

Newly Published Dictionary of Railway Technology Terms (Second Edition) and List of Railway Term Equivalents in Other Languages

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The greatest obstacle for any global project is language — communication with the world at large is impossible unless language barriers are removed. The unique qualities of the Japanese language make communication especially difficult for Japanese businesspeople pursuing commercial ventures on the world stage.

To commemorate its 10th anniversary in 1997, the Railway Technical Research Institute (RTRI) published the Dictionary of Railway Technology Terms. The dictionary listed keywords in Japanese with their English equivalents, and a supplement included a list of equivalents in French, German and Chinese beside the Japanese original. But because it was an early trial effort the content was far from complete. Also, because the supplement was published separate from the main dictionary, it was difficult to use. And so, to celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2007, we have published the second edition of Dictionary of Railway Technology Terms, a complete revision and expansion of the original. A CD-ROM List of Railway Term Equivalents in Other Languages is included.

We had hoped to harmonize our list of equivalents with the railway terminology database, RailLexic, compiled by the Union Internationale des Chemins de Fer (UIC), but had to abandon the plan at an early stage after we realized that, more often than we had assumed, terms in other languages have different conceptual shades of meaning in Japanese. We therefore tried as much as possible to harmonize our effort with the UIC railway terminology database, while adding explanatory text for terms that spring from different concepts.

The second edition was designed for use in the age of the worldwide web, so we released the contents online at the same time we marketed the book form. Anyone can access the dictionary and list of equivalents for free from the RTRI website. There was a concern that this would hinder sales of

the paper and CD-ROM versions, but libraries and other institutions will always have a strong need for them, and we realized that making them available online would be a form of advertising promoting sales of the paper publication and disc.

One big advantage of an online dictionary is that entries can be added and edited at any time. This makes it possible to keep providing users with the latest information, and we could even let users themselves modify entries, as is done now for Wikipedia and similar online reference works. Unfortunately, one drawback of our online dictionary is that it is currently available only in Japanese. At a later date, we hope to modify it to make it accessible to people in other languages as well.

RTRI is a member of the UIC Terminology Group, and is participating in its compilation of RailLexic. Through our ties with UIC and other railway organizations worldwide, we hope to improve the content of the List of Railway Term Equivalents in Other Languages. In this way, too, we shall contribute to the globalization of rail technology and strengthen our ability to serve as a provider of railway-related information.

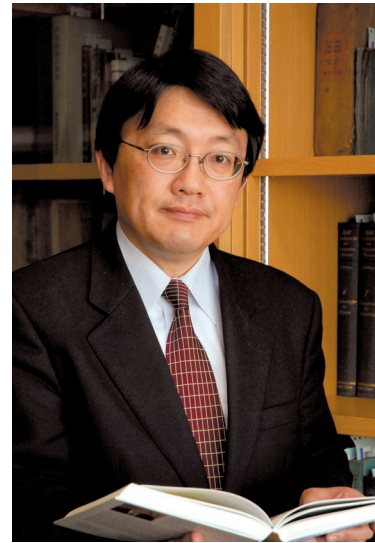


Fig. 1 Second edition of Dictionary of Railway Technology Terms published by Maruzen Co., Ltd. (2006/ISBN4-621-07765-1 C3551), and the companion CD-ROM, List of Railway Term Equivalents in Other Languages

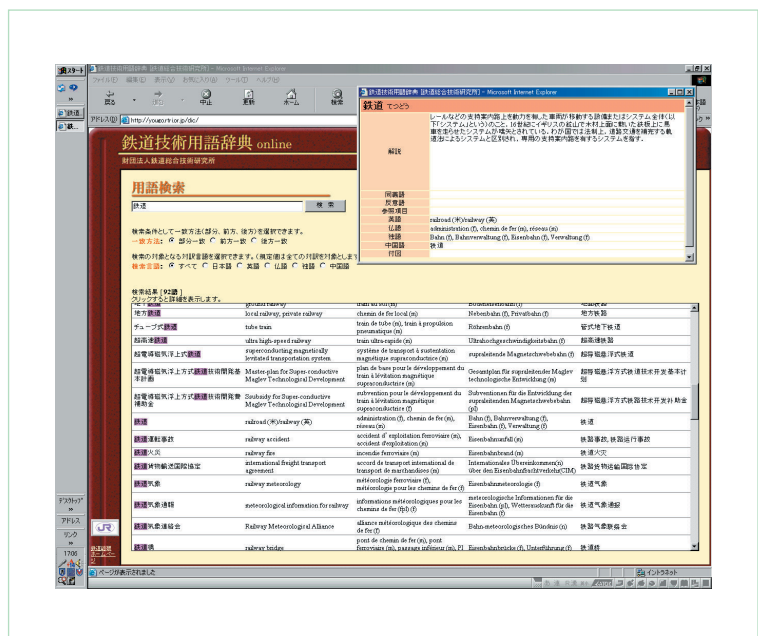


Fig. 2 Sample search screen for the online second edition of Dictionary of Railway Technology Terms, <http://yougo.rtri.or.jp/dic/>