

An Observation of Communication Techniques on the Illustrated Explanation YouTube Video

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Introduction

YouTube videos have been used widely for many purposes including commercials, education, public service announcement, society and many other purposes. It is an innovative approach where the advantages of multimedia elements (such as video, sound, graphic and animation) are used for better content understanding, as well as multiple platforms for easy viewing (such as phone, computer, and tablet). Some professional video makers produce quality video that can go viral online, reaching thousands and even millions of viewers. One YouTube video namely Illustrated Explanation of Surah al Ash (IESA) had gone viral in Islamic online society reaching 100,000 viewers with very positive testimonials and impressive remarks. It clearly shows the effectiveness of the communication techniques. IESA is one of quality animations on Nouman Ali Khan (NAK) collection YouTube channel that explains about al Quran chapters. The researcher believes that there are design philosophies that made such communication techniques effective. This research describes the communication techniques of IESA on six design aspects; animation, mind mapping, illustration, text, sound and graphics. The study observed the design philosophy used on each aspect.

Analysis

IESA is available on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izuQLatPqt8>. The communication techniques on IESA and, the rest of whole original Al Quran 114 chapters were written in high level language, where to feel and understand the content, one need to read tafseer (resource book that explains the content), and or refer to ustaz (experts). The communication techniques of IESA

allow opportunities for uses to feel and understand the content better. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the communication techniques can be observed from the perspective of design philosophies. Through SWOT analysis, ISEA can be understood as having.

S - Strength, in terms of capabilities in relating content with animation, mind mapping, illustration, text and graphic so viewers found it easy to understand.

W - Weakness, in terms of applying consistent design presentation. NAK collection showed different styles of presentation on its other videos of al Quran chapters.

O - Opportunity, to rely on a framework to produce more content using consistent design presentation

T - Threat, in terms of miscommunication through lack of consistency in design presentation.

It is suggested to observe and describe the possible design philosophies behind the communication techniques.

Two similar videos available on YouTube were observed. The table below showed the comparison of each one based on the six design aspects that have been observed (Table 1).

Table 1: Other similar videos on YouTube showed a lack of design aspects and testimony from viewers.

No	YouTube Channel	Design aspects observed						Testimony
		Animation	Mind mapping	Illustration	Text	Sound	Graphic	
1	Daily Reminder http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izuQLatPqt8	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	Positive and ordinary remarks
2	I Dewah http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izuQLatPqt8	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	Positive and ordinary remarks

Methodology

The observation was conducted on 28th august 2014 based on six design aspects:

1.Animation : the overall narration and animation techniques of the video played from beginning until the end.

2.Mind Mapping : the content break down and mapping techniques.

3.Illustration : the use of visualization techniques

4.Text : the types of text, arrangement of text.

6.Sound : the experience of hearing and use of sounds.

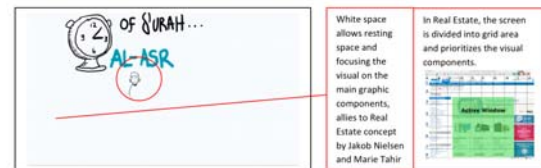
6.Graphics : the arrangement of text and illustration on the screen.

All six design aspects are arranged into a proposed framework.

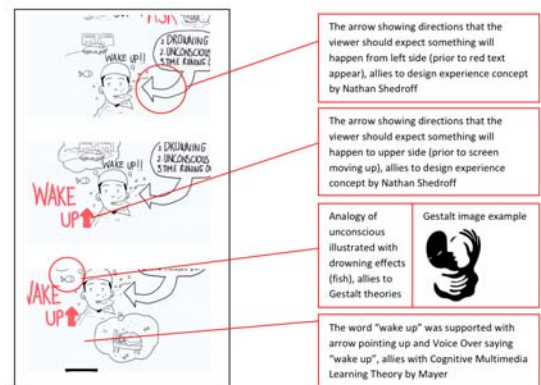
Discussion

IESA utilized Voice Over as taken from a Ustaz Nouman Ali Khan (Islamic scholar) lecture and synchronized with illustrated explanation. The Voice Over was uniquely motivating. Ustaz Nouman Ali Khan is able to narrate the content of surah al Asr in a unique way where viewers tend to wait for more explanation. He had a clear voice, sounded a bit rushed, and used simple English. The lecture provides analogies to explain key points from surah Al Asr content. Each analogy was illustrated/symbolized and narrated using animated line drawing animation technique that trigger curiosity and sustain motivation. ARCS (Attention Relevance Confidence and Satisfaction) model (Keller, 1987) suggests that motivation

sustains because of curiosity (Figure 1 & 2).



showed incomplete drawing and created curiosity, which is good to sustain motivation.



art direction guiding the viewers on what to expect from one screen to another.

Each analogy illustration supported better understanding for the viewers. This analogy Illustration, similar to Gestalt theory, where images are able to represent multiple meanings. It seems like such an approach can be used to explain high level language like al Quran. Line drawing used here also reduced overloading screen capacity. As discussed on Screen real estate concept (Nilsen & Tahir, 2002), the amount of visual information used should be limited for usability purpose. By minimizing visuals on the screen, the graphic approach looked planned, which means that

every time the scene changes, the graphic design layout made the viewer curious expecting what happens next. This graphic design layout was associated with design experience (Shedroff, 2009), where design is the process of making experience. Shedroff also believed that experience includes meaning. The text on the graphic design layout however, supported the illustration for quick meaning recall. It was Sans Serif type which normally used for fast reading purpose. Nevertheless, through Cognitive Multimedia Learning Theory, Mayer believed

that people learn more deeply from words and pictures than from words alone (Mayer, p.47). Towards the end of the video, overall content was seen in a big picture looking like a graphical map, which was associated with Mind Map concept (Tony Buzan,) where graphic technique provides a universal key to unlock the potential of the brain. Thus, the whole experience of watching the video from the beginning towards the end gives continuous support to understand the content better (Figure 3a-3b).

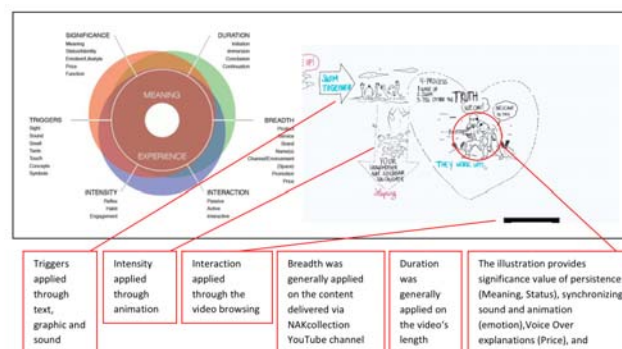


Figure 3a: Design Experience of Nathan Shedroff focuses on meaning, based on significance, duration, breadth, interaction, intensity, and triggers.

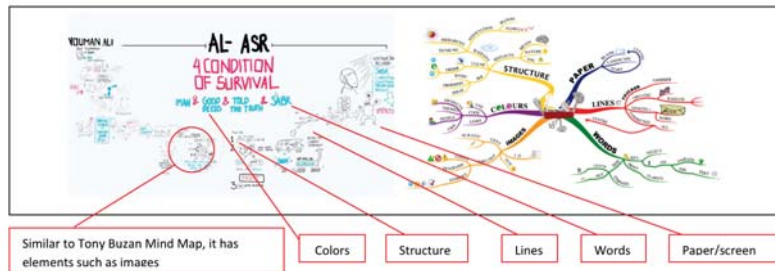


Figure 3b: Overall graphical map unlock the potential of brain to memorize and comprehend better.

Conclusion

The overall process has been noted and a framework is proposed (below) (Figure 4). In overview, the process has more weightage in the middle. There are four steps, where step one has one technique, step two has two techniques, step three has two techniques, and step four has one technique.

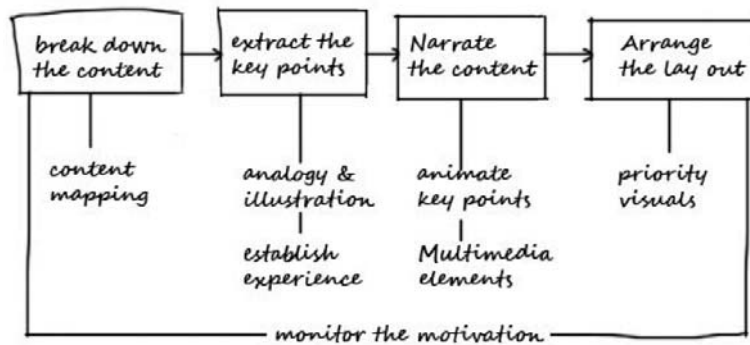


Figure 4: the proposed communication technique framework

Break down the content

This is the step one where designer needs to map the content prior to narrating it. Break it down into important points using Mind Map technique of Tony Buzan. The objective is to get the overall content structured and workable to narrate. The narration should not take a long duration. To sustain motivation along the narration, the ARCS (Attention Relevance Confident Satisfaction) model should be used. ARCS model gives the users a step by step process to get good attention, followed by engagement of relevance contents, feeling confidence to continue watching, and get satisfied at the end. ARCS model applies from step one to step four.

Extract the key points

Step two ensures the important points are delivered effectively. Each important point needs to be extracted via illustration so the users can picture the meaning in a short time. Thus, Gestalt theory is used. It is also suggested to have simple illustrations to avoid visual cramp. After all illustrations compiled, arrangements need to be created using design experience philosophy.

Narrate the content

Step three ensures the users can understand the illustration better. Animated Line Drawing philosophy is used to sequence the appearance based on priority. The important part of the illustration will appear first and followed by the less important and so on and so forth. The sequence appearance is also supported by sounds and animation as ruled by Cognitive Multimedia Learning Theory.

Arrange the layout

Step four completes the overall communication by arranging the overall visuals with priorities. The philosophy of Real

Estate is used. It ensures that the cognitive process is directed towards important information only.

Recommendation

This research tried to elaborate the philosophies behind a successful design work. Further readings need to be done to understand each of the philosophies and understand the framework better. To find out the reliability of the framework, it is suggested to have developmental research of similar content using the proposed framework. Further research can also be done to find out whether the duration of video of 7'8 minutes can be extended and remain effective.

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