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S08 Recognition of Kanji Jukugo, Hanja'e and Chinese compounds: S1

A cross-linguistic comparison of Japanese, Chinese,
and Korean word recognition

漢字熟語の認知：日本語，中国語，韓国語の比較

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概要

Chinese, Japanese, and Korean languages share a large portion of vocabulary which is based on Chinese characters. They are called Kanji Jukugo in Japanese, Hanja'e in Korean, and Ci in Chinese. They are so-called cross-language cognates. Considerable amounts of phonological and semantic overlaps are found across the three vocabularies. However, the writing systems for each language are different; Korean uses Hangul, Chinese Hanzi, and Japanese Kanji and Kana. The aim of this symposium is to make clear what is common and different in reading Kanji Jukugo, Hanja'e, and Ci, and to get some practical knowledge that can be applied to learning and teaching these languages as a second language.

Korean Hangul writing system is known to be a very shallow orthography. However, Prof. Park and his colleagues, using a diversity of tasks such semantic categorization, phrase verification, picture-word naming, etc. with homophones and pseudohomophones as materials, have found that orthography rather than phonology is the major source of constraints in accessing the meaning of words written in Hangul. However, Hangul orthography is ambiguous in that each constituent of Hanja'e usually corresponds to more than two morphemes. Morphological priming effects-omnipresent in the processing of Kanji Jukugo and Chinese compounds-have not been reported for Hanja'e.

There is only limited variation in Japanese sounds, resulting in a large number of homophonic words. Adopted as a writing system for the Japanese language, Chinese characters distinguish these homophonic words. Yet, homophonic effects were observed in the processing of visually-present kanji compounds. Single kanji can also yield various Kanji Jukugo (kanji compound words), creating spread activations in the mental lexicon. Prof. Tamaoka will introduce recent studies regarding Japanese kanji and their compounds in this symposium.

Universal Phonology Principle (Perfetti & Zhang, 1996) and Strong Phonological Theory (Frost, 1998) claim that phonology is necessary for lexical access and that phonological recoding is a mandatory phase of print processing. Prof. Chen and his colleagues, however, have shown that visual information is more important than phonological information in Chinese word recognition. Moreover, their findings suggest that phonological information is not processed stronger or faster than orthographic or semantic information in Chinese word recognition. Prof. Chen will also introduce his recent research on optical imaging of phonological processing across the Chinese and English writing systems.