Nihongo Sensei 1.1

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Basics

Introduction to Nihongo Sensei

How to

Take a Quiz

Create a Quiz

Edit a Quiz

Reference

Acknowledgments

About Neurosoft

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Acknowledgments

Introduction

Nihongo Sensei is a program written in Windows that displays a word in Japanese characters and uses the sound card to say the word simultaneously. The user inputs vocabulary words to study and the program creates a quiz. The program can also print quizzes with scores, edit quizzes in Japanese, and keep statistics of progress. The user can concentrate on certain words for repeated practice based on previous scores.   The program teaches Japanese vocabulary words with both visual and auditory prompts.

About Neurosoft

Neurosoft was founded in the spring of 1993 by myself (Ben Gerdemann.) Currently Neurosoft's only product is Nihongo Sensei, but several more products are expected to be released by the end of the year. At this time I'm a junior attending West Albany High School.

Taking a Quiz

Purpose

To show Japanese words in a quiz and have user input English

Overview

The two percentage bars on the screen keep track of your progress.   The top one keeps your score on the current quiz. The bottom one shows how well you know the current word. For example if you have missed the word 'sakana' five times and got it right once the bottom bar would show 1 of 6.

Steps
1. Start at the main screen
2. Double click on a quiz on the left
3. When the quiz windows appears type the English translation for the displayed word
4. Repeat step three until the button says done
5. Choose done

Creating a Quiz

Purpose

To give a new quiz a filename and description

Steps

1. Start at the main screen
2. Click New Quiz
3. Type a DOS filename on the right and an 80 character description on the left
4. Choose OK
5. Edit your new quiz (See Editing a Quiz)

Editing a Quiz

Purpose

To add new words, delete words, change words, change the quiz name and reset scores.

Steps

1. Start at the main screen
2. Click on a quiz to edit
3. Click on Edit Quiz

To change a word

1. Click on the part of the word (English or Romaji)
2. Type the new text
3. Press return

To delete a word

1. Place the cursor on the word to delete
2. Click Delete Problem

To add a word

1. Click Add Problem
2. Fill in the English and Romaji for the word at the bottom of the screen

Overviews

Quizzes

Quizzes are an important part of Nihongo Sensei.   A quiz is a file with English words and their Japanese translations.   Also inside the quiz is a percentage score for each word.   Every time you take a quiz the file is updated to show how many times you correctly translated a word and how many times you did not. These statistics are used to group vocabulary words in a quiz into three different levels (easy, medium, and hard.)

Japanese Language

The Japanese language consists of three character sets; kanji, hiragana and katakana.   Hiragana and katakana have 42 different characters that represent the 56 syllable sounds of Japanese.   These syllable sounds create all the words in spoken Japanese.   Hiragana and katakana use different characters to represent the same set of sounds.   Some of these 42 characters are just the same character drawn smaller and said the same such as "ウ う."   These small characters are combined with larger characters to make stretch sounds.   Katakana is used to write words borrowed from foreign languages and hiragana is used for Japanese words.   Kanji has over ten thousand characters and each character represents on word or idea.

To write these different character sets with English letters, romaji was invented.   Romaji is a technique for writing Japanese sounds with the English alphabet.   For example "ikimasu" (e-key-ma-sue) is written in romaji and means "to go."   The four syllables are represented by four hiragana characters "いきます."

Nihongo Sensei uses hiragana because katakana has only limited usage in Japanese and kanji is not based on a phonetic system.   Nihongo Sensei uses romaji for the input of Japanese words because most users will have a keyboard with only English keys.   Romaji is kept to a minimum because it is important for the Japanese language student to learn Japanese characters and not to rely on romaji.

Appendix

Table of Hiragana and Romaji

The following is a list of the romaji arranged in rows of sounds.   To separate ambiguous phrases use a period.

+a	a	+i	i	+u	u	+e	e	+o	o
ぁ	あ	ぃ	い	ぅ	う	ぇ	え	ぉ	お

ka	ga	ki	gi	ku	gu	ke	ge	ko	go
か	が	き	ぎ	く	ぐ	け	げ	こ	ご

sa	za	shi	ji	su	zu	se	ze	so	zo
さ	ざ	し	じ	す	ず	せ	ぜ	そ	ぞ

ta	da	chi	ji	+tsu	tsu	zu	te	de	to	do
た	だ	ち	ぢ	っ	つ	づ	て	で	と	ど

na	ni	nu	ne	no
な	に	ぬ	ね	の

ha	ba	pa	hi	bi	pi	fu	bu	pu	he	be	pe	po	bo	po
は	ば	ぱ	ひ	び	ぴ	ふ	ぶ	ぷ	へ	べ	ぺ	ほ	ぼ	ぽ

ma	mi	mu	me	mo
ま	み	む	め	も

+ya	ya	+yu	yu	+yo	yo
ゃ	や	ゅ	ゆ	ょ	よ

ra	ri	ru	re	ro
ら	り	る	れ	ろ

+wa	wa	wu	we	wo
ゎ	わ	ゐ	ゑ	を

n
ん

kya	kyu	kyo
きゃ	きゅ	きょ

gya	gyu	gyo
ぎゃ	ぎゅ	ぎょ

sha	shu	sho
しゃ	しゅ	しょ

ja	ju	jo
じゃ	じゅ	じょ

cha	chu	cho
ちゃ	ちゅ	ちょ

nya	nyu	nyo
にゃ	にゅ	にょ

hya	hyu	hyo
ひゃ	ひゅ	ひょ

pya	pyu	pyo
ぴゃ	ぴゅ	ぴょ

bya	byu	byo
びゃ	びゅ	びょ

mya	myu	myo
みゃ	みゅ	みょ

Program Screens

Main Screen

Shows a list of quizzes on the left and series of actions to perform with them on the right.

Take Quiz

Starts taking the currently selected quiz.

Edit Quiz

Brings up the edit window, for changing the words in the quiz, changing the quiz name, deleting words and adding words.

New Quiz

Creates a new quiz.

Print Quiz

Prints the current quiz.

Delete Quiz

Deletes the current quiz.

Info

Displays information on the current quiz including, average scores, number of problems, and difficulty level of problems.

Options

Choose how the quiz is displayed, adjust sound, and choose level of difficulty for a quiz.

Exit

Quit Nihongo Sensei.

Take Quiz

Shows Japanese words in a quiz and have the user input English.

Functions

Speaks the word as it is shown on the screen.

Prompts user for English translation.

Keeps track of score on current quiz.

Keeps score on individual word.

Notifies user of correct translation if they are incorrect.

Edit Quiz

Allows editing of Japanese and English translations in a quiz.

To change words simply click on the English on romaji you wish to change and type in the new text and press return.   You cannot change the hiragana automatically; when you change the romaji Nihongo Sensei will update the hiragana for you.

Update

Translates all romaji into hiragana and displays it on the screen.   This function is not usually necessary, because the hiragana should be changed automatically.

Save

Saves the quiz.

Delete Problem

Deletes the vocabulary word that the cursor is on.

Add Problem

Adds a vocabulary word at the end.

Quiz Name

Changes the name of the quiz.

Clear Scores

Clears the scores on all vocabulary words.

Exit

Returns to the main menu.

New Quiz

Creates a new quiz.   Prompts for a filename and description.

Filename

DOS filename to give the quiz.

Description

An 80 character description for the quiz.   This name will be used to identify your quiz.

Quiz Information

Shows statistics on a selected quiz

Quiz name

The full name of the quiz.

Number of problems

The number of vocabulary words in this quiz.

Quiz score

The overall score you have on the quiz.

Easy, Medium, Hard problems

The number of easy, medium and hard problems in this quiz based on your past performance.   A quiz that you know well will have very few hard problems and mostly easy and medium problems.   If you have scored poorly on a quiz the results will show many hard problems with few easy or medium problems.

Options

Change the way quizzes are taken including the use of sounds and characters.   Adjusting the difficulty level and the way the sounds are spoken.

Quiz

Choose how you want the quiz to be taken.

Word and Sound--The word is shown in hiragana and spoken

Just Word--The word is only shown in hiragana

Just Sound--The word is not shown in hiragana.   It is only spoken.

Level

All Words--Include all the vocabulary words when taking a quiz

Hard, Medium, Easy Words--Use only a certain level of words when taking the quiz.   The numbers in parenthesis after your choice indicate the range of percentage scores on this level.   For example if you choose Hard Words (0-20), you would take a quiz with all the words that you scored 20% correct on or worse.

Sound Speed

Change the scroll bar and click test until, the word "konichiwa" sounds correct.