

LESSON 1

Manga Go Over Big in the States

世界に送る *manga, anime*



STAGE 1 Read the Article

When *Shonen Jump's* first English language edition was sold in the United States last month, customers bought all 250,000 copies within a few days. This is a huge number for a comic book and an equally huge relief for its publishers, Shueisha, who debated for more than a year whether it was too big a risk. Before *Shonen Jump*, no one had thought to export translated versions of Japanese *manga* to the United States even though American kids are familiar with *manga* based TV cartoons like *Pokemon* and *Dragon Ball*. Shueisha decided to enter the U.S. market partly because *Weekly Shonen Jump's* domestic sales have fallen by half to about 3.4 million since the mid 1990's. Although early sales look good, the United States is a challenging market because American comics are very different from Japanese *manga*, with superheroes defeating evil in 36 pages or less. Compare this with the five series that are in the 300 page first issue of *Jump*; *Yu-Gi Oh!*, *Dragon Ball Z*, *Sand Land*, *Yu Yu Hakusho* and *One Piece*. All five have complicated stories that could continue for years. However, Americans say that they like Japanese comics because they are 'more sophisticated, better drawn and have more interesting stories.' The American version of the comic reads from right to left, something which readers love because they think its 'cool'. Readers are also given background information about characters, the cartoonists and the quirkiest aspects of Japanese culture. *Jump* has a sales target of a million copies within three years which would put it on the same level as well known publications such as *Newsweek* or **Vogue*. Perhaps in a few years American businessmen will be reading *manga* on their way to work like their Japanese counterparts.

(291words)

NOTE *Vogue*: 雑誌名

Structure & Grammar

名詞節を導く *whether*

1.4 *whether* it was too big a risk (リスクが大きすぎるかどうか)

☞ *that* と同様にあとに節が続き、全体として名詞の働きをし、文の目的語となる。

倒置

1.4 *too big a risk* (大きすぎるリスク)

☞ *too, so* など「程度の副詞」が「a(n) + 形容詞 + 名詞」の形容詞を修飾する場合、「*too, so* + 形容詞 + a(n) + 名詞」の語順になるので注意。

現在完了

1.8 *have fallen* by half to about 3.4 million since the mid 1990's

(1990年代半ばから半分の約340万部に落ちてきている)

☞ 過去の出来事が現在にも関連しているときに用いるのが現在完了である。

Vocabulary

Find the word defined below.

() difficult in an interesting or enjoyable way

() someone or something that has the same job or purpose as someone or something else in a different place

Pay attention to these phrases and look them up in your dictionary if you don't know their meaning.

be familiar with ~ _____

partly because ... _____

 **Spot the MISTAKE!**

How do you think about this article?

Content Questions

Answer in English.

a. What are the figures for *Shonen Jump's* sales in the U.S.?

b. Why did Shueisha decide to sell the comic in the U.S.? Give 2 reasons.

c. How are American comics different from Japanese *manga*?

d. What does the American version have in common with its Japanese original?

e. Why is the sales target for *Shonen Jump* compared with the sales figures of *Newsweek* and *Vogue*?

f. Where might American businessmen be reading *manga*?

STAGE 3 Background Information

日本の輸出品

1960年代から80年代にかけて、日本の代表的な輸出品目は家電製品、自動車などのハードウェアが占めていた。しかし、80年代後半に入ると、漫画、アニメ、コンピュータ・ゲームなどのソフトウェアの輸出が目立っている。90年代半ばには、その数を把握できないほど膨大な漫画が英訳されている。

漫画・アニメの輸出史

アニメは60年代から輸出が始まり、映画やテレビを通して欧米諸国の少年少女の人気を博してきた。初期には、『鉄腕アトム』(Astro Boy)、『エイトマン』(The Eighth Man)などがある。子ども向けが主流であったのは80年代前半までで、後半以降は青年向けのアニメ輸出が増加している。青年ファン層の増加のきっかけとなったのは、大友克洋原作・監督の『AKIRA』(1989)である。この作品により、日本ではアニメや漫画が、テーマの面でも技術の面でも大人の鑑賞に堪えうる、質の高いメディアであることが世界中に知られたのである。漫画版『AKIRA』(全6巻)は6か国語に翻訳され大ヒットし、ビデオもベストセラーになっている。その他、アニメ版『攻殻機動隊』(Ghost in the Shell)は、米ビルボード誌ビデオチャートで1位に、宮崎駿原作・監督の『千と千尋の神隠し』は2002年度のベルリン国際映画祭・金熊賞と2003年度アカデミー賞長編アニメ賞を獲得している。

一方漫画は、手塚治虫『火の鳥』、中沢啓治『はだしのゲン』の輸出が1978年に始まっている。80年代に入ると『AKIRA』、『子連れ狼』(Lone Wolf and Cub)、『ゴルゴ13』(The Professional: Golgo 13)など急増している。英語版の初期の判型は、アメリカン・コミックスと同じB5判の薄い雑誌型か、A6判の厚い単行本型であったが、90年代に入ると日本と同じB6判のものが標準的になり、95年にはページを開く方向までも日本語本と同じものが出版されている。

用語集の出現

こうしたブームの中で、海外のアニメ・漫画ファン(Otaku)のための用語集なども出現している。

kawaii, otaku, seiyuu, manga, anime, hentai, -chan, -san, -kun, idol, sensei など。

(参考: 明治書院「日本語学」2003年11月号)





Useful Expressions

賛成・反対を述べる

I totally disagree ... / I am in total agreement ...

I would go along with that ... / I sort of agree ... (i)

[() に指定された Question で実際に使ってみよう]

- a. Do you think the American version of *Jump* will reach its sales target? Why or why not?
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- b. What aspects of Japanese culture do you think an American reader would find hard to understand? What kind of things would you explain in detail to American reader?
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- c. Are you a regular *Jump* reader? Do you have a favorite *manga* and a favorite *manga* character?
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- d. Why are *manga* so popular even among adults?
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- e. What do you like to read? Put the following in order of preference and explain why:
1. newspapers 2. magazines 3. *manga* 4. novels 5. short stories
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- f. How much time do you spend reading for pleasure per day or per week? When do you read?
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- g. If you were a professional writer, what would you like to write and why?
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- h. Are there any books you have read more than once?
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- i. Older people complain that younger Japanese can't speak or write Japanese well because they read *manga* instead of books. Do you agree with them or not? Please give reasons.
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