

Genki: Case study of benefits for foreigners of producing theatre in a Japanese regional dialect

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About Kochi

- Rural
- Isolated
- Monocultural





What is Genki?

- The Genki Tosaben Musical
- Produced annually since 1996
- Original plays in the Tosaben Dialect
 - Shiteru vs Shichu, Shiranai vs Shiran
- Produced by JET ALTs for charity
 - Tour the prefecture and collect donations for study abroad scholarships
- Combines Western and Kochi historical figures and culture (E.g. Sakamoto Ryoma in Star Wars)

Research Questions

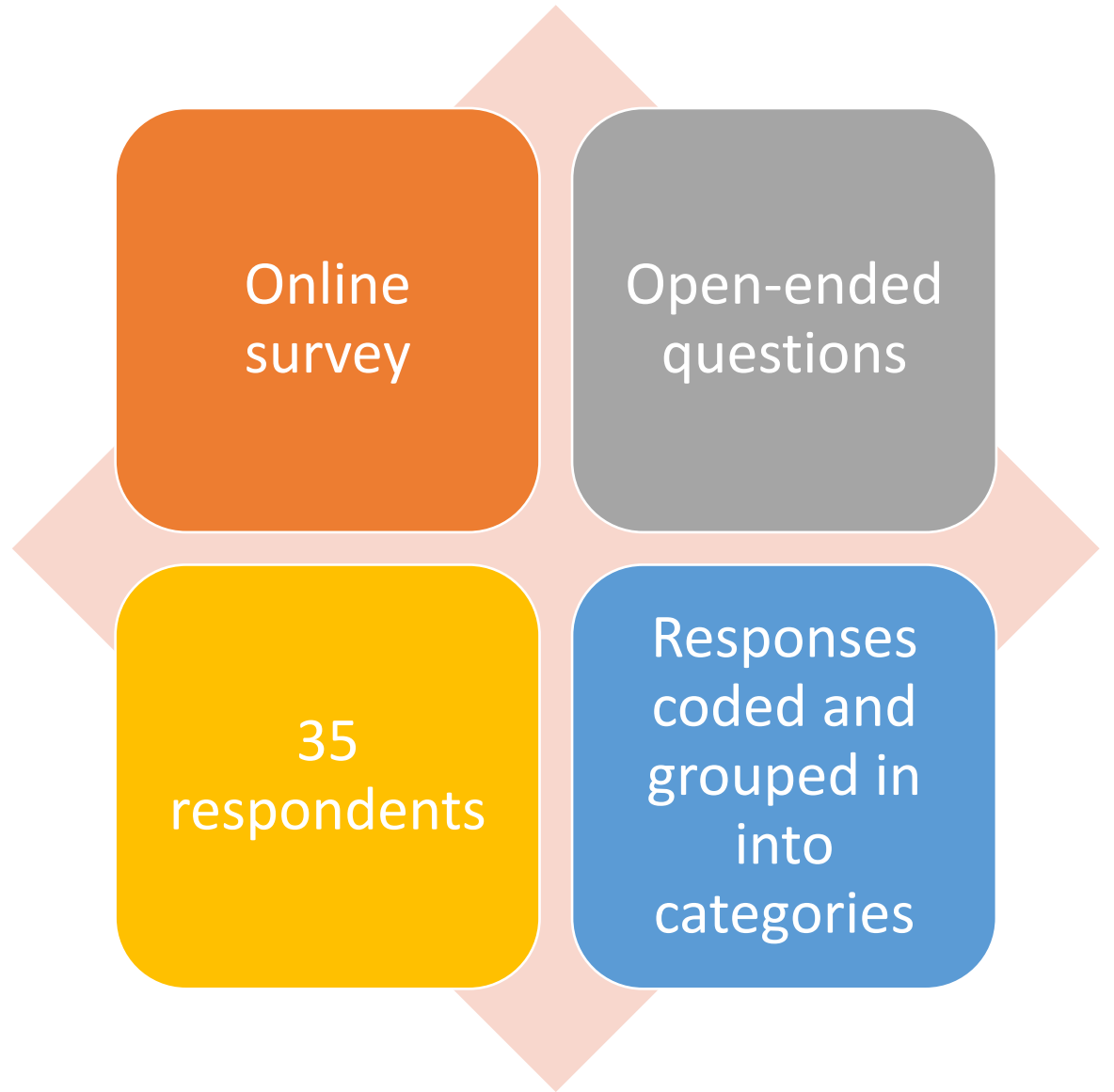
Why do people decide to join Genki?

What effect did participating in Genki have on peoples' Japanese language learning?

How did joining Genki affect community integration?

What are the positive and negative aspects of participation in Genki?

Methods



Why do people decide to join Genki?

- Social connections
 - Other foreigners
 - Local community
- Love of theatre
- Personal challenge
 - Language learning



What effect did participating in Genki have on peoples' Japanese language learning?

- Increased interest in Tosaben
- Improved pronunciation and intonation
- Increased motivation to study Japanese
- Better vocabulary and grammar
- Increased confidence



How did joining Genki affect community integration?

- Strengthened relationships with the other foreign residents participating
- Improved co-worker relations
- Bonding with the local community
- Making friends with the Japanese volunteers
- Improved relations with students



What are the negative aspects of participation in Genki?

- Rehearsal scheduling
- Cast member commitment and ability
- Interpersonal conflict
- Lack of community support
- Too many creators
- Travelling to rehearsals
- Contributing money



What are the positive aspects of participation in Genki?

- Spending time with cast members
- The experience of making the show and performing
- Making connections to the local community
- Improving Japanese
- The touring experience
- Freedom to choose roles



Conclusion

- The experience is generally very positive and beneficial
- By examining participant experiences and motivations, we can see what has helped Genki to be successful for over 20 years
- Hopefully this information can be helpful for those wishing to replicate this positive experience in other locations outside of Kochi



Links to past performances

- 2021 Genki video
<https://youtu.be/J06AJKzeGPQ>
- 2019 Alice in Wonderland
<https://youtu.be/av1vQ6vp38o>
- 2015 Wizard of Oz
<https://youtu.be/10Eig3M00QQ>
- 2014 Harry Potter
<https://youtu.be/3TmUgQfrb30>
- 2011 A Christmas Carol (trailer)
<https://youtu.be/0Gt-JWuD3bA>