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Participatory Graphic Design for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage

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PARTICIPATORY GRAPHIC DESIGN FOR SAFEGUARDING CULTURAL HERITAGE

Assistant Professor Dr. Siriporn Peters | Art, Communication and Theatre

Introduction

Participatory graphic design for safeguarding cultural heritage was the main focus of this research. In this research, graphic design is defined as a process, which combines art and technology in order to communicate an idea and make knowledge visible and easy to access. Participatory design is an approach, which allows future design users to take part in a design process with design-researchers in order to ensure that the design solution meets their needs.

According to UNESCO (2016), cultural heritage can be oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the cultural heritage; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship. "Safeguarding" means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.

This was a collaborative research with the representatives of the Cheyenne and Arapaho nations in Oklahoma in 2015. These nations were selected as a case study because SWOSU is located on the land of these nations where are rich of knowledge.

Research Questions

The research was guided two research questions.
- The first question was what cultural heritage that the Cheyenne and Arapaho nations intended to preserve and safeguard.
- The second question was what graphic designers could do to help these nations to preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage effectively.

Objectives

The researcher aimed to study the cultural heritage of the Cheyenne and Arapaho nations and design a potential means to help these nations to safeguard their cultural heritage.

Research Methodology

The research methodology was a qualitative research by using a case study as a research approach. The participants were Cheyenne and Arapaho educators and knowledgeable community members.

Research Procedures

There were four procedures.

Photograph Archive

Documents

Objectives & Products

Before IRB approved

1st Procedure
A consultation meeting and recruitment

2nd Procedure
Data Collection and Analysis

3rd Procedure
A Participatory Design Process: Group discussion for reflection & planning an action

Taking an action & observation

4th Procedure
Monitoring and Evaluation

evaluation

Future Research

Interview

After IRB approved

Participatory Observation

Physical Artifacts: Audio Photograph & Video

Results

The research findings revealed that the Cheyenne and Arapaho language were the cultural heritage that the participants intended to safeguard and pass on to new generations.

As these nations have only a spoken language, graphic designers used visual communication, digital medua and online technology to help the participant communities to preserve and pass on their language to new generation. Graphic designers also help to make the Cheyenne and Arapaho languages visible and easy to access.
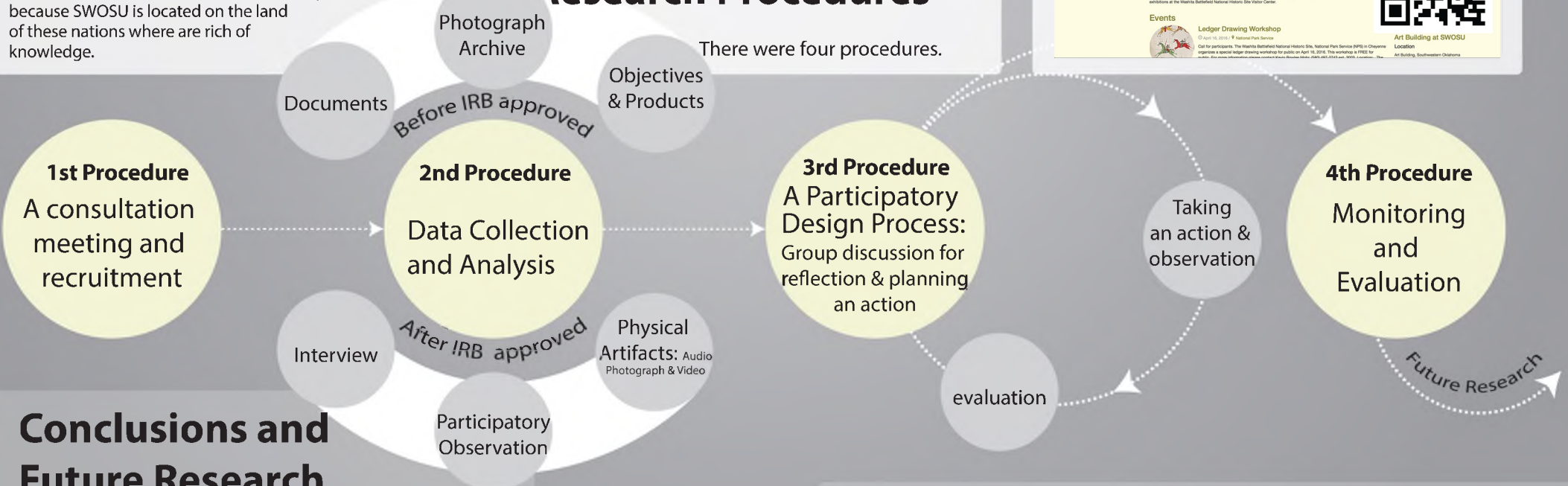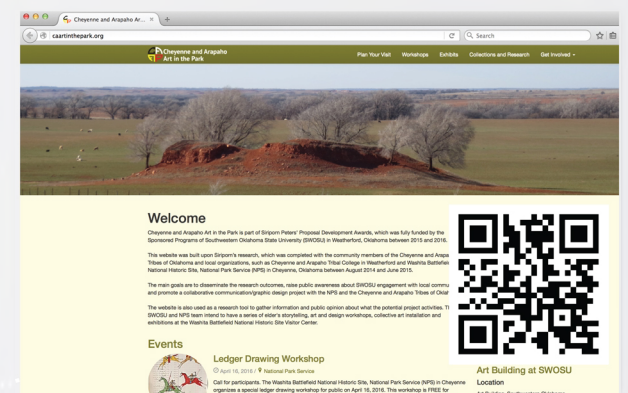
Conclusions and Future Research

The research revealed that the Cheyenne and Arapaho languages were the cultural heritage that these communities intended to safeguard. According to UNESCO, the Cheyenne Language in Oklahoma is severely endangered, as there are only 400 speakers. The youngest speakers are elders. The Arapaho language in Oklahoma is extinct. The representatives of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes Language Program in Oklahoma intend to increase the number of younger speakers by using multimedia and information technology. Therefore, the participant communities agreed to continue working with graphic designers at SWOSU to create motion graphics and digital media to preserve and pass languages to young generations.

Work Sample

Number One
É peve vóoná o
is Hello.
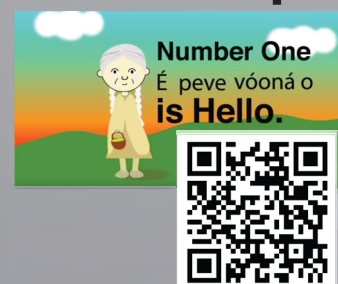
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