

The First Japanese-Japanese Dictionary for Non-Japanese Using the Defining Vocabulary

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Abstract : This research introduces the concept of a monolingual Japanese dictionary for non-native speakers of Japanese, whose temporal title is Dictionary of Contemporary Japanese for Advanced Learners (DCJAL). As the language market is very small compared with English, a monolingual Japanese dictionary for non-native speakers, containing sufficient entries, has not been published yet. In such a dictionary environment, Japanese-language learners are using bilingual dictionaries or monolingual Japanese dictionaries for Japanese people. This research started in 2017, as a project team which consists of four Japanese and two non-native speakers, all of whom are linguists of the Japanese language. The team has been trying to propose the concept of a monolingual dictionary for non-native speakers of Japanese and to provide the entry list, the definition samples, the list of defining vocabulary, and the writing manual. As the result of seven-year research, DCJAL has come to have 28,060 head words, 539 entry examples, 4,598-word defining vocabulary, and the writing manual. First, the number of the entry was determined as about 30,000, based on an experimental method using existing six dictionaries. To make the entry list satisfying this number, words suitable for DCJAL were extracted from the Tsukuba corpus of the Japanese language, and later the entry list was adjusted according to the experience as Japanese instructor. Among the head words of the entry list, 539 words were selected and added with lexicographical information such as proficiency level, pronunciation, writing system (hiragana, katakana, kanji, or alphabet), definition, example sentences, idiomatic expression, synonyms, antonyms, grammatical information, sociolinguistic information, and etymology. While writing the definition of the above 539 words, the list of the defining vocabulary was constructed, based on frequent vocabulary used in a Japanese monolingual dictionary. Although the concept of DCJAL has been almost perfected, it may need some more adjustment, and the research is continued.

Keywords : monolingual dictionary, the Japanese language, non-native speaker of Japanese, defining vocabulary

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