

Polysemous *Dajare* wordplay in Japanese-language advertisement series titled *Santarou*: A pragmatic study

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Abstract

Dajare is a type of Japanese wordplay used in humorous contexts. Previous studies have only examined *dajare* formed through homophonic or semi-homophonic word pairs, while polysemous wordplay is more commonly found in English-language puns. This study seeks to describe *dajare* based on polysemy found in a series of Japanese-language television advertisements titled *Santarou* produced by *Au*. This study uses the qualitative-descriptive method to describe polysemous *dajare* found in the data source. The theory used is Attardo's (2017) general theory of verbal humor to describe how the *dajare* creates humor in the advertisements. It can be concluded that polysemous *dajare* wordplay in the data revolves around the incongruity between the original meaning of a word and its derivation in slang and colloquial language.

Abstrak

Permainan Kata *Dajare* Berpolisemi dalam Serial Iklan Bahasa Jepang *Santarou*: Kajian Pragmatik

Dajare adalah jenis permainan kata bahasa Jepang yang digunakan dalam konteks humor. Penelitian terdahulu berfokus pada *dajare* yang dibentuk dengan memasang kata yang berbunyi sama atau mirip, sementara permainan kata yang berdasarkan pada polisemi lebih banyak ditemukan dalam permainan kata bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan *dajare* berdasarkan polisemi yang ditemukan dalam serial iklan televisi berbahasa Jepang berjudul *Santarou* yang diproduksi oleh *Au*. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif-deskriptif untuk menggambarkan *dajare* polisemi pada sumber data. Teori yang digunakan adalah teori umum humor verbal oleh Attardo (2017) yang digunakan untuk menjelaskan bagaimana *dajare* membentuk humor dalam iklan. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa *dajare* polisemi pada data berpusat pada perbedaan antara makna asli sebuah kata dengan maknanya yang sudah bergeser dalam ragam bahasa slang dan kolokial.

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1 Introduction

As a tool for human communication, language can be analyzed based on its applications in daily life. One such application is the use of language in humor and media. Advertising is one such type of media to feature humor. Although the purpose of advertising is to sell a product or service, some advertisements do not attempt to convince future consumers directly, instead relying on humor to affect them. Mey (1993, p. 4) argued that jokes in advertisements serve to create a euphoric effect, disarming the recipient of the advertising and making it more effective in inviting them to do what the producers of the ad want them to do. As advertisements also primarily use language to convey their message, humor in advertisements is often based on language or linguistic phenomena.

According to Attardo (2017a), language-based or verbal humor is based on violations of Grice's cooperative principle. The cooperative principle is a general law governing conversation, divided into four maxims, which are the maxim of quality (only give information that you believe is true), the maxim of quantity (give enough information), the maxim of relevance (only give relevant information), and the maxim of manner (be unambiguous) (Grice, 2009, p. 68). When a speaker intentionally violates one of the maxims, the resulting incongruity can be perceived as humorous (Attardo, 2017a, p. 180).

A form of verbal humor based on the violation of the maxim of manner is pun or wordplay. Wordplay is the use of words with similar sounds but different meanings or a word with multiple meanings to create ambiguity in a sentence or text (Partington, 2006; Tarigan, 2013).

Dajare is a type of wordplay used in humorous contexts in Japanese. According to Otake (2010, p. 79), *dajare* is more commonly based on words with identical or similar sounds (homophones or semi-homophones) rather than words that have multiple meanings (polysemy).

Raskin (2017) proposed that humor arises from incongruity based on overlapping but opposing scripts. A script is a chunk of information regarding a particular concept. In linguistics, a script is expressed by a semantic network between words that have semantic links with each other (Attardo, 1994, pp. 198–201). In practice, this means humor is created when the reader or hearer sees an initial meaning to a word, phrase, or sentence, and then is forced to reinterpret what that sequence meant by a contradiction or incongruity to get into the second meaning (Attardo, 1994, pp. 206–207).

Attardo (2017b) adds to Raskin's theory with an approach that focuses on analyzing the constituent components of humor, called knowledge resources. Knowledge resources are used as parameters to categorize how similar jokes are to each other, e.g., to differentiate between puns and non-puns. The six knowledge resources, from the most concrete to the most abstract, are Language, Narrative Strategy, Target, Situation, Logical Mechanism, and Script Opposition (Attardo, 2017b, pp. 127–128).

Regarding puns specifically, the most relevant knowledge resource is the Language knowledge resource. According to Attardo (2017b, p. 128), the Language knowledge resource contains a full description of the text on every linguistic level (phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical). Therefore, the Language knowledge resource should be able to be used to analyze how puns are made, whether by using a sequence of phonemes that could represent multiple morphemes as in example (1) or using morphological ambiguity as in example (2).

(1) "What is black and white and [r&Ed] all over?"

(2) “Teacher strikes idle kids”

(Attardo, 2017b, p. 129)

The other knowledge resources cover the description of certain elements of a joke. Narrative Strategy describes the placement of humor in a text, whether they use jab lines (humor or jokes placed in the middle of the text) or punch lines (humor or jokes placed at the end of the text); Target describes the “victim” of the humor or the “butt” of an offensive joke; Situation describes the background of events in the joke or humorous text; Logical Mechanism accounts for the resolution of the incongruity; while Script Opposition describes the abstract incongruity that generates humor itself, with three high-level oppositions: good/bad, normal/abnormal, and actual/non-actual (Attardo, 2017b, pp. 128–133).

There have been several research focusing on the use of humor and wordplay in advertisements and media. Tanaka (1992, 1994, pp. 69–70) theorized that puns are used in advertisement because they take more time to process in the readers’ or viewers’ minds, and are therefore both more attention-grabbing and more memorable.

Studies by Tsakona (2013) and Tsami (2020) focused on the metapragmatic aspects of humor in television advertisements in Greek. Tsakona (2013) studied how differences in sociocultural background and knowledge affected humor appreciation, while Tsami (2020) used Tsakona’s findings to discuss how humor in television advertisements stigmatized non-standard and regional varieties of Greek by portraying them as funny and laughable.

Lazović (2018) studied the use of puns in online bank advertisements in English and Serbian, concluding that puns are used to grab the readers’ attention and do not necessarily fulfill humorous functions. In contrast to that, Putri & Ariastuti (2019) analyzed how humor on the social media platform Twitter is used to create a brand image by the fast food chain Burger King, finding that humorous tweets were used initially to personalize their brand, and later on used to appeal to customers to buy more of their product. A study by Dynel (2020) also supported this thesis of using of humor as a tool for branding by analyzing how another fast food chain, Wendy’s, used aggressive humor known as “roasting” to increase interaction with internet users and build an image for their brand.

On the other hand, research on Japanese puns or *dajare* has mostly focused on analyzing them based on phonology. Otake (2010) divided *dajare* into three types based on how similar the phonemes are between the two words; homophonic *dajare* have two words with identical sounds, semi-homophonic *dajare* have two words with the same phonemes but with supersegmental differences like intonation and duration, while embedded *dajare* compare two words which are identical in parts, with additional phonemes in one of the words. Salisah & Sunarni (Salisah & Sunarni, 2020) elaborated on embedded *dajare*, noting that phonological similarity between the words does not guarantee similar or related meanings. Finally, Salisah et al. (2021) studied how *dajare* are formed in conversation, concluding that both the speaker and the hearer must be knowledgeable about both the field which contains the reference word and the field which contains the target word to appreciate a joke successfully.

Studies that specifically focused on *dajare* and wordplay in advertisements include Suzuki (2010) and Matsui (2007). Suzuki (2010) compared the use of *dajare* in a Japanese advertisement with the use of wordplay in English advertisement and concluded that the wordplay found in English

advertisements are more semantically creative than Japanese *dajare*, following Matsui's (2007) findings of polysemous wordplay in English-language advertisement.

However, this conclusion can be challenged by analyzing an example of polysemous *dajare* in Japanese advertisement. According to Tjandra (2016) polysemy is a paradigmatic sense relation in which a word could have more than one meaning. Therefore, a polysemous *dajare* should contain a word that could be interpreted with more than one meaning, instead of two words with identical sounds (homonyms). Several of such *dajare* can be found in the Japanese advertisement series titled "Santarou" produced by Japanese telecommunication company Au.

This study seeks to answer the question of what kind of polysemous semantic relationship can be used humorously as *dajare* in an advertisement. This research aims to describe polysemous *dajare* found in the Japanese advertisement series titled "Santarou" and how they are used in the aforementioned advertisement series. This study should provide novelty in findings of Japanese wordplay that based on polysemous words or phrases instead of the more common homophonic or semi-homophonic wordplay.

2 Methods

This research used the qualitative-descriptive method. The data were collected from the Japanese-language television advertisement titled "*Santarou*" produced by Au and published from 2016 to 2018. This data source was chosen because of its humorous tone and moderate length. Each advertisement in the series was presented as a brief scene around 30 seconds in length. Hence the *dajare* in them were contained in dialogue form and suitable for pragmatic analysis. Advertisements were determined to contain polysemous *dajare* when a joke used in the advertisement is based on the semantic ambiguity of a word or phrase.

Data collection was limited to dialogue containing *dajare* based on polysemy in accordance with the research objectives. The observation method as described by Mahsun (2012) was used to collect data. The data was collected in the form of dialogues observed from the advertisements through archival video channels on the YouTube platform (au, 2016a, 2016b, 2018). The dialogue was then transcribed in Japanese orthography and Latin transliteration. After that, the dialogue was translated into English with gloss and overall translation.

Data analysis was done with the identity method using extralinguistic elements (Mahsun, 2012), specifically the referential and pragmatic elements. The analysis was done based on Attardo's (2017b) General Theory of Verbal Humor with emphasis on the "Language" knowledge resource to see how polysemy is used to create wordplay in a humorous context. First, a possible meaning of a word or phrase was considered, and then a second meaning that could also be assigned to that word or phrase was noted. The *Shinmeikai* Japanese dictionary (Yamada et al., 2017) was consulted to confirm the multiple senses of a word or phrase. The "Situation" knowledge resource was also noted, especially in noting the reactions of the interlocutors to the use of *dajare* by a speaker.

3 Results and Discussion

The results of the study will be outlined in the following section. Each datum will be presented with a short description of the advertisement, then analysis in terms of the Language, Narrative Strategy, Situation, and Script Opposition knowledge resources. The Target knowledge resource will only be noted when relevant, e.g., if the text is offensive or contains aggressive humor. The Logical

Mechanism knowledge resource of all the data is playful cratyism or conflation of different meanings of words, as noted for all types of wordplay by Attardo et al. (2002).

Overall, polysemous *dajare* were found in three advertisements, two published in 2016, and one published in 2018. As the theme of the data source revolve around Japanese mythology, the *dajare* found in the data were centered around the word “*oni*” (a kind of Japanese mythological creature similar to a giant or an ogre) and its secondary senses used in contemporary language.

Datum (1) below is an example of polysemous *dajare* found in the data source.

- (1) 桃太郎：「あれ？鬼ちゃん。」
Momotarou: “Are? Oni-chan.”
Momotarou: oh Oni-chan
鬼ちゃん：「ああ、お前っす！」
Oni-chan: “Aa, omae ssu!”
Oni-chan: ah you cop
浦島太郎：「何してんの？」
Urashima Tarou: “Nani shiten no?”
Urashima Tarou: what doing SFP
鬼ちゃん：「鬼寒いで鬼うまいっすよ。」
Oni-chan: “**Oni-samui de oni-umai** ssu yo.”
Oni-chan: very-cold dat very-tasty cop SFP
かぐや姫：「おしろこ！」
Kaguyahime: “Oshiruko!”
Kaguyahime: red bean soup
鬼ちゃん：「さあ、鬼甘、鬼過多 鬼濃いめ、どうしましょう？」
Oni-chan: “Saa, **oni-ama, oni-kata, oni-koime**, doushimashou?”
Oni-chan: so extra-sweet extra-large extra-thick how do you want it
桃太郎：「え、何それ？」
Momotarou: “E, nani sore?”
Momotarou: eh what that
浦島太郎：「なんか分かんないけど 鬼甘 で！」
Urashima Tarou: “Nanka wakannai kedo **oni-ama** de!”
Urashima Tarou: a bit understand-neg but extra-sweet inst
鬼ちゃん：「えい、鬼甘ましましありましょう！」
Oni-chan: “Ei, **oni-ama** mashi mashi ari-mashou!”
Oni-chan: hey extra-sweet increase increase to be-volitional
かぐや姫：「じゃ、私も！」
Kaguyahime: “Ja, watashi mo!”
Kaguyahime: then I add
鬼ちゃん：「可愛い子ちゃんは頼んで。鬼可愛いっすから ね。」
Oni-chan: “Kawaii ko-chan wa tanonde. **Oni-kawaii** ssu kara ne.”
Oni-chan: cute girl top help-conj very-cute cop because SFP
浦島太郎：「女にも甘いなあ。」
Urashima Tarou: “Onna ni mo amai naa.”
Urashima Tarou: woman dat add sweet SFP
桃太郎：「鬼合わだね。」

Momotarou: “*Oni-awa da ne.*”

Momotarou: *very-fitting cop SFP*

アナウンサー: 「*au ショップで、鬼甘 するもらえます!*」

Anaunsaa: “*Au Shoppu de, oni-ama shiruko moraemasu!*”

Narrator: *Au Shop at extra-sweet shiruko receive*

Momotarou: ‘*Oh? Oni-chan.*’

Oni-chan: ‘*Ah, it’s you!*’

Urashima Tarou: ‘*What are you doing?*’

Oni-chan: ‘*[It’s] very tasty (oni-umai) when it’s very cold (oni-umai).*’

Kaguyahime: ‘*[It’s] red bean soup!*’

Oni-chan: ‘*So, how do you want it, extra-sweet (oni-ama), extra-large (oni-kata), or extra-thick (oni-koime)?*’

Momotarou: ‘*What is that?*’

Urashima Tarou: ‘*I don’t really understand, but extra-sweet, please!*’

Oni-chan: ‘*Hey, let’s make lots and lots of extra-sweet [red bean soup]!*’

Kaguyahime: ‘*Then, me too!*’

Oni-chan: ‘*A pretty girl [like you] helps. Because [you’re] very-cute (oni-kawaii)!*’

Urashima Tarou: ‘*[He’s] sweet with women, too.*’

Momotarou: ‘*It’s very fitting (oni-awa).*’

Narrator: ‘*Get extra-sweet red bean soup at Au Shop!*’

(au, 2016b)

Datum (1) is a 2016 advertisement for a promotion at the *Au Shop* website where users could get free red bean soup by answering a questionnaire. The advertisement featured a scene in a traditional Japanese market, where the characters Momotarou, Kaguyahime, and Urashima Tarou are walking. They encountered the character named Oni-chan manning one of the stalls in the market, selling red bean soup.

Table 1: Analysis of Datum (1)

Language	Multiple meanings of “ <i>oni</i> ” (‘Giant creature’ vs. ‘very’)
Narrative Strategy	Jab lines throughout the text
Situation	Confused comments by interlocutors
Script Opposition	Actual/Non-actual

As the name suggests, Oni-chan is an *oni*, defined in the Shinmeikai Japanese Dictionary as a creature from folklore with horns and fangs, noted for eating humans. The *dajare* in datum (1) comes from the repeated use of the adjective *oni-*, as in *oni-umai* (‘very-tasty’), *oni-ama* (‘extra-sweet’), *oni-kawaii* (‘very-cute’), et cetera. This is another meaning of the word *oni*, used in colloquial or slang language. It is an abbreviated form of the adjectival phrase *oni no you ni~* which is used as an intensifier similar to the English word “very” (Nihongo Zokugo Jiten, n.d.).

The Language knowledge resource in datum (1) therefore includes the polysemy of the word *oni*, which has both the referent or intended meaning of “an intensifier used in colloquial language” and the target meaning of “a creature from folklore, of which Oni-chan is a member.”

In terms of Narrative Strategy, the placement of the wordplay is scattered as jab lines in the text, which means they are used repeatedly, not just at the end.

The Situation knowledge resource is also relevant in datum (1), as the text highlights the *dajare* said by Oni-chan by having other characters comment on it. The other characters' dialogue expressed confusion, such as Momotarou's dialogue "*Nani sore*" ('what is that?') or Urashima Tarou's dialogue "*Nanka wakannai kedo*," ('I don't really understand, but—'). It showed that Oni-chan's use of the *dajare* inhibits communication, triggering the viewer to search for the target meaning and what is meant by the wordplay.

Finally, the overarching script opposition in datum (1) can be summed up as actual/non-actual, specifically between the actual meaning of *oni* used in the dialogue as a colloquial intensifier and the non-actual meaning of *oni* as the creature from folklore.

Datum (2) below features a similar *dajare* as seen in datum (1).

- (2) 桃太郎：「今年 はどんな 子 が入る のかな。」
Momotarou: "Kotoshi wa donna ko ga hairu no ka na."
Momotarou: this year top what child acc enter gen SFP
男：「新入生代表あいさつ！」
Otoko: "Shinnyuusei daihyou aisatsu!"
Man: new student representative greeting
赤鬼：「はい！」
Akaoni: "Hai!"
Akaoni: yes
鬼ちゃん：「よし、赤鬼！」
Oni-chan: "Yoshi, Akaoni!"
Oni-chan: okay Akaoni
桃太郎：「鬼ちゃん？」
Momotarou: "Oni-chan?"
Momotarou: Oni-chan
鬼ちゃん：「あれ、うちの子なんですよ」
Oni-chan: "Are, uchi no ko nan desu yo."
Oni-chan: that my child cop SFP
鬼ちゃん：「けっこう勉強 できるっすよ！」
Oni-chan: "Kekko benkyou dekiru ssu yo!"
Oni-chan: a lot studying cop SFP
浦島太郎：「子供しっかりしてる！」
Urashima Tarou: "Kodomo shikkari shiteru!"
Urashima Tarou: child hard working
赤鬼：「...学べる こと も 両親に感謝し...」
Akaoni: "...Manaberu koto mo ryoushin ni kansha-shi..."
Akaoni: study-poten matter add parents dat thankful
鬼ちゃん：「...しかも優しいでしょう？」
Oni-chan: "...Shika mo yasashii deshou?"
Oni-chan: only add kind cop
アナウンサー：「親子で 笑おう！ピタット 学割。」
Anaunsa: "Oyako de waraou! Pitatto gakuwari."
Narrator: parent-child with laugh-vol tight student discount

金太郎：「親ばか だな。」

Kintarou: "Oyabaka da na."

Kintarou: overfond parent cop SFP

桃太郎：「いや、鬼ばか。」【笑う】

Momotarou: "Iya, oni-baka. (Warau)"

Momotarou: no very-stupid (laugh)

赤鬼：「静かに！」

Akaoni: "Shizuka ni!"

Akaoni: be quiet

みんな：「すみません。」

Minna: "Sumimasen."

Everyone: sorry

Momotarou: 'I wonder what kind of children entered [the school] this year.'

Man: 'Greeting from the student representative!'

Akaoni: 'Yes!'

Oni-chan: 'Okay, Akaoni!'

Momotarou: 'Oni-chan?'

Oni-chan: 'That is my child.'

Oni-chan: 'He has studied a lot!'

Urashima Tarou: 'Such a hard-working child!'

Akaoni: '...It is thanks to the parents that we are even able to study....'

Oni-chan: '...Just [hearing] that is very nice, isn't it?'

Narrator: 'Laugh with your parents! Tight student discount.'

Kintarou: 'You're such a doting parent.'

Momotarou: 'No, [he's] very stupid (oni-baka).' (laughter)

Akaoni: 'Be quiet!'

Everyone: 'Sorry.'

(au, 2018)

In datum (2), the advertisement is promoting a student discount for the cellular data plan offered by *Au*. The text is set in a newly-enrolled student reception ceremony, with Momotarou, Kintarou, Urashima Tarou, and Oni-chan in attendance. It turns out that Oni-chan's son Akaoni is giving the greeting speech, which leads to Oni-chan's conversation with the other characters.

Table 2: Analysis of Datum (2)

Language	Multiple meanings of "oni" (‘Giant creature’ vs. ‘very’)
Narrative Strategy	Punchline
Situation	Student ceremony setting
Script Opposition	Actual/non-actual

From the Language knowledge resource, datum (2) has a similar polysemous *dajare* as in datum (1), that is the use of the phrase *oni-baka* (‘very-stupid’), with the referent sense being the colloquial intensifier, while the target sense is the creature from folklore. *Oni-baka* in the dialogue is also used as a response to a similar-sounding word, *oyabaka* (‘overfond parent’).

The difference between datum (2) and datum (1) lies in terms of Narrative Strategy, as the *dajare* in datum (2) is placed at the end of the text, and is therefore part of the punchline of the text.

In the Situation knowledge resource, datum (2) is set in a student ceremony, with the characters present including Oni-chan, who is a parent to Akaoni. This situation sets up Kintarou's remark about Oni-chan being an *oyabaka* ('doting parent') which is then used for the *dajare* by Momotarou by turning it into *oni-baka* ('very-stupid'). Akaoni then had to reprimand his own father and his friends, adding to the humor, since it could be said from such a scene that Oni-chan is stupid as joked by Momotarou.

The Script Oppositen in datum (2) is still the same abstract opposition, which is actual/non-actual, as they feature *dajare* with the same referent and target meanings.

Finally, datum (3) below contains a *dajare* based on a different meaning of *oni*.

- (3) 桃太郎：「こちら、鬼の鬼ちゃん。」
Momotarou: "Kochira, oni no Oni-chan."
Momotarou: this person oni gen Oni-chan
鬼ちゃん：「よろしくお願ひします。」
Oni-chan: "Yoroshiku onegaishimasu."
Oni-chan: nice to meet you
かぐや姫：「いつもお世話になっております。」
Kaguyahime: "Itsumo osewa ni natte orimasu."
Kaguyahime: thank you for your help
鬼ちゃん：「可愛い奥さんじゃないっすか。」
Oni-chan: "Kawaii okusan janaissu ka."
Oni-chan: cute your wife cop-neg SFP
桃太郎：「そんなことないよ！」
Momotarou: "Sonna koto nai yo!"
Momotarou: that matter neg SFP
かぐや姫：「おい。」
Kaguyahime: "Oi."
Kaguyahime: oi
桃太郎：「えっと、鬼ちゃんのうちは、どう？」
Momotarou: "Etto, Oni-chan no uchi wa, dou?"
Momotarou: ehm Oni-chan gen house top how
鬼ちゃん：「ああ、うち五人生まれたんっす。」
Oni-chan: "Aa, uchi gonin umaretan ssu."
Oni-chan: ah house 5 people born cop
浦島太郎：「子供いんの？」
Urashima Tarou: "Kodomo in no?"
Urashima Tarou: children to be SFP
金太郎：「結婚してたんだ？」
Kintarou: "Kekkonshiteta nda?"
Kintarou: marry-past cop
鬼ちゃん：「家族一人一人養う的な。」
Oni-chan: "Kazoku hitorihitori yashinai teki na."
Oni-chan: family each provide -like SFP
浦島太郎：「ええ、どんな奥さん？」
Urashima Tarou: "Ee, donna oku-san?"

Urashima Tarou: *eh how your wife*
 鬼ちゃん：「ああ、鬼嫁です。」
 Oni-chan: “Aa, **oni-yome** desu.”
 Oni-chan: *ah cruel-wife cop*
 桃太郎：「あ、一緒。」
 Momotarou: “A, *issho*.”
 Momotarou: *ah same*
 かぐや姫：「おい。」
 Kaguyahime: “Oi.”
 Kaguyahime: *oi*
 みんな：【笑う】
 Minna: [warau]
 Everyone: [laughs]
 アナウンサー：「家族一人一人のスマホが割引。AU スマートバリュー」
 Anaunsaa: “Kazoku hitorihitori no sumaho ga waribiki. AU sumaato baryuu.”
 Narrator: *family each gen smartphone acc discount. Au smart value.*

Momotarou: ‘This is Oni-chan, the oni.’
 Oni-chan: ‘Nice to meet you.’
 Kaguyahime: ‘Nice to meet you too.’
 Oni-chan: ‘Your wife is cute, isn’t she?’
 Momotarou: ‘Ah, not so much.’
 Kaguyahime: ‘Oi.’
 Momotarou: ‘Eh, what about your family?’
 Oni-chan: ‘At my family we already have five children.’
 Urashima Tarou: ‘You have children?’
 Kintarou: ‘You’re married?’
 Oni-chan: ‘Our family sort of provides for themselves.’
 Urashima Tarou: ‘What is your wife like?’
 Oni-chan: ‘Ah, she’s an oni wife/cruel wife (**oni-yome**).’
 Momotarou: ‘Ah, same.’
 Kaguyahime: ‘Oi.’
 Everyone: [laughs]
 Narrator: ‘Individual discount for family members. Au Smart Value.’

(au, 2016a)

Datum (3) is an advertisement for a discounted family cellular data package. The dialogue takes place in Momotarou’s family house, where he and his friends Kintarou and Urashima Tarou introduced Oni-chan to Momotarou’s wife, Kaguyahime.

Table 3: Analysis of Datum (3)

Language	Multiple meanings of “oni” ('Giant creature' vs. 'cruel wife')
Narrative Strategy	Punchline
Situation	Conversation about family between friends
Script Opposition	Bad/Good

In the Language knowledge resource, the *dajare* comes from Oni-chan’s response to Momotarou’s question about his wife. Oni-chan described her as *oni-yome*, which is a slang term

for a ‘cruel wife’ or ‘termagant wife’. As with datum (1) and datum (2), the target meaning is the original meaning of *oni*, in this context referring to Oni-chan’s wife who is an *oni* as well.

The text in datum (3) places its *dajare* at the end as part of its punchline. The Situation knowledge resource is also used to set up the conversation about family, also adding the humor when Momotarou agreed with Oni-chan’s statement. The ‘wife who is an *oni*’ sense could not apply to Momotarou’s own wife Kaguyahime, which implies that he meant to call her a ‘cruel wife’. Kaguyahime replied “oi”, seemingly offended, making datum (3) to be the only text in the data to have a Target element. In this case, the Target is wives in general, or Kaguyahime and Oni-chan’s wife specifically.

The Script Opposition in datum (3) is between the referent sense ‘cruel wife’ and target sense ‘a wife who is an *oni*’. The abstract opposition between these two senses is bad/good, as shown in Kaguyahime’s reaction to being labeled with the former sense. Therefore, datum (3) has a different type of Script Opposition compared to datum (1) and datum (2).

The results outlined from data (1)-(3) show that polysemous *dajare* found in the data are based around one word in particular, *oni*. The word *oni*, while originally meaning ‘a creature from folklore with horns and fangs’, has two additional uses in the context of slang and colloquial language, namely as an intensifier when used as an adjective, and meaning ‘cruel’ or ‘termagant’ when used with the word *yome* (‘wife’). There is an overlap of these senses as they are represented by the same morpheme *oni*, but they are otherwise distinct to each other and “opposed” in terms of script. The use of these multiple senses of the word *oni* shows an example of Japanese wordplay which are based on polysemy rather than homophony or semi-homophony.

4 Conclusion

It can be concluded that polysemous *dajare* wordplay in the data revolves around the incongruity between the original meaning of *oni* and its derivation in slang and colloquial language. The humor is also supported by reactions from interlocutors within the text like confusion, laughter, or offense.

As polysemous *dajare* have been found in the researched advertisement series, it may also be found in other settings. In the practical use for advertising, the novelty of Japanese wordplay based on polysemy could also be used to differentiate such advertisements compared to the more common homophonic or semi-homophonic wordplay.

Further research can be done to investigate how polysemous *dajare* are used. Since the data used in this research revolves around the wordplay of one word in a audiovisual advertisement series, further research can be done on how polysemous *dajare* are used in other settings, such as conversations, narratives such as novels and dramas, or written advertisements.

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