

Re: kanji/chinese/japanese

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Gabor Farkas wrote:

- > hi,
- >
- > *short version:*
- > *is half of the words in japanese language chinese?*
- >

is half of the words in english language french? :)

- > *long version:*
- (snip..)
- >
- > *so it seems that when they invented the word for airport, they took the*
- > *kanji for sky and the kanji for harbor.*
- >
- > *but the japanese word for sky and harbor is (\$B6u (B, \$B\$=\$i (B) and (\$B9A (B, \$B\$_\$J\$H (B).*
- >
- > *i understand that as usually, they used the on(chinese) reading.what i*
- > *don't understand is: why?.*
- >
- > *but what i don't understand is that what about people who do not know*
- > *the kanji? like children?*
- >

children just learn the words phonetically.

They can learn what is /kuukoo/, what is /empitsu/ what is /jitensha/, what are /terebi/, /gakkoo/, /densha/, /shimbunshi/, /hikooki/, etc., before learning how they are written.

- > *my native language is hungarian, but i'm quite fluent also in slovak*
- > *(because i live in slovakia), and i understand german too.*
- > *airport in those languages:(accents removed)*
- > *hungarian: repuloter: flying square*
- > *slovak: letisko: a place where you can fly*
- > *german: flughafen: a flying harbour / a harbour for flying things*
- >
- > *so, the same way as in english, it's made from flying and harbour.*
- >

- > *if i tell airport to a small child, who knows what does air and port*
- > *mean, he will kind of understand what an airport is.*

I bet that the children, who live far from the sea, and just near an airport, would learn the word "repulter", "letisko", "flughafen", or "airport" before learning what's hafen or port is...

- > *maybe he will imagine a harbour in the clouds, where ships flying in the*
- > *skies arrive, but still he will have a quite good understanding.*
- >
- > *but what happens when you tell a japanese child \$B\$/\$&\$3\$& (B? will he know*
- > *that it's made of sky+harbor?*

>
Yes, when they learn to read/write \$B!!6u9A (B. :)

- > *why are new japanese words (i chose airport because it should be quite*
- > *new) spelled as chinese words?*
- >

Because combining kanji to mean something new is a convenient way of making new words, as the need to the new words arises.

- > *i know that probably the answer is:because it is like that. live with*
- > *that, but i'd like to understand it...*
- >
- > *questions:*
- > *why is it like that? (i know that in the past, when the japanese people*
- > *started to write, they used the chinese symbols and so on. but when in*
- > *the 19/20–th century they invent a new word, why don't they use the*
- > *kunyomis? or i reformulate: when they invent a WORD, why don't the base*
- > *it on the SAYING/audio/voice part? why base it on the writing?)*
- > *is it not a problem for them?*

Probably because the words combined from kunyomi words, (we say yamatokotoba) would be very long syllables. We had a fun making a yamatokotoba words to describe everyday things... like toomimi for telephone, hiyashibako for refrigerators, etc. :)

- > *does this mean that a lot of words (half of all?) in japanese are in*
- > *fact pronounced as chinese? (afaik chinese and japanese doesn't have*
- > *much in common...aren't they worried about such a 'contamination'?)*
- >

A lot of Japanese words compound from kanji, are pronounced as "ancient Chinese pronunciation heard by ancient Japanese people of the time". :)

Chinese and Japanese belong to different language groups, so gramatically, or syntactically they don't have much in common. But many languages, related or unrelated, can borrow the words from another language, or make their own words based on the borrowed word. A little thinking will make you find a lot of English words, compound from Latin, Greek or French origines.

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(Well, English and Latin have more closer relation than Japanese and Chinese, but they are not in the same group inside Indo-European languages.

The similarity between the words like "pater" and "father" are due to having same origine of Indo-European languages, but using the words like "language", "compound", "origines", or new word like "multimedia", "internet", etc., are using the borrowed words.)

— Why they made the word "internet", although children these days don't learn Latin in school? 8)

Aren't they worried about such a 'contamination'?

Well, once accustomed, we tend to feel the borrowed words just like our own.

> *or maybe i just don't understand something.. :)*

>

> *thanks,*

> *gabor*

welcome.

muchan