

**The Lexical Fields of NEWS WEB EASY and
Asahi Shogakusei Shimbun Vocabulary:
Focusing on Word Usage Rate and Word Frequency**

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Summary

This paper compares the vocabulary used in digital and print media news articles published in the NEWS WEB EASY (NWE) and the Asahi Shogakusei Shimbun (ASS), which are written in “*Yasashii Nihongo* (Easy Japanese).” The selected articles target different types of readers, non-native speakers and Japanese elementary school students, respectively. This paper reports early research of news vocabulary from the perspective of lexical fields to use the “*Yasashii Nihongo*” news in the beginner classes. This study examines 962 articles from the NWE and 552 articles from the ASS, published between June 2016 and March 2017. The study used the *Kadokawa Ruigo Shin-Jiten* (Kadokawa New Thesaurus) for the classification of lexical fields. The NWE and the ASS have similar usage rates for each of the lexical fields. Among the ten major fields, *seijō* (properties) accounts for approximately twenty-five percent, and *hendō* (changes), *kōdō* (behaviors), *shakai* (societies), and *gakugei* (arts and sciences) each account for approximately ten percent of the news vocabulary. The NWE has a high usage rate of low-difficulty basic verbs in the behaviors and changes fields, whereas the ASS also has a high usage rate of low-difficulty verbs in the behaviors and changes fields, it, moreover, has a high usage rate for *kango* nouns that can be used as *sahen* verbs. Although basic verbs are less difficult, they are ambiguous, and it is easier to define *kango* nouns than ambiguous verbs using a dictionary. The articles in the ASS are short and seldom use *i*-adjectives in the *seikō* (attributes) field like normally highly-utilized words, such as *ureshii* (happy), which is a trend in NWE articles that slightly deviate from the topic. Although shorter articles can be easier to understand, the use of certain types of words helps readers understand even lengthy articles, such as the *i*-adjectives for attributes.

Key words : “*Yasashii Nihongo* (Easy Japanese)”news, news vocabulary, lexical fields, word usage rate, word frequency