Multimedia Design in the Implementation of Cultural Research

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Digital technologies of media infiltrate increasingly diverse aspects of life; taking part in accomplished new digital cultural forms and practices. This article outlines a design practical work in relation to a collaborative project between multimedia design and visual ethnographic culture research. The aim of the collaboration is to explore new possibilities for using new media to create a multilayered associative narrative, as most efforts in the design field have been directed to defining and forming the concrete objectives of our physical environment. The article describes the ideas about how multimedia design can be used to combine, integrate and juxtapose the moving image alongside photographs and sound to convey ideas about landscape, life style and visual culture, and tangible context in relation as a material of representing contemporary culture. It makes the assertion that, by using knowledge and techniques of multimedia design are enabling users' to enrich their experience and interaction with the materials presented. Powerful new possibilities can arise and key sources of inspiration be created through which to communicate ideas and arguments in border research areas for multilayered narrations. It is proposed that the design approach contributes to thinking about ways that digital media can respond to multiple realities and corporeal and affective phenomena, and open up new avenues for the design-based research paradigm.

Keywords: multimedia design, visual ethnographic, visual culture, new media.

1. INTEGRATION OF DESIGN RESEARCH AND DEIGN ANTHROPOLOGY

Digital technologies of media infiltrate increasingly diverse aspects of life widely taking part in accomplishing new digital cultural forms and practices. This article outlines work in progress in relation to a collaborative project between multimedia design and visual anthropology culture research (Orrill, Hannafin, & Glazer, 2003; Reigeluth & Frick, 1999). Visual anthropology is a distance research technique in company with images and video clips, concerned the visual evidence as a means to investigate cultural content. Visual anthropologists believe that whilst text based construction mainly forms the primary description of anthropology, when combined with multi tangible forms of multimedia, this would interpret research data more comprehensibly and be a light veiled advance (Appadurai 1996).

The collaboration draws on visual anthropology methods within the field of innovative multimedia design practice on the representation of Taiwanese contemporary visual culture. When looking at the possibilities, key sources of inspiration are considered along with the wider implications of this research to the fields of interactive multimedia

design (Browning, Bidwell, Hardy, Standley, 2008). This research is a design based project, as most previous efforts in the design field have been directed at defining and forming the concrete objectives of our physical environment, this project describes the ideas about how multimedia design can be used to combine, integrate and juxtapose moving images alongside photographs and sound to convey ideas about landscape, life style, visual culture, and tangible context in relation as a material of representing contemporary culture. This is principally due to their ability to contextually simulate real-life situations by presenting various activities in multimodal and multisensory ways.

2. CULTURE UNDERSTANDING FROM 'ALONG THE RIVER DURING THE CHING-MING FESTIVAL'

To take the example of *Along the river During the Ching-ming Festival*, a scroll of Chinese traditional painting and one of most distinguished genre portraits originally draw by artist Zhang Zeduan (1085-1145) during the Song Dynasty. It captures the daily life of people from the period at the then capital-Bianjing. It transforms the storytelling of

various activates in life, and became an important archive as a cultural research documentary for its age along with its high level of artistic quality. This research took Tai-Pin Old Street as the place of case study in order to integrate multi discipline into a project. Tai-Pin Old Street is located in the historical town of Do-Liou, in the middle of Taiwan Island. This street is in the center of town, six hundred yards/meters in length, and full of traditional beliefs and localized life style. The major population of Do-Liou is from the southern part of Fukien Province, Zhangzhou and Quanzhou, and the vast majority of the population labored in agriculture. The trading activities of the town gathering in this street have taken place since the early Ming Dynasty. This street possesses more than eighty baroque houses established in three different styles in the Japanese colonial period during the early twentieth century, and it's seen as a typical landscape of the aforementioned period. The hybridization of Taiwanese local culture in the twenty first century is clear, mingled as it is with European, American, Japanese and Chinese influence over the past five hundred years. This juxtaposed and tangible texture of cultural influence is represented in everyday life, in the way people live; dress, move, socialize, and trade. Though multimedia is a platform used to convey various forms of materials, and demonstrate it in one piece, this research hit up with a board field investigation of verbal and text material, which starts with interviews with local residents, culture investigators, and documentary officers, to help understand the historical background and present situation from the different perspectives of this town. The second step took thousands of images and video clips to record the existing street landscape, to map those disappeared remains, as well as take down the residential livelihood and social behavior of the

present day. These investigations aim to construct a creative documental and interactive media to demonstrate the features of Tai-Pin Old Street in 2009 (Fig. 1).

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF TAI PIN STREET

This project recreates the street in a 45° bird view via various illustration and interactive multimedia design software, and reveals the street in an interactive film model. Users can multi touch to move and zoom in on any detail that interests them, with individual items available in audio to pop up the historical and current information in multimedia form. Rebuilding an interactive scene for Tai-Pin Old Street, based on a visual anthropology concept, multimedia creation and media technology is the achievement of this project.

This practical design research harnesses the intrinsic capacity of interactive multimedia design to give visual and hearing form to concepts and relations, by using visual ethnography as a way to understand, act out, look upon, search for, and interrogate a representation of contemporary culture. The interrogation of multimedia practice enables users to interact with the materials presented and enlightens the possibility of conceiving the production of knowledge as a relative process involving interdependent correlations of human knowledge. This is fundamental to their future development as distinctive design spheres while opening up the scope for culture-based knowledge and understanding to reorient interactive multimedia design. A new sense of materiality, meaning, audienceship and authorship is provoked, and consequently there exists an opportunity to work out new multimedia narrative strategies.

Figure 1: the partial scene of Tai-Pin Street

4. REFERENCES

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