The A-I-U-E-O Gabun photo-and-wordplay workshop:

A participatory study of collaborative storytelling in local communities

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What is A-I-U-E-O Gabun?

- Community-linked participatory media project centering on workshop designed to foster exchange among local citizens.
- Focuses on collaborative process by which personal histories are shared with others.
- Looks personal memories and experiences as valuable historical resources for storytelling.

Background and goals

What is A-I-U-E-O Gabun?

- Form of expression simple yet enabled sustained collaboration by diverse group.
- Hints from traditional wordplay forms: oriku (acrostic poem), renga, haiga etc.
- A-I-U-E-O = 1 syllabary group of the modern Japanese
- ga = picture, bun = text

A-I-U-E-O *gabun as* a new form of folk literary and artistic expression for the digital age









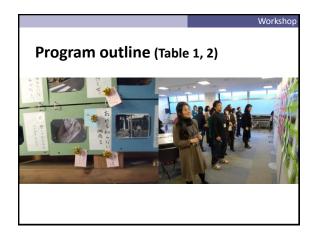


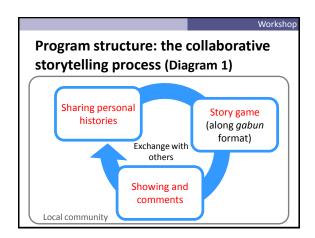
Venue and participants (Table 1) • Fujisawa city, Kanagawa (Dec. 2007) – 9 residents from 20s to 70s – 2 days, used online system • Toyohashi city, Aichi (Jan. 2009) – 8 residents from 40s to 80s – 1 day, publicly exhibited after the workshop • Bunkyo ward, Tokyo (Mar. 2009) – 16 residents and commuters from 20s to 60s – 1 day, publicly exhibited after the workshop











Results and analysis

Sharing personal histories

- 1. Importance of initial storytelling
 - Talking the memories directory in the actual space of the workshop withdrew gabun stories associated with the original meaning of the photo.
- Historical photographs as stimulus for reminiscences and dialogue
 - "You're younger than I am, but I bet you still know what the bridge used to look like." (FK) "Yes, you couldn't go anywhere unless you crossed that bridge." (MN) [Figure3]

Results and analysis

Story game

- 1. Learning the way of storytelling
 - Many comments and feedbacks on how to make gabun
- 2. Acknowledging the audience
 - Importance of having the audience was reconfirmed: Groups as rivals, facilitators as outsiders.
- 3. Informal discussion as an editorial process
 - Conversations including casual remarks, indications of approval functioned as the editorial process [Table3]

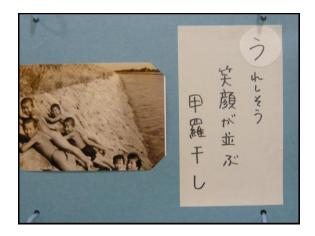
Results and analysis

Showing and comments

- 1. Learning through reflection and self-affirmation
 - Glancing every works afforded participants think back their creation
 - Approximately 30% of Bunkyo and 45% of Shonan comments praised their own works made by group.
- 2. Extended communication through public commentary





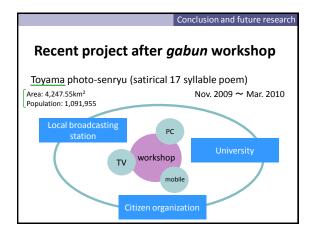




Conclusion and future research

Conclusion

- 1. Potential usage of *gabun* format in different situation and themes.
 - local archives with workshop activities
- 2. The analytical framework for collaborative storytelling process needed to be refined.
- 3. Future-oriented outlook needed to be transmitted to participants and cooperating organizations.
- 4. Future plan collaborating with multiple local institutions to go beyond a single workshop.



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