STEREOTYPES AND FOREIGN WORDS:
THE TERM KAWAII IN FRENCH NATIONAL
NEWSPAPERS (1999-2009)

Kyoko Koma
Vytautas Magnus University, Centre for Asian Studies, Kaunas

Keywords: foreign word, stereotype, xenism, peregrinism, loan word, kawaii, French newspaper, discourse analysis.
Pagrindinės sąvokos: užsienietiškas žodis, stereotipas, ksenizmas, peregrinizmas, skolinys, kawaii, prancūzų laikraštis, diskurso analizė.

1. Problematics

It will be examined how the term kawaii, one of the key words from the Japanese popular culture used in foreign countries, adds a new semiotic value to the images of Japan in French media. Before the 1990s, the most popular xenisms (foreign words mentioned with reference to a linguistic code of origin and to foreign realities) of Japanese words in France were geisha, samouraï, Hiroshima, etc. These xenisms become peregrinisms, which “[reflect] foreign realities, but [their] meaning[s] [are] understood by the interlocutor.” They are used to represent (and often caricature) some Japanese events. In the 1990s, when the Japanese popular culture was imported to France and to other countries in the form of mangas, extravagant street fashion and video games, the term kawaii started appearing in the French media. This term is used not only as a xenism, with a French definition, but also as a peregrinism, without a French definition. Taking into consideration that newspapers influence public opinion, the analysis will focus
on three French national newspapers: *Le Figaro* (conservative), *Libération* (left), and *Le Monde* (centre-left), between 1999 and 2009. From a semidiscursive point of view, the evolution from a xenism to a peregrinism of the term *kawaii* will be analysed and the new semiotic value that this term added to the contemporary images of Japan will be determined, conditioned by the French social context.

2. The term *kawaii* in contemporary Japan

According to the sixth edition of *Kojien*, the dictionary of the Japanese language, the definition of the term *kawaii* is “pitiful, poor; must love, feel deep affection; small and beautiful.” Recently, the usage of *kawaii* is frequent in women’s magazines, and the signification of the term is developed according to Koga (2009) as follows:

1. Signification of *kawaii* varies depending on the magazine: from bourgeois style to French style, etc.
2. The term *kawaii* designates the esthetic which appreciates the immature or the childish.
3. The term *kawaii* describes the decorative taste, which is one of the two principal esthetics in Japan, the other being minimalism, which is its opposite.
4. *Kawaii* could be based on the miniature.
5. *Kawaii* is a value associated with girls, who are considered to be weak in a macho society. If the term were used to qualify any object without distinction, the well-defined hierarchies would be subverted.
6. *Kawaii* is symbolically constructed by the culture of Japanese mass consumption. The fashion *kawaii* could not exist if it were not consumed.

---

1 This paper also analyses the supplemental magazines regularly inserted in *Le Figaro*.
2 According to Simone Bonnafous and Patrick Charadeau, “semio” is “the sense construct by categories of forms of words, sequence of words and their arrangement which signify as they are, and are not only transparent traces of a certain content, as a certain sociology and content analysis consider “discursive,” these categories of form-sense are not one system of language, but one of usages, which regulates the combinations, the contextualisation and the intertextualisation according to conditions of production” (Les discours des médias entre sciences du langage et sciences de la communication, in *Le Français dans le Monde*, Paris, CLE INTERNATIONAL, July, 1996)
In this context, the signification of the term *kawaii* as it is actually used among Japanese girls has evolved.

### 3. The term *kawaii* in French newspapers, 1999-2009

In foreign countries, the term *kawaii* is considered to be as one of the key words to represent Japanese popular culture. How is it used in our corpus, the French national newspapers? What are their glosses? What does this term define? Does it participate in the construction of stereotyped images? These points will be discussed further on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Le Figaro</th>
<th>Le Monde</th>
<th>Libération</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Occurrence of the term *kawaii* in French newspapers.

In the corpus, the occurrences of the term *kawaii* are not very numerous. This term appeared in *Le Monde* in 1996 for the first time. It has been often used in *Libération* since 2002 and in *Le Figaro* since 2006.

The term *kawaii* appeared 4 times in *Le Monde*, 11 times in *Libération* and *Le Figaro*. It can be noted that *Le Figaro* used this word less and less, in opposition to *Le Monde*. 
Table 2. Articles where the term *kawaii* appeared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of publication</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Monde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/12/1999</td>
<td>Des figures de la culture « kawaii « imprégnées des valeurs japonaises (Face of the &quot;kawaii&quot; culture pervasive in the Japanese values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/06/1999</td>
<td>AIBO LE TOUTOU ELECTRONIQUE (Aibo, the electronic doggie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/10/2006</td>
<td>Murakami, un cas sur le marché de l’art (Murakami, a case of the art market)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/07/2008</td>
<td>Au Japon, l’aristocratique cité impériale de Nara (The aristocratic imperial city of Nara In Japan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libération</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/09/2002</td>
<td>Balade dans l’animation japonaise (Ballad in Japanese animation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/07/2002</td>
<td>Expo. La fondation Cartier accueille le nouvel âge d’or de la création japonaise. (Expo. The Cartier foundation receives the new golden year of Japanese creation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/10/2002</td>
<td>La capitale japonaise a accueilli deux manifestations de stylisme d’intérieur (The Japanese capital received two manifestations of interior design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/2003</td>
<td>Au Japon, Mickey mouse (Mickey Mouse In Japan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/08/2004</td>
<td>Été. La BD du jour Sacrés numéros. (Summer. Cartoon of the day Saint Numbers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/01/2005</td>
<td>Spécial BD (Special Cartoon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/01/2006</td>
<td>Spécial BD Angoulême. Vient de paraître Junko Mizuno. La Petite Sirène. (Special Cartoon Angouleme, has just been released. Junko Mizuno. The small siren)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/05/2006</td>
<td>3 000 fans de “japanimation” se sont retrouvés, ce week-end, dans le Val-de-Marne (3000 fans of &quot;Japanimation&quot; met this weekend in le Val-de Marne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/03/2007</td>
<td>Coureurs de Japon (Frequenters of Japan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/02/2008</td>
<td>Six graphistes explorent leurs peurs enfantines dans un film d’animation (Six graphics explored their childish horror in an animation film)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/06/2008</td>
<td>La musique est un jeu d’enfant festival (Music is a game of children festival)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Figaro*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/07/2002</td>
<td>Lacoste en gris silver (Lacoste in silver grey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/10/2002</td>
<td>Lieux, attitudes, le Paris des tendances In Out (Places, attitudes, Paris of tendencies IN OUT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/04/2006</td>
<td>C’est-à-dire “mignon“ en japonais, empruntée à l’exposition de Takashi Muramami (That is “mignon” in Japanese; loaned to the exposition of Takashi Murakami.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Le Figaro* includes its magazine *Figaro Scope* with which this newspaper is sold regularly.
4. The notions of a loan word, a xenism and a peregrinism

According to *Dictionnaire de linguistique* (Dictionary of Linguistics),

A xenism is a lexical unit made up of a word in a foreign language which designates a reality peculiar to the culture of a locutor of this language. A xenism is the first stage of a loan word. (...) The distinctions between a xenism, a peregrinism, and a loan word allow us to take into account the usage of certain words: a xenism is a foreign word mentioned with reference to a linguistic code of origin and to foreign realities. A peregrinism reflects foreign realities, but its meaning is understood by the interlocutor.

Using the term *kawaii* as a xenism signifies that the gloss of this term will be a translation or an explication. For the interlocutor, this term is not familiar yet; he/she has not acquired common knowledge, concerning this subject yet. In contrast, the usage of the term *kawaii* as a peregrinism signifies that it needs no gloss: the interlocutor knows it as a foreign word without a gloss and can interpret it by his/her own common knowledge. Finally, using this term as a loan word signifies that it has already penetrated into this society, which no longer considers it as belonging to a foreign culture.

To understand the relations between a foreign word and a stereotype

---

5 The author also refers to the article by Sarah Leroy, “Glasnost et perestroïka—Les peregrinations de deux russismes dans la presse française” (in *Mots* n° 82, directed by Agnès Steuckardt and Jean-Paul Honoré), which provided me a significant reflection.

or fixed idea, constructing the stereotypical images, it is necessary to define the notions of a stereotype and fixed ideas.

A stereotype is “a collective simplified and fixed representation or image of the beings or the things that we inherited from our culture.”7 Ruth Amossy (1991) has noted that a stereotype is an abstract scheme constructed by the reader from various “indirect, scattered or incomplete” data (Amossy 1991: 33). The stereotypes possess a repetitive character when we speak about a certain category generally (for example, the Japanese, the women, the rich) and about their sub-categories (for example, the fashion of Japanese women, Japanese politics, Japanese art, etc.). A stereotype is actualised through a *cliché* on the one hand, which is a “group of the words that it’s possible to take materially of text” (Amossy 1991: 33), and the stereotypeme on the other hand, which comprises “specific features directly related to the category of stereotype” (Rambon 2001: 196). The fixed idea is related “to the opinion and the way of assertion” (Amossy et al. 2000: 24) and registered as “judgments, beliefs and ways of doing or saying in the formulation that is presented as a certified report of obviousness and a categorical affirmation (cf. a watch—a watch is good only if it comes from Genève)” (ibid. or cf. Paris is the center of the fashion world). The fixed ideas relate “the mechanism of acceptance of the authority” (op. cit.: 47) and the “call to individual judgment” (op. cit.: 24).

The fact that the term *kawaii* is used as a xenism, that is, with a gloss, permits the speaker to construct his ethos, his self-image as a specialist in the current Japanese culture on the one hand and to show his individual and subjective judgment on the word *kawaii* through the gloss on the other hand. As Agnès Steuckardt and Jean-Paul Honoré indicated, the gloss, or “translation, which is presented as pure explanation, does in reality give only one biased idea of [the] sense of the word in the loaned language.”8 That is, the gloss would permit one to construct a fixed idea and constitute a “call to individual judgment.” What’s more, the xenism also functions as a means of “[setting] off [a] change of scenery”9 and as an index of local color or of “effect of reality.”10

---

8 Steuckardt, A. et Honoré, J-P, Présentation in *Mots* n° 82, p. 3.
In contrast, using the term *kawaii* as a peregrinism signifies that it has already penetrated into the common knowledge of the members of the society that use this term. When such a peregrinism qualifies objects with which it is not logically associated (for example, the peregrinism *Hiroshima* is used in media to qualify Japanese fashion, which is not related to the atomic bomb at all), words could constitute “indirect, scattered or incomplete” data, that is, a stereotypeme, from which an abstract and reductive schema, the stereotype, is constructed, which the reader could then interpret.

Finally, using the term *kawaii* as a loan word signifies that this term does not construct images of Japan any more.

5. The term *kawaii* as a xenism

In the following sections, the term *kawaii* will be analysed as a xenism in this corpus.

Gloss in apposition and implicit judgment

The term *kawaii* qualifies objects related to the Japanese culture with a gloss in apposition which is a definition or a literal translation. The gloss, which is the most commonly used for this term, is *mignon* (*cute, sweet or kind* in English).

(1) An embodiment of the Kawaii (mignon) culture and a cure for loneliness, dogs today number 13 million in Japan. (*Le Figaro Magazine*, 24 March 2007).

(2) The crowd gave a cheer “kawaii” (which is “mignon”), the price, the weight, the autonomy of the batteries, disposition of the first [dog] robot for public is inquired (*Le Monde*, 9 June 1999).

(3) This Japanese (Takashi Murakami), who conquers contemporary art with his pop art mixed Nippon naivety, presents a panorama of the Japanese young creation to Paris, a happy hotchpotch where the taste called kawaii ("mignon" in Japanese) predominates (*Libération*, 4 July 2002).

(4) In this manifestation-laboratory, all is mixed. Kitsch, zen, tradition, internationalism, hyper technology, and the style “kawaii” (“mignon”) in Japanese (*Libération*, 28 October 2002).

Here each object, that the term *kawaii* qualifies, is related to Japan, such as dogs in Japan (1), Japanese dog robots (2) and the popular art of Takashi
That is, the term qualifies the adorable domestic animals or popular culture. However, even referring to a photograph, it is not possible to identify what is designated as *kawaii* in extract (4). Used in this way, *kawaii* designates things which are not related to small animals or popular culture.

From these examples, it appears that such gloss is a literal translation, but this is not always the case:

(5) In spite of the coldness and rain, Roppongi Hills, the chic Tokyo district, had the atmosphere of a big night party. Two film stars, Kirsten Dunst and Tobey Maguire, were welcomed by “kawaii” (trop mignon (very cute) in Japanese) by hundreds of fans (*Le Figaro, Le Figaro Économie*, 17 April 2007).

(6) A cosplayer must know the characters that he interprets (their attitudes, their gestures) well, so he must have read [the mangas] “biography” (...) he must be able to integrate some Japanese terms into his vocabulary. Examples: gomen which signifies “pardon,” kawaii which signifies “mignon, adorable” (cute, adorable in English) [...] (*Le Figaro*, 28 February 2007).

(7) [...] The illustrator working in Japan knows how to mix kowai and kawaii, horror and mièvrerie (feebleness in English).

In extract (5), *kawaii* and its gloss describe the reaction of Japanese fans of one foreign actress visiting Japan. In extract (6), *kawaii* is introduced as a Japanese word, denoting the *cosplay* of manga characters. In extract (7), it is used as one of the characteristics of Japanese animation, of which the other is horror. Concerning the gloss, the translation *mignon* is accompanied by the adverb, expressing the excessive quantities *trop* (*too much* in English) or *très* (*very* in English), as the familiar language in extract (6) or by the adjective *adorable* in extract (7). *Kawaii* is also translated as *mièvrerie* (*feebleness* in English), a substantive which has a negative shade of meaning, instead of the translation *mignon*. The first 2 glosses use the words, which have positive connotations, but the last one uses the word with negative connotations. Therefore, it can be concluded from these extracts that the gloss is not a literal translation, but a mark of the subjective judgment of the locutor.

**Explicit comments in the form of a definition**

Sometimes not only the gloss is attached in apposition to the term *kawaii*, but also a certain subjective explanation/interpretation of the locutor; for example:

(8) Violence is certainly one of the characteristics of Japanese cartoon and video games world. (...) The Pokemon belongs to another style: the cult
of kawaii, which is “mignon” (cute in English). The word which signifies the sentiment of affection aroused by a little sickly child or a small animal became “cute” in the Anglo-American culture, the password of the imaginary world of the Nippon youth (Le Monde, 17 December 1999).

The gloss cites the translation of the term *mignon* first. The further explanation is followed: “the sentiment of affection aroused by a little sickly child or a small animal” and “the password of the imaginary world of the Nippon youth.” The objects that this term qualifies delimit this world: all the world of the video games manga, the characters of Japanese cartoons are defined as children or small animals.

(9) His [Takashi Murakami]’s work borrows especially from the esthetics of Manga and the culture of kawaii (in other words, “mignon” (cute in English)). He plays on two tensions, wicked and reassuring. Following the example of Walt Disney, he invents his own characters, such as Mr. Dob, a kind of Mickey, sometimes ferocious and ironic, sometimes sickly (Le Monde, 23 October 2006, p. 22).

In this extract, with the gloss “mignon’ (cute in English)”, the culture of *kawaii* is presented as one of the sources of creative works by the Japanese artist Takashi Murakami. The locutor shows his subjective judgment on *kawaii* implicitly through the enthymeme described as follows:

I. His work borrows especially from the esthetics of Manga and the culture of kawaii (in other words, that which is “mignon” (cute in English)).

II. He plays on two tensions, wicked and reassuring. Following the example of Walt Disney, he invents his own characters, such as Mr. Dob, a kind of Mickey, sometimes ferocious and ironic, sometimes sickly.

III. In other words, Murakami’s artistic work, adapting the culture of kawaii, can be wicked and reassuring, and his characters are sometimes ferocious and ironic, sometimes sickly.

IV. The culture of kawaii could be characterised by the perversion on the one hand, and feebleness on the other.

In this extract, the premise of a syllogism expressed in I and II is explicit, while III and IV are deductions that form a kind of conclusion. However, as it is expressed that “His [Takashi Murakami]’s work borrows especially from the esthetics of Manga and the culture of kawaii”, it is not certain whether these enumerated characteristics are peculiar to the culture of *kawaii*. This ambiguity could add a new signification to the term *kawaii*.

Some evidence of this notion may be found in the following extracts:

(10) Kawaii. The expression “kawaii,” which signifies mignon in Japanese and is borrowed from the exposition of Takashi Murakami at the Cartier Foundation,
KYOKO KOMA

has become the gimmick of modeux who also appreciate all the acid esthetic and false ingenue of manga (Le Figaro, no. 18104, Le Figaroscope, 23 October 2002).

In this extract, the term *kawaii* is explained by the means of the signification "‘mignon’ (cute in English)” and by its origin in the exposition of Takashi Murakami. The signification “the acid esthetic and false ingenue of manga,” which is far from the sense of *kawaii* pervasive in Japan, is added to the adjective *kawaii*.

(11) He [Matsumoto] mixes the cute pervert of *kawaii* (le mignon pervers du *kawaii*) with his habitual ruffled character, the costumes of an eclectic folklore and also the architecture (Libération, 20 August 2004).

(12) It was Takashi Murakami that the gallery owner Emmanuel Perrotin discovered in France. Very quickly this artist, coming from manga art, created a group titled Kaikai Kiki. The artists have recourse to the long Japanese tradition related to the contemporary phantasmagoria influenced by video games, science fiction or the observation of Japanese society in common. It is also called as the *Kawaii* movement (Le Figaro, Le Figaroscope, 21 May 2008).

*Kawaii* defines a Japanese manga, but signifies “*mignon-pervers*” (cute pervert), as in extracts (9) and (10). In extract (11), this term is used to designate the activity of a popular artist like Takashi Murakami. Here the signification of this term is far from the meaning that *kawaii* is used in Japan.

It could be said that the xenism *kawaii* elaborates two fixed ideas about the Japanese contemporary popular culture. On the one hand, it is described pejoratively in terms of cuteness, adorableness and feebleness and, on the other hand, it is described in terms of perversity, irony and fierceness.

6. The term *kawaii* as a peregrinism

The term *kawaii* used as a peregrinism could not be found in *Le Monde*, but it appeared in June, in 2008 in *Le Figaro* and in 2004 in *Libération*.

(13) (…) two 25-year-old girls, dressed in noir in Victorian fashion, screwed on platform shoes of at least ten centimeters in height, who proclaim everywhere that they love *Dragon Ball Z* (…), are simply “trop (too much) *kawaii*” (Libération, 29 May 2006).

The word *kawaii* is used without a gloss here to designate French women costumed as Japanese animation characters or as “gothic Lolitas.”
The locutor thus presupposed that the interlocutors knew the meaning of the term *kawaii* in the context of Japanese youth culture, therefore, it could be said that this foreign word has already penetrated into the culture of interlocutors.

(14) Tsumori Chisato (...) is recognised as the queen of the kawaii motifs (*Le Figaro*, 30 June 2008).

With neither inverted commas nor gloss, the term *kawaii* is used not to designate the features of popular culture, such as manga or the gothic Lolita, but the features of the creations by a Japanese fashion designer. The locutor presupposes that the interlocutor knows what *kawaii* is. Furthermore, this article does not contain any photography of Tsumori Chisato’s clothing. However, according to the site presenting her 2008 collection, the motifs, that Chisato uses, are not related to the Japanese popular culture. It is possible that this term was used to qualify the Japanese objects reductively, as products of esthetics peculiar to Japan; this usage is closer to the signification of *kawaii* as it is circulated in Japan.

7. Conclusion

As it has been analysed, on the one hand, the term *kawaii* is used to designate elements of the Japanese popular culture (video game characters, manga, gothic Lolitas) described as *mignon* (cute) and, on the other hand, to designate the characteristics of Takashi Murakami’s artwork considered to be *mièvrerie/mignon pervers* (feebleness/cute pervert). These aspects expressed in France do not correspond to the uses of *kawaii* in Japan that Koga presented.

Could the term *kawaii* become a loan word? It can be seen from the next extract:

(19) (...) tonight in the Divan of the world, the melancholic folk of Michael Wookey surrounded by his Toy Cabaret, the recreational music of KAWAII, the sets of Emmanuel Rebus improvisation with tumbling toy and music club (*Libération*, no. 8429, Culture, 12 June 2008, p. 12).

In this extract, the term *kawaii* designates the name of a French music group, and Japan is not mentioned in this context. The CD jacket of this group presents a *mignon* stuffed animal, but it not possible to note any Japanese features. If this *kawaii* represents a kind of preciosity, feebleness and
childishness without any reference to the Japanese features, it can be presumed that this term is being used as a loan word.

What is more, on the francophone site of “Bing”, it is possible to find pages where the term *kawaii* appears. It is also remarked that this term could enter the process of derivation and composition\(^{11}\) as *comme kawaiette, kawaiilicious* and *kawaiieuses.*\(^{12}\) On the Internet auction site “E-bay,” the word *kawaii* can also be found, but it designates clothes which do not always evoke the features of *kawaii* that were found in this corpus. This means that in some websites, the term *kawaii* is already being used as a loan word. This usage is close to that of Japan. Thus on the one hand, we have the usage prescribed by the national newspapers, a medium which influences public opinion, and on the other, the usage promulgated by the Internet, where net surfers collectively construct the meaning with others that share a common interest. The future will show if the word *kawaii* will be included in a French dictionary or, on the contrary, will disappear from the French usage.

**Bibliography**


**Abstract**

This paper analyses the use of the term *kawaii* as foreign word. The new aspects that it adds to the images of Japan will be analysed in three representative national French newspapers: *Le Figaro, Libération* and *Le Monde* published from 1999 to 2009.

*Kawaii* is considered to be a key word that represents the Japanese popular culture. This term

---

started to appear in French media in the 1990s, when France and other foreign countries began to import Japanese popular culture.

Specifically, *kawaii* is a foreign word for the French media. Foreign words are used in three stages: as xenisms, as peregrinisms and as loan words. According to *Dictionnaire de Linguistique* (*Dictionary of Linguistics*), a xenism is a “foreign word mentioned with reference to a linguistic code of origin and to foreign realities.” A peregrinism “reflects encore foreign realities, but its meaning is understood by the interlocutor” without reference. A loan word is “versed to French vocabulary, and could for example enter in some process of derivation and of composition.”

In this corpus, the term *kawaii* is used not only as a xenism mentioned with reference, but also as a peregrinism, without reference. It is even used as a loan word to designate a non-Japanese object.

The further purpose of the paper is to progress towards the understanding how Japanese words, as foreign words that are used in French newspapers, participate in constructing the stereotypical image of Japan in the French society. This issue will be analysed from a semidiscursive point of view, determining whether the term *kawaii* is used as a stereotype. It will be discussed whether it contributes, expectedly or not, to the explanation of Japanese events reductively and as caricatures or not.

---

**Terminas kawaii nacionaliniuose Prancūzijos laikraščiuose 1999-2009**

**Santrauka**


*Kawaii* laikomas esminiu populiariąja japonų kultūrą išreiškiančiu žodžiu. Jis pradėtas vartoti prancūzų žiniasklaidoje paskutinėjame praeito amžiaus dešimtmečyje, kai Prancūzija bei kitos šalys pradėjo sekti populiarią japonų kultūrą.

Žodis *kawaii* iš tiesų yra svetimas prancūzų žiniasklaidoje. Užsienietiški žodžiai vartojami trimis lygiais: kaip ksenizmai (xenism), kaip peregrinizmai ir kaip skoliniai. Pagal *Dictionnaire de Linguistique* (*Lingvistikos žodynas*), ksenizmas „užsienietiškas žodis, vartojamas apibūdinant lingvistinį kilmęs kodą bei užsienietiškas realijas.“ Peregrinizmas „atspindi pasikartojančias užsienietiškas realijas, bet jų reikšmę suvokia iš konteksto be nuorodų. Skoliny – „įtrauktas į prancūzų kalbos žodyną ir gali būti naudojamas žodžių darybos procese.“

Analizuojamuose tekstuose terminas *kawaii* vartojamas ne tik kaip ksenizmas, vartojamas su apibūdinimu, bet ir kaip neapibūdinta svetimybė. Jis netgi vartojamas kaip skolinys, kalbant ne apie japonišką objektą.

Toliau šiame darbe stengiamasi pažvelgti į tai, kaip prancūzų laikraščiuose vartojami japonų kalbos žodžiai dalvauja kuriant stereotipinį japonų įvaizdį Prancūzijos visuomenėje. Šis klausimas analizuojamas per semidiskursyvią prizmą, stengiantis apibrėžti, ar terminas *kawaii* vartojamas kaip stereotipas. Apvertiama, ar šis terminas prisideda – sąmoningai ar ne – prie japoniškų subtilybių supaprastinimo.