

Why We Build Local Large Language Models: An Observational Analysis from 35 Japanese and Multilingual LLMs

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Abstract

1 Why do we build local large language models (LLMs)? What should a
 2 local LLM learn from the target language? Which abilities can be trans-
 3 ferred from other languages? Do language-specific scaling laws exist? To
 4 explore these research questions, we evaluated 35 Japanese, English, and
 5 multilingual LLMs on 19 evaluation benchmarks for Japanese and English,
 6 taking Japanese as a local language. Adopting an observational approach,
 7 we analyzed correlations of benchmark scores, and conducted principal
 8 component analysis (PCA) to derive *ability factors*. We found that if LLMs
 9 perform well in English on tasks like academic subjects, code generation,
 10 arithmetic reasoning, commonsense, and reading comprehension, they also
 11 perform well on the same tasks in Japanese. This indicates it is not necessary
 12 to specifically train on Japanese text to enhance abilities for solving these
 13 tasks. In contrast, training on Japanese text improves question-answering
 14 tasks about Japanese knowledge and English-Japanese translation, which
 15 indicates that abilities for solving these two tasks can be regarded as *Japanese*
 16 *abilities*. Furthermore, we confirmed that the Japanese abilities scale with
 17 the computational budget for Japanese text. Taken together, our findings
 18 offer generalizable insights into which tasks benefit from local-language
 19 data and what we can expect when building local LLMs.

20 1 Introduction

21 Major large language models (LLMs) are English-centric (*English LLMs* hereafter), e.g., Meta
 22 Llama 3 (Dubey et al., 2024), Mistral (Jiang et al., 2023), and Phi-3 (Abdin et al., 2024), due
 23 to the dominance of English on the internet and the global economy, which results in a
 24 limited focus on non-English languages. Several companies and research institutes have
 25 been actively developing LLMs targeting non-English languages (*local LLMs* hereafter), e.g.,
 26 Bllossom (Choi et al., 2024), Chinese-LLaMA (Cui et al., 2024) and openCabrita (Larcher et al.,
 27 2023), driven by various motivations. These include advancing research and development
 28 in multilingual NLP, mitigating security risks associated with relying on a limited number
 29 of foreign companies, and promoting responsible artificial intelligence for their community.

30 However, the advantages of training LLMs on non-English text remain underexplored—
 31 particularly regarding the unique skills or knowledge such LLMs might gain compared to
 32 English-centric or Multilingual LLMs. On the one hand, LLMs have demonstrated high
 33 multilingual abilities, such as arithmetic reasoning (Shi et al., 2023) and machine translation
 34 (Briakou et al., 2023), which casts doubt on the advantage of training on non-English text. On
 35 the other hand, training on non-English text has been reported to bring stronger cultural and
 36 regional knowledge of the target language (Romanou et al., 2025), although there are mixed
 37 findings for other tasks such as commonsense reasoning and reading comprehension (Cui
 38 et al., 2024; Choi et al., 2024; Larcher et al., 2023). These two perspectives—multilinguality
 39 versus language specificity—suggest that the effectiveness of training on non-English text
 40 is inherently task dependent. Indeed, demonstrating an advantage of training on non-
 41 English text remains not straightforward. Numerous studies have built non-English LLMs
 42 from scratch (Holmström et al., 2023) or via continual pre-training (CPT) over English
 43 LLMs (Cui et al., 2024; Choi et al., 2024; Larcher et al., 2023), but their task-specific results
 44 are often mixed or contradictly, raising doubts about generalizability (§ 2.1). Because LLM

45 performances depends on several design choices—such as training from scratch or via CPT,
 46 which base model is selected for CPT (Tejaswi et al., 2024a), and how the training data
 47 is curated (Penedo et al., 2024; Li et al., 2024)—it is difficult to isolate performance gains
 48 specifically attributable to training on non-English text. Given its huge impact, thorough
 49 investigation and convincing insights into the advantages of local LLMs are valuable.

50 To explore what unique skills or knowledge may emerge as the natural consequence of
 51 the training on non-English text, we adopt an observational approach (Ruan et al., 2024)
 52 for Japanese-centric LLMs (*Japanese LLMs* hereafter), leveraging the exceptionally active
 53 development in Japan (e.g., Llama 3.1 Swallow¹ and LLM-jp (LLM-jp et al., 2024)) among
 54 non-English initiatives. Specifically, we evaluate 35 publicly available Japanese, English,
 55 and multilingual LLMs representing a variety of design choices. We also use 19 compre-
 56 hensive evaluation benchmarks covering knowledge-based QA, academic subjects, reading
 57 comprehension, and more, tasked in Japanese and English. These also includes paired
 58 Japanese and English benchmarks so that we can compare the task performance across both
 59 languages. Our goal is to derive generalizable insights (i.e., insights that are robust to design
 60 choices) by conducting a quantitative analysis.

61 First, to explore multilinguality versus language specificity, we analyzed score correlations
 62 across 19 task benchmarks for 35 LLMs, and applied Principal Component Analysis (PCA)
 63 to represent the performance in a low-dimensional *ability space* (Ruan et al., 2024). We
 64 found that tasks such as academic subjects, code generation, and arithmetic reasoning
 65 exhibited strong cross-lingual correlations on their scores and were associated with the
 66 same ability factors across languages. This indicates strong multilingual transferability,
 67 suggesting that training in English text would also improve performance on these tasks
 68 when tested in Japanese. Conversely, tasks such as QA about Japanese cultural knowledge
 69 and English-Japanese translation exhibited weak correlations with other tasks and were
 70 strongly associated with an independent ability factor, indicating language-specific abilities.

71 Second, to investigate the language-specific abilities attributed to training on Japanese text,
 72 we examined language-specific scaling laws. Specifically, we defined the language-specific
 73 computational budget as the product of the number of parameters and training tokens for
 74 each language (Hoffmann et al., 2022), and analyzed the log-linear relationship between
 75 these budgets and the ability factors obtained by PCA. We found that the English com-
 76 putational budget showed a strong correlation with the general ability factor but a weak
 77 correlation with the Japanese-specific ability factor. In contrast, the Japanese computa-
 78 tional budget showed a strong correlation with the Japanese ability factor, suggesting that enhance-
 79 ment of Japanese knowledge and English-Japanese translation skills arise from training on
 80 Japanese text itself beyond particular design choice. These knowledge and skill scale with
 81 the amount of Japanese training text and are difficult to acquire solely from English text.

82 2 Related Work

83 2.1 Effects of Training on Non-English Text

84 There is a growing number of studies examining the impacts of training local LLMs on
 85 target language data: Chinese (Zhao et al., 2024; Cui et al., 2024), Turkish (Toraman, 2024),
 86 Portuguese (Larcher et al., 2023), Swedish (Holmström et al., 2023), and Finnish (Luukkonen
 87 et al., 2023). Some studies consistently reported gains in reading comprehension (Etxaniz
 88 et al., 2024b; Fujii et al., 2024; Dou et al., 2024; Joshi et al., 2025; Vo et al., 2024; Larcher et al.,
 89 2023), commonsense reasoning (Etxaniz et al., 2024b; Fujii et al., 2024; Phasook et al., 2024;
 90 Dou et al., 2024; Joshi et al., 2025; Vo et al., 2024; Choi et al., 2024; Tejaswi et al., 2024b), and
 91 local knowledge QA (Etxaniz et al., 2024b; Fujii et al., 2024; Joshi et al., 2025; Etxaniz et al.,
 92 2024a). However, following our survey of 15 previous reports on non-English LLMs (see
 93 Table 1 in § A), the evidence remains fragmented for two reasons: 1) Sparse coverage of
 94 task types: Prior works evaluated only a small set of benchmarks (an average of 2.5). In
 95 particular, machine-translation and coding tasks appear in just 2 and 0 out of 15 studies,
 96 respectively. 2) Contradictory results: Some studies drew (self-)contradictory conclusions:

¹<https://swallow-llm.github.io/llama3-swallow.en.html>

97 e.g., for mathematical reasoning, Etxaniz et al. (2024b) reported positive+neutral effects,
 98 whereas Pipatanakul et al. (2023) noted negative+neutral effects; for academic subject, both
 99 of Phasook et al. (2024) and Dou et al. (2024) documented positive+neutral effects; and, for
 100 summarization, Fujii et al. (2024) observed a negative effect, whereas Joshi et al. (2025) and
 101 Tejaswi et al. (2024b) found a positive effect.

102 2.2 Multilinguality vs Language-specificity

103 Training on non-English corpora sometimes involve using multilingual corpora. Berend
 104 (2022) and Chang et al. (2024a) reported that multilingual training does not always improve
 105 performance due to the curse of multilinguality (Conneau et al., 2020). Furthermore, English
 106 and multilingual LLMs reportedly show strong multilingual abilities on tasks such as
 107 arithmetic and commonsense reasoning (Shi et al., 2023) through cross-language generaliza-
 108 tion (Zhang et al., 2023). These findings suggest that the benefits of training on non-English
 109 text might be limited or task-dependent.

110 2.3 Correlations between Tasks and Ability Factors

111 Several prior studies have investigated the correlations between different task benchmarks
 112 and associated the task performance with a small number of ability factors (Ruan et al., 2024;
 113 Ni et al., 2024; Tiong et al., 2024). These studies have reported strong correlations between
 114 knowledge-based QA tasks and identified ability factors specific to arithmetic reasoning
 115 and code generation. Additionally, Ruan et al. (2024) observed the log-linear relationship
 116 between the computational budget and ability factors. However, these discussions are
 117 limited to English monolingual settings, leaving cross-language generalization and scaling
 118 laws in multilingual contexts, including Japanese and English as in our study, unexplored.

119 3 Experimental Settings

120 3.1 Models

121 To obtain generalizable insights, we evaluated publicly available 35 Japanese, English, and
 122 Multilingual LLMs (see Table 2 in Appendix B.1 for the complete list), which represent
 123 diverse design choices, including training data, the number of model parameters, and pre-
 124 training approach. The evaluated models include: English LLMs (e.g., Llama 3 (Dubey et al.,
 125 2024), Mistral (Jiang et al., 2023), and Mixtral (Jiang et al., 2024)); Japanese LLMs continually
 126 pre-trained from English base LLMs on 18–175 billion tokens of Japanese text (e.g., Llama
 127 3 Swallow (Fujii et al., 2024) and Llama 3 Youko (Sawada et al., 2024)); Japanese LLMs
 128 pre-trained primarily on 130–1,050 billion tokens of Japanese text from scratch (e.g., LLM-
 129 jp (LLM-jp et al., 2024) and Sarashina2; and multilingual LLMs pre-trained on multilingual
 130 data including Japanese (e.g., C4AI Command-R² and Qwen2 (Yang et al., 2024)). Notably,
 131 all the English LLM families that served as base models for the continually pre-trained
 132 Japanese LLMs were evaluated as well. We focused on base models and did not evaluate
 133 instruction-tuned models to examine the effect of pre-training and avoid the confounding
 134 effects of task-oriented instruction tuning.

135 To estimate the computational budget for each model, we collected data on the number of
 136 model parameters and the number of training tokens for Japanese, English, and total across
 137 all languages from official sources such as technical reports, press-release documents, and
 138 model cards. Refer to Appendix B.3 for details. For a continually pre-trained model, we
 139 calculated the total number of training tokens by summing the tokens used in both initial
 140 and continual pre-training stages.

²<https://huggingface.co/CohereForAI/c4ai-command-r-v01>

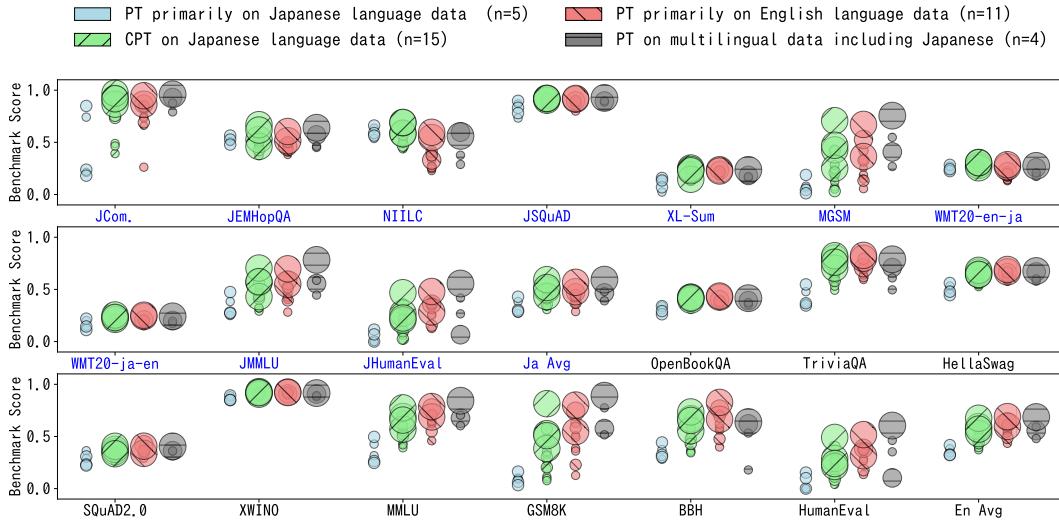


Figure 1: Task performance grouped by primary language of LLMs. Bubble size indicates the number of parameters.

141 3.2 Evaluation Tasks and Benchmarks

142 We evaluated the models using 19 evaluation benchmarks in both Japanese and English³,
 143 which is listed in Table 3 of Appendix B.2. These tasks were selected from the perspective of
 144 cross-lingual benchmarking and comprehensiveness for general-purpose LLMs. The eval-
 145 uation was conducted using zero-shot or few-shot in-context learning settings depending on
 146 tasks. Refer to Appendix B.2 for details.

147 We employed some Japanese benchmarks corresponding to their English counterparts
 148 for cross-lingual benchmarking: code generation (JHumanEval (Sato et al., 2024) vs. Hu-
 149 manEval (Chen et al., 2021)), commonsense (JCommonsenseQA (Kurihara et al., 2022)
 150 vs. XWINO (Tikhonov & Ryabinin, 2021) and HellaSwag (Zellers et al., 2019)), arithmetic
 151 reasoning (MGSM (Shi et al., 2023) vs. GSM8K (Cobbe et al., 2021)), encyclopedic knowl-
 152 edge-based QA (JEMHopQA (Ishii et al., 2023) and NIILC (Sekine, 2003) vs. TriviaQA (Joshi et al.,
 153 2017)), reading comprehension (JSQuAD (Kurihara et al., 2022) vs. SQuAD2 (Rajpurkar et al.,
 154 2018)), and academic subjects (JMMLU (Yin et al., 2024) vs. MMLU (Hendrycks et al.,
 155 2021)). Notably, MGSM, JMMLU, and JHumanEval are translations of GSM8K, MMLU, and
 156 HumanEval, respectively. Cross-lingual correlations between these benchmarks provide
 157 insights into the multilinguality and language specificity of each task. It is also worth
 158 noting that JEMHopQA and NIILC are developed based on Japanese Wikipedia and include
 159 instances that assess knowledge specific to Japanese culture, such as history, geography,
 160 notable figures and society, making them suitable for evaluating how much LLMs acquire
 161 knowledge about Japan.

162 For comprehensiveness, inspired by the natural language processing taxonomy (Chang
 163 et al., 2024b; Guo et al., 2023) and to capture as many ability factors as possible, we included
 164 additional task benchmarks beyond cross-lingual benchmarks. Specifically, we employed
 165 Japanese automatic summarization (XL-Sum (Hasan et al., 2021)), machine translation
 166 between English and Japanese (WMT20-en-ja and ja-en (Barrault et al., 2020)), English
 167 question answering (OpenBookQA (Mihaylov et al., 2018)), and logical reasoning (Big-
 168 Bench-Hard (Suzgun et al., 2023)). Because we posit that local LLMs serve as foundational
 169 models for the target language, our evaluation focused on fundamental knowledge and
 170 skills rather than domain-specific tasks (e.g., question answering in financial or medical

³The evaluation scores for each model will be publicly available on Zenodo with a CC-BY Attribute license upon acceptance (for blind review).

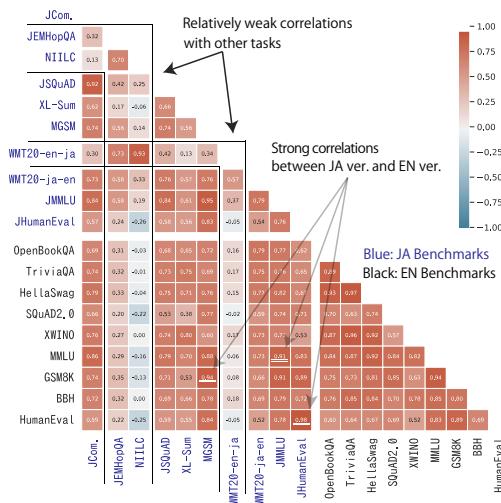


Figure 2: Pearson correlation matrix among task benchmarks ($n = 35$).

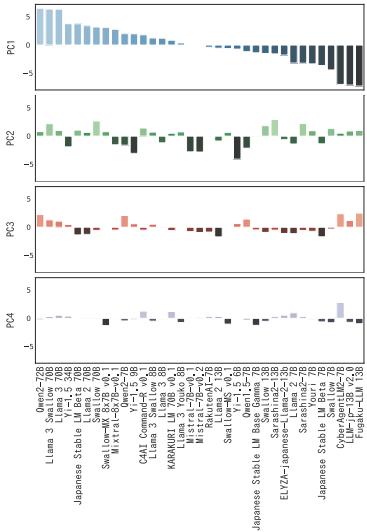


Figure 3: Principal component scores for each LLM.

171 domains). Furthermore, we excluded safety and bias-related tasks, as these should be
172 addressed in the post-training stage.

173 3.3 Definition of the Computational Budgets

174 The Chinchilla scaling laws (Hoffmann et al., 2022) propose an approximation for training
175 FLOPs as $C \approx 6ND$, where C represents the training FLOPs, N is the number of parameters,
176 and D is the number of training tokens. Following this formula, we define ND_l as the
177 computational budget, where D_l is the training tokens for the language l .

178 3.4 Evaluation Framework and Environment

179 We evaluated all 35 LLMs on 19 task benchmarks by using a custom implementation⁴ of
180 existing evaluation frameworks such as llm-jp-eval (Han et al., 2024) and the Language
181 Model Evaluation Harness⁵. Refer to Table 4 for the details of implementations used for
182 evaluation. We used NVIDIA A100 GPUs mostly for the evaluations.

183 4 Experimental Results

184 Based on the experimental setting explained in the previous section, we obtained a matrix of
185 benchmark scores $X \in \mathbb{R}^{M \times D}$, where M and D are the numbers of LLMs and benchmarks,
186 respectively ($M = 35$ and $D = 19$ in this study) and an element $X_{i,j}$ presents the score of the
187 LLM i on the benchmark j . In this section, we use the benchmark scores matrix X to analyze:
188 1) the effects of LLM's primary language on overall performance (§ 4.1), 2) the similarity
189 of benchmarks based on LLM performance (§ 4.2), 3) the ability factors of LLMs (§ 4.3), 4)
190 whether these ability factors align with scaling laws (§ 4.4), and 5) their generalizability to
191 LLMs trained from scratch (§ 4.5).

192 4.1 Comparison of Benchmark Scores by Pre-trained Languages

193 Figure 1 presents a bubble chart showing the benchmark score distributions grouped by the
194 primary language of the LLMs: Japanese continually pre-trained (green), Japanese trained

⁴Our implementation has been available on Github, but is hidden here for blind review.

⁵<https://zenodo.org/records/10256836>

	JCom.	JEM-HopQA	NIILC	JSQuAD	XL-Sum	MGSIM	WMT20-en-ja	WMT20-ja-en	JMMLU	JHumanEval	OpenBookQA	TriviaQA	HellaSwag	SQuAD-2.0	XWIMTO	MMLU	GSM8K	BhL	HumanEval
PC1 ($r=65.2$)	0.25	0.13	0.01	0.24	0.21	0.26	0.07	0.24	0.27	0.23	0.25	0.26	0.27	0.22	0.28	0.26	0.25	0.23	
PC2 ($r=15.4$)	0.06	0.42	0.57	0.13	-0.05	0.05	0.54	0.21	0.08	-0.19	-0.03	-0.03	-0.05	-0.16	-0.01	-0.12	-0.11	-0.04	-0.18
PC3 ($r=7.0$)	-0.10	0.24	0.03	-0.10	-0.34	0.31	0.03	-0.07	0.17	0.32	-0.21	-0.28	-0.20	0.20	0.02	0.27	-0.05	0.33	
PC4 ($r=3.2$)	-0.14	0.12	-0.03	-0.33	-0.54	-0.03	-0.06	0.19	-0.05	-0.23	0.33	0.10	0.22	0.46	0.05	0.01	0.05	0.05	-0.29

Figure 4: Factor Loadings of principal components for each benchmark ($n = 35$; r is the variance explained; blue: Japanese benchmarks; black: English benchmarks).

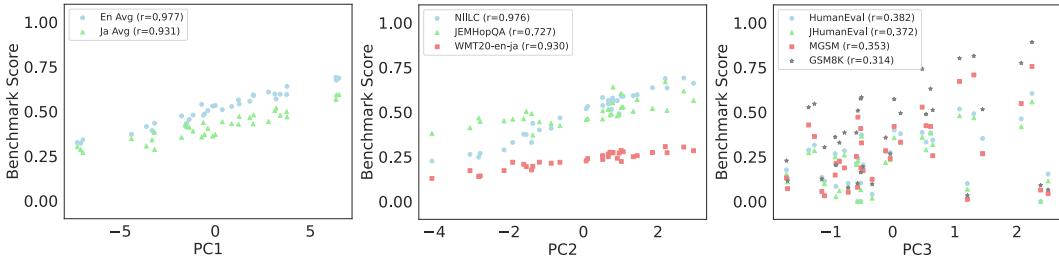


Figure 5: Relationship between principal component scores and raw benchmark scores with significant factor loadings: PC1 vs En/Ja average [left], PC2 vs Japanese knowledge-based QA and En-Ja translation [center], and PC3 vs code-generation and arithmetic reasoning [right] ($n = 35$; r is the pearson correlation coefficient).

from scratch (light blue), English (red), and Multilingual (gray). The variable n in each group represents the number of models included.

On overall, it is evident that LLMs with larger parameters tend to achieve higher scores in each group. When comparing benchmark scores for smaller models, there is a clear tendency for LLMs continually pre-trained on Japanese text (the green bubbles) to outperform English LLMs (the red bubbles) on Japanese benchmarks (shown in blue) except JHumanEval and MGSM. This indicates the effectiveness of continual pre-training on Japanese text. The advantage is particularly evident in tasks such as Japanese QA (NIILC) and English-Japanese translation (WMT20-en-ja). Refer to Appendix C for detailed discussion. Similarly, Japanese LLMs trained from scratch (the light blue bubbles), despite having relatively few parameters, achieve competitive scores on most Japanese benchmarks, with the exceptions of the arithmetic reasoning (MGSM) and the code-generation (JHumanEval).

4.2 Correlation Between Evaluation Benchmarks and Language-Specific Performance

To group benchmarks based on the similarities of LLM performance, we computed a Pearson correlation between two benchmarks a and b . More specifically, let the column vectors $X_{:,a}$ and $X_{:,b}$ represent the array of two benchmarks a and b , we compute the Pearson correlation $\text{corr}(X_{:,a}, X_{:,b})$. Figure 2 shows the Pearson correlation matrix, revealing two key findings⁶:

First, we observed strong cross-lingual correlations on certain tasks: academic subjects (MMLU vs. JMMLU: 0.91), arithmetic reasoning (GSM8K vs. MGSM: 0.94), and code generation (HumanEval vs. JHumanEval: 0.98). In other words, for these tasks, when LLMs perform well on the English benchmarks, they are also likely to perform well on the corresponding Japanese benchmarks. This suggests that multilinguality outweighs language specificity in these tasks, and that LLMs may generalize abilities acquired through training primarily on English text.

Second, QA tasks about Japanese knowledge (JEMHopQA, NIILC) and an English-Japanese translation task (WMT20-en-ja) exhibit relatively weak correlations with other tasks respectively. In particular, NIILC shows negative correlations with most English tasks, and

⁶We confirmed that using Spearman’s rank correlation produced no significant differences in the findings.

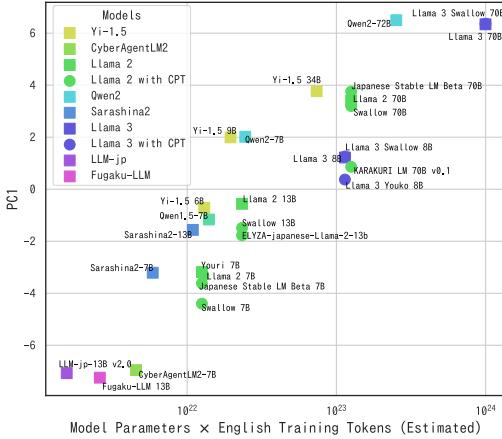


Figure 6: Relationship between the computational budget for English and PC1 scores ($n = 27$).

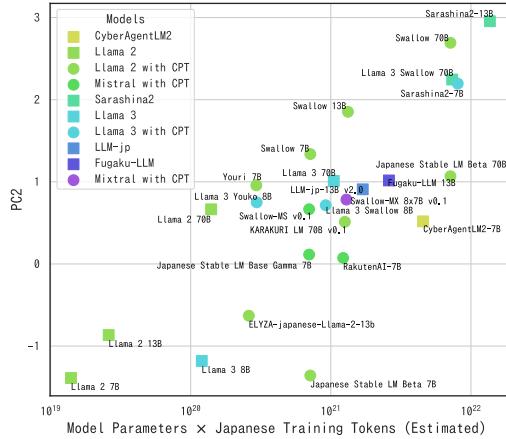


Figure 7: Relationship between the computational budget for Japanese and PC2 scores ($n = 25$).

222 WMT20-en-ja shows almost no correlations with them. These facts suggest that performance
223 on these tasks may be determined by factors different from those influencing other tasks.

224 While we observe strong linear correlations between JMMU, MGSM, and JHumanEval and
225 their English counterparts, given that these are derived from English benchmarks, readers
226 may be concerned that cross-lingual correlations of these benchmarks are overestimated. A
227 straightforward workaround would be to evaluate using random, non-overlapping subsets
228 of instances for each language. Instead of implementing this directly, we approximated the
229 accuracy variation from random splits using the estimated standard error (SE) following Bi-
230 derman et al. (2024) and confirmed that impact of fluctuation by the SE is negligible on the
231 observed linear trends. For example, MGSM has 250 instances, and the SE for an accuracy
232 of 0.5 is approximately $\sqrt{0.5(1 - 0.5)/250} \approx 0.032$. In contrast, the observed standard
233 deviation of accuracy across LLMs was 0.246, sufficiently larger than the SE.

234 4.3 Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

235 We observed benchmark groups from the correlation matrix in the previous subsection. In
236 order to identify ability factors of LLMs, we apply Principal Component Analysis (PCA)⁷ to
237 project the task performance into a low-dimensional ability space.

238 Formally, we first standardize each column of X to have mean of zero and a standard
239 deviation of one: \hat{X} . Next, we perform eigendecomposition of the correlation matrix as
240 $\hat{X}^\top \hat{X} = U \Lambda U^\top$, where $U = [u_1, u_2, \dots, u_D]$, and $u_j \in \mathbb{R}^D$ is the j -th unit-length eigenvector.
241 We then select the top four principal components (PCs), as their cumulative variance
242 explained (r ; contribution ratio) is 90.8% (= 65.2% + 15.4% + 7.0% + 3.2% from PC1 to PC4).
243 We define the eigenvectors corresponding to PC1 to PC4, $U_4 = [u_1, u_2, u_3, u_4] \in \mathbb{R}^{D \times 4}$ as
244 the factor loadings and compute corresponding PC scores as $S_4 = \hat{X} U_4$. Given that U is an
245 orthonormal matrix and the total variance explained by PC1-PC4 is about 90%, the original
246 matrix can be approximated as the product of PC scores and factor loadings: $\hat{X} \approx S_4 U_4^\top$.

247 In this way, we decompose standardized benchmark scores \hat{X} into the product of LLM-
248 specific principal component scores (ability factors) $S_4 \in \mathbb{R}^{M \times 4}$ in Figure 3 and benchmark-
249 specific factor loadings $U_4 \in \mathbb{R}^{D \times 4}$ in Figure 4, which represent the associations between
250 the ability factors and task performances⁸.

⁷We used the `sklearn.decomposition.PCA()` method from the `scikit-learn` package.

⁸Since the signs and magnitudes of the PC scores and factor loadings are arbitrary, we adjusted the signs for ease of interpretation and normalized the factor loading vectors to have an L_2 norm of 1.

	JCom.	JEM-HopQA	NIILC	JSQuAD	XL-Sum	MGS8K	WMT20-en-ja	WMT20-ja-en	JMMLU	JHumanEval	OpenBookQA	TriviaQA	HellaSwag	SQuAD-2.0	XWIMLO	MMLU	GSM8K	BhL	Human-Eval
PC1 ($r=65.6$)	0.25	0.06	-0.05	0.24	0.24	0.25	0.03	0.23	0.26	0.23	0.26	0.26	0.27	0.22	0.25	0.28	0.26	0.24	0.23
PC2 ($r=17.0$)	0.05	0.48	0.54	0.12	-0.11	0.09	0.54	0.25	0.14	-0.16	0.01	-0.02	-0.01	-0.12	-0.03	-0.07	-0.05	-0.02	-0.15
PC3 ($r=7.1$)	-0.07	0.11	0.04	-0.02	-0.27	0.34	0.05	-0.19	0.19	0.35	-0.21	-0.28	-0.20	0.18	-0.39	0.03	0.30	-0.09	0.38
PC4 ($r=3.0$)	-0.55	0.36	0.03	-0.53	-0.02	0.02	-0.01	-0.07	-0.10	0.18	0.14	0.27	0.15	0.02	0.09	-0.07	-0.04	0.29	0.13
	-0.5	-0.0	0.5																

Figure 8: Factor loadings of principal components for each benchmark ($n = 20$: only with models trained from scratch; r is the variance explained; blue: Japanese benchmarks; black: English benchmarks).

251 The first principal component (PC1) has relatively uniform factor loadings. As shown in
 252 Figure 5 left, LLMs with higher PC1 scores tend to have higher average benchmark scores
 253 in both English and Japanese, suggesting that PC1 represents a general ability factor. It
 254 represents the average performance across most benchmark scores, including commonsense
 255 and reading comprehension in Japanese. This indicates that, unlike prior studies (§ 2.1),
 256 training on English text is effective and that Japanese-specific training is not necessarily for
 257 improving these abilities.

258 The second principal component (PC2) shows concentrated factor loadings on JEMHopQA,
 259 NIILC, and WMT20-en-ja, and relatively small factor loadings on JCommonsenseQA and
 260 JSQuAD, indicating the abilities of (encyclopedic) knowledge about Japan and English-
 261 Japanese translation. In fact, Figure 3 shows that LLMs pre-trained on Japanese text,
 262 such as Swallow and Sarashina2 families, have high PC2 scores, which will be analyzed
 263 in detail in § 4.4. Additionally, as shown in Figure 5 center, the higher PC2, the higher
 264 benchmark scores on those tasks. For instance, the margin of NIILC accuracy between LLMs
 265 with the lowest and highest PC2 scores is approximately 40 points. Considering that PC1
 266 has relatively low factor loadings for these benchmarks, PC2 represents Japanese-specific
 267 abilities, such as QA about Japanese knowledge and English-Japanese translation. Given
 268 that PC2 strongly associates with Japanese knowledge-based QA tasks, this aligns with
 269 previous work (Romanou et al., 2025), which found that multilingual LLMs struggle with
 270 cultural questions, especially in languages not included in the pre-training data.

271 The third principal component (PC3) shows concentrated factor loadings on MGS8K,
 272 GSM8K, JHumanEval, and HumanEval, representing abilities of multilingualism, language-agnostic
 273 arithmetic reasoning, and code generation. As shown in Figure 5 right, there is a moderate
 274 trend suggesting that higher PC3 score are associated with higher benchmark scores on
 275 code-generation and arithmetic-reasoning.

276 Finally, the fourth principal component (PC4) shows positive factor loadings for some
 277 English benchmarks. However, strong English LLMs, such as Llama-3-70B, do not show
 278 higher PC4 scores compared to Japanese LLMs like CyberAgentLM2-7B. In addition, given
 279 that the variance explained by PC4 is only 3.2%, PC4 is likely to correspond to residuals
 280 that are difficult to interpret in a way tied to specific benchmarks or abilities.

281 4.4 Scaling Laws between Ability Factors and Computational Budget

282 In § 4.3, we made two key observations: 1) PC2 represents Japanese ability while PC1
 283 represents a general ability; 2) LLMs pre-trained on Japanese text tend to have higher
 284 PC2 scores. Based on these observations, we explore the language-specific scaling laws
 285 by examining the log-linear relationship between the computational budgets (§ 3.3) and
 286 principal components, which are expected to represent different abilities.

287 Figure 6 shows the scatter plot with the English computational budget (log scale) and
 288 PC1. It reveals that the general ability (PC1) scales with the English computational budget
 289 (Pearson’s $\rho = 0.916$)⁹

⁹The correlation with the logarithm of the total computational budget was slightly higher ($\rho = 0.938$). Still, given the weak correlation with the Japanese computational budget, we concluded that it scales more with the English computational budget.

290 Figure 7 shows the scatter plot with the Japanese computational budget (log scale) and PC2.
 291 We can see that the Japanese ability (PC2) moderately scales with the Japanese computational
 292 budget ($\rho = 0.779$). We also confirmed that the correlation between PC2 and the English
 293 or total computational budget is much weaker ($\rho = 0.164$ and 0.186 , respectively). These
 294 findings indicate that PC2 and associated Japanese task performances scale with an increase
 295 in Japanese training tokens, thereby supporting our claim in § 4.3 that “PC2 represents
 296 Japanese ability.” Furthermore, we argue that the source of Japanese ability lies in the
 297 computational budget allocated to Japanese texts.

298 **4.5 PCA for LLMs Trained from Scratch**

299 To verify that our findings are not heavily influenced by the pre-training method, we
 300 repeated the analysis after excluding continually pre-trained Japanese LLMs, retaining only
 301 20 LLMs trained from scratch. Figure 8 shows the factor loadings of PCs extracted from
 302 the performance of these 20 LLMs, revealing ability factors similar to those identified in
 303 the original analysis (§ 4.3). We omit the results of relationships between computational
 304 budgets and English and Japanese abilities, but observed the consistent correlations with
 305 Figures 6 and 7 (see Figures 13 and 14 in Appendix D.2).

306 **5 Conclusion and Future Work**

307 In this paper, we performed the most comprehensive evaluation to date, testing 35 Japanese,
 308 English, and Multilingual LLMs on 19 task benchmarks that assess the abilities in both
 309 Japanese and English. This breadth of coverage is one of the key novelties of our study and
 310 enables us to extract more generalizable insights than prior work. We then analyzed the
 311 cross-task and cross-lingual correlations of benchmark scores, mapped the performance
 312 in a low-dimensional ability space, and explored the relationship between ability factors
 313 and computational budgets for English and Japanese. The correlation analysis showed
 314 strong multilingual abilities in academic subjects, code generation, and arithmetic reasoning
 315 tasks. This suggests that, in order to enhance the abilities of these tasks, there is no strong
 316 motivation for using Japanese training data.

317 The low-dimensional factor analysis using PCA identified three ability factors. PC1 repre-
 318 sents the general ability and affects nearly all tasks except for QA about Japanese knowledge
 319 and English-Japanese translation. PC1 follows a scaling law with the computational budget
 320 for English. Complementing PC1, PC2 represents the ability for QA about Japanese knowl-
 321 edge and English-Japanese translation. Interestingly, PC2 follows a scaling law with the
 322 computational budget for Japanese data. Although PC3 represents multilingual abilities in
 323 arithmetic reasoning and code generation, we have not reached the point of identifying a
 324 scaling law that it follows.

325 From these analyses, we concluded that the advantage of building local LLMs by training
 326 on Japanese text is particularly evident in acquiring local knowledge written in Japanese
 327 and enhancing the ability to translate from English. This conclusion is likely to characterize
 328 Japanese LLMs. Our study is the first broad, unified evaluation across dozens of LLMs
 329 and an extensive benchmark suite to reveal which tasks do and do not benefit from target-
 330 language training.

331 We consider two directions as future work. First, we plan to extend the analysis with
 332 more LLMs and evaluation tasks to discover additional insights. This includes using LLMs
 333 with unique designs, for example, Phi family (Li et al., 2023; Abdin et al., 2024), which
 334 were trained on synthetic text. We also want to add evaluation tasks such as Japanese
 335 logical reasoning and standardized admission exams. The second direction is to extend our
 336 analysis and findings to other languages. We believe that the conclusion of this paper can be
 337 generalized to: the advantage of building local LLMs by training in a language is acquiring
 338 local knowledge written in the language and enhancing the ability to translate from English
 339 to the language. This direction is nontrivial because conducting LLM experiments properly
 340 requires a deep understanding of the target languages and cultures. We hope this paper
 341 serves as a catalyst for the development and analysis of non-English LLMs.

342 **Acknowledgments**

343 (Removed for blind review)

344 **Ethics Statement**

345 This study does not evaluate the safety aspects of LLMs, such as harmlessness or hon-
346 esty (Askell et al., 2021), which are considered to be largely shaped by pre-training data. The
347 same applies when developing local LLMs — they are likely to absorb social group-specific
348 biases (Yanaka et al., 2024), stereotypes, and racism. Consequently, there is a concern that
349 we may be overlooking an inconvenient side effect: it might be unavoidable for local LLMs
350 to reinforce social biases specific to the target language.

351 **Reproducibility Statement**

352 We prioritized reproducibility in our work. As described in § 3.4, all 35 LLMs (Table 2), 19
353 benchmarks (Table 3), and evaluation frameworks (Table 4) used in our study are publicly
354 accessible. Additionally, evaluation scores for all LLMs, along with models’ metadata—
355 including training data, the number of model parameters, the number of training tokens,
356 and pre-training approach—are available (§ 3.2) to facilitate the reproduction of statistical
357 analyses. Please note that our unified evaluation framework and the results are withheld
358 here to preserve anonymity during the blind review process. For reference, our experiments
359 were primarily conducted on NVIDIA A100 GPUs.

360 **Broader Impacts**

361 We believe our findings will contribute to the development of non-English LLMs. Moreover,
362 this could foster a society in which every country has access to LLMs specialized in its own
363 language and knowledge, thereby reducing the digital divide.

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636 A Survey of Prior Work and Comparison with Our Analysis

637 We systematically surveyed prior works on non-English LLM development in two perspectives: coverage of design choices and effects of training on target languages.

638 At the first glance on Table 1, we can find that several task types are covered sparsely.

639 Only 0–3 papers address machine translation (in either direction), code generation, or

640 summarization—indicating that these areas remain largely unexplored in the literature.

641

642 More importantly, we observed the contradictory evidence for “language-agnostic” tasks.

643 The majority of prior studies actually report gains from target-language training on com-

644 monsense reasoning (8 positive, 1 neutral, 0 negative) and academic subject benchmarks (5

645 positive, 2 neutral, 0 negative). These findings contrast both with our results. Furthermore,

646 there seems no clear consensus on other tasks. For reading comprehension and mathem-

647 atical reasoning benchmarks, prior work offers mixed or inconclusive evidence regarding

648 the impact of target-language data (6 positive, 3 neutral, 0 negative; 3 positive, 2 neutral, 1

649 negative, respectively).

Table 1: The impact of training on the target language text. \nearrow : Positive, \searrow : Negative, \rightarrow : Neutral, $-$: Not investigated

Reference	Lang	Method	Read-Compr.	Com-mon-Sense Reason.	Math-Reason.	MT to Tgt Lang	MT from Tgt Lang	Acad. Subject	Coding	Local Knowl-QA	Summarization
Ours	JA	PT CPT	\rightarrow	\rightarrow	\rightarrow	\nearrow	\nearrow	\rightarrow	\rightarrow	\nearrow	\nearrow
Etxaniz et al. (2024b)	EU	CPT	\nearrow	\nearrow	\nearrow, \rightarrow	—	—	\nearrow	—	\nearrow	—
Fujii et al. (2024)	JA	CPT	\nearrow	\nearrow	\nearrow	\nearrow	\searrow	—	—	\nearrow	\searrow
Phasook et al. (2024)	TH	CPT	\rightarrow	\nearrow	\nearrow	—	—	\nearrow, \rightarrow	—	—	—
	VI										
	TH										
Dou et al. (2024)	ID	CPT	\nearrow	\nearrow	—	—	—	\nearrow, \rightarrow	—	—	—
	MS										
	LO										
Joshi et al. (2025)	HI	CPT	\nearrow	\nearrow	—	—	—	\nearrow	—	\nearrow	\nearrow
Vo et al. (2024)	KO	CPT	\nearrow	\nearrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Choi et al. (2024)	KO	CPT	\rightarrow	\nearrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Toraman (2024)	TR	CPT	\rightarrow	\rightarrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Larcher et al. (2023)	PT	CPT	\nearrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	TA										
Tejaswi et al. (2024b)	HI	CPT	—	\nearrow	—	\nearrow	—	—	—	—	\nearrow
	AR										
	TR										
Cui et al. (2024)	ZH	CPT	—	—	—	—	—	\nearrow	—	—	—
Etxaniz et al. (2024a)	EU	CPT	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	\nearrow	—
Holmström et al. (2023)	SV	PT	—	—	\searrow, \rightarrow	—	—	—	—	—	—
Luukkonen et al. (2023)	FI	CPT	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pipatpankul et al. (2023)	TH	CPT	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

650 B Details of the Experimental Setup

651 B.1 Evaluated Models

652 Table 2 shows a list of LLMs evaluated in this study. The table includes the name, the

653 number of active parameters during inference, the base model from which the model was

654 continually pre-trained, the language distribution of the training corpus, the total number

655 of training tokens, the reported or estimated number of training tokens in English and

656 Japanese, and the reference of each model. § B.3 explains the method used to estimate the

657 number of language-specific training tokens. *CPT* stands for *continual pre-training*.

¹⁰Number of active parameters on inference. The total number of parameters is 47B.

Table 2: List of evaluated LLMs (the number of tokens is in billions [Bil], including estimates).

Model name	Num of params	Construction method	Source of CPT	Corpus	Training tokens	EN tokens	JA tokens	Reference
Yi-1.5 6B	6	PT	—	ZH,EN, Code	3600	2170	—	AI et al. (2024)
CyberAgentLM2-7B	7	PT	—	JA,EN	1300	650	650	cyberagent/calm2-7b
Japanese Stable LM Base Gamma 7B	7	CPT	Mistral-7B-v0.1	JA,EN	—	—	100	stabilityai/japanese-stablelm-base-gamma-7b
Japanese StableLM Beta 7B	7	CPT	Llama2 7B	JA,EN	2100	1794	102	stabilityai/japanese-stablelm-base-beta-7b
Llama 2 7B	7	PT	—	EN	2000	1794	2	Touvron et al. (2023)
Mistral-7B-v0.1	7	PT	—	EN	—	—	—	Jiang et al. (2023)
Mistral-7B-v0.2	7	PT	—	EN	—	—	—	Jiang et al. (2023)
Qwen1.5-7B	7	PT	—	—	4000	2000	—	Team (2024)
Qwen2-7B	7	PT	—	ZH,EN, Code+27	7000	3500	—	Yang et al. (2024)
RakutenAI-7B	7	CPT	Mistral-7B-v0.1	JA,EN	—	—	175	RakutenGroup et al. (2024)
Sarashina2-7B	7	PT	—	JA,EN	2100	840	1050	sbintuitions/sarashina2-7b
Swallow 7B	7	CPT	Llama2 7B	JA,EN	2100	1794	102	Fujii et al. (2024)
Swallow-MS v0.1	7	CPT	Mistral-7B-v0.1	JA,EN, Code	—	—	100	Fujii et al. (2024)
Youri 7B	7	CPT	Llama2 7B	JA,EN	2040	1834	42	Sawada et al. (2024)
Llama 3 8B	8	PT	—	EN	15000	14250	15	Dubey et al. (2024)
Llama 3 Swallow 8B	8	CPT	Llama3 8B	ZH,EN, Code	15100	14250	115	Fujii et al. (2024)
Llama 3 Youko 8B	8	CPT	Llama3 8B	JA,EN	15022	14250	37	Sawada et al. (2024)
Yi-1.5 9B	9	PT	—	ZH,EN, Code	3100	2170	—	AI et al. (2024)
ELYZA-japanese-Llama2-13b	13	CPT	Llama2 13B	JA	2018	1794	20	Sasaki et al. (2023)
Fugaku-LLM 13B	13	PT	—	JA,EN	400	200	200	Fugaku-LLM/Fugaku-LLM-13B
Llama 2 13B	13	PT	—	EN	2000	1794	2	Touvron et al. (2023)
LLM-jp-13B v2.0	13	PT	—	JA,EN, Code	260	120	130	LLM-jp et al. (2024)
Sarashina2-13B	13	PT	—	JA,EN	2100	840	1050	sbintuitions/sarashina2-13b
Swallow 13B	13	CPT	Llama2 13B	JA,EN	2100	1794	102	Fujii et al. (2024)
Yi-1.5 34B	34	PT	—	ZH,EN, Code	3100	2170	—	AI et al. (2024)
C4AI Command-R v0.1	35	PT	—	JA,EN, ZH+8	—	—	—	CohereForAI/c4ai-command-r-v01
Mixtral-8x7B-v0.1	13 ¹⁰	PT	—	EN	—	—	—	Jiang et al. (2024)
Swallow-MX 8x7B v0.1	13 ¹⁰	CPT	Mixtral-8x7B-Instruct-v0.1	JA,EN	—	—	100	Fujii et al. (2024)
Japanese Stable LM Beta 70B	70	CPT	Llama2 70B	JA,EN	2100	1794	102	stabilityai/japanese-stablelm-base-beta-70b
KARAKURI LM 70B v0.1	70	CPT	Llama2 70B	JA,EN	2016	1794	18	KARAKURI Inc. (2024)
Llama 2 70B	70	PT	—	EN	2000	1794	2	Touvron et al. (2023)
Llama 3 70B	70	PT	—	EN	15000	14250	15	Dubey et al. (2024)
Llama 3 Swallow 70B	70	CPT	Llama3 70B	ZH,EN, Code	15100	14250	115	Fujii et al. (2024)
Swallow 70B	70	CPT	Llama2 70B	JA,EN	2100	1794	102	Fujii et al. (2024)
Qwen2-72B	72	PT	—	ZH,EN, Code+27	7000	3500	—	Yang et al. (2024)

658 **B.2 Evaluation Tasks and Benchmarks**

659 Table 3 provides an overview of the evaluation benchmarks used in this study. The table
660 includes the benchmark name, a brief description, the language of the task, the metric for
661 scoring the model’s output, the experimental setting (e.g., few-shot, zero-shot, chain-of-
662 thought), and the reference of each benchmark. The scale of evaluation metrics is normalized
663 between 0 and 1, and *EM* means *exact match*.

Table 3: List of benchmarks used for evaluation.

Name	Description	Lang.	Eval. metric ^{9,10}	Exp. setup	Reference
JcommonsenseQA (JCom.)	Multiple-choice questions with 5 options based on a knowledge base	JA	Acc.	4-shot	Kurihara et al. (2022)
JEMHopQA	Free-form question answering to evaluate knowledge and reasoning ability	JA	Char F1	4-shot	Ishii et al. (2023)
NIILC	Free-form question answering where answers can be obtained from an encyclopedia	JA	Char F1	4-shot	Sekine (2003)
JSQuAD	Free-form question answering on Wikipedia articles	JA	Char F1	4-shot	Kurihara et al. (2022)
XL-Sum	Generating summaries from BBC articles	JA	ROUGE-2	1-shot	Hasan et al. (2021)
MGSM	Japanese translation of the primary school math word problem dataset (GSM8K)	JA	Acc. (EM)	4-shot	Shi et al. (2023)
WMT20(en-ja)	English-Japanese translation of news articles	JA	BLEU	4-shot	Barrault et al. (2020)
WMT20(ja-en)	Japanese-to-English translation of news articles	JA	BLEU	4-shot	Barrault et al. (2020)
JMMLU	Japanese translation of the multiple-choice benchmark MMLU (53 subjects)	JA	Acc.	5-shot	Yin et al. (2024)
JHumanEval	Japanese translation of HumanEval	JA	pass@1	0-shot 10 trials	Sato et al. (2024)
OpenBookQA	Multiple-choice questions based on scientific knowledge and common sense	EN	Acc.	4-shot	Mihaylov et al. (2018)
TriviaQA	Free-form question answering based on trivia knowledge	EN	Acc. (EM)	4-shot	Joshi et al. (2017)
HellaSwag	Multiple-choice questions to predict the next event	EN	Acc.	4-shot	Zellers et al. (2019)
SQuAD2	Free-form question answering based on a supporting document	EN	Acc. (EM)	4-shot	Rajpurkar et al. (2018)
XWINO	Binary-choice questions to identify the antecedent of a pronoun in a sentence	EN	Acc.	4-shot	Tikhonov & Ryabinin (2021)
MMLU	Multiple-choice questions across 57 subjects	EN	Acc.	5-shot	Hendrycks et al. (2021)
GSM8K	Primary school math word problem dataset	EN	Acc. (EM)	4-shot	Cobbe et al. (2021)
BBH	23 challenging tasks from the BIG-Bench dataset	EN	Acc. (EM)	3-shot CoT 0-shot 10 trials	Suzgun et al. (2023)
HumanEval	Evaluation of code generation ability via unit tests	EN	pass@1	0-shot 10 trials	Chen et al. (2021)

664 B.3 Estimating the Number of Training Tokens

665 The numbers of language-specific training tokens (in billions) were either obtained from
 666 or calculated based on official sources such as technical reports, release documents, or
 667 model cards. When an exact number was unavailable in the source, we used the following
 668 estimates:

- 669 • Ratio of Japanese training tokens:
 - 670 – Llama 2, Llama 3: 0.1%
 - 671 – Mistral, Mixtral: 0%
 - 672 – Full-scratch Japanese LLMs: 50%
 - 673 – Japanese LLMs with CPT: 100%
- 674 • Ratio of English training tokens:
 - 675 – Qwen1.5, Qwen2: 50%
 - 676 – Yi-1.5: 70%
 - 677 – Llama 2: 89.7%
 - 678 – Llama 3: 95%

Table 4: List of evaluation frameworks.

Name	Description	Reference
LLM-jp eval (1.3.0)	Automatic evaluation tool for Japanese LLMs	Han et al. (2024)
JP Language Model Evaluation Harness (commit #9b42d41)	An evaluation framework for Japanese LLMs	zenodo.10256836
Language Model Evaluation Harness (0.4.2)	An evaluation framework for LLMs	zenodo.10256836
Code Generation LM Evaluation Harness (commit #0261c52)	An evaluation framework for code generation task	Ben Allal et al. (2022)

Table 5: Breakdown of LLM groups used in Figure 1.

Category	Models
Japanese LLMs pre-trained from scratch	CyberAgentLM2-7B, Sarashina2-7B, Sarashina2-13B, Fugaku-LLM 13B, LLM-jp-13B v2.0
LLMs continually pre-trained on Japanese text	Japanese Stable LM Base Gamma 7B Japanese Stable LM Beta 7B, RakutenAI-7B, Swallow 7B, Swallow-MS v0.1, Youri 7B, Llama 3 Swallow 8B, Llama 3 Youko 8B, ELYZA-japanese-Llama-2-13b, Swallow 13B, Swallow-MX 8x7B v0.1, Japanese Stable LM Beta 70B, KARAKURI LM 70B v0.1, Llama 3 Swallow 70B, Swallow 70B
English LLMs	Yi-1.5 6B, Llama 2 7B, Mistral-7B-v0.1, Mistral-7B-v0.2, Llama 3 8B, Yi-1.5 9B, Llama 2 13B, Yi-1.5 34B, Mixtral-8x7B-v0.1, Llama 2 70B, Llama 3 70B
Multilingual LLMs	C4AI Command-R v0.1, Qwen1.5-7B, Qwen2-7B, Qwen2-72B

679 A symbol ‘–’ in Table 2 indicates that the number could not be obtained or estimated despite
680 our best efforts. We excluded these LLMs from the analysis of the scaling laws in § 4.4.

681 **B.4 Evaluation Framework**

682 Table 4 reports a list of evaluation frameworks used in this study. The table shows the
683 framework name, a brief description, and the reference of the framework. We slightly cus-
684 tomized these evaluation frameworks to cover benchmarks that are not officially supported
685 and to implement workarounds for LLMs; for example, some LLMs require special tokens
686 or line breaks in the prompt to generate valid outputs. We will release the customized
687 implementation upon acceptance.

688 **B.5 Details of LLM Grouping**

689 Table 5 shows the breakdown of LLM groups used in Figure 1.

690 **C Analysis of the Evaluation Results**

691 This section presents detailed observations that complement the explanation in § 4.1.

692 **C.1 Performance Difference between the Pre-trained Languages**

693 Figure 1 reveals a notable observation: the scores of Japanese LLMs pre-trained from scratch
694 (the blue box) are consistently lower than those of continually pre-trained models. This

695 may be due to the relatively small number of parameters of the LLMs in this category
 696 (e.g. CyberAgentLM2-7B, Sarashina2-7B, Fugaku-LLM 13B), as well as the limited training
 697 budget (i.e., number of training tokens) available for developing LLMs from scratch. This
 698 highlights a challenge in developing local LLMs in Japan.

699 Additionally, compared to other groups, multilingual LLMs (the black box) performed
 700 significantly better in arithmetic reasoning (MGSM and GSM8K) and code generation
 701 (JHumanEval and HumanEval) tasks. However, we believe that this does not reflect the
 702 overall strength of multilingual LLMs, but rather the strengths of Qwen family (Yang et al.,
 703 2024), which represents three out of four LLMs in this group.

704 C.2 Variations in Task Scores

705 Figure 1 highlights tasks with both high and low score variances. Tasks with low score
 706 variances can be grouped into two categories:

- 707 1. Benchmarks evaluated with n-gram based metrics (e.g. WMT20-ja-en and WMT20-
 708 en-ja with BLEU, and XL-Sum with ROUGE-2).
- 709 2. Tasks requiring essential skills (e.g. JSQuAD and SQuAD2.0 (reading comprehen-
 710 sion), and OpenBookQA and XWINO (commonsense)).

711 In contrast, tasks with high score variances can be grouped into two categories:

- 712 1. Tasks requiring specific capabilities (e.g. MGSM, GSM8K (arithmetic reasoning),
 713 JHumanEval and HumanEval (code generation))
- 714 2. Knowledge-intensive tasks (e.g. NIILC, JMMLU, MMLU, and TriviaQA)

715 The scores for these tasks heavily depend on whether a model possesses the necessary
 716 capabilities or specialized knowledge, which leads to a greater variance.

717 D Robustness Check of Findings Obtained from Experimental Results

718 To test the robustness of the findings presented in § 4, we conducted two additional analyses
 719 using different methods and settings: the use of maximum likelihood estimation and Promax
 720 rotation¹¹ instead of PCA (in § 4.3); and exclusion of continually pre-trained models to focus
 721 on models trained from scratch. Moreover, we performed leave-one-out cross-validation
 722 to confirm that our insights derived from observational approach are robust to statistical
 723 errors.

724 D.1 Maximum Likelihood Estimation and Promax Rotation

725 Figure 10 presents factor loadings with Promax rotation applied. This figure reveals two
 726 factors similar to those identified in § 4.3: ability factor for arithmetic reasoning and code
 727 generation (Factor 2 for PC3), and ability factor Japanese (Factor 3 for PC2). In contrast,
 728 the first factor (Factor 1) seems to represent English ability, not the general ability (PC1),
 729 since the loading scores are strongly positive on the English task benchmarks such as
 730 OpenBookQA, TriviaQA, HellaSwag, and XWINO.

731 Additionally, the fourth factor (Factor 4) seems to be a distinct ability factor for Japanese at
 732 first glance since the loading scores are strongly positive on two Japanese task benchmarks
 733 (JCom. and JSQuAD). However, the correlation coefficient with the logarithm of the compu-
 734 tational budget for Japanese is as small as 0.241, much lower than that of the computational
 735 budget for English (0.788). Figure 9 shows small Factor 4 scores on Japanese LLMs, such as
 736 Llama 3 Youko 8B, Japanese Stable LM Beta 7B, CyberAgentLM2-7B, LLM-jp-13B v2.0 and
 737 Fugaku-LLM 13B. Even strong Japanese LLMs (e.g., Llama 3 Swallow 70B, Japanese Stable
 738 LM Base Gamma 7B) do not show high scores compared to non-Japanese LLMs. Therefore,

¹¹We used the `factor_analyzer.FactorAnalyzer()` and `factor_analyzer.Rotator()` method from the `factor_analyzer` package.

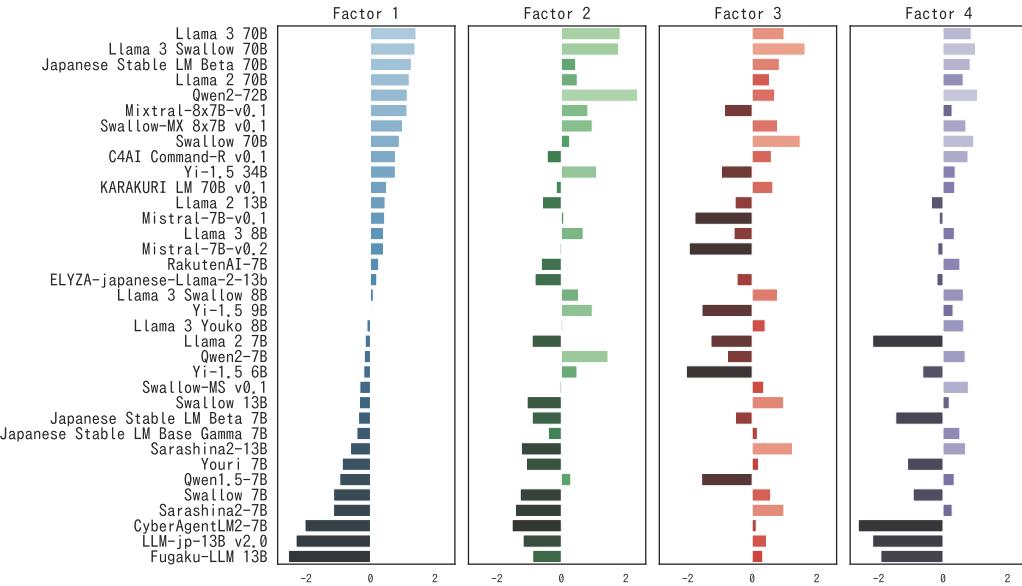
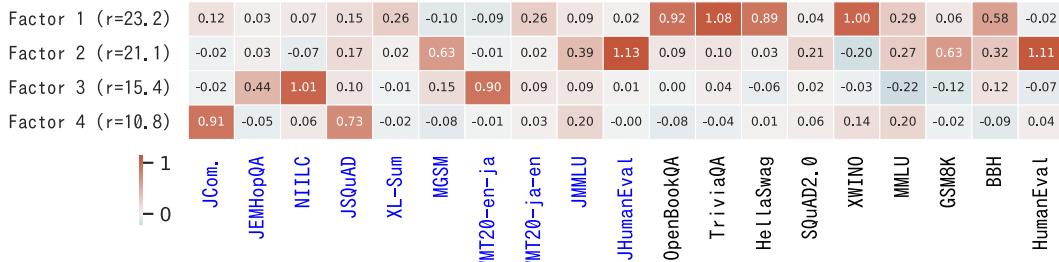


Figure 9: Factor scores for each model with Promax rotation applied.

Figure 10: Factor loadings by task with Promax rotation applied ($n = 35$; r represents a contribution; blue and black colors correspond to Japanese and English task benchmarks, respectively).

739 the fourth factor should be considered as a residual that is difficult to interpret; therefore,
 740 commonsense tasks and reading comprehension do not determine Japanese abilities.

741 To sum, these results confirm two similar factors to those identified in § 4.3 (an ability factor
 742 for arithmetic reasoning and code generation, and a Japanese ability factor) and two unique
 743 factors (an English ability factor and a residual factor).

744 D.2 Analysis with only Full-scratch Models

745 We removed continually pre-trained LLMs, which are categorized as *LLMs continually*
 746 *pre-trained on Japanese text* in Table 5 and conducted the same analysis as in § 4.2 to § 4.4.

747 Figure 15 shows the Pearson correlation matrix of benchmark scores. The figure reveals that
 748 JEMHopQA, NIILC (QA about Japanese knowledge) and WMT20-en-ja (English-Japanese
 749 translation) are weakly correlated with other tasks. In addition, the figure shows strong
 750 correlations across languages in benchmarks of arithmetic reasoning (GSM8K vs. MGSM),
 751 academic subjects (MMLU vs. JMLLU), and code generation (HumanEval vs. JHumanEval).
 752 These findings are consistent with those identified with continually pre-trained LLMs in
 753 § 4.2.

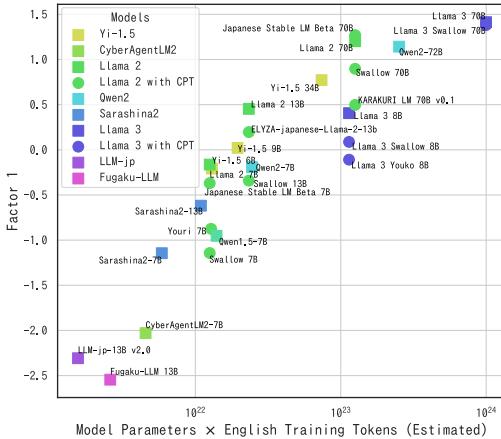


Figure 11: Relationship between the computational budget for English and Factor 1 ($n = 27$).

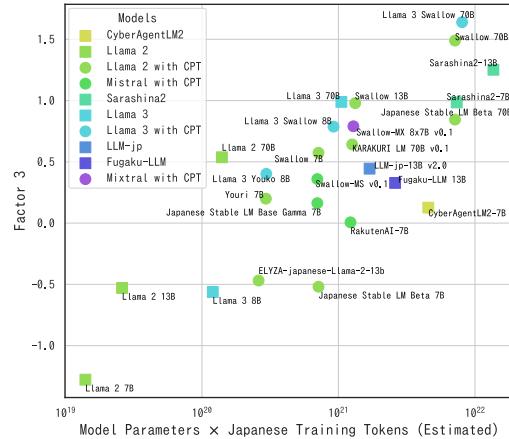


Figure 12: Relationship between the computational budget for Japanese and Factor 3 ($n = 27$).

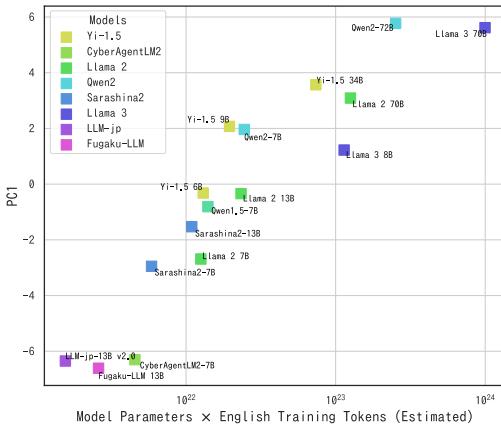


Figure 13: Relationship between the computational budget for English and PC1 ($n = 16$; only with models trained from scratch).



Figure 14: Relationship between the computational budget for Japanese and PC2 ($n = 10$; only with models trained from scratch).

Figure 16 shows the factor loadings for each task benchmark. The figure highlights four factors: a general ability factor with uniform scores on each benchmark (PC1); a Japanese ability factor with high scores on JEMHopQA, NIILC, and WMT20-en-ja (PC2); an ability factor for arithmetic reasoning and code generation with high scores on HumanEval, JHumanEval, MSGM, and GSM8K (PC3); and a residual factor that is difficult to interpret (PC4). These observations are consistent with those obtained with continually pre-trained LLMs in § 4.3.

Lastly, we examined the relationship between the computational budget for English and PC1 (Figure 13) and the one between the computational budget for Japanese and PC2 (Figure 14). Figure 13 exhibits a strong positive correlation between PC1 (general ability) and computational budget for English ($\rho = 0.923$), and Figure 14 indicates a moderate positive correlation between PC2 (Japanese ability) and computation budget for Japanese ($\rho = 0.779$). These relationships are the same as those confirmed with continually pre-trained LLMs in § 4.4.

In this way, we could confirm the findings observed in § 4.2 to § 4.4 even with the LLMs built from scratch, which indicates the robustness of the findings against the construction methods of LLMs.

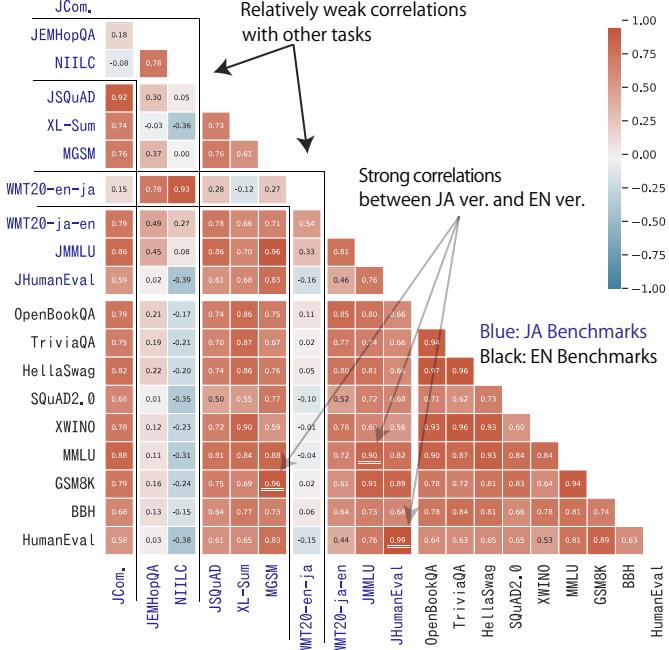


Figure 15: Pearson correlation matrix among benchmark scores ($n = 20$; only with models trained from scratch).

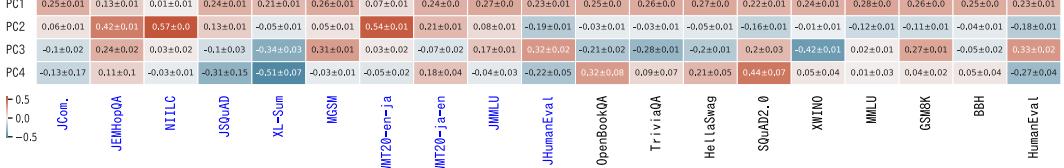


Figure 17: Leave-One-Out CV statistics: mean and standard deviations of the factor loadings ($n = 35$, blue: Japanese benchmarks, black: English benchmarks).

771 D.3 Leave-One-Out Cross-Validation

772 We assessed the statistical error of factor loadings using leave-one-out cross-validation on
 773 the analyzed LLMs (see Figure 17) and confirmed that the standard deviations were small
 774 relative to the absolute values.

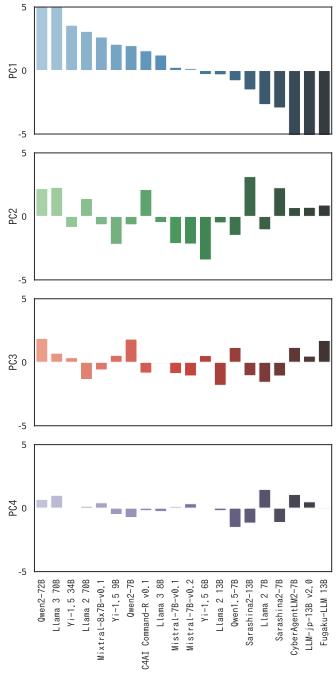


Figure 16: Principal component scores for each model ($n = 20$; only with models trained from scratch).