

Distinctive difference game titles between Japanese context and English context



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2016 August 17, Replaying Japan at Leipzig University

What is “Japanese video game”

- Kohler, Chris. *"Power-up: how Japanese video games gave the world an extra life."* (2004).
- Picard, Martin. *"The foundation of geemu: A brief history of early Japanese video games."* Game Studies 13.2 (2013).
- Pelletier-Gagnon, Jérémie. *Video Games and Japaneseness: An analysis of localization and circulation of Japanese video games in North America.* Diss. McGill University, 2011.

What is “Japanese video game”

- Some famous “Made in Japan” games is not famous in Japan.

Ex : “Zaxxon”(1982), “Jet Grind Radio” (2000), “Cooking Mama”(2006)



(C)SEGA 1982



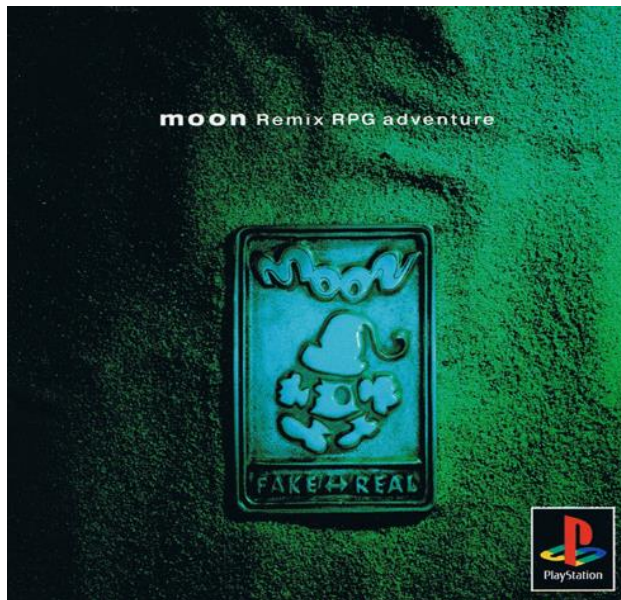
(C)SEGA 2000



(C)TAITO 2006

Some famous Japanese game is not famous in English context.

Ex : “moon”(1997)



(C) ASCII 1997



(C) ASCII 1997

Japanese gamer don't know famous game titles.

- For example, most of Japanese video game players don't know
 "Tempest" (1981), *"Canabalt"* (2009)



(C)ATARI 1981



(C)Semi-Secret Software 2009

Do you know the game ?

<https://goo.gl/forms/ZJr4iQqam95p9kcC2>



1. Purpose of the study

- A) Today Japanese video game context and English video game context, each context have much local bias. We want to know local game history.
- B) Developing method to know characteristic history in each area.

2. Significance of the study

- A) Making basic resource for local game history research, and area studies.
- B) Extended use case trial of Media Art DB.

Now, This DB don't include work – version relation.(at 2016/8)



The screenshot shows the Media ART DB search results for the keyword 'mario'. The interface is in Japanese. At the top, there are tabs for 'マンガ' (Manga), 'アニメーション' (Animation), and 'ゲーム' (Game). The 'ゲーム' tab is selected. Below the search bar, there is a green button labeled '詳細検索' (Advanced Search). The search results are displayed in a table with the following columns: 'タイトル' (Title), '年齢' (Age), 'プラットフォーム' (Platform), 'メディア' (Media), 'パブリッシャー' (Publisher), and '発売日' (Release Date). The table shows four results for 'mario'.

タイトル	年齢	プラットフォーム	メディア	パブリッシャー	発売日
Dance Dance Revolution with MARIO	ES	ニンテンドーゲームキューブ	8センチ光ディスク	任天堂株式会社	2005年7月
Dr. MARIO: ボクシング! 特別編 & 続編	ES	ニンテンドー3DS	ダウンロードコンテンツ	任天堂株式会社	2015年5月
Dr. MARIO & 続編	ES	Wii	ダウンロードコンテンツ	任天堂株式会社	2008年3月
Dr. MARIO & 続編	ES	ゲームボーイアドバンス	ゲームボーイアドバンス専用カートリッジ	任天堂株式会社	2005年3月



Media ART DB / Game Domain(Published by Agency for Cultural Affairs Japan)

3.Method

1. Picking up video game titles from
 - a. video game books, awards, exhibitions about video games, and sales data.
 - b. If the same video game title was found from several resources, the video game title gets a high score.
 - c. Identifying “work” level, not “version” level.
2. Then We made lists.
 - these lists don’t pick up a weak biases.
 - GTA series ,Monster Hunter series, Call of Duty series

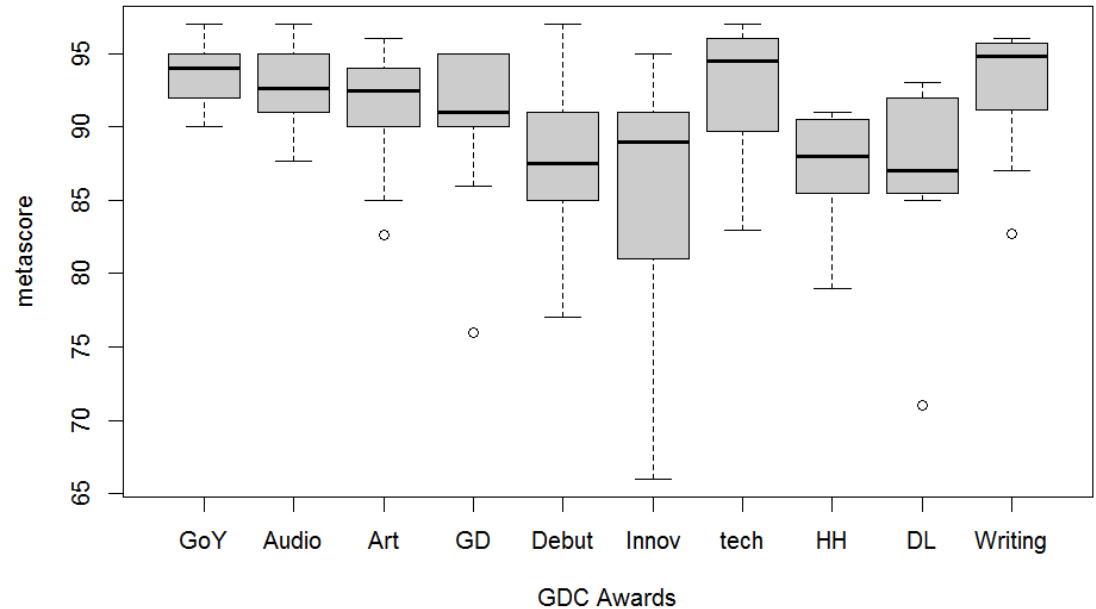
	Authorized	Non – Authorized
Current	Awards	Sales data
Retrospective	Book of game history, Museum Exhibition	Game mania choice

Method : example

Title	Japanese context		JP Context Point	English context			EN Context Point
	CESA Awards	Book A		Book B	GDC awards	Smithsonian Museum Exhibition	
Super Mario Bros		1	1			1	1
Wii Sports	1		1	1	1		2
Final Fantasy VII	1	1	2			1	1
Super mario 64	1		1			1	1
Wii Fit	1	1	2				0
Metal Gear Solid	1	1	2	1		1	2
Pokémon	1	1	2				0
The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time	1		1			1	1
Super Mario Bros 3			0			1	1
nintendogs	1		1	1	1		2

Source Data Problems

Relation of between Game Developer Choice Award and Metascore scatter 2001-2014



- Akito Inoue(2015) : “Innovative game” tend to get low meta score.
- Daisuke Yoshinaga(2015) : User’s game review score is unstable. It have weakness against flaming.

Influence to each area

	Awards	Sales	Book of history	Museum	Mania	Total
Whole - Influence to each area	26%	25%	18%	8%	23%	100%
JP Only title - Influence to each area	21%	0%	32%	30%	16%	100%
Diff between JP Only and whole	6%	25%	-14%	-23%	6%	0%
International title - Influence to each area	27%	27%	16%	18%	12%	100%
Diff International Only and whole	-1%	-2%	2%	-10%	11%	0%
EN only title - Influence to each area	9%	0%	20%	56%	14%	100%
Diff between ENOnly and whole	17%	25%	-2%	-49%	9%	0%

Type	point	Japanese resources	English resources	International resources
Chronology, Book of history, Game study	0.6	Chronology of “Nippon Manga*Anime*Game”, Chronology of Magazine Famitsu no.1300	“Supercade”, “High score”, “Rules of play”	
Exhibitions in Museum	1.3	Playable Game Exhibition (2015), Exhibition of Nippon Manga*Anime*Game	The Strong museum hall of fame,MoMA, Smithsonian Museum (2012)	
Awards / Hall of fame / Authoritative scores	0.45 ^{*1}	BEST 10 titles in Magazine Famitsu yearbooks,Famitsu Hall of fame ^{*2} ,CEDEC Awards, Japan Game Awards, Media Arts Festival Awards,Gamest Awards	Metacritiques Metascore, Game Developer Conference Awards, E3 Game Critique Awards, AIAS Awards, Game Canon	International Mobile Game Awards
Gamer’s pick up lists	0.3	Takarazima ”80s TV game we love” “Coming back master pieces”, Eroge Scape ^{*3} , PC game ranking book, Ritsumeikan professor's pick up lists, “OLD GAMERS HISTORY”, “TV game study for adults.”	1001 Video games You Must Play Before You Die	
Sales data	0.65 point per million sales ^{*4}	Fami-tsu, Media-create	vgchartz.com	AppAnnie data

Total pickup game titles =4800

◆ Biggest problem.

Which English title and which Japanese title is same work ?(I spent 4 days for identify them)

- ✓ Some problem may be left, in this data.
- ✓ We need “Work” and “Version(Manifest)” relation database.

4.Result

Game genre is Japanese standard. Ex. Mario Bros. is “Action” game

Japan context only / by genre

Genre	N	TITLE
RPG	12	Torneko no Daibōken: Fushigi no Dungeon, Ragnarok Online, Yokai watch, Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Summoner, Mystery Dungeon: Shiren the Wanderer, Romancing Saga 2, The Final Fantasy Legend, PoPoLoCrois Story, Romancing Saga, Yokai watch 2, moon, Bravely Default
ETC	10	Love Plus, idol m@ster, Ingress, #denkimeter, Colony-na-Seikatsu, Gunma-no-yabo, Osawari-Tantei Nameko-Saibai kit, Hatsune-Miku Project DIVA, Neko-atsume, Aquanaut's Holiday
ADV	9	Sakura Wars, Tsukihime, Higurashi When They Cry, Sound Novel Evolution 2: Kamaitachi No Yoru, Sound Novel Evolution 3: Machi – Unmei no Kousaten, D, 428: Fūsa Sareta Shibuya de, The Portopia Serial Murder Case, Boku no Natsuyasumi
SLG	6	Tokimeki Memorial, Kantai Collection, Densha de Go!, Derby Stallion, Gunparade March, Gihren no Yabou
ACT	5	Heiankyo Alien, Dynasty Warriors 3, MANEATER, Naruto: Ultimate Ninja Storm, Kidō Senshi Gundam: Senjō no Kizuna
SPO	4	Pro Yakyu Family Stadium, J-League Jikkyou Winning Eleven, Jikkyo Powerful Pro Yakyu, Tennis for two
PZL	2	Gee Bee, Pazudora Z
Fighting	1	Art of Fighting
RACE	1	SEGA RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

English context only / by genre

Genre	N	TITLE
ACT	13	Portal, Flower, Marble Madness, TRON: Maze-Atron,Jumpman, Tempest, Joust, Brutal Legend, Spy vs Spy, Earthworm Jim, Canabalt, Spy hunter, TANK
STG	12	Zaxxon,Star Trek: Strategic Operations Simulator, Defender, Centipede, Dead space, Geometry Wars: Retro Evolved 2, Einhänder, I Robot, Berzerk, Star Raiders, Attack of the Mutant Camels,1943: The Battle of Midway,
SLG, RTS	8	fLOw, Pirates!, Worms Armageddon, Dwarf Fortress, Dune II: Battle for Arrakis, Utopia, Company of heroes, Lord of the Rings: Battle for Middle Earth II
ADV	5	Myst, The Secret of Monkey Island, Zork I, ADVENTURE, Grim Fandango
ETC	4	Vib-Ribbon, Passage, Majestic, TELSTAR
PZL	4	ChuChu Rocket!, Q*bert, Zack & Wiki: Quest for Barbaros' Treasure, Boom Blox
RPG	3	EVE Online, Ever Quest, Never winter Nights
SPO	1	Sensible World of Soccer

Famous in both Context / by genre

(around even point get)

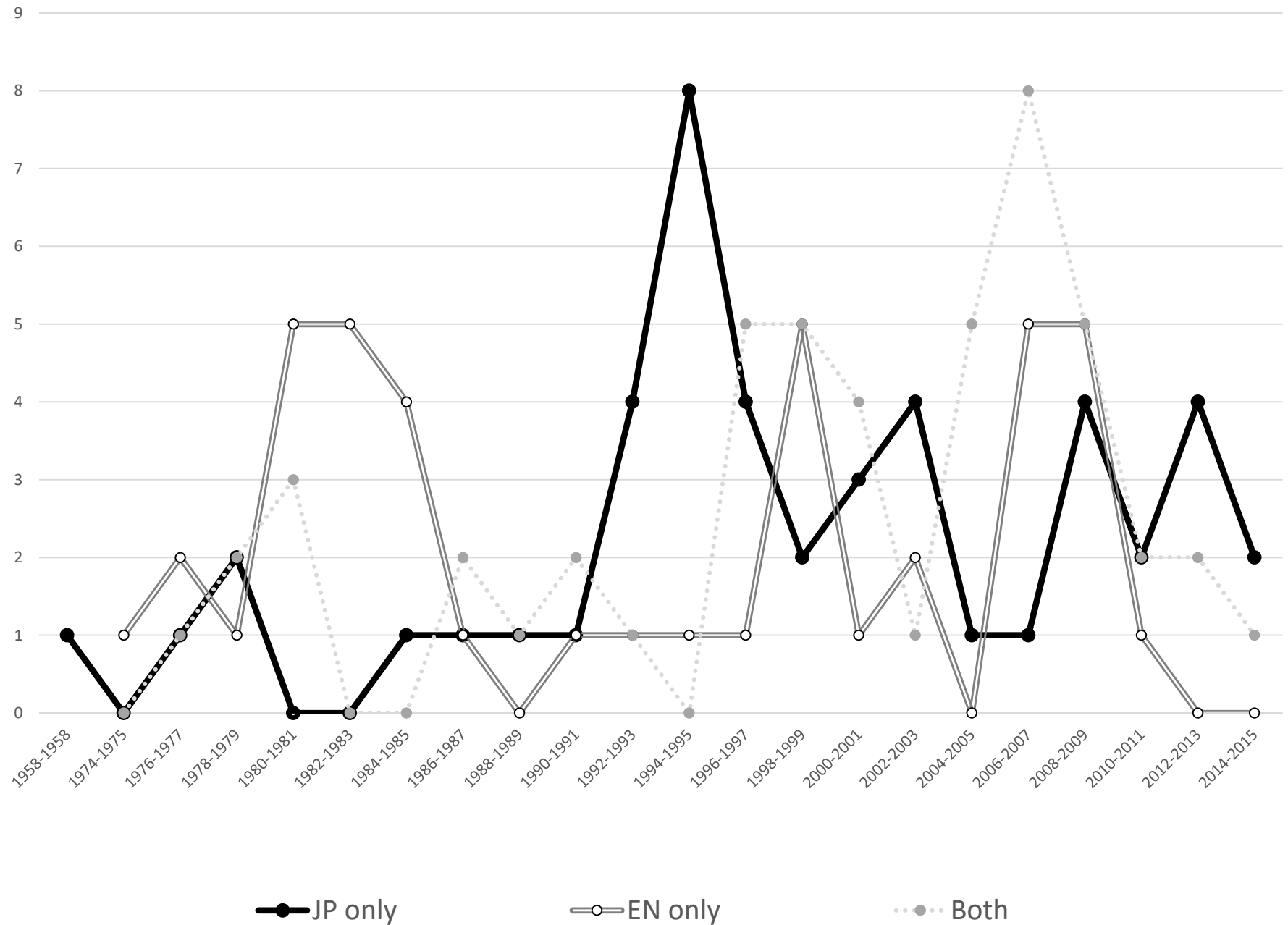
Genre	N	TITLE
ACT	20	Super Mario 64, Metal Gear solid, Super Mario Brothers 3, Pac-man, Donkey Kong, Shadow of the Colossus , Resident Evil, Ōkami, Metal Gear Solid 4, Guns of the Patriot, Sonic the Hedgehog, New Super Mario Brothers Wii, New Super Mario Brothers, Katamari Damacy, Super Mario Galaxy, Grand Theft Auto V, RED DEAD REDEMPTION, Shenmue, Crazy Climber, Journey, Super Smash Bros. for Wii U
RPG	9	Final Fantasy VII, Pockemon(Red,Green),Final Fantasy IX, Dragon Warriors(Dragon Quest),Final Fantasy VIII, Final Fantasy XII, Final Fantasy X, Kingdom Herts, Pockemon(Gold, Silver)
ETC	5	Nintendogs, Wii Fit, Brain Age, Mine Craft, Animal Crossing
ACT • RPG	4	The Legend of Zelda, The Legend of Zelda : Ocarina of Time, The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past, The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask
RACE	3	Mario Kart Wii, Gran Turismo, Super Mario Kart
FPS	1	Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare
SPO	2	Wii Sports, Wii Sports Resort
STG	2	Space Invader, Galaxian
ADV	1	HEAVY RAIN
PZL	1	Breakout
RTS	1	Pikmin

Publisher's bias

JP only			EN only		Both	
Publisher		N	Publisher		N	N
1	BANDAI NAMCO /BANDAI/NAMCO	5	Atari	7	Nintendo	22
2	Chunsoft	4	Electronic Arts	2	SQUARE	5
3	KONAMI	4	Midway Games	2	SCE	4
4	SEGA	4	SCE	2	KONAMI	3
5	SUQARE / ENIX	4	Others	37	SEGA	3
6	SCE	3			Activision	2
7	Ascii	2			CAPCOM	2
8	LEVEL5	2			NAMCO	2
9	Others	22			RockstarGames	2
10					Others	5

Time line Data

Number of game titles



5.findings

(1) We don't know each other.

- a. A lot of Japanese don't know about 1980s famous titles in English contexts.
- b. A lot of non-Japanese people don't know middle of the 1990s in Japanese famous titles.

(2) A lot of ADV and RPG genre game is only famous in Japanese contexts

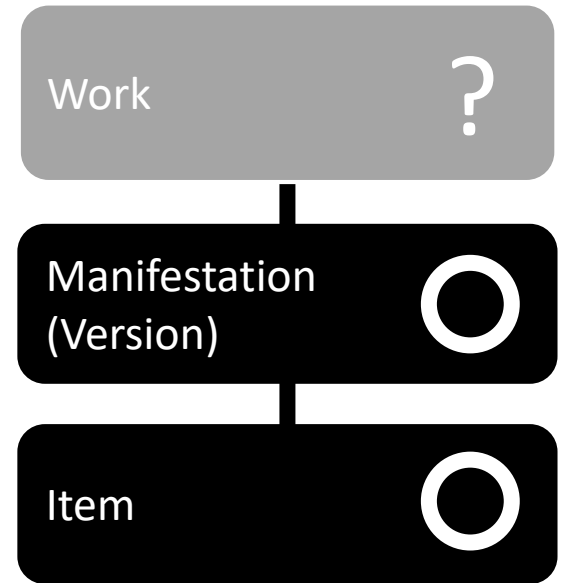
- Ex:*Higurashi*, *Sakura Wars*, *Toruneko no Daiboken*

(3) A lot of ACT and STG genre game in 1970s-1980s English contexts is not famous in Japan.

- Ex:*Zaxxon*, *Tempest*

6.Further studies

- A) Next step : Making credible “work” level DB. Then, refining the data.
- #this research “work” level credibility is far from perfect.
- B) In a similar way, we can check more area game history,such as Korean,German, French... and so on. (But I can not understand any other language than Japanese and English.)
- C) Find correlation with other factors.



Thank you for listening

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7. Questions

Related factors, Related hypothesis, Methodological Problems

7-1. Why do a lot of Japanese not know 1980s famous titles in English contexts?

7-2. Why do a lot of non-Japanese people middle of the 1990s in Japanese famous titles?

7-3. In this research, What is the big methodological problem ?

7-1. Why do a lot of Japanese not know 1980s famous titles in English contexts?

I don't prepare the evidence today.

I guess, probably...

- a. Atari 2600 influence in Japan is less powerful than US and Europe. (Atari 2600 sales in Japan is lower than US and Europe.)
- b. As well, Atari's arcade game sales in Japan is not little but not big.

7-2. Why do a lot of non-Japanese people middle of the 1990s in Japanese famous titles?

I don't prepare the evidence today. I guess, probably...

- a. Some Japanese company didn't export their masterpiece (Especially, Bandai and Chunsoft is characteristic)
- b. Probably, Some Japanese company thought their game don't have a competitiveness in US and Europe game market.
 - a. Above all, Chunsoft "Toruneko" series sales strongly connect "Dragon quest" series popularity. As well, Bandai in 1990s sales strategy depend on Japanese anime and manga characters.
 - b. "Text-novel", "Visual-novel" game genre use many "Japanese text". The game core fascinate factor depend on the "Japanese language". So, not only they have to pay huge localize cost, but also they have to keep the text quality.

7-3.Methodological problems

1. Work level identify is hard.
2. Pick up list is not perfect. For example “Portal” have a good reputation in Japanese core gamer. But “Portal” is picked up in this list. I can’t find enough resource, So I have to add more resource.
3. I tried to make neutral list as possible. But, my making list itself may have a bias or characteristic. But I can’t test the characteristic of this method. I have to test it.
 - Probably, some people feel this list weight in awards and museum choice is heavy than sales result.
 - Some people may feel sales data is heavy than awards.