Wasei-eigo in Airport Linguistic Landscape: Functions and Meaning Shift Patterns in a Major International Airport in Japan

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Abstract

The phenomenon of *wasei-eigo* is a form of adaptation of English vocabulary into Japanese that has evolved in response to the social and cultural needs of Japanese society. Its use is commonly found in the linguistic landscape of public spaces, including international airports, which serve as multilingual communication spaces. This study aims to identify the use of *wasei-eigo* in the linguistic landscape at major international airports in Japan and to analyse the functions and phenomena of meaning shifts found in the data. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method using documentation techniques to examine various signage, information boards, service guides, and visual media featuring *wasei-eigo* expressions. Data were collected during an internship from September 2025 to May 2026. They analysed using the Linguistic Landscape theory by Landry and Bourhis (1997), Nambu's (2025) concept of the Japanese linguistic landscape, and Ullmann's (1972) theory of semantic change.

The findings indicate that *wasei-eigo* is widely used throughout the airport and primarily serves an informational function. Most of the data retained meanings similar to their original English counterparts and did not undergo semantic change. These findings suggest that the use of *wasei-eigo* in a major international airport setting prioritises informational clarity and effective communication for users with diverse linguistic backgrounds. Nevertheless, some terms exhibited semantic changes, particularly narrowing and broadening, as adaptations to the Japanese sociocultural context. Thus, the use of *wasei-eigo* not only reflects the influence of English on Japanese public spaces but also demonstrates efforts to enhance the comprehensibility of information and reduce potential ambiguity in international communication

Keywords: *international communication; linguistic landscape; major international airport; meaning shift; wasei-eigo*

INTRODUCTION

Language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a representation of social relationships and cultural identity. As globalisation and technology develop, language continues to evolve, including through the incorporation of foreign loanwords (Rahayu, 2023). According to Stanlaw (2010), approximately 5%–10% of everyday Japanese vocabulary consists of *gairaigo* (loanwords), with around 94.1% originating from English. Kageyama and Kishimoto (2016, cited in Nambu, 2025) classify Japanese vocabulary into *wago*, *kango*, *gairaigo*, and *konseigo*. *Gairaigo* refers to foreign loanwords, particularly from Western languages, most of which originate from English (Hosokawa, 2023). Although *gairaigo* generally retain meanings close to their source languages, some undergo changes in form or meaning, resulting in expressions known as *wasei-eigo*.

Wasei-eigo refers to lexical expressions created in Japan from English elements whose meanings differ from standard English. Unlike *gairaigo*, which are directly borrowed, *wasei-eigo* are formed through the adaptation and recombination of English lexical elements by Japanese speakers (Shibasaki et al., 2007). Consequently, some expressions either do not exist in English or have meanings different from their English counterparts, reflecting linguistic adaptation and lexical creativity. Sandra et al. (2024) further describe *wasei-eigo* as a form of *gairaigo* that has undergone semantic change within the Japanese context.

Such expressions can be found in public spaces and the linguistic landscape, including information boards, which serve both informational and symbolic functions (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). Nambu (2025) further notes that *wasei-eigo* in the Japanese linguistic landscape may contribute to an image of modernity, cosmopolitanism, and globalisation. However, its use in international settings such as airports may cause misunderstanding because its meanings do not always correspond to the original English expressions. Airports are multilingual environments involving Japanese staff, foreign employees, and international passengers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, understanding *wasei-eigo* is important for effective communication and minimising potential misunderstandings in passenger services.

Semantic shifts can be classified into broadening, narrowing, amelioration, and pejoration (Ullmann, 1972). In airport linguistic landscapes, broadening and narrowing are particularly relevant because they may reflect adaptations to local communicative needs, while airport language primarily aims to convey information clearly and efficiently. As global mobility and intercultural communication increase, semantic change continues to produce lexical forms whose meanings may differ from those of their source words (Nedashkivska et al., 2025).

Although Saputra and Fanani (2025) have examined language use at Japanese airports, their study remains primarily descriptive and focuses on staff comprehension. Other studies of semantic change have focused on digital media (Nedashkivska et al., 2025) and historical cross-linguistic comparisons (Asri et al., 2024). Thus, limited research has examined *wasei-eigo* within the linguistic landscape of multilingual airport environments while considering its semantic shifts. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the characteristics of *wasei-eigo* used in Japanese international airports, particularly expressions that undergo meaning shifts, and to examine their implications for international communication.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to examine *wasei-eigo* in the

linguistic landscape of a Japanese international airport, focusing on an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in its natural context (Moleong, 2014).

The research was conducted during an internship at a major international airport in Japan, with data collected from September 2025 to May 2026 across international and domestic terminals, particularly in passenger service areas and public facilities. The data consisted of signage, information boards, service instructions, facility names, and other visual media containing *wasei-eigo*. Data were collected through documentation by photographing and recording relevant terms encountered during work activities.

The collected terms were classified into *gairaigo* and *wasei-eigo*. A term was categorised as *wasei-eigo* when it originated from English but exhibited changes in form, usage, or meaning specific to the Japanese context and differed from standard English usage. The meanings were verified using the Weblio and Merriam-Webster dictionaries. Data analysis applied the Linguistic Landscape theory of Landry and Bourhis (1997) and Nambu's concept of the Japanese Linguistic Landscape. Semantic shifts were analysed using Ullmann's (1972) theory, particularly narrowing and broadening, which were the main shift types identified in the data. The analysis involved data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was supported through theoretical and source triangulation by comparing field data with Linguistic Landscape and semantic change theories and dictionary references.

This study has two limitations: (1) some signage was documented repeatedly, meaning that not all data were recorded in full; and (2) signage within the airport environment is dynamic and may change in line with developments in facilities, operational requirements, or specific periods, such as the holiday season or winter, giving rise to temporary terms and information. This study should therefore be regarded as a preliminary investigation providing a foundation for future research with a broader dataset and wider research scope.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Data Overview

This study identifies various forms of *wasei-eigo* found in the linguistic landscape of a Japanese international airport, specifically in the domestic and international departure areas, connecting corridors, and other public areas. The data were obtained from various forms of public signage located throughout the airport environment, such as facility information boards, directional signs, commercial media, and passenger service signs found in departure and arrival areas, as well as general public spaces.

Table 1. Distribution of *Wasei-eigo* Data by Data Collection Area

No.	Data Collection Area	Terminal Location	Number of Data	Percentage
1.	Domestic Area	Terminal 1 and Terminal 2	30	30.9%
2.	International Area	Terminal 1, 2, and 3	34	35.1%
3.	Connecting Corridor	Terminal 2 and Terminal 3	5	5.2%
4.	Public Area	Terminal 1, 2, and 3	28	28.9%
	Total		**97 Data**	**100%**

Based on Table 1, the *wasei-eigo* data were classified according to four collection areas: domestic, international, connecting corridor, and public areas. The classification was based on the function of each space and the activities of its users. The domestic area includes facilities and signage for domestic flights, the international area covers international departure and arrival facilities, the connecting corridor serves as a transitional space between facilities, and the public area consists of spaces accessible to general airport users. The international area contained the highest number of data, with 34 instances (35.1%), followed by the domestic area with 30 (30.9%), the public area with 28 (28.9%), and the connecting corridor with 5 (5.2%). This distribution indicates that *wasei-eigo* was most frequently observed in areas directly associated with international activities and passenger mobility. To avoid data redundancy, identical signs with the same form, function, and meaning were counted only once even when found in multiple locations. However, the same sign was recorded separately when it occurred in a different functional context or area.

Overall, 97 instances of *wasei-eigo* were identified and analysed based on two aspects: their linguistic landscape functions and patterns of meaning shift. This classification provided the basis for examining the characteristics and semantic changes of *wasei-eigo* within the airport environment.

2. The Role of *Wasei-eigo* in the Linguistic Landscape

According to Landry & Bourhis (1997), the functions of language in the linguistic landscape can be divided into two main categories: the informational function and the symbolic function. The informational function relates to the use of language as a means of conveying information, while the symbolic function relates to the representation of identity, social image, and specific symbolic values in the public sphere.

In the Japanese context, Nambu (2025) explains that the use of foreign languages in the linguistic landscape is not always intended for direct communication, but is also used to create an impression of modernity, internationalism, and globalisation. This is evident in the use of *wasei-eigo* at Japanese international airports, which serves not only to convey information to passengers but also to represent the international image of Japanese airports.

Table 2. Classification of *Wasei-eigo* Functions in the Linguistic Landscape

No.	LL Category (Linguistic Landscape)	Number of Data	Percentage	Data Examples
1.	Informational Function	76 data	78.4%	(1) キャッシュコーナー *kyasshu kōnā* ATM (2) ベビールーム *Bebīrūmu* Nursing Room (3) ミーティングサービス *Mītingu Sābisu* Meet-and-Greet Service
2.	Symbolic Function	14 data	14.4%	(4) キッズパーク *kizzu pāku* Children's Play Area
3.	Dual Function	7 data	7.2%	(5) 展望デッキ *Tenbō dekki* Observation Deck (6) リムジンバス *Rimujin basu* Airport Shuttle Bus
	Total	**97 data**	**100%**	

According to Table 2, the informational function was the most dominant category in the use of *wasei-eigo* at Japanese international airports, accounting for 76 instances (78.4%). This dominance indicates that the use of *wasei-eigo* in airport environments is primarily driven by the need to convey public information, such as directional signs, facilities, and passenger services.

The symbolic function was found in smaller numbers, namely 14 data points (14.4%). This function generally appears on commercial signage or premium facilities aimed at building a modern and international image. In addition to these two categories, some data points were found to have a dual function, performing both informational and symbolic functions simultaneously this dual function was identified in 7 instances (7.2%). In addition to conveying information to users, such signage also contributes to fostering a modern, professional, and international image within the airport environment. These findings demonstrate that the use of *wasei-eigo* in the airport's linguistic landscape relates not only to practical communication but also to the formation of visual identity and global image within Japanese public spaces.

2.1 Informational Function

The informational function refers to the use of language as a means of conveying information to help users of public spaces understand their surroundings. In the context of airports, this function is particularly important as it relates directly to navigation, services, and instructions.

Based on the analysed data, 76 instances (78.4%) of *wasei-eigo* serve an informational function. *Wasei-eigo* in this category is generally used on signage relating to facilities and directional guidance, such as the following:

(1) キャッシュコーナー
kyasshu kōnā
ATM



Figure 2.1.1. ATM signage, Domestic Area, Terminal 2, First Floor.

Analysis:

Based on Data (1) above, a "cash corner" (*kyasshu kōnā*) is found in Terminal 2 of a major international airport in Japan. According to the lexical definition listed in the Weblio Japanese dictionary, the term *kyasshu kōnā* refers to an automatic teller machine (ATM) or an area providing ATM services. Its constituent English elements, "cash" and "corner", literally mean "money" and "a specific corner or part of a place". The difference between the lexical meanings of these constituent elements and the actual meaning used in Japanese indicates a meaning shift, whereby the term is no longer understood based on its literal meaning but rather as a banking transaction service facility (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-a; Weblio, n.d.-c)

According to Landry & Bourhis (1997), this signage forms part of the linguistic landscape and serves an informational function, as it is used to convey public information regarding the availability of a facility at the airport. This sign helps users locate the ATM

service and carry out financial transactions more easily without requiring further interpretation. The use of the term キャッシュコーナー therefore places greater emphasis on conveying information than on any symbolic function.

In line with Nambu's (2025) perspective, the use of English-based vocabulary in Japanese public spaces aims to improve access to information for a wide range of users. In the context of international airports, the use of the term "cash corner" illustrates how *wasei-eigo* is utilised as a practical means of communication to indicate the availability of financial services.

(2) ベビールーム

Bebīrūmu
Nursing Room



Figure 2.1.2. Signage displaying information on the use of the nursing room, International Area, Terminal 1, Fourth Floor.

Analysis:

The data in Figure 2.1.2 show the use of ベビールーム (*bebīrūmu*) in Terminal 1 of a major international airport in Japan. Lexically, the term is a *wasei-eigo* formed from the English elements "baby" and "room." Although "baby room" is not listed as a fixed lexical unit in the Merriam-Webster English dictionary, its literal meaning can be understood as a room related to babies. In Japanese, however, ベビールーム has undergone semantic specialisation and refers specifically to facilities for babies and parents, including breastfeeding booths, nappy-changing stations, washbasins, and hot water facilities (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-b, n.d.-e; Weblio, n.d.-b, n.d.-c). This indicates that the term has acquired a more specific meaning in the Japanese context.

According to Landry and Bourhis (1997), the signage serves an informational function by indicating the location and purpose of the facility, allowing passengers to identify the services they need quickly and clearly. From Nambu's (2025) perspective, the use of English-based vocabulary in Japanese public spaces can also enhance access to information for diverse users. In an international airport, ベビールーム therefore functions primarily as a practical communication tool, informing passengers travelling with infants about the availability of specialised facilities and supporting their mobility within the airport.

However, the example also demonstrates that *wasei-eigo* used for informational purposes may not always facilitate international communication effectively. When its meaning differs from the original English expression, it may create ambiguity for non-Japanese speakers, as illustrated by the following example.

(3) ミーティングサービス

Mītingu Sābisu
Meet-and-Greet Service



Figure 2.1.3. Central area of the airport between the South Wing and East Wing, Terminal 1, First Floor.

Analysis:

Based on Data (3), ミーティングサービス (*Mītingu Sābisu*) refers to a passenger pick-up and escort service, whereas the English word "meeting" generally refers to a gathering or conference. The term combines the English elements "meeting" and "service" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-h, n.d.-n), which can literally be understood as a service related to meetings. However, Japan Land Service (n.d.) uses ミーティングサービス to refer to a customer reception service at locations such as airports, stations, and hotels, including welcoming and accompanying customers from a designated meeting point. Thus, its Japanese meaning refers to passenger reception and assistance rather than a formal meeting.

Based on Ullmann's (1972) theory, this difference represents a **meaning shift**, as the term has been adapted to the operational context of passenger services in Japan. From a linguistic landscape perspective, the signage serves an **informational function** by indicating the availability of passenger services (Landry & Bourhis, 1997), while Nambu (2025) highlights how *wasei-eigo* reflects the adaptation of foreign-language elements to local social and operational contexts.

However, this semantic adaptation may create ambiguity for international users. English speakers may interpret "meeting service" as a service related to meetings or conferences, whereas in Japanese airports it refers to passenger pick-up and escort services. Therefore, the shift in meaning may potentially reduce the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication in the international airport environment.

2.2 Symbolic Function

In addition to the informational function, *wasei-eigo* also serves a symbolic function within the linguistic landscape. This function relates to the use of language as a representation of identity, ideology, and social image. Within the research data, a total of 14 instances (14.4%) of *wasei-eigo* were used in symbolic contexts, particularly on commercial signage and in branding. The use of English or pseudo-English in these contexts is intended not merely to convey information but also to create a modern, international, and global impression, as in the following instance:

(4) キッズパーク
kizzu pāku
Children's Play Area



Figure 2.2.1. Domestic Departures Area, Terminal 1, Second Floor.

Analysis:

ased on Figure 2.2.1, キッズパーク (*kizzu pāku*) was found in a children's play area at a major international airport in Japan. The term is a *wasei-eigo* formed from the English elements "kids" and "park." According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.-d), "park" refers to an area equipped for recreational activities, while the combination can be understood as a recreational area for children. In Japanese, however, キッズパーク generally refers to children's play facilities located within public spaces such as airports, shopping centres, and stations, giving the term a more specific meaning.

Based on Ullmann's (1972) theory of semantic change, キッズパーク is categorised as narrowing, as its meaning has become specialised to refer to a relatively small, often indoor children's facility integrated into modern public spaces. From a linguistic landscape perspective, the signage serves an informational function by identifying the location of the children's facility, while also carrying symbolic meaning. Landry and Bourhis (1997) highlight the informational and symbolic functions of linguistic landscape, while Nambu (2025) notes that *wasei-eigo* can contribute to a global and modern image in Japanese public spaces.

Thus, キッズパーク can be understood as serving both informational and symbolic purposes: it identifies a facility while simultaneously presenting the airport as modern, family-friendly, and welcoming to international users.

2.3 Dual Function

A dual function is a function of the linguistic landscape that can be categorised as both informational and symbolic, as in the following instances:

(5) 展望デッキ
Tenbō dekki
Observation Deck



Figure 2.3.1. Corridor 1, South and North Wings, Terminal 1, Fifth Floor.

Analysis:

Based on Figure 2.3.1, 展望デッキ (*tenbō dekki*) refers to an airport observation facility where visitors and passengers can view aircraft activity on the apron and runway. The term combines 展望 (*tenbō*), meaning "observation" or "view," and デッキ (*dekki*), derived from the English "deck," which refers to a platform or flat area used for specific activities

(Weblio, n.d.-d; Merriam-Webster, n.d.-d). In the airport context, the signage provides information about the location of the observation facility.

According to Landry and Bourhis (1997), linguistic landscape can serve both informational and symbolic functions. In this case, 展望デッキ not only directs visitors to the observation facility but also contributes to the airport's image as a modern public space offering recreational and tourist experiences. Similarly, Nambu (2025) notes that foreign-language elements in Japan's linguistic landscape may carry symbolic and aesthetic value beyond communication. Therefore, 展望デッキ can be categorised as having a dual function, combining an informational function as a signpost with a symbolic function that presents the airport as a modern, attractive, and internationally oriented destination.

(6) リムジンバス

Rimujin basu
Airport Shuttle Bus

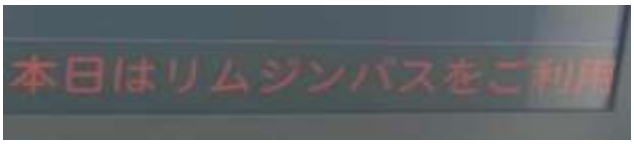


Figure 2.3.2. Airport bus stop No. 31 outside Terminal 2.

Analysis:

Based on Figure 2.3.2, リムジンバス (*rimujin basu*) derives from the English words "limousine" and "bus". According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.-g), a limousine refers to a luxury private vehicle generally used for exclusive transport services. In Japanese, however, リムジンバス is used to refer to a bus service connecting the airport with various destinations outside the airport Weblio (n.d.-j). This term therefore indicates a broadening of meaning, as its reference is no longer limited to private luxury vehicles but also encompasses public transport in the form of airport buses.

In the context of Japanese international airports, signage for "limousine buses" serves to provide information regarding the location of, and access to, airport transport services. According to the linguistic landscape theory proposed by Landry & Bourhis (1997), linguistic signs in public spaces serve not only an informational function but also a symbolic one; the use of the term "limousine" does not merely refer to a mode of transport but also creates an impression of a comfortable, professional service that meets international standards. In line with Nambu's (2025) perspective, the use of foreign-language elements in Japan's linguistic landscape often serves to create a modern and international impression in public spaces.

The signage for "Limousine Bus" can therefore be categorised as having a dual function, simultaneously fulfilling an informational function as a signpost for transport services and a symbolic function as a representation of the airport's modern and internationally oriented image.

3. Meaning Shift Analysis

Analysis of the data shows that *wasei-eigo* at Japan's international airports undergo various types of meaning shift. These shifts are classified according to Ullmann's (1972) theory of meaning shift, which divides changes in meaning into several categories, including narrowing, broadening, and no shift (meaning unchanged). These shifts indicate that *wasei-eigo* does not

always retain the original meaning of the English term but rather undergoes adaptation in accordance with the cultural context and local needs in Japan.

Table 3. Classification of *Wasei-eigo* According to Meaning Shift

No.	Classification	Number of Data	Percentage	Representative Data
1.	Narrowing (restriction of meaning)	25 data	25.77%	(7) パソコン *pasokon* Laptop (8) モバイルバッテリー *Mobairu batterī* Portable Battery
2.	Broadening (expansion of meaning)	3 data	3.09%	(9) オストメイト対応設備 *Osutomeito taiō setsubi* Ostomate Facilities (10) トラベルキオスク *toraberu kiosuku* Travel Kiosk
3.	No shift (meaning unchanged)	69 data	71.13%	(11) ミーティングポイント *Mītingu pointo* Meeting Point
	Total	**97 Data**	**100%**	

Based on the classification results, the majority of the data are used for informational purposes and do not undergo a change in meaning. Instances of narrowing and broadening, however, are generally found on signage relating to facilities, passenger services, and airport operational requirements.

3.1 Narrowing (Restriction of Meaning)

According to Ullmann's (1972) theory, narrowing is the process by which the meaning of a word that originally had a broad scope becomes more restricted in its usage that is, the meaning of a word becomes specialised so that it refers only to specific contexts, objects, or functions, as opposed to its original meaning.
In the phenomenon of *wasei-eigo*, narrowing occurs when loanwords from English retain their original form, but the meaning used in Japanese becomes narrower than the original meaning in the source language.

(7) パソコン
pasokon
Laptop



Figure 3.1.1. The area leading to the security check for domestic departures before entering the screening area, Terminal 1, Third Floor.

Analysis:

Based on Figure 3.1.1, パソコン (*pasokon*) is an abbreviation of "personal computer," adapted from パーソナルコンピューター (*pāsonaru konpyūtā*) by combining the initial syllables of its constituent elements. Merriam-Webster (n.d.-l) defines "personal computer" as a versatile computer designed for individual use in various contexts, making it a broad category of computers for personal purposes.

In Japanese, however, パソコン commonly refers to personal computers used in everyday life, including laptops and desktops (Weblio, n.d.-f), while English distinguishes portable computers more specifically as "laptops" and uses "personal computer" as a broader category (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-f). Based on Ullmann's (1972) theory, パソコン is therefore categorised as narrowing, as its usage in Japanese has become more specific than the broader category represented by "personal computer" in English.

(8) モバイルバッテリー

Mobairu batterī
Portable Battery



Figure 3.1.2. Notice board in front of the Peach Airlines counter, Terminal 1, First Floor.

Analysis:

Based on Figure 3.1.2, モバイルバッテリー (*mobairu batterī*) derives from the English words "mobile" and "battery." According to dictionary entries, "battery" refers to a device that stores and generates electrical energy for various purposes (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-i, n.d.-c). In Japanese, however, モバイルバッテリー specifically refers to a portable external battery used to charge electronic devices such as mobile phones and tablets. Weblio (n.d.-i) equates the term with "portable battery charger," "external battery," or "power bank," making its meaning more specific than the general English term "battery."

This difference may cause misunderstanding among international users, as "mobile battery" is not commonly used in English to refer to a portable charging device and may instead be interpreted as a battery installed in a mobile device. Based on Ullmann's (1972) theory of semantic change, モバイルバッテリー is therefore categorised as narrowing, as its meaning has become more specific, referring to a particular type of portable external battery rather than batteries in general.

3.2 Broadening (Expansion of Meaning)

According to Ullmann's (1972) theory, broadening occurs when the scope of reference of a term expands beyond its original meaning to encompass a wider range of objects or concepts, as in the following data:

(9) オストメイト対応設備

Osutomeito taiō setsubi
Ostomate Facilities



Figure 3.2.1. Information board, Terminal 1, Fourth Floor.

Analysis:

Based on Figure 3.2.1, the term オストメイト (*Osutomeito*) refers lexically to individuals who have undergone ostomy surgery, a medical procedure that creates an artificial opening in the body, known as a stoma, for waste elimination. The original meaning of the term is therefore very specific, referring only to stoma users (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-j; Weblio, n.d.-a)

In its usage within the Japanese linguistic landscape, however, particularly in the phrase オストメイト対応設備 (*osutomeito taiō setsubi*), its meaning has expanded contextually. Such facilities are not used only by ostomates but are also understood as part of accessible toilets usable by various other groups of people with disabilities, such as wheelchair users, the elderly, and those with other special needs.

According to Ullmann's (1972) theory, this phenomenon can be categorised as broadening, as a term that originally had a very specific reference has evolved into a more general indicator of accessibility facilities in the context of Japanese public spaces.

(10) トラベルキオスク

toraberu kiosuku
Travel Kiosk



Figure 3.2.2. Oversized Baggage Security Check Area, Fourth Floor, Terminal 1 North Wing.

Analysis:

Based on Figure 3.2.2, トラベルキオスク (*toraberu kiosuku*) derives from the English words "travel" and "kiosk." According to the Merriam-Webster and Weblio dictionaries, "travel" refers to moving from one place to another, while "kiosk" denotes a small building or stall providing goods or services. Thus, the term can literally be understood as a kiosk providing travel-related goods or services (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-o, n.d.-e; Weblio, n.d.-e, n.d.-b).

In Japanese airports, however, トラベルキオスク refers to a broader range of passenger needs, including travel essentials, souvenirs, duty-free goods, snacks, and other

travel-related items. Its meaning has therefore expanded from a facility associated with travel services to a multifunctional facility serving various passenger needs. Based on Ullmann's (1972) theory, this phenomenon is categorised as **broadening**, as the term's referential scope has expanded beyond the meaning suggested by its original English elements.

3.3 No Shift (Meaning Unchanged)

The "no shift" category refers to terms whose meaning has not changed from that in the source language. In this category, the lexical meaning of *wasei-eigo* remains consistent with the original meaning in English, and thus does not undergo either narrowing or broadening.

(11) ミーティングポイント
Mītingu pointo
Meeting Point



Figure 3.3.1. Waiting area, South Wing, Terminal 1, Fourth Floor, international flights.

Analysis:

Based on Figure 3.3.1, the term ミーティングポイント (*mītingu pointo*) is a *wasei-eigo* formed from the English elements "meeting" and "point". According to the Weblio Japanese dictionary (n.d.-h), ミーティングポイント means 待ち合わせ場所 (*machiawase basho*), a predetermined meeting place, as well as 合意点 (*gōiten*), a point of agreement. In English, "meeting" refers to an activity in which two or more people gather for a specific purpose, while "point" can refer to a specific spot or location; the combination "meeting point" is understood as a pre-arranged location for meeting.

In the context of its use at Japan's international airports, "meeting point" is used to indicate an area designated as a meeting point for passengers and those seeing them off or picking them up. The meaning used in the Japanese context still refers to the same function as the meaning in English, namely a designated location for meeting; there is thus no broadening, narrowing, or other form of semantic shift.

Based on Ullmann's (1972) theory of semantic shift, ミーティングポイント falls into the no-shift category, as the meaning used in the Japanese context retains the same conceptual meaning as in the source language. This finding suggests that not all *wasei-eigo* undergo a shift in meaning: in some cases, the English elements used in forming *wasei-eigo* retain their original function and meaning, making them relatively easy for international users to understand.

4. The Relationship between Function and Meaning Shift

The results of the analysis reveal a link between language-use functions within the linguistic landscape and the impact of meaning shifts on the effectiveness of communication

at Japanese international airports. This link is evident in the differing effects of meaning shifts on informational signage compared with signage serving a symbolic function.

Table 4. The Relationship between Linguistic Landscape Function and Meaning Shift in *Wasei-eigo*

No.	Linguistic Landscape Function	Most Frequent Meaning Shift Type	Impact on International Communication
1.	Informational Function	Narrowing and Broadening	May lead to ambiguity, as the meaning in the Japanese context differs from the original English meaning.
2.	Symbolic Function	Broadening	Does not necessarily hinder communication, as it emphasises a modern, global image and the aesthetics of public spaces.

Based on Table 4, the impact of meaning shifts varies according to the function of the linguistic landscape. For informational signage, clarity is essential because information must be accurately understood by international users. Most data showed no meaning shift, indicating that airport information remains largely comprehensible. Meanwhile, narrowing and broadening reflect adaptation to Japan's social and cultural context, although some may produce different interpretations among international users. In contrast, meaning shifts in symbolic signage are less likely to hinder communication because its primary function is to create a modern, international, and cosmopolitan image.

The linguistic landscape therefore influences how semantic shifts affect international communication. The predominance of *wasei-eigo* without semantic shifts suggests an effort to maintain clarity and minimise miscommunication in international airport spaces, while semantically adapted *wasei-eigo* continues to reflect Japanese linguistic and cultural identity. Overall, the findings suggest that *wasei-eigo* in Japanese international airports balances the needs of international communication with the preservation of local linguistic and cultural characteristics.

5. Implications for International Communication

Based on the findings, *wasei-eigo* usage at Japanese international airports is predominantly informational, with most data showing no meaning shift. However, some terms undergo narrowing and broadening, particularly on signage for passenger facilities and services. This indicates that *wasei-eigo* functions not only to convey information but also reflects the adaptation of English to the Japanese social and cultural context. The findings also reveal complex implications for international communication. English-based vocabulary supports the modern, global, and international image of Japanese airports, while semantic shifts may create ambiguity when Japanese meanings differ from their original English meanings. Thus, the use of global languages in the linguistic landscape does not always guarantee effective cross-cultural communication.

For informational signage, clarity and appropriate meaning are essential to minimise potential misunderstandings among international users. In contrast, *wasei-eigo* on symbolic signage contributes to the construction of linguistic identity and Japan's modern image in airport public spaces.

CONCLUSION

This study identified 97 instances of *wasei-eigo* in the linguistic landscape of a Japanese international airport, distributed across domestic, international, connecting-corridor, and public areas. The use of *wasei-eigo* was dominated by the informational function (76 instances, 78.4%), followed by the symbolic function (14, 14.4%) and dual function (7, 7.2%), indicating that *wasei-eigo* primarily serves to convey information in airport public spaces.

Regarding semantic change, 25 instances (25.77%) exhibited narrowing, 3 (3.09%) broadening, while 69 (71.13%) retained their original meanings. These patterns indicate that although most *wasei-eigo* remain close to their English equivalents and are therefore relatively accessible to international users, some terms have been adapted to Japanese communicative and cultural contexts, particularly those related to passenger facilities and services.

Overall, the findings suggest that *wasei-eigo* in Japanese international airports balances the demands of international communication with the preservation of local linguistic and cultural identity. While the predominance of unchanged meanings supports information clarity and may minimise miscommunication, instances of narrowing and broadening demonstrate the adaptation of English within the Japanese linguistic landscape.

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