

Amir Aliyu
Professor Loui
Linux Tools and Scripting
04/02/2023

Fellow Student Critique: ChineseTranslator

This project is definitely novel, and puts much of the responsibility on the user to work it correctly. At first, I tried different approaches to work the website, and neither of them worked as I expected. That is because without the tutorial, I didn't know how to work it intuitively. This can be both a benefit and a drawback—the project may be confusing, but once the user understands how to work it, the functionality actually lends itself really nicely to learning a language. This is because learning languages is supposed to be somewhat difficult, and depends on the learner to seek out knowledge in a self-directed way. So, this project depending on the user to do the leg-work makes sense.

For this project, the user must use the website tactically. By this, I mean the most efficient use of this tool would be to enter all the words in a sentence that the user knows almost all of what it means, and that can isolate the word the user does not know. Then, the user can research the unknown word, return, and put it in the dictionary for another use. If the user tries to input all the vocabulary they know, it would be inefficient.

This project can help make context clues more clear in a sentence, as if one knows the surrounding words, they can make assumptions about what the last remaining word could be. Something that would expand this project nicely could be if the computer provided some hints for the words the user doesn't know, making it again easier to use context-based clues. This expansion could be done using Chat GPT as mentioned in the GitHub Readme document.

The functionality to store words in a dictionary made sense, and all the buttons worked correctly. The only critique of that facet would be the dictionary does not allow phrases, which makes sense, but it does rely on the user to have some prior knowledge of Chinese to be able to use it correctly.

Some suggested improvements could be some instructions displayed on the page, and a way for the user to submit whole sentences alongside their translation, which would speed up the process of submitting to the dictionary. However, the point of this project may be for the user to gain knowledge of a language through manually inputting all the words they know themselves. This could make a novice gain understanding, as the amount of words they know is relatively little and they could more easily input them all, but it could make the experience more grueling for an almost-fluent user who has many words they know. In conclusion, though there was a learning curve, this project would be a great way for a Chinese learner to reinforce existing vocabulary.