

The Impact of Storytelling - Evaluation of the Exhibition „Pia says Goodbye“

At a glance

- Internal research project (F2465) of DASA Working World Exhibition Dortmund / Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
- Duration 2017-2023
- Summative evaluation and impact research
- Mixed methods approach

Project

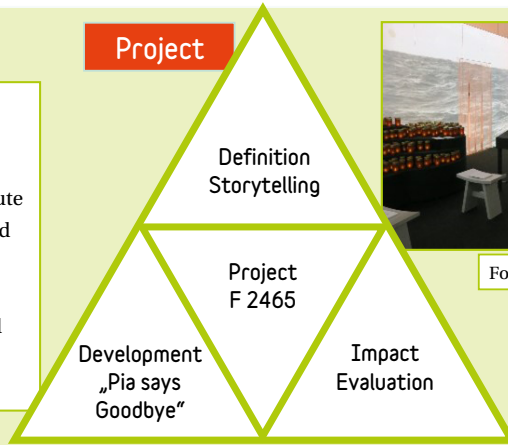


Foto: Patricia Dobrijevic, 2020

Exhibition narrative

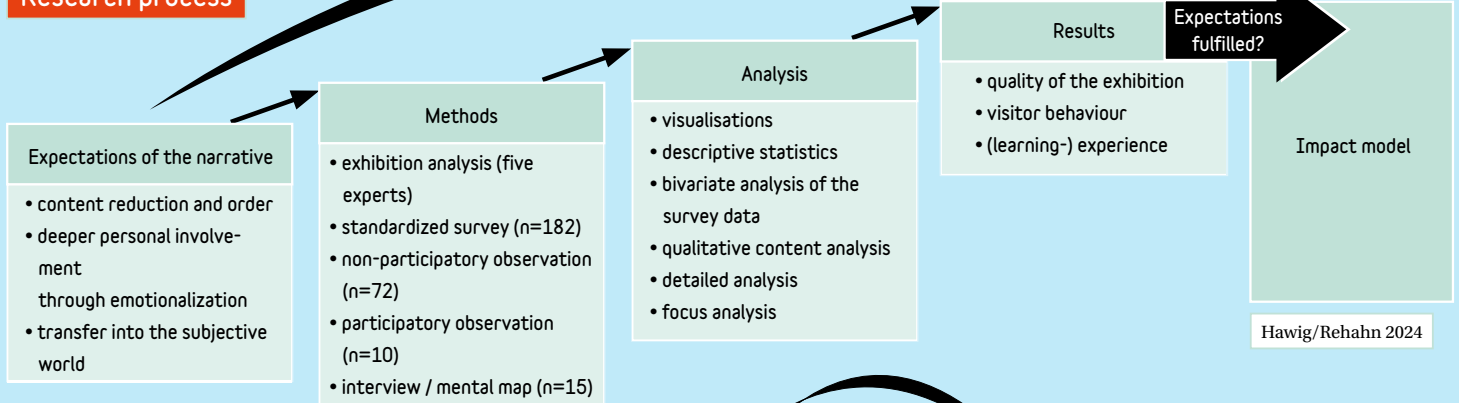
DASA's temporary exhibition „Pia says Goodbye“ (2019-2020) told the story of the fictional 17-year-old Pia, whose grandmother Ruth suddenly died. Visitors accompanied Pia in her grieving process. The exhibition narrative was based on the narrative dimensions of space, character and plot.

Object of study

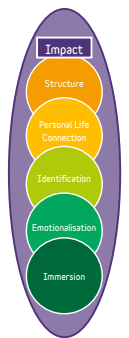
Visitors' use of and response to the exhibition and (learning) experiences in „Pia says Goodbye“. We defined (learning) experiences based on the Generic Learning Outcomes (Dodd 2011).

The project defined storytelling as a communication and interpretation strategy in exhibitions, applied this definition to the exhibition „Pia says Goodbye“ and finally evaluated the effect of this narrative on the visitors.

Research process



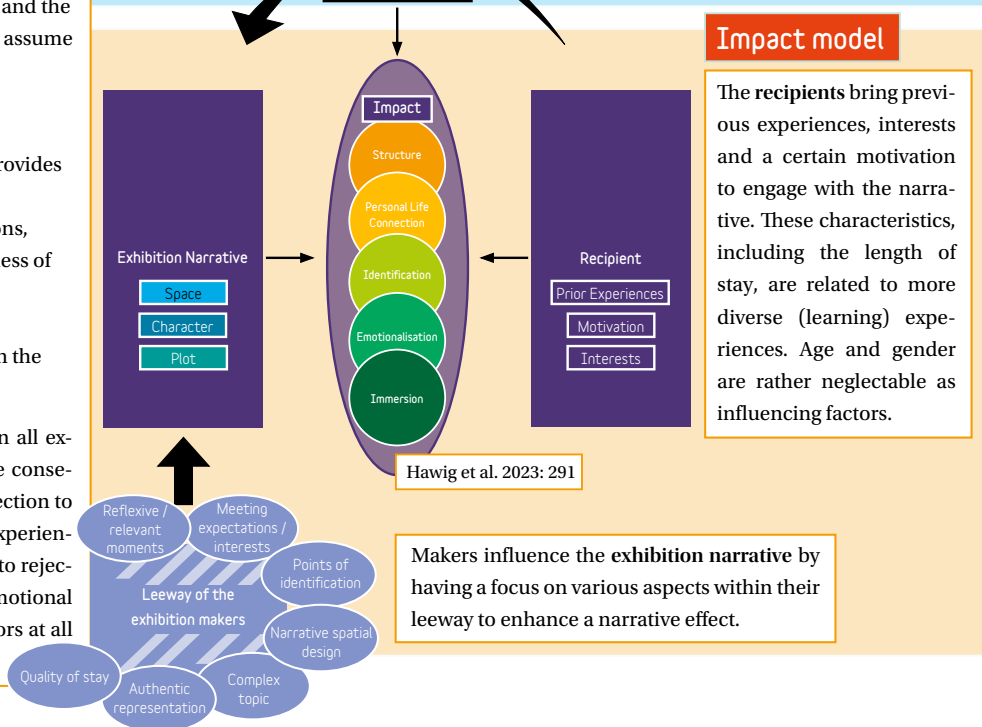
The **impact**, which depends on the exhibition narrative and the recipients, is made up of five dimensions of impact. We assume that the exhibition strategy storytelling:



- structures the exhibition content and provides spatial orientation,
- provides several personal life connections,
- provides points of identification regardless of age or gender,
- touches visitors emotionally and
- allows visitors to immerse themselves in the exhibition.

Each of these dimensions occurs to varying degrees in all exhibition narratives and has both positive and negative consequences depending on the recipient: for some, a connection to their lifeworld and identification enhances the visitor experience, for others it awakens unwanted memories or leads to rejection in the absence of personal reference points. An emotional or immersive experience is also not desired by all visitors at all times.

Utilization Process



Impact model

The recipients bring previous experiences, interests and a certain motivation to engage with the narrative. These characteristics, including the length of stay, are related to more diverse (learning) experiences. Age and gender are rather neglectable as influencing factors.