

Chinese Aspects Corresponding to Japanese "V-te iru" Form

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This is the comparative study of aspect between the Japanese and Chinese languages , focussing on Japanese "V-te iru "and the Chinese aspects corresponding to it .

The purpose of this paper is to examine these factors especially for the native speakers of Chinese which cause the critical errors in the choice of aspect forms, and to search applicable ways for Japanese language teaching by the result of findings.

One of the factors which gives learners difficulties to master the right choice in Japanese aspect is indistinctness of the criteria of lexical category of verbs and co-occurrence rules of aspect forms and verb categories, because they are not pararell to those of Chinese. It is also difficult for learners to choose the appropriate type of aspect in each context, unless there is a distinctive understanding of the contextual functions of aspect forms in both languages including overlaps and divergencies .

In order to analyze the aspectual features of both languages, first I set up the common elements as an analyzing tool which compose the meaning of verbs , for there are some certain regularities in the way of coherence between the lexical categories of verbs and the aspect forms in the both languages.

As for Japanese "V-te iru ", the most critical elements that diverge the aspectual meanings into two kinds, such as <progressive > and <state of result >, are attribute to two types of semantic features of verb such as [\pm process] and [\pm limit]. The aspectual meaning of <progressive> is drawn from [+process] ,and the <state of result > is drawn from [+limit]. The similar consideration can be applied to Chinese verb categories and aspect forms . But not only these two of the semantic features are critical elements to classify Chinese verb categories and types of aspects, but also semantic feature [\pm state] is necessary to

classify them as a consequence.

Secondly, by using one Japanese novel ("Madogiwa no Totto-chan" written by T.Kuroyanagi) and its Chinese translation as raw materials, I can observe 264 examples of "V-te iru" and the corresponding Chinese translations.

The results are as follows:

It is definite that the verbs realizing <progressive> aspect are necessary to have [+process] in both Japanese and Chinese. In addition to that, <progressive> "V-te iru" is translated into three kinds of aspect forms, such as "zai V", "V-zhe" and "V-le". It shows that these Chinese aspect forms reveal three implicit aspectual meanings of "V-te iru", which cannot be easily judged from the superficial form of "V-te iru" alone. "Zai V" represents <progressive foreground> of <progressive> "V-te iru". "V-zhe" represents <progressive background>. "V-le" represents <durative> only if it co-occurs with a component of period of time, and also represents <awareness> after the action has been completed.

Realizing <state of result> aspect, Japanese verbs must have the semantic feature of [+limit] in "V-te iru" form, corresponding Chinese verbs are two types. One is having [+state] and the other is having [+limit]. [+state] verbs are characterized by having the meaning that shows actual existence as a result of action of the verb. [+limit] verbs, on the other hand, are characterized by having the meaning of non-existence after the action of verb.

As far as having observed from the point of Japanese "V-te iru", it seems that Chinese aspect forms select contextual meaning more precisely, and lexically more fractionated Chinese verbs are have strong restriction of choice of aspect according to the meaning of verbs. I only examine three kinds of Chinese aspect forms through "V-te iru" in this paper. But it is necessary to examine other kinds of aspectual expressions which have been observed in the raw materials I have collected, and also necessary to observe Japanese aspects from the point of each of the Chinese aspect forms.