

An Instructor Support System for Preparing Japanese Teaching Materials Focusing on Differences of Meanings between Chinese Character and Japanese Kanji

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Abstract: In this paper, we describe development of an instructor support system for native Japanese teachers who instruct Japanese to international students focusing on the differences in meanings between Chinese and Japanese. Although native speakers of Chinese who are learning Japanese have basic knowledge of Kanji (Chinese character), it is hard for them to learn Japanese. In this research, we analyze the difference between both languages and propose how to give questions about meanings of Kanji to Chinese speakers. Then, we describe an instructor support system for preparing Japanese teaching materials.

Keywords: KaLeSy-CJ, Differences between Chinese and Japanese, Linguistic Education

Introduction

For the purpose of global exchanges, the number of Japanese learners who are native Chinese speakers has been increasing every year. Therefore, it is necessary and important to develop an effective Japanese learning system for native speakers of Chinese. For instance, with regard to researches on meanings of Kanji[1], it is said Kanji words that have different meanings in both languages are very difficult to understand. In this paper, we analyze the differences of the meanings and propose how to make questions about meanings of Kanji for Chinese speakers. We also describe development of an instructor support system for preparing the questions as Japanese teaching materials focusing on differences of meanings between Chinese characters and Japanese Kanji.

1. Analysis of differences between Chinese and Japanese

Many Kanji have same meaning in both Japanese and Chinese. However, it is well-known that several Kanji mean different things in Japanese and Chinese. So this causes misunderstanding in the meaning. Some examples are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Example of differences of meaning between Chinese and Japanese

Example	a.新聞	b.単位	c.反対	d.関心
Japanese	newspaper	unit, credit	disagree, opposite	interest
Chinese	news	unit, one's place of work	disagree	interest, care

2. An instructor Support System for Preparing Japanese Teaching Materials

Our instructor support system has the following features:

(1) All Kanji contained in a question are automatically checked whether they have differences of meanings between Chinese and Japanese. (2) Our system gives the type of difference such as "Same Meaning", "Only Japanese", "Only Chinese". (3) Our system gives the explanations according to each type of difference.

The system interface is shown in Figure 1. If the Check Button is pushed, our system automatically checks Japanese text inputted by a teacher in advance. The meanings of the Kanji words in the text are classified with difference types. For example, “どちらの単位にお勤めですか。” means “Where do you work?”. In this sentence, “単位” means “one’s place of work” only in Chinese. Our system can offer this sentence for Japanese teachers, and s/he can understand this exceptive meaning in Chinese. The teacher can select the sentences and the explanations of the difference by pushing “>>” button. In addition, the teacher can make sentences by modifying the sentences. The new sentences are stored in the database.

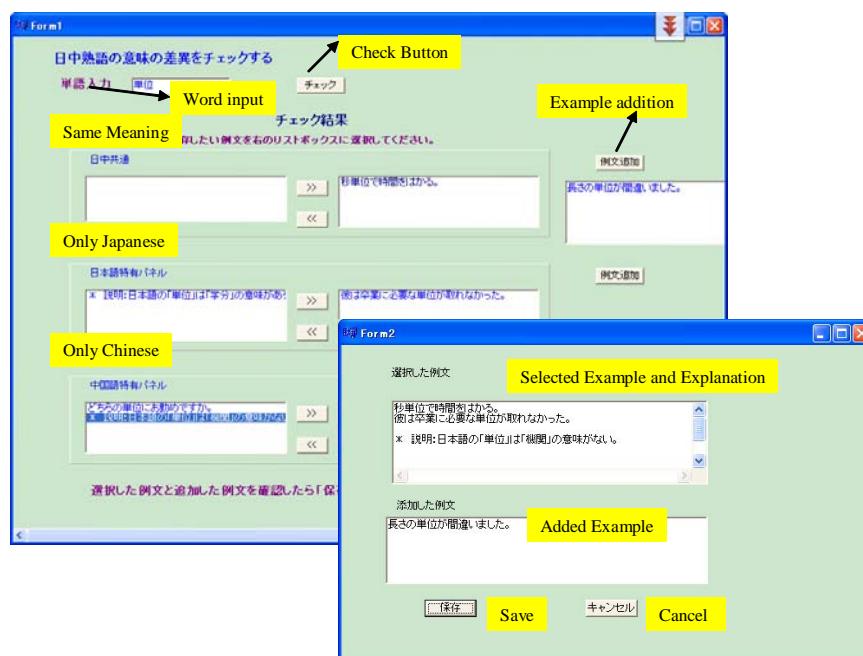


Figure 1. Interface of the instructor support system

3. Conclusion

This paper described an instructor support system based on the differences of meanings between Chinese characters and Japanese Kanji. Our system helps Japanese teachers who do not know Chinese well to give suitable questions for Chinese students. As for our future work, we will check the performance of our system in real situations and improve our system through the use of our system.

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References

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