

**Difficulties Faced by Japanese Businesspeople  
in Pronouncing /l/ and /r/ Sounds in English**

Mayumi Nakagawa



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### **Abstract**

It is commonly known that the English sounds of /l/ and /r/ are difficult for native Japanese speakers to pronounce properly since the Japanese language does not have these sounds. Previous researches revealed three main issues which cause some difficulties for Native Japanese speakers to produce some English sounds properly. These problems were the differences between a mechanism to produce the Japanese and English sounds, instructions and materials with improper descriptions on how to produce each sound, and annotation of English sounds by using *katakana*, which is one of the Japanese writing systems. This study found that the Native Japanese speakers had less knowledge about how to make each sound. Learning the common spelling rules and phonetics alphabets are helpful and bring good results for the learners. However, it is not an easy task to learn them. In the case of Japanese businesspeople, they need to improve their English communication skills for their job performance in a short period of time. This research found that more than one third of words in business related paragraphs contain the sounds of /l/ and/or /r/; therefore, learning the proper mechanism to make these two sounds will help to improve their English remarkably and quickly. Especially, helpful to businesspeople, the practicing of the case of consonant clusters, /V + r/ and / ə-ʒ / should be emphasized.

There were many materials and books to assist people to improve their English pronunciation. Although some unique methods are utilized to teach how to produce sounds like-native English speakers, most of material suggests they do not bring any quick solution or improvement to their English communication skills. Generally, prepared materials to practice English sounds include lists of words to be read aloud over and over. However, these words were not commonly used or relevant to the learners. The materials to practice the sounds have to be carefully prepared, and they have to fulfill the businesspeople's needs. It is especially important to practice the sound of /l-r/ over and over until they learn the muscle movements of each sounds. By practicing business-related vocabularies, which businesspeople use commonly, they could learn and improve their pronunciation and English communication skills quickly and easily.

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\* 金融経済学部

## **1. Introduction**

Businesspeople, who are active internationally, are required to communicate in a language other than their first or native language. Their job qualifications include communication and language skills. Of most concern to them is the issue of miscommunication at their business conferences and/or presentations in English. The wrong usage or mispronunciation of vocabulary could cause misunderstandings and miscommunications, and could provide some unforeseen and unexpected messages to listeners. It could lead to the loss of business opportunities for companies. The biggest reason for this miscommunication and misunderstanding is that the listeners could not understand what they said due to their incorrect pronunciations. Once the native and/or non-native English speakers discover that they are not able to understand a person's speech, they have a tendency to lose interest in what is being said. Indeed, sometimes the native and/or non-native English speakers are unable to understand some of the English words spoken by Japanese businesspeople at presentations and/or negotiation tables.

Generally, native Japanese (NJ) speakers experience some difficulties in pronouncing each sound correctly. Anthony (2003) explains that "Japanese phonology has no mechanism to represent muscular effort, and pitch is determined by syllabicity" (p. 242). Since the American English sounds are different from Japanese sounds, NJ speakers find it difficult to pronounce each sound correctly without studying the mechanism of sounds and practicing them. Various research performed in the past revealed that NJ speakers have some difficulties in pronouncing the following sounds: /l/, /r/, /ð/, /θ/, /z/, /s/, /d/, /t/, /v/, /f/, /ʒ/, /dʒ/ and some others. Especially, /l/ and /r/ are noticeable as particularly difficult. These two sounds are the cause of much miscommunication with English speaking people. Much research has been performed to clarify why NJ speakers have difficulties in pronouncing these two sounds: /l/ and /r/.

This study examines why NJ speakers have some difficulty in pronouncing the sounds of <l> and <r>, and what kind of practices would help to improve their pronunciation of /l/ and /r/ for them. Especially, this study examines the research pertaining to the difficulties of Japanese businesspeople.

## **2. Possible Reasons Why NJ Speakers Have Difficulty Pronouncing the Letters of <l> and <r>**



## **2.1. The mechanism to pronounce used in the Japanese language,**

As one of the reasons for the difficulties to pronounce the sounds /l/ and /r/ for NJ speakers, some researchers (Tayler, 2007; Suarez and Tanaka, 2001; Anthony, 2003; Minami, 1987) concluded that the Japanese language itself is the cause of this problem. The Japanese language has only 5 vowels, which are <a>, <e>, <i>, <o>, and <u>, and each syllable is constructed with one consonant (C) and one vowel (V). Excluding some exceptions, each syllable always ends with one of the vowels listed above. Taylor (2007) mentioned that “One aspect of English phonology that many Japanese students have problems with is that English does not follow the CV (consonant + vowel) pattern of Japanese but contains consonant clusters and have consonants in word final position” (p.45). Suarez and Tanaka (2001) also studied and expressed that “last syllables often end in vowels epenthized in order to make English conform to Japanese syllable restrictions” (p. 107). Since NJ speakers learn the mechanism to pronounce C+V and produce the sounds like C+V as a habit, they have a tendency to insert a vowel sound after every consonant even when they speak in English. This is called “to epenthesis”, which is to add a vowel sound between consonants in consonant clusters and/or after a word final consonant. Anthony (2003) explained the problems as the following: “Japanese, for example, has five vowels, which are Romanized as *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*. When these letters occur in an English word, they are most often transliterated as their romanized Japanese counterparts, ...” (p. 242). Therefore, when they pronounce English words, they have a tendency to make each sound as C+V. For example, the word “capital” could be pronounced /ka • pi • ta • lu / instead of /kæpətɪ/. Also, when they pronounce words with letter <l> or <r> at the end of words, they tends to add a vowel sound after it.

The above researches reveal that the different mechanisms to produce the sounds between the Japanese and English cause NJ to pronounce each sound differently and incorrectly. This makes it difficult for the listeners to understand the words pronounced by NJ speakers. This is the case for the Japanese businesspeople, also.

## **2.2 Improper instructions on how to make the sounds of /l/ and /r/**

Some researchers found that some instructions, which explain how to produce the sounds of /l/ and /r/ provided in Japan, are not correct. This is another reason why the NJ speakers are not able to pronounce the both sounds well. Minami (1987) explains about this problem that “seems to find some causation on instruction introduced on the textbooks and training documents (p. 50).<sup>(1)</sup> He also reports that “29 pronunciation

textbooks and possible training documents, which were written in English or Japanese, had been evaluated. As a result, majority of them; especially, the ones written in Japanese, found inaccurate in their instructions, which discussed on the above” (Minami, 1987, p. 59).<sup>(2)</sup> Since teachers and/or instructors have to depend on the books and materials prepared for them, they believe that they have been teaching correct pronunciations.

Generally, teachers at school instruct their students about both sounds as the follows: “in order to make the sound of the letter <l>, touch the back of your upper teeth with the tip of your tongue quickly.”, also, “in order to make the sound of the letter <r>, curl up a tip of your tongue inside.” These instructions are often used but they are not correct as discussed in the following Section 4. Minami (1987) pointed out that “the problems are remarkable in the books prepared by some Japanese writers. Since students and would-be educators have been taught with these books, this is a very serious issue and should be considered” (p. 62).<sup>(3)</sup> In other words, many Japanese have been taught and will be taught both sounds incorrectly, until books and training materials of pronunciations are revised with correct instructions.

Therefore, wrong instructions expressed about the sounds of <l> and <r> in the materials can be one of the reasons why NJ speakers are not able to pronounce these sounds correctly. Many Japanese businesspeople have learned English with such materials and such instructions. This is another reason for them to have a difficult time to pronounce the both sounds correctly.

### **2.3 Using *katakana* to annotate English pronunciation**

Thirdly, some researchers have discussed whether it is good or bad to annotate English pronunciation by using *katakana*, which is one of the writing systems use mainly to express foreign words. When *katakana* is used to show the pronunciation of English words, they have a tendency to read them like Japanese sounds. This causes some confusion between the sounds of /l/ and /r/ in English for NJ speakers because the Japanese language does not have any differences between these two sounds.

When Japanese words are expressed by using *Romaji*, which is a method of writing Japanese in Roman characters, the consonant <r> is spelled < ra >, < ri >, < ru >, < re >, and < ro > when it goes with Japanese five vowels. Their sounds are similar to /l/ rather than /r/ but it is not quite the same as the English /l/. Since they use the same letter <r> when the *Romaji* is used to express words, it may cause some confusion in the pronunciation of the words including the letter <r>. The Japanese <r> written by using *Romaji* and the English letter <r> are the same character but they are different sounds.

Minami (1987) explains that “it has been said that it is a difficult sound for the Japanese learners, but this is often explained that no opposition is found between the sound of /r/ and /l/ in Japanese; therefore, it is easy to get confused with the Japanese row of <ra>.” (p. 50).<sup>(4)</sup> If they read the annotation written in *katakana*, they are not sure which sounds they have to utilize since the Japanese have only one sound which is similar to /l/. Suarez and Tanaka (2001) conclude that “students who rely only on *katakana* to annotate English pronunciation have significantly poorer pronunciation”. (p. 106). Also, Taylor (2007) writes that “the most popular technique for recording pronunciation is to use kana rather than phonetic symbols. This distorts the English words.”(p. 48). It is necessary to understand that the letter <l> and <r> have different sounds and that *katakana* is not able to express the differences between these two sounds, /l/ and /r/. Since they need to learn spelling rules and the phonetic alphabet to improve the English sounds, annotating the English sounds by using *katakana* should not be recommended to students or taught to Japanese practicing English.

The above three causes explain why NJ speakers, including businesspeople, have a difficulty to pronounce the sounds /l/ and /r/. It is necessary for them to understand that the articulation of the Japanese and American English is completely different. Learners should be taught and get familiar with the common pattern of spelling rules and the phonetic alphabet.

### **3. The Importance of the Sounds of /l/ and /r/ for Businesspeople**

In order to clarify how important it is for Japanese businesspeople to pronounce the sounds /l/ and /r/ correctly, three typical paragraphs from the books in the business field were analyzed. At the same time, the sounds of /ð/, /θ/, /z/, /s/, /d/, /t/, /v/, /f/, /ʒ/ and /ʒ/, which are recognized as difficult sounds for the Japanese to pronounce, were examined. The results are as followings.

The first paragraph (Appendix 1) is selected from the field of Financial Management. This paragraph contains 58 words. Twenty-six out of 58 words, or about 44% of the paragraph, contain the sounds of /l/ and/or /r/. Ten words contain the sound /l/ and 19 words contain the sound /r/. Three words fall under both categories. This means that almost every other word contains either sound. Regarding other sounds, 20% of the paragraph contains the sounds of /ð/ and/or /θ/, 14% contains the sounds of /d/ and/or /t/, 17% contains the sounds of /v/ and/or /f/, and 5% contains the

sounds of /ʒ/ and/or /dʒ/. The sounds of /z/ and/or /s/ were found in 23 words, which is about 39% of this paragraph. This paragraph contains more words with the sounds of /l-r/ than words with other sounds which are difficult for the Japanese.

The second paragraph (Appendix 2) is selected from the field of Corporate Finance. This paragraph contains 85 words, and 32 out of 88 words, or about 38% of the paragraph, contain the sounds of /l/ and/or /r/. Twenty-six words contain the sound /l/ and 17 words contain the sound /r/. Five words fall under both categories. One out of three words contains either sound. Regarding other sounds, 6% of the paragraph contains the sounds of /ð/ and/or /θ/, 25% contains the sounds of /z/ and/or /s/, and 13% contains the sounds of /v/ and/or /f/. No word contains the sounds of /ʒ/ and/or /dʒ/. The sounds of /d/ and/or /t/ were found in 25 words, which is about 29% of this paragraph. This paragraph also contains more words with the sounds of /l-r/ than with other sounds which are difficult for the Japanese.

The third paragraph (Appendix 3) is selected from the field of Accounting. This paragraph contains 119 words, and 46 out of 119 words, or about 40% of the paragraph, contains the sounds of /l/ and/or /r/. Seventeen words contain the sound /l/ and 34 words contain the sound /r/. Three words fall under both categories. One out of two words contains either sound. Regarding other sounds, 8% of the paragraph contains the sounds of /ð/ and/or /θ/, 25% contains the sounds of /z/ and/or /s/, and 10% contains the sounds of /v/ and/or /f/. No word contains the sounds of /ʒ/ and/or /dʒ/. The sounds of /d/ and/or /t/ were found in 43 words, which is about 36% of this paragraph. This paragraph also contains more words with the sounds of /l-r/ than words with other sounds which are difficult for the Japanese.

These comparisons explain that many words commonly used in the business sentences contain either or both sounds of /l/ and/or /r/, which are almost 40 to 50% of the total words in paragraphs. The words contains the sounds of /s-z/ or /d-t/, which are also the difficult sounds to pronounce correctly, are found in the business paragraphs a little less than the words contains the sounds of /l-r/; however, the sounds of /s-z/ and /d-t/ do not cause as much miscommunication and misunderstanding in negotiations for businesspeople as do the sounds of /l-r/. This finding leads a summary that practicing these two sounds, which are /l/ and /r/, will help to improve businesspeople's pronunciation remarkably. Moreover, they will find less miscommunication and misunderstanding by English speaking people at their business occasions.

#### 4. How to correctly pronounce the letter <l> and <r>

First of all, the correct instructions of how to make the sounds of <l> and <r> have to be provided to the Japanese businesspeople who would like to and who need to improve their English. It is not possible for every learner of English to study the phonetics for understanding the concepts of sounds; therefore, some simple and easy instructions about how to make the American English sounds should be provided. Some practice books of pronunciation show diagrams and pictures of shapes of mouth for each sound. However, they may not be of much help. They need to know how to use of the tongue, mouth, and lips, which are not required to use when they communicate in Japanese. Anthony (2003) reports that “Japanese phonology has no mechanism to represent muscular effort” (p. 242). Dauer discusses some causes of difficulties for Japanese speakers. Through her understanding of the problems Japanese speakers have, she explains what the problems are and what they have to do to improve their sounds of /l/ and /r/. Dauer explains each sound at different positions in a word, and her instructions are easily understood by anyone who has little knowledge of phonetics. At first, Dauer (1993) explains the position of /r/ and /l/ as an initial syllable:

/r/ is a quick version of the vowel /ɚ/. The tip of tongue points to, but *never touches*, the roof of the mouth. Air flows over the *center* of the tongue; the sides of the tongue are raised (you can feel them against the back upper teeth). The lips are slightly rounded (push the corners of the lips in a little). (p. 201)

/l/ is a lateral. The tip of the tongue *touches the tooth ridge*, and air goes out the *sides* of the tongue (the sides of the tongue are lowered). The lips are *not rounded*. The back of the tongue takes the shape of the following vowel. When you release /l/ into the following vowel, the tongue tip should drop down quickly. (p. 201)

Secondly, Dauer (1993) explains the both sounds at a final position “< r > at the end of a word or before a consonant is pronounced the same as the vowel / ɚ / in her or better... < l > at the end of word or before a consonant has a special pronunciation called dark l. Like initial /l/, the tongue tip touches the tooth ridge and the air goes out the sides; ... (p.204) Dauer (1993) also discusses the sounds / ɚ-ɝ / and vowels followed by < r > below:

For non-native speakers, it is best to think of < r > here as a vowel, like / ɚ /, that blends together with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong in words like *here*

/hiə /, *hair* /hɛə /, and *hire* /haɪə /. To make these diphthongs, make the first vowel sound and slowly move your tongue and lips to the position for / ə /. You will notice that the words *fire* and *fear* almost sound like two syllables /faɪ.yə/, /fi.yə/, ... In the word *fur*, however, the tongue does not change position during the vowel: there is just one vowel / ə /. (p. 48)

The sounds / ə-ɜ / and vowels followed by < r > are hardly discussed in Japan when people study English in schools. Dauer (1993) says, “If a non-native speaker masters the vowel / ə /, he or she should have no trouble pronouncing the consonant /r/ and linking words ending in < r > to vowels” (p. 49).

By learning how to make the sounds of /l-r/ at the different positions of each word, the NJ speakers are able to pronounce both sounds understandably. Especially, by practicing how to make the sounds / ə-ɜ / and vowels followed by < r >, their English will be improved very much. Since almost 40-50% of the business related vocabularies contain these two sounds, Japanese businesspeople would be able to improve their English rapidly by learning both sounds.

## **5. How to practice the sounds**

### **5.1 Available devices to learn the sounds**

In the past, Japanese people had very limited opportunities to learn the English sounds from Native American English speakers. Since the 1980s, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has been commonly utilized at schools. Before, people were able to study English sounds only in places that housed a huge main computer system and devices. CALL has been upgraded with the advancement made in Information Technology. Moreover, people are able to study English using their own PCs by installing software provided by CD-ROMs and/or DVDs at home. The progress of computer technology provides various tools to learn English. As long as people have devices accessing the Internet, they are able to learn and practice English easily. Nowadays, they can take online programs held by other countries through the Internet by using a laptop, a cell phone, and any other device, which allow access to the Internet, even if they live in Japan. These advanced technologies allow people to connect with anyone in other countries without any troubles. Nakagawa (2003) mentions this as follows: “CALL would find studying contents provided at the Internet; moreover, Web Enhanced Language Learning (WELL) would allow distance learning over the Internet.



More and more these methods will be found effective to people” (p.306).<sup>(5)</sup> These days some software applications like Skype allow users to make voice calls over the Internet. This allows people to take lessons from the Native American English speakers directly over the Internet. The environment to learn English; especially, correct pronunciations, has been improving day by day due to the rapid advancement of information technology.

Whenever they would like to improve their English, they are able to find many ways to learn it. Learning English no longer has to be in the traditional setting of the classroom. Improving their English can be done while enjoying their time watching movies and TV programs, listening music, and/or talking with friends in English. However, this has to be well planned, and they must set goals as to how they expect to learn proper English. Since various devices are available now, it is important to develop an appropriate method to assist anyone wishing to learn English with such devices.

## 5.2 Existing Methods to learn the sounds

As discussed in Section 2.3, learners have a tendency to annotate English sounds with *Katakana* but this provides unfavorable results. However, there is one method called “Kinji Katakana (approximate Katakana)”. This is a method with special rules to learn the pronunciation by expressing it with Katakana instead of phonetic symbols by Shimaoka. He explains that some Japanese phrases could be heard in some English phrases. These two phrases do not have the same meaning since they are not translations at all. Shimaoka (2004) explained the Japanese noun, “‘Agedoufu’ can be heard the sentence, ‘I get off.’ in English” (p. 48).<sup>(6)</sup> The translation of this Japanese word means “a deep-fried Tofu”. Shimaoka (2004) believed that “it helps to have confidence when speaking in English because speakers are aware of the similarities and differences between Japanese and English” (p. 3).<sup>(7)</sup> However, Fukuda (2004) examined the effect of this Kinji-Kana Notation and found the following:

The research approved that this Kinji-Kana Notation has a hidden potential as one of the teaching methods. It was found that this method was effective for people who were not good at English and who had less confidence to communicate in English. However, the people who enjoy and have a higher ability in English might have a decreased motivation for learning. (p.15)<sup>(8)</sup>

Shimaoka (2004) prepares the practice book with Kinji-Kana notation and explains the rules of how to pronounce Japanese phrases in order to make them similar to the English sounds. For example, the sound /l/ is expressed <<sup>n</sup>l > and <<sup>ス</sup>ル > when it is

written in *katakana*. Also, the sound /r/ is expressed as < wr > and if it is written in *katakana* < ヱル >. In the case of words, <leave> is /li:v ズル□ヴ/ and <run> is /rʌn ヱランズ/. Some learners might think it is fun to learn this method because it gives the impression of a puzzle or a game. However, they must learn all the rules in order to master Kinji-Kana Notation. They might be able to learn similar sounds to pronounce each word by learning this notation but still they are not correct sounds. It is hard to say if this method is easier to learn than phonetic symbols. Neither is easy to learn if the goal is to master the rules. If that is the case, phonetics rather than Kinji-Kana should be taught and learners should spend their time to learn phonetic symbols.

Culhane and Ito introduced different ways to learn the English sounds. It is called Sound Spellings, which “borrows from techniques used by radio and television journalists ... the name of professional golfer *Mark Calcavecchia*. Sound Spellings provide a guide, such as *mar-k kal-ka-veck-ee-a*”(2004, p. 74). The research concludes as follows:

“the type of training offered in the Sound Spelling system may be beneficial for Japanese learners of English in counteracting typical pronunciation difficulties they face, particularly in regards of “L” and “R” sounds, in reducing the number of added sounds, and in assisting them with overall pronunciation tendencies.” (p. 80)

However, it seems to take some time to master how to write the Sound Spellings for most learners. One concern about this method is how the learners who are not skilled at differentiating each sound are going to pick the sounds to write down.

Various methods have been introduced but learning sounds is not an easy task. Learning basic phonetics is just one method and it might be the solution for learners that would like to speak like a native speaker and avoid miscommunication due to their poor pronunciation. Especially, by learning the common patterns of spelling rules and the phonetic alphabet, the pronunciation of the sounds of /l/ and /r/ can be improved very much.

### **5.3 Favorable Exercises to Learn the Sounds**

Various recommended and favorable methods have been found through this research. All of them seem to take some time and efforts to learn the rules at the level



of speaking intelligible English. None of them provides a quick method to learn correct English sounds. It is said that “L2 phonological development is no straightforward task for learners, whether the L2 sounds are similar or new to their L1 phonological system” (Kasai, 2005, p. 43). It is not necessary to learn phonetics as a subject but it can be learned as a part of speaking skills. Since businesspeople are very eager to improve their English, introducing the common pattern of spelling rules and the phonetic alphabet is one of the ways to aid their learning of the correct American English sounds.

Mrs. Shirley Hewitt, Speech Professor, commented that “mastering correct sounds is like practicing sports. Sports players train their own body muscles until they learn how to use them automatically at a game. It is similar to learning languages. People have to practice speech sounds over and over until their muscles around their mouths, tongues, teeth, and others learn the movements to make proper sounds. It is important to practice until they can make the correct sounds.” Paterson (2005) discusses the muscles movements and the first language as follows:

“the muscles become attuned to producing the mother tongue and they cannot easily be retained, consequently this universal ability is lost. This means that it is difficult for a learner to articulate a new sound, or combination of sounds, that do not already exist in the L1.”(p. 116)

Therefore, people have to practice over and over until their muscles learn the movements to make correct American English sounds. Paterson (2005) also explained that “an interlanguage continuum does exist from L1 to L2 forms, whereby they tend to produce the L1 form in earlier levels and gradually acquiring the L2 form as their level of ability improves” (p. 120). This indicates that the learners need to practice over and over until they are comfortable making each sound.

Secondly, the type of practice that is most helpful for the learners must be considered. Many exercises can be found repeating comparative words between <l> and <r>. One of common practices is that “One is to shadow or mirror a speaker, repeating internally or aloud their words” (Tayler, 2007, p. 45). One issue of this common practice is that sometimes vocabularies used as a practice of sounds are not common or not realistic so that they do not help with improving the quality of the sound found in different words. Arimoto (1993) found:

It is necessary to have a pronunciation practice with some context in order to

acquire contextualization and/or communicative competence. If not, pronunciation practices would be mechanical and monotone; therefore, it would not bring expected results even though spending a lot of time. (p. 88)<sup>(9)</sup>

It is said that “no similar sound exists in Japanese and in such cases a learner finds it more difficult to make a distinction” (Kasai, 2005, Yamada and Tohkura, 1992). It is necessary to learn how to make each sound properly and to practice them over and over until they reach a comfort level. This practice should be performed by utilizing some exercises with contexts, which provide knowledge related to their fields, until they can produce the sounds automatically. For the Japanese businesspeople, it would be very helpful to practice the vocabularies related to their specialized fields over and over until they are comfortable to produce the sounds and such words.

## **6. Conclusion**

Many businesspeople would like to improve their English communication skills in order to avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding at their jobs. As this research shows, almost 40% or more of vocabularies in business related paragraphs contain the sounds of /l/ and/or /r/, which are said to be difficult sounds for NJ speakers. Practicing these sounds will be a better and faster solution to improve their oral English communication skills.

This study found that three reasons why they are unable to pronounce these two sounds correctly. The first problem lies in the physical mechanism to pronounce the first language, Japanese. Unfortunately, the majority of books and materials used by learners and teachers to learn and teach the American English sounds provide incorrect instructions on how to produce these two sounds. This is the second cause that NJ speakers can not produce the sounds of /l-r/ correctly. The other reason is that some learners annotate the sounds in Japanese writing, *katakana*, without understanding how to produce each sound even though the Japanese have a different articulation from the American English.

Most of the businesspeople who have been learned English under these problems need to practice by correcting what they learned about these two sounds in the past. Since muscle movements to produce each sound are different from the Japanese sounds to the English ones, learning the proper muscle movement to produce the sounds of /l-r/ will improve their English. NJ speakers, especially businesspeople, must learn how to

move the lips, tongue, teeth, and mouth to produce correct English sounds. It is important for them to practice the words, which contain the sounds of /l-r/, over and over until they learn the muscle movements to produce the correct sounds of /l/, /r/ and / ə-r-ʒ /. The materials that explain the sounds of /l/, /r/, and / ə-r-ʒ / should be prepared by using business related vocabularies will help them improve their English effectively. At the same time, concern about their miscommunication and misunderstandings due to their incorrect pronunciation will be greatly reduced. The recent advances technologies have made practicing English sounds enjoyable and convenient for Japanese businesspeople. Technology gives learners the ability to learn English sounds, rhythm, and intonation effectively.

## Notes:

The original sentences used as references in the papers after being translated:

- (1) 教本:指導書類の記述・説明のしかたにも原因があるようである。
- (2) 29 種類の英語および日本語で書かれた発音教本ないしは指導書と考えられるものを検討した。そして、その結果圧倒的に多数のもの（特に日本語によるもの）に上記説明上の不正確さが認められた。
- (3) このことは特に日本人の著した教本類に顕著であって、それに基づいて生徒や教員志望学生が指導されていることを考えれば、きわめて問題のある事柄である。
- (4) 従来から日本人学習者にとっては習得の難しい音とされているが、このことは、日本語に /r-l/ の対立がなく、その為ラ行音と混同されやすいという点から説明されることが多い。
- (5) 計算機援用語額学習システム(CALL)から Web 上のコンテンツを学習教材として取り込んだり、ネットワーク技術と連動した遠隔学習を可能とする Web 協調語学学習システム(WELL)が今後ますます有用となってこよう。
- (6) 「揚げ豆腐」から I get off.へ
- (7) 日本語を使う利点は日本語と英語の共通点や相違点が明らかになるので、自信をもって発音ができ
- (8) 近似カナ表記は、可能性を秘めた指導法であることが、以上の実験により分かった。英語をあまり得意とせず、自信のない人に対して特に効果があることが分かったが、しかし一方で、英語を楽しんでいる能力の高いと思われるレベルには、学習意欲を下げる要因として働く可能性も出てきた。
- (9) Contextualization 或いは communicative competence 獲得のために、文脈を設定した意味のある発音練習を必要としている。そうでないと、発音練習が機械的で単調なものに陥ってしまい、時間をかける割りには十分な成果を挙げることができないのである。

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reception of American English /r/ and /l/ by Japanese listeners. *Perception & Psychophysics*, 52, 4, 376-392.

<Appendix 1>

Whittington, O. R. & Delaney, P. R. (2009). *Wiley CPA Exam Review, Business Environment and Concepts*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey.

Financial managers are hired to maximize the wealth of the owners of the firm. Therefore, financial managers can be viewed as agents of the owners who hired them. However, managers have other personal goals, such as personal wealth, job security, prestige, and perquisites that may cause their actions not to always be consistent with wealth maximization for stockholders. (p. 172)

\* prepositions: for x1

58words

46 words (excluding preposition 7; articles-5)

26 words contains the sounds /l/ and/or /r/ (not counted prepositions and articles)

44% of words in this paragraph contain the sounds /l/ and/or /r/.

56% of words excluding prepositions and articles have the sounds /l/ and/or /r/.

10 words contain the sound /l/ (3 words contain the sound /l/ and /r/.)

19 words contain the sound /r/ (3 words contain the sound /l/ and /r/.)

/ð/ and/or /θ/: 12 words including articles; 20% of total words in this paragraph

/z/ and/or /s/: 23 words including prepositions; 39% of words in this paragraph

/d/ and/or /t/: 8 words; 14% of words in this paragraph

/v/ and/or /f/: 10 words including prepositions; 17% of words in this paragraph

/ ʒ / and/or / dʒ /:3 words; 5% of words in this paragraph

<Appendix 2>

Ross, S. A., Westerfield, R. W., & Jordan, B. D. (2007). *ESSENTIALS OF CORPORATE FINANCE*. McGraw-Hill/Irwin. New York.

Financial Institutions are basically businesses that deal primarily in financial matters. Banks and insurance companies would probably be the most familiar to you. Institutions such as these employ people to perform a wide variety of finance-related tasks. For example, a commercial loan officer at a bank would evaluate whether a particular business has a strong enough financial position to warrant extending a loan. At an insurance company, an analyst would decide whether a particular risk was suitable for insuring and what the premium should be. (p. 3)

\* prepositions: for x2

85 words

64 words (excluding preposition-9; articles-11)

32 words contains the sounds /l/ and/or /r/ (not counted prepositions and articles)

38% of words in this paragraph contain the sounds /l/ and/or /r/.

50% of main words excluding prepositions and articles have the sounds /l/ and/or /r/.

26 words contain the sound /l/ (5 words contain the sound /l/ and /r/.)

17 words contain the sound /r/ (5 words contain the sound /l/ and /r/.)

/ð/ and/or /θ/: 5 words including articles; 6% of total words in this paragraph

/z/ and/or /s/: 21 words; 25% of words in this paragraph

/d/ and/or /t/: 25 words including prepositions; 29% of words in this paragraph

/v/ and/or /f/: 11 words including prepositions; 13% of words in this paragraph

/ʒ / and/or / dʒ /: 0 words; 0% of words in this paragraph



<Appendix 3>

Segel, J. G. & Shim, J. K. (1995) *BARRON'S Dictionary of Accounting Terms*.  
Seibunsha.

The three types of inventory for a manufacturing company are raw materials, work-in-process, and finished goods. Included in inventory are (1) goods in transit for which title has been received and (2) goods out on consignment. Inventory is recorded in the accounting records typically at the lower of cost or market value. An inventory count usually occurs at the lower of cost or market value. An inventory count usually occurs at year-end to assure that the physical quantity equals the quantity per books. At the end of the accounting period, beginning and ending inventories are presented in the income statement in the Cost of Goods Sold calculation, while ending inventory is shown in the balance sheet under current assets. (p. 222)

\* prepositions: for x 2; under x 1

119 words

84 words (excluding preposition- 21; articles-14)

46 words contains the sounds /l/ and/or /r/ (not counted prepositions and articles)

40% of words in this paragraph contain the sounds /l/ and/or /r/.

56% of main words excluding prepositions and articles have the sounds /l/ and/or /r/.

17 words contain the sound /l/ (3 words contain the sound /l/ and /r/.)

34 words contain the sound /r/ (3 words contain the sound /l/ and /r/.)

/ð/ and/or /θ/: 10 words including articles; 8% of total words in this paragraph

/z/ and/or /s/: 30 words; 25% of words in this paragraph

/d/ and/or /t/: 43 words including prepositions; 36% of words in this paragraph

/v/ and/or /f/: 12 words including prepositions; 10% of words in this paragraph

/ ʒ / and/or / dʒ /: 0 words; 0% of words in this paragraph

