NEWS RELEASE

NII Inter-University Research Institute Corporation
Research Organization of Information and Systems
National Institute of Informatics

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CiNii Research automatic translation function trial version launched
— Making it possible for users who do not understand Japanese to search for Japanese papers —

The Inter-University Research Institute Corporation Research Organization of Information and Systems, National Institute of Informatics (NII; Director-General: Sadao Kurohashi; Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) will provide a trial version of the CiNii Research automatic translation function from Monday, October 21, 2024, with the aim of expanding the use of the academic information search service CiNii Research[*1] developed and provided by NII, and especially to promote its spread among non-Japanese speakers. By using this feature, it becomes possible to search for Japanese papers using English keywords and also to translate into English and display the titles and authors of the searched Japanese papers, which will greatly enhance the convenience of users who do not understand Japanese.

Based on the information gained through providing this trial version, NII plans to examine further functional enhancements to expand the global distribution and use of Japanese academic information.

Background of New Function Development

CiNii Research mainly contains papers written in Japan, and since half of these papers are written in Japanese, it was necessary to use Japanese keywords to search for Japanese papers. For this reason, users accessing CiNii Research from overseas still account for only 15% of the total, and how to disseminate information about Japanese papers and expand their use overseas has become an issue.
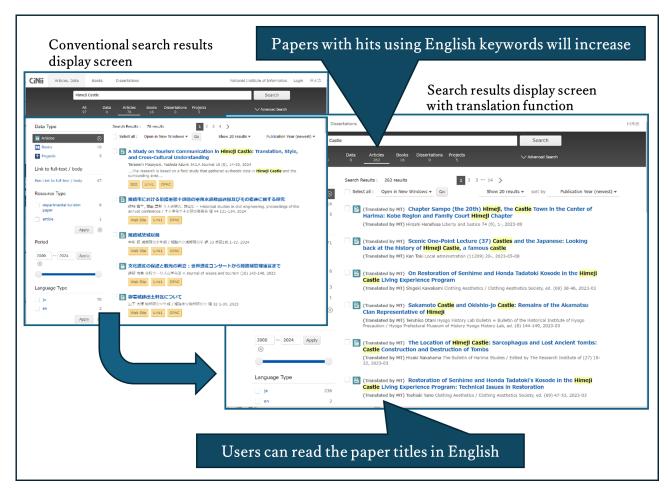
Features and Expected Effects of New Functions

Therefore, NII made use of machine translation to create English indexes in advance for the metadata (titles, authors, abstracts, etc.) of Japanese papers included in CiNii Research. An evaluation was conducted to ensure that the metadata of the Japanese papers could be matched with English keyword inputs, and the results confirmed that opportunities to discover Japanese papers in English significantly improved (the number of search results increased by about 1.5 times).[*2]

Following this, NII developed a trial version that extends the metadata of all Japanese papers included in CiNii Research into English. In the trial version, by additionally implementing a function to display a list of Japanese papers shown as search results in English, users who had previously been unable to use CiNii Research due to not understanding Japanese will be able to search for Japanese papers using English keywords, which is expected to promote the use of Japanese papers from overseas.

Conventional search results display screen

Papers with hits using English keywords will increase

Search results display screen with translation function

Users can read the paper titles in English

Release Date and Future Plans

The trial version developed this time retains the existing ease of use of CiNii Research while enhancing searching and displaying results when entering English keywords. Japanese-to-English translation is pre-executed in bulk, and the translation results are accumulated, so there is no delay in search time compared to existing services. This trial version will be released on October 21, 2024 (Monday) on CiNii Labs,[3] which is a portal site for publishing CiNii Research experimental services and content. Based on the results of the trial, the plan is to incorporate this feature into the official version of CiNii Research and offer it during FY2025.

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