A personal report on the present status of R systems in Japan

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R and Japanese users

R is still not so popular in Japan as it should be.

Why?

Main reasons:

- **Language barrier**. R's object names and R's documents are in English. Japanese are poor in English in general.

- **Free software**. One sometimes feels it difficult to get and install it. Again, avaialbale instructions are all in English and discouraging.

- **CUI not GUI**. In particular, Microsoft Windows users are not familiar with softwares with CUI.

- **Statistical knowledge**. Users are likely to want to get a final result hastily, which is contradict to S and R's philosophy. One needs a good knowledge of statistics to know how to get what he wants.

- **Too many commands**. R has a numerous commands with a lot of options. Although it is a great merit, one needs an experience in order to master its effective use,

- **General distrusts in qualities of Free softwares** not only in companies but also in academic worlds. They are likely to continue to use softwares which their bosses or teachers have been familiar with.

- **R cannot handle with Japanese**. End-users want to use Japanese object names, data with Japanese strings, and Graphics with Japanese annotations.

Last but not least

There has been little chance that a common Japanese become aware of the exsitence of R.

(Unfortunately, "R" is a too simple naming which is difficult to be noticed by Internet searches.)

> **What are necessary and effective to popularize the use of R in Japan?**

R related activities in Japan

- Translations of documents.

- Japanizing R.

- Japanese maling list.

- Internet site for R where one can get various Japanese informations on R and ask what he wants to know in Japanese.

- Japanese books on R.

- Distributions of R in a way one can try R easily. In particular, it is desirable that students can learn statistics readily using R.

- Any more?

I am happy to be able to say to Ross and Paul today that all these are available now. Actually, I guess that the use of R is spreading steadily just now in Japan.

Translations of documents of R

Almost all R's official manuals were translated into Japanese now.

- R notes

- Introduction to R

- Writing R Extensions

- R Language Definition

- R Data Import/Export

- R Installation adn Administration

- R FAQ by Kurt Hornik

- R for Windows FAQ by B. J. Ripley

- R for Macintosh FAQ/DOC by S. M. Iacus

In addition, about 300 object helps (in HTML) were translated.

Japanese books on R

The first Japanese book on R was published this October. Two more books will be appear next year.

- Minato Nakazawa "Basics of statistical Analysis by R", Pearson Education Co. (2003/10).

- S. Mase et al. "Introduction to Data Science using R" , Suuri Kougakusha. (2004/4 ?),

- M. Okada et al. A manual of R with a CRDOM

Translation of Dalgaard's R book?

Japanese maling list

There is a small Japanese maling list on R called **Rjp**.

It started three years ago and its first aim was a cooperative translation of "R notes". Since then, it has been the only resource to exchange Japanese informations on R. Members were mainly isolated and hidden Japanese R users and rather limied.

RjpWiki

On 11th, June this year, Okada (the administrator of Rjp ML, Tokyo University) started a Wiki-based Tokyo University,
website called **RjpWiki**.

Wiki is an Internet collaboration system software. Anyone can post an article. One can modify, add, and even delete whatever articles exist anonymously. It can be a powerful tool to accumulate informations continuously with collaborate works which works more effectively than mere MLs.

RjpWiki soon turned out to be quite successful. First poster of RjpWiki were members of Rjp ML. After accumulating a certain amount of useful tips and informations, its existence became gradually known outside and attracted new poster who contributed further informations.

RjpWiki: Japanized R

It is both very lucky and timely for RjpWiki that Nakama, a free database programmer, announced on RjpWIki that he succeeded in "making R speak Japanese" which was wellcommed with a great surprise to Japanese R users.

Inspired by Nakama's experiment, Okada tried to Japanize Windows version R with success.

These news as well as the existence of RjpWiki were announced in several Japanese MLs of statisticians and those who use statistics, which further accelated postings and accesing to RjpWiki.

RjpWiki: R-KNOPPIX

KNOPPIX is one of Linux distributions based on Debian GNU/Linux with the KDE desktop manager. Its astonishing feature is that it (1.6Mbytes in total) can reside in one CDROM in a compressed form and it can be bootable. This means that one can start almost full Linux systems without installing it to PCs. Therefore, R binded with KNOPPIX may be an ideal choice of teachers who want to let students experience full-fledged data analysis. All he have to do is to give students a R-KNOPPIX CDROM and say "try it with your home PC". Fortunately, there is already an almost completely Japanized KNOPPIX called KNOPPIX-jp.

In a RjpWIki article, I wrote an idea of making KNOPPIX-jp binded with (Japanized) R. To my astonishment, Tanimura (Nagasaki University) quickly responded me that he had already made such a KNOPPIX-jp. He later made a KNOPPIX-jp with Japanized R binded.

This news was again posted to several MLs, which also attracted wider interests in both R and Rjp-Wiki.

I posted an article to r-help ML to announce Nakam's i18n patches to R and, also, made an English page on RjpWiki to introduce his and Okada's experiments.

The following is a summary of access log to Nakama's webpage up to now (12/03). It is seen that Nakama's Japanized R is atracting wide interests both in Japan and abroad.

(BTW, it is curious that, seemingly, there is no access at all from Korea and China except Taiwan where people should have the same language problem as in Japan.)

Access log of Nakama's webpage (2003.8.19 – 2003.12.3)

counts	domains	counts	domain
4446	ne.jp	2875	ac.jp
1375	co.jp	1445	or.jp
252	go.jp	440	ad.jp
703	other .jp	2239	unknown

836	.net	414	.com
25	.arpa	2	.fr
7	.uk	5	.br (Brazil)
1	.pe (Peru)	1	.ar (Argentine)
69	.tw (Taiwan)	2	.de (German)
16	.pt (Portugal)	1	.ph (Phillipine)
1	.nl (Dutch)	12	.nz
1	.it	2	.au
11	.edu	8	.ca
5	.lt (Lithuania)	4	.se (Sweden)
1	.bg (Burgar)	1	.at (Austoria)
1	.pl (Poland)	1	.es (Spain)

RjpWiki: Contents

Present contents of RjpWiki are as follows:

- Informations on R and related topics

- Tips on R

- links to documents, books, packages and web-sites

- Q and A

- examples of R's graphics

- Japanization of R

- R-KNOPPIX

- translations of R-related documents

- translations of short object summaries of various R packages

Misc. Remarks

R was introduced in forums of two major Internet sites in Japan from which many Japanese other than statisticians became aware of R. They know that there are already plenty of Japanese informations and Japanese documents on R.

Nakama's Japanized patches and, in particular, MS Windows binaries makes them feel at ease in using R.

Nakazawa's book is very timely and gives a good introduction to how to use R and what can be done using R.

RjpWiki has an increasing number of accesses. At present, it has about 10,000 accesses per month. There are enthusiastic supporters and they post new articles constantly. Without exaggeration, it becomes now the most active Internet site in Japan for a single statistical software. Also it is a successful example of collaborations based on Wiki softwares.

Again, last but not least

All these enthusiastic activities which I have just reported comes, of course, from the fascinating charm of R. I, as well as Japanese R users, would like to thank Ross, Paul and other R's core members for giving us this excellent system.