

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CHINESE, JAPANESE AND KOREAN (CJK) SERVICE FROM THE USERS' POINT OF VIEW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY LIBRARY

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After CP Tang's presentation on the Australian National Chinese, Japanese and Korean Service (ANCJKS), I am going to relate the experience of library users and library staff at the East Asian Collection (EAC), University of Sydney Library, in using the ANCJKS in searching and cataloguing.

Online Catalogue at the East Asian Collection

The Online Catalogue at the East Asian Collection has changed to the web access format (WebPAC) as from December 1998, running via a separate CJK port with the special CJK software, WinMASS. The WebPAC at EAC now supports both the display of CJK scripts and search in those scripts. WinMASS also allows library users to access and browse the Internet in CJK scripts. One of the public terminals display the ANCJKS WebPAC, side by side with the local WebPAC.

Library staff work stations at the East Asian Collection

Library staff work stations at the East Asian Collection are set in both window and DOS environment. The software MASS, which works in window environment, is used for cataloguing Chinese, Japanese and Korean materials. Records are found or created first in the ANCJKS and are ftp'ed to local system afterwards. The JOIN card, which is DOS based and supports over 60,000 CJK characters, is mainly used for cataloguing Chinese materials.

Merits of the ANCJKS from library users' point of view

As library users can view CJK vernacular scripts in the ANCJKS, there is no ambiguity in meaning when compared to viewing only romanisation. I am sure we all agree on this.

A large number of our library users at the East Asian Collection know more than one East Asian language. When library users search the database in Kanji, for example, Chinese and Korean records with the same character can also be retrieved. Most characters in Chinese, Japanese and Korean with the same meaning are written in the same form, but they are sometimes written slightly differently. The System knows which characters are in fact the same word and is able to retrieve records in 3 languages (CJK). Our researchers are delighted that the System is able to help them to find more resources.

The System is particularly helpful to students and researchers who are familiar with one East Asian language and are learning a second East Asian language. For example, students who know Chinese language and are learning Japanese can find materials on a specific Japanese author. They can search the System in scripts without having to know how to pronounce or romanise the name of a Japanese author which is often difficult.

As our researchers and postgraduates come from different countries (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan and Korea), they are used to different input methods in searching the System. In the instance of Chinese Studies, postgraduates from China are used to search the System in Pinyin; those from Hong Kong are used to the dictionary form of using radicals; while those from Taiwan are in favour of using the Zhuyin Fuhao. The Chinese input method of WinMASS can cater for all our users' needs, offering all the above input methods. Likewise, Japanese and Korean records can be retrieved via romanisation, the dictionary-radical form and Japanese/Korean typewriter keyboard. In general, our library users in Japanese and Korean Studies are happy to search by romanisation.

Our library users find the ANCJKS helpful in verifying bibliographical references, especially for personal names, dates of birth of authors and reign of emperors etc. Locating an item and requesting for interlibrary-loans are always important for researchers. At present, our users can find more bibliographic references in the ANCJKS than locations for their required items in Australia. This shortage of location is not the shortcomings of the System, but it's the problem of whether librarians have time to input more holdings in the System.

Merits of the ANCJKS from librarians' point of view

Library staff at our campus find the shared cataloguing in the ANCJKS resourceful and convenient. In addition to using the large numbers of bibliographic records originated from Library of Congress and the National Diet Library of Japan in the ANCJKS, we can download records from the RLIN database to the ANCJKS. The hit-rate in RLIN is high. It's our policy not to do original cataloguing. We find that it's easy to download records from RLIN or to clone records.

Room for improvement

At present, any user can access the ANCJKS WebPAC, not limiting to members of ANCJKS. Our library users experienced difficulties in accessing the CJK database via the Web access in the beginning of the year. This has been improved by our now dedicating 2 of our 5 CJK system ports, for which we subscribe, to WebPAC. Perhaps the priority of access to ANCJKS WebPAC for member libraries should be looked at.