR* 2013)
- shinkansen* = bullet train, high-speed railway line in Japan (*DCR* 1997, 2013)
- shogun* = a title of the military dictators in Japan 1185-1868 (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- shogunal* = related to the shogun (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- shogunat* = shogunate (*DAN* 2019)
- sudoku* = logic-based number placement puzzle (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- sumo* = competitive wrestling (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- surimi* = a paste made from fish or meat (*DCR* 2013)
- sushi* = a Japanese dish of vinegared rice with seafood or vegetables (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)
- șintoism* = the Shinto religion (*DAN* 2019)
- șintoist* = Shinto believer (*DAN* 2019)

- taifun* = tropical cyclone (*DAN* 2019)  
*taiko* = Japanese percussion instrument, drum (*DAN* 2019)  
*tanka* = classical Japanese poetry (*DAN* 2019)  
*tatami* = a type of mat used as a flooring material for Japanese rooms (*DCR* 1997, 2013, 2019)  
*tempura* = Japanese dish, seafood meat, vegetables that have been deep-fried (*DCR* 2013)  
*Terrashima* = the whole world destroyed as Hiroshima was destroyed (*DCR* 2013)  
*tofu* = bean curd, food prepared by coagulating soy milk (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)  
*tokiot* = inhabitant of Tokyo (*DCR* 2013, *DAN* 2019)  
*tsuga* = Asiatic conifer (*DAN* 2019)  
*tsunami* = series of waves caused by the displacement of a large volume of water (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)  
*ukiyo* = the term for describing the urban lifestyle and culture in the Edo period (1600-1867) (*DAN* 2019)  
*umami* = one of the 5 basic tastes; savoury (*DCR* 2013)  
*yakiniku* = grilled meat, grilled meat cuisine (*DCR* 2013)  
*yakuza* = transnational organized crime syndicates originating in Japan (*DCR* 1997, 2013, *DAN* 2019)  
*yen* = the official currency of Japan (*DAN* 2019)  
*yuko* = arbitration system in the martial arts (*DCR* 1997, 2013)