Creative Visual Paradigm:

A Mindset of Thai Lecturers and Graphic Designers

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Abstract

This research explored the creative and visualization techniques that have been used in graphic and advertising design throughout the years. Thai professionals and educators discussed and revealed their creative stories and techniques. The result of this particular research will help understanding the aspect of teaching, learning as well as working in the field of graphic and advertising in Thailand.

Keywords : Creativity, Visual Techniques, Graphics, Advertising

Introduction

Creativity is a necessity for artist and designer to create his or her works. Teaching design students to be creative has been a challenge for educators. Likewise, Professionals have to deal with the issue almost on the daily basis. Lots of Academic Institute in Thailand, offer only a limited amount of course that deals with the subject of creative thinking, not to mention, specifically the creative visualization.

Aims

Based on the hypothesis of how to teach graphic design students to think or to be more creative?, and how to teach graphic design students to visualize better with more alternative solution?

There were two main objectives of this specific research. First of which was to study the creative thinking or idea generation techniques as well as the creative visualization techniques. The second was to gather the information of creative process, visualization and teaching from Thai educators and Professional practitioners.

Conceptual framework
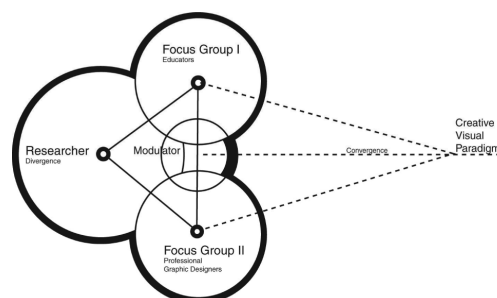
Material and method

During the time, The Researcher had explored and collected various kinds of idea generation techniques which could be helpful for visualization. Among them were very common and popular such as

Brainstorming

Mindmapping

Synectics

6 Hat thinking

Later on, the lesser known techniques had been revealed such as

Morphological and Matrix Analysis

Triz

Random Input

Provocation

To all appearance, many techniques had been invented for us to choose from. Take only the tool of the Brainstorming alone, There were many different kinds of them in details, for example

The Stepladder Technique

Brainwriting

Reverse Brainstorming

Starbursting

Charette Procedure

Crawford's Slip Writing Method

Freewriting

Concept Mapping (not to be confused with the Mindmapping technique)
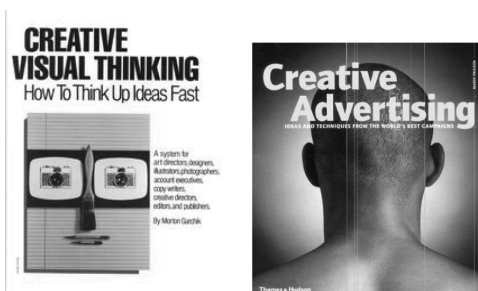
For more specific issue of visualization, there were a few books that explained thoroughly. The top three books that became the references of creative visualization technique were "Creative Visual Thinking (HOW TO THINK UP IDEAS FAST)" by Morton Garchik, "Creative Advertising (Ideas and Techniques from the world's best campaigns)" by Mario Pricken and "A Smile in the Mind" by Beryl Mcalhone & David Stuart". These books contained all useful visualization techniques for artist, graphic designer, art director, as well as advertiser. As a result, 60 visual techniques were selected from these books. In addition to this, the issue of creative visualization had been explored over the years, especially by the world famous graphic designer, Alan Fletcher in the books called "The Art of Looking Sideway" and "Beware of Wet Paint".

In order to get the more profound information about "creative processing and visualization" aspects in Thailand, The researcher employed the tool of focus group discussion as the research methodology. The Target groups were selected and well qualified in term of experience and expertise. The first group consisted of professional graphic designer, art director, creative, and the second group was experienced lecturers in communication arts, communication design, and graphic art. The answer and discussion among the group revealed some of the fact and overall situation in visualization and creative process in Thai advertising and graphic design scene.

The Focus Group of Thai Lecturers

The Focus Group of Thai Graphic Professionals

Results and discussion

Both quantitative and qualitative data had been collected and analyzed from the discussion. 60 of visual techniques had been reviewed and discussed by target groups. Some of the key findings from both focus group discussion included

Top 10 popular visualization techniques
Fantasy
Association
Non-Verbal Image
Telling Stories
Symbol and Signs
Unusual View
Alternative Media
Changing Product
Metaphor and Analogy
Omission & Suggestion
Test of Credibility
Theme Device

Visual Pun
Expectation Confound
Alphabet or Typography
Outstanding Photograph
Comparative Juxtaposition

Bottom ten of visualization techniques
Distortion
Come and Play
Fine Arts
Comic Strip
Unusual Production Technique
Decoration
Paradox & Optical Illusion
Double Exposure
Three Dimensional image
Geometric
Trompe l'oeil

The creative process of the graphic professionals was mostly an easy going attitude, straight forward, problem based, with involved marketing awareness. Most of them had been trained some of the creative techniques, such as Mindmapping and Brainstorming from attending workshops. Doodling and sketching their first thoughts were common ways of getting idea as well as reviewing the works of others from magazines and Googling. However, from their perspective, the step of visualization became secondary. Most professionals revealed that they prioritized the importance of getting the right "message" rather than exploring visual or style as well as being strongly aware of the demographic and psychographic issues of the target audience.
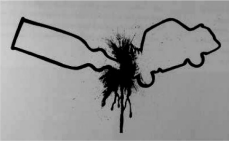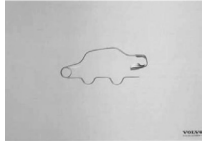
Meanwhile, the group of lecturers had used Brainstorming and Mindmapping in their
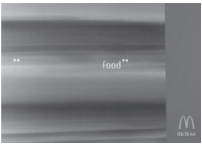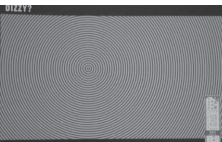
teaching. Most of them had also employed the system of "student center" and "problem based" in the learning process. And regarding the visualization technique issue, they also favored and emphasized on "sketching" to generate different possibility of visual experimentation. Nevertheless, most of them admitted that the visual techniques selected from the three main books were very effective and helpful in many ways.

In Conclusion, the aspects of creative visualization in Thailand has been growing over the years. Both Professionals and educators has always emphasized on the design fundamentals and the elements and principles of visual arts as foundations and starting points, especially for the older generation. However, the paradigm has been shifted since brainstorming and lateral thinking and creative visual thinking first launch in the 70s and 80s respectively. Nowadays, there are many more tools available to help sharpen or strengthen the skills of visualization more creatively. Designers can develop their works with imagination and originality by using some of the creative or idea generation techniques. Particularly for art director and graphic designer, learning and utilizing the creative visual techniques is a must, we can create more options or alternatives effortlessly. Meanwhile, Design institutes should pay more attention to their curriculums for improving or adding more courses in creative thinking and visualization, because they have a direct responsibility for education. Perhaps the paradigm of creative visualization in Thailand will be shifted for the better in the near future, as Edward de Bono, the creative thinking guru stated "Thinking is a skill; it can be developed and improved if one knows how"

Examples of Creative Visual Techniques

Fantasy	Association	Non-Verbal Image
Telling Stories	Symbol and Signs	Unusual View
Alternative Media	Changing Product	Metaphor and Analogy
Omission & Suggestion	Test of Credibility	Theme Device

Visual Pun	alphabet or Typography	Alphabet or Typography
Outstanding Photograph	Comparative Juxtaposition	Distortion
Fine Arts	Comic Strip	Unusual Production Technique
Decoration	Paradox & Optical Illusion	Double Exposure
Three Dimensional image	Geometric	Trompe l'oeil

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