

REFRAMING CONVERSATIONS THROUGH SIGNAGE: USING VIDEO-BASED DATA COLLECTION TO CAPTURE VISITOR TALK AT ZOO AND AQUARIUM EXHIBITS

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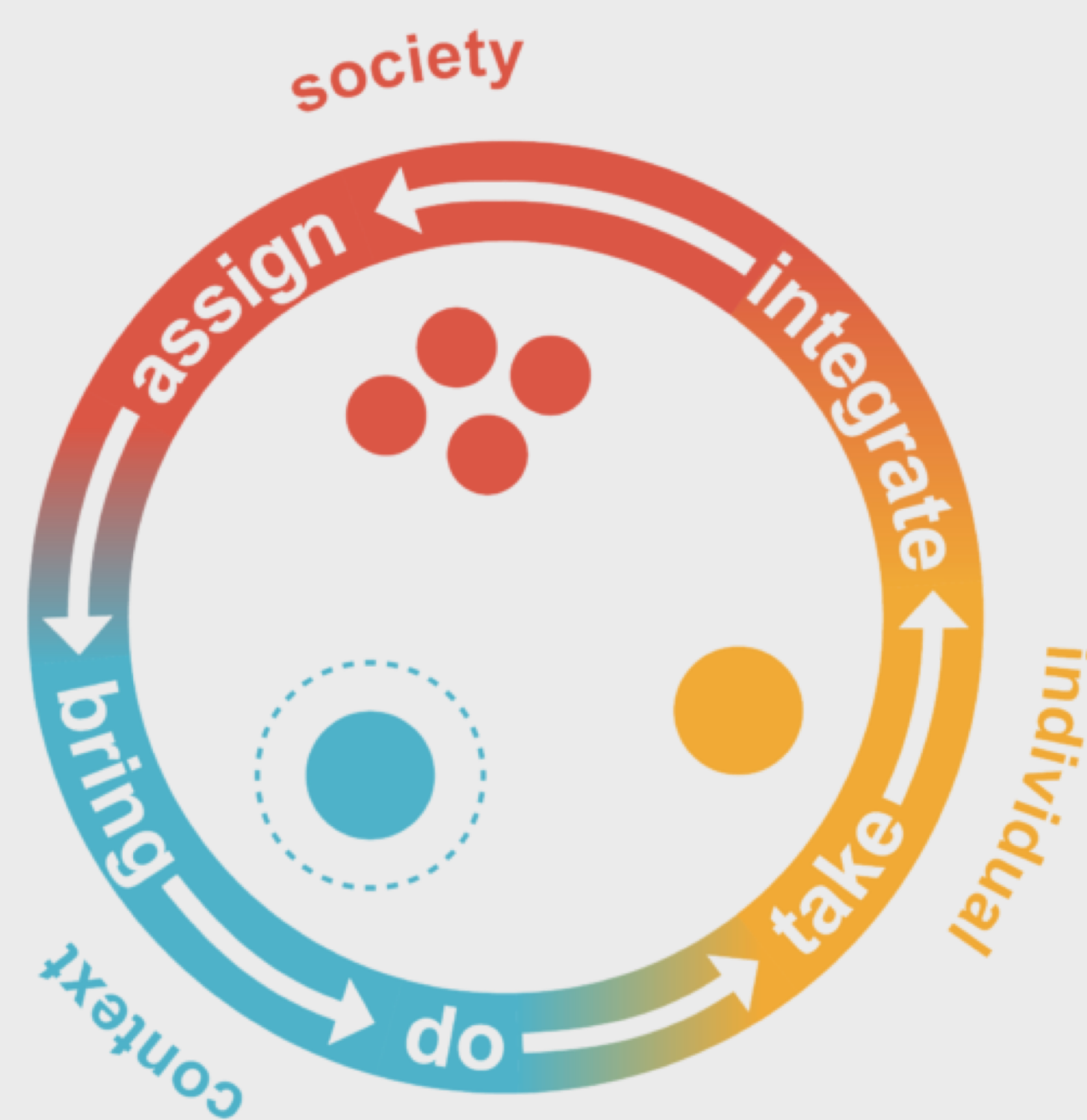
INTRODUCTION

This study is part of a broader collaboration between three research teams – New Knowledge Organization, Ltd., COSI's Center for Research and Evaluation, and the Center for Research on Lifelong STEM Learning at Oregon State University – to understand how visitor agendas, behavior, and learning relate to the conservation education agenda of most zoos and aquariums (Z/As).

The project has the following three goals:

1. To understand how visitor goals and behavior impact learning;
2. To understand how the conservation education agenda of most Z/As interlaces with these goals; and
3. To understand how the public situates the voice of Z/As in society.

The project explores questions on different experiential levels, looking at the societal, contextual and visit level of an individual to more fully understand outcomes from a single visit.



RESEARCH QUESTION

How do changes in interpretive strategies influence learning behaviors and learning outcomes?

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

- Contextual model of learning (Falk & Dierking, 2000; Falk & Storksdieck, 2005);
- Framing theory (Goffman, 1974; Scheufele, 1999; Scheufele & Nisbet, 2012);
- Agenda setting theory (McCombs, 2003; 2005; 2018; Scheufele, 2000; Weaver et al., 2004);

RESEARCH SITES

Nashville Zoo: Giraffe Exhibit



Oregon Coast Aquarium: Sea Otter Exhibit



IN-SITU QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

Two conditions at each site:

- Existing signage focusing on simple descriptive and natural history information (**comparison condition**)
- Signage with simple descriptive information and explicit conservation message (**treatment condition**)

INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE



Watch the sea otters.
What adaptations do you see that help them survive in the ocean?

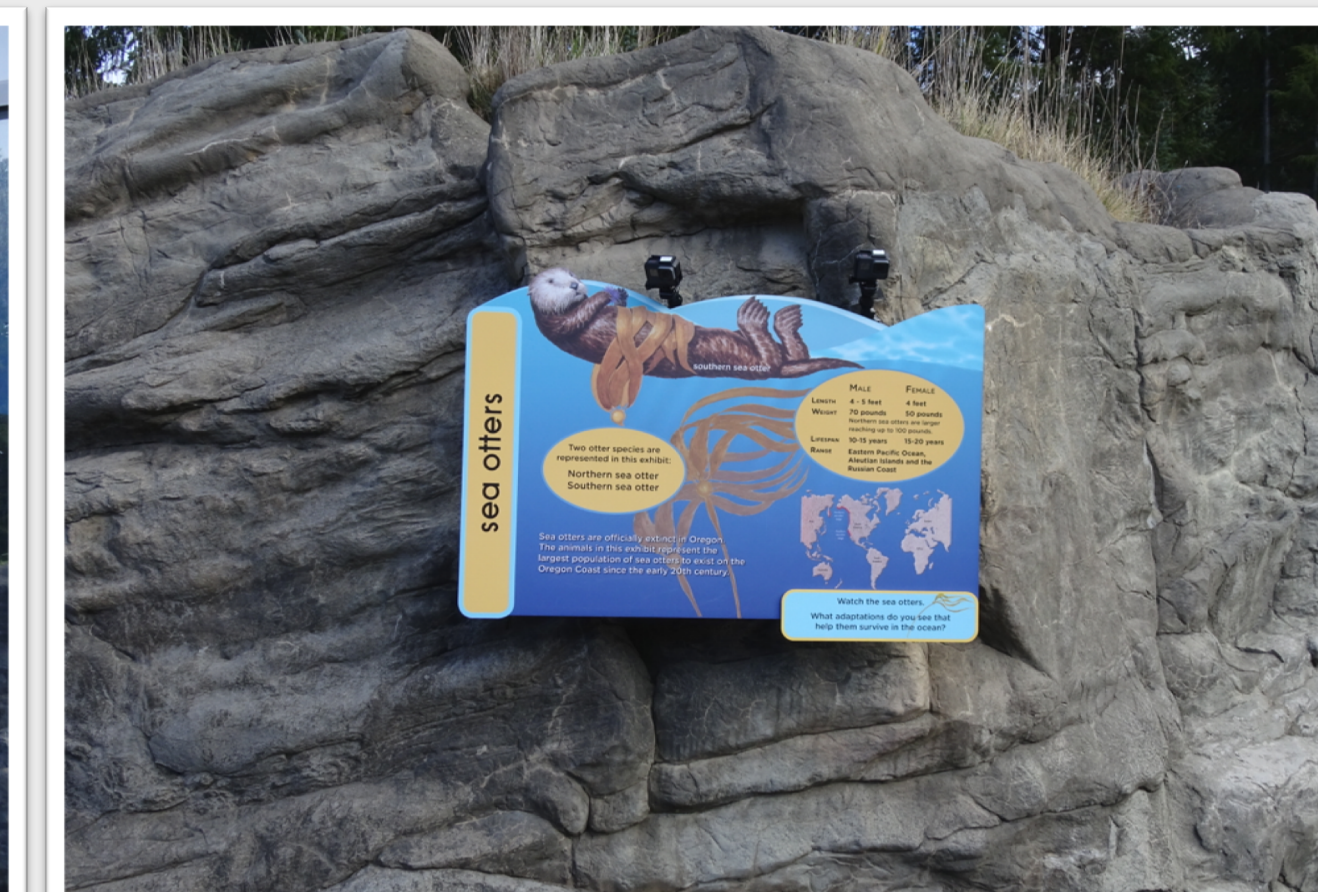
DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

GoPro cameras and microphones mounted across exhibit space capturing visitor behavior and talk

Intercept interviews:

- Group characteristics
- Prior interest and experience
- Time at exhibit
- Nature of group conversations
- Perceptions of exhibit message

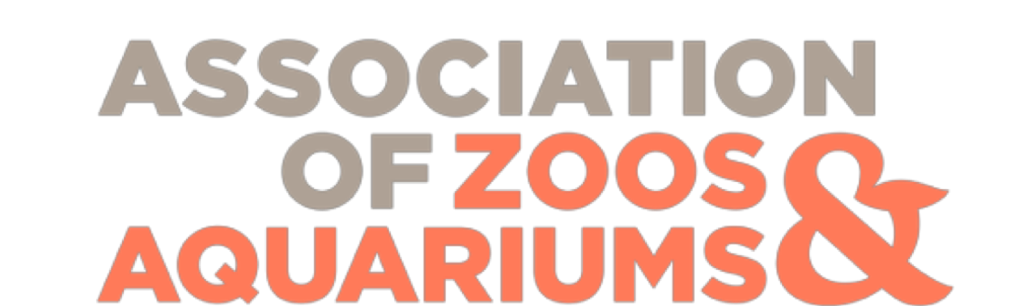
Data Analysis: transcription, iterative conversation analysis using coding framework to identify conservation and meaning-making talk



PROJECT PARTNERS



Lifelong Learning Group



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