

P3 Report

Understanding Naga Culture through Interactive Narratives

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Approval sheet

The Project titled "Understanding Naga Cultural Identity through Interactive Narratives." by Thuli N Chishi is approved, in partial fulfilment of the 'Master in Design' Degree in Interaction Design at the Industrial Design Centre, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay.

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Declaration

This is a presentation of my original research work for the project titled "Understanding Naga Cultural Identity through Interactive Narratives". Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.

The work was done under the guidance of Professor Ravi Poovaiah.

I understand that any violation of the above will be a cause for disciplinary action by the institute and can evoke penal action by parties whose content was used for this project without proper citation.



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Acknowledgement

I am sincerely grateful to my guide Professor Ravi Poovaiah, who with patience has guided me through the progress of the project and giving me the freedom to explore possibilities with this project.

I also would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the IxD faculty- Prof. Venkatesh Rajamanickam, Prof Girish Dalvi, Prof. Pramod Khambete, Prof. Jayesh Pillai, Prof. Vivek Kant and Prof. Anirudh Joshi for the constant feedback and constructive criticism that aided in my journey. The schools and the teachers who I've encountered who are giving everything they can to help the children learn and being so welcoming to my intentions.

I thank my classmates for their valuable feedback and constant support and my family for all the encouragement.



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Abstract

The Naga cultural identity is obscured by speculations, assumptions, and lack of proper records and literature. While there are quite a handful of books written on the history, the political scenes, and some anthropological books on a few tribes, they fall short in conveying to those who are curious what the naga cultural identity is. This is due to the lack of indigenous written accounts and lack of insight from the people within the tribal communities. This is attributed to the Nagas lacking a written script and having passed down most of their knowledge orally. In this project, using an interactive narrative, there will be an attempt to help understand some parts of the Naga culture to the general people while preserving some of it in a novel way. The resulting design is a digital tool that acts as a repository for dozens of stories that aid in experiencing and understand naga culture through a variety of narratives.

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1

Introduction

1.1 The Naga history in Brief

The Nagas are a group of tribes that inhabit Nagaland a State in the northeastern region of India. The origin of the Nagas are highly speculated and there are many theories behind it, the most commonly agreed upon theory is that the Nagas migrated from south-east Asia, bearing similarities in physical traits and cultural customs with people of that region. [1] There are 16 recognized tribes in total who come under the umbrella term "Naga". The 16 Naga tribes are; Ao, Sema, Angami, Lotha, Chakhesang, Zeliang, Yimchunger, Konyak, Zeliangrong, Phom, Chang, Tangkhul, Rengma, Kahminguam and Pochury. Each tribe is distinguished by its own dialect, customs, traditions and attires. The Nagas tribes led a simple community life in the hills each ruled by their own customary laws. They were mainly agriculturists with strong territorial boundaries, over which they would engage in warfare. Due to the gruesome act of headhunting followed during those days, the Nagas are mainly dubbed as headhunters.

The arrival of the British missionaries during the British occupation began a turning point for the Nagas, with modernity arriving in the form of education and administrative reforms. The Nagas then abandoned their animistic practices for a new religion which they still practice in this day and age; today more than 95% of Nagas identify as Christians. During the struggle for independence in British occupied India, the Nagas strived to become their own nation, but after independence, Nagaland became a part of India and remain to this day, a state of India. This has left the Nagas divided on the issue of statehood, this political issue remains testy to this day and there exists strife amongst the people regarding the same. [1]

1.2 A dominant oral culture

The Naga culture is rich with folklore, traditions and stories, celebrated through various festivals and passed onto generations orally through the power of memory. According to an ancient Naga belief, their history was recorded on an animal skin which was unfortunately eaten by a dog. Since then they believe in their history and traditions being preserved through an oral medium in the form of songs myths, tales and other expressive behaviour. [2]

The official language of the state is English, however Nagamese is also predominantly spoken amongst Naga people. A formal writing script for Nagamese is absent, which further exacerbates the emphasis on an oral tradition. There is some attempt at a literate culture by depiction of meaning through forms and patterns in shawls, such as 'Tsongkotepsu', worn by Ao men only and 'supeti' worn by Ao womenfolk. However there is limited use of such sources and lack of conventional interventions such as archeology, literary, numismatics and epigraphy put a heavy reliance on oral sources such as folktales, myths, legends, songs, poems, and artefacts to pass down the Naga tradition and culture. [3]

A lot of knowledge on Naga customs and tradition were lost as the early Christian missionaries prohibited indigenous folk tales, art and practise branding them anti-Christian. Several folklores, customs and traditions, have since been warped or lost in the process of being passed on orally. There is also paucity of these oral stories being exchanged amongst people within the Naga tribes themselves. [4]

1.3 An Etic and Emic perspective

According to cultural anthropology, '...Emic knowledge and interpretations are those existing within a culture, that are determined by local custom, meaning, and belief and best described by a 'native' of the culture. Etic knowledge refers to generalizations about human behaviour that are considered universally true, and commonly links cultural practices to factors of interest to the researcher, such as economic or ecological conditions, that cultural insiders may not consider very relevant.' [5] The Nagas as a community have extensively been written about, with the majority of these early writings presenting an Etic perspective. Some of the earliest writings on Naga culture, traditions and the life of the people, appeared during the colonial era in the form of Administrative records, field reports, travelogues and books. These works are primarily descriptive in nature and interpreted more from the researcher's viewpoint. The post-colonial writings also follow

similar lines. They failed to capture the pith of the Naga community. [1,6] These representations have also been met with resistance by Nagas for providing an inconsistent or incomplete understanding of the Naga culture. [7] With a sizeable Naga population getting higher education, and a stable socio-political climate, post 1970's saw a surge of Naga writers who wrote both fictional and non fictional accounts on Naga History, Religion and Politics. There are however only a handful of such writers such as who provide an insider's perspective. This presents an opportunity to capture Naga stories, practises and traditions from an emic perspective, and further advance existing contributions in this space. [6]

1.4 Misconceptions and ignorance about the Nagas

For several years people from North east India have complained about the attempt of the media and general public to fit very diverse cultures of the region into a blanket term with little to no understanding of their nuances. [8,9] This has been viewed as ignorance towards the culture and people of the region. Although the existence of the Naga communities is well known, there is a lack of clarity or none in the way Nagas are perceived. The Nagas are viewed as another exotic tribal group in the jungles riddled with stereotypes by foreigners and countrymen alike. The Naga cultural identity is obscured by speculations, assumptions, and lack of proper records and literature. Hence this presents an opportunity to disseminate stories about the Naga culture in an attempt to inform those with little to no knowledge of the same.

1.5 Interactive Narratives

Stories have been a strong part of any culture, narratives are a part of everyday life and what can be a better way to understand a culture than through the very medium it has been preserved over the decades. Stories have been used to communicate, teach and pass down values and history. Most narratives are presented linear or non-linear fashion but they often follow the author's dictation. When a story is told, it is through the view of the narrator and how the narrator sees it. The listener or reader becomes a passive receiver of the narration through reading or observation.

Interactive narratives are narratives where the story or the plot is driven by user actions or user decisions. [10] The user or the receiver of information can perform activities through a digital media, taking roles within the story to drive the plot, issue commands or observe as a third person and make decisions to influence or manipulate the story. The user becomes directly involved in

1.6 Interactive Narrative to understand Naga culture

Interactive narratives provide a powerful and engaging opportunity to engage users to understand the Naga culture better. It is an emerging trend, finding one of its uses in delivering factual pieces of information in an immersive way. [11] Hence interactive narratives can be appropriately used to communicate various aspects of the Naga way of life. It can be used to create an immersive experience where the user can learn more about the Naga culture by finding themselves within the environment or context of the story. This can help to make the stories impactful and memorable for users by providing a situated understanding for the same. This immersiveness can also help to communicate information about multiple aspects of the culture together, such as sounds, nature, objects etc.

Hence in this project, using an interactive narrative, there will be an attempt to help understand some parts of the Naga culture to the general people while also attempting to preserve some of it in a novel way.

2

Research

Research for this project can be broadly divided into two categories. The first being primary and secondary research done to gather narrative sources and gain a nuanced understanding of the Naga culture. The second being secondary research done to explore and understand the area of Interactive Narratives.

2.1 Primary and Secondary Research on Naga Culture

For primary research, a field trip was taken to Kohima, the capital of Nagaland where resources were sought out better understand the culture, the views of the locals and scope down the topic of “Understanding Naga culture” to a more focused area. The research itinerary involved visits to the Nagaland State library and the Kohima state museum; brief conversations with locals, the educated youths, elders and an interview with an expert in the field. The major findings from the user studies are discussed below:

2.2 Findings:

2.2.1 Dwindling practise of storytelling amongst present-day Nagas

It was evident from the primary research that the Nagas are proud storytellers and have a strong sense of community. Through this strong sense of community, the stories, customs and traditions have been passed on from the elders to the younger generations. The oral tradition of the nagas is however, dwindling, most youngsters are either uninterested or don't find opportunities to hear the tall tales of an elder. This re-affirms the need to pass down the old knowledge and document it for the future generations making it easier to access these stories and share them.

2.2.2 Looking at the Naga contemporary way of life

In another interview with a professor of literature, Prof. Theyie Kreditsu, a writer and a scholar of cultural studies, talked about her initiative as a



Fig: Theyie Kreditsu promoting ethnic wear through social media.



Fig: A tattooed Chang Naga woman and recreated tattoo of the same by Mo Naga.

social media activist in promoting local products and traditional wear like normalizing Makhelas. She also explained that the cultural identity of the Nagas is a fluid term that is evolving over the years with the Nagas adapting to a contemporary life while still trying to retain a touch of the Naga's rich collective past.

There are also large growing platforms where fusion is being promoted. For instance, fusion cosplays where the youth with increasing influence of the Japanese anime culture hold events where they encourage cosplaying activities with naga traditional attires, and fusion contemporary rock concerts held in Hornbill festivals, promoting traditional and tribal songs.

2.2.3 Documentation of all types of practices

Another argument highlighted by Prof. Theyie Kreditsu stated that are some forgotten customary laws and traditions are harmful, for example, patriarchal inheritance laws and do not need to be followed. However it is still important to preserve their knowledge in their given context and time. Documenting why some customs existed in the times and context that they did remains imperative to gain an understanding of the culture as a whole.

2.2.4 Establishing a Credibility Criterion

While there is a lot of information available on various topics, the credibility of the information could be compromised due to various modification of stories over the years, hence there was a need to establish some criterion for the credibility of these sources. After expert interviews, it was concluded that the most credible information would belong to the more dominant narration. This would be the version with the most common narration, widely believed by the majority.

2.2.5 What would you like to be covered?

As part of my user studies we also asked Nagas of different ages as to what they would be like to be included as part of a documentation of their cultural identity. This brought about several interesting answers from them. Most of them emphasized on their own tribes, they wished for people to be educated about their tribes; their customs and traditions that vary within the different clans or villages of that very tribe Another prominent response was to include how the Naga way of life has changed over the years, especially since the Independent movement and the advent of missionary groups. Other peculiar answers were to include information about their lifestyle, diet and facial features.



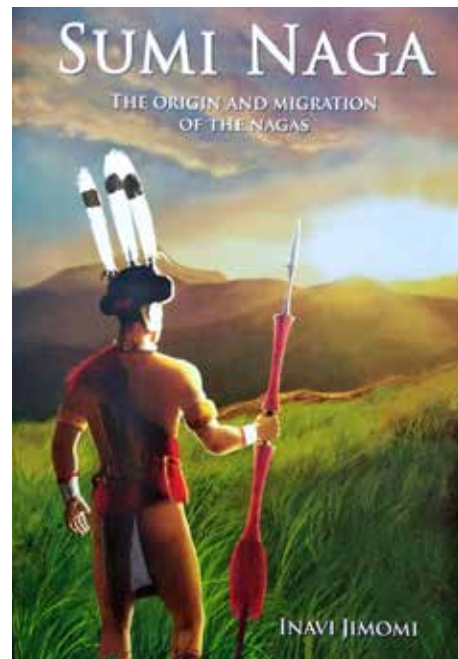
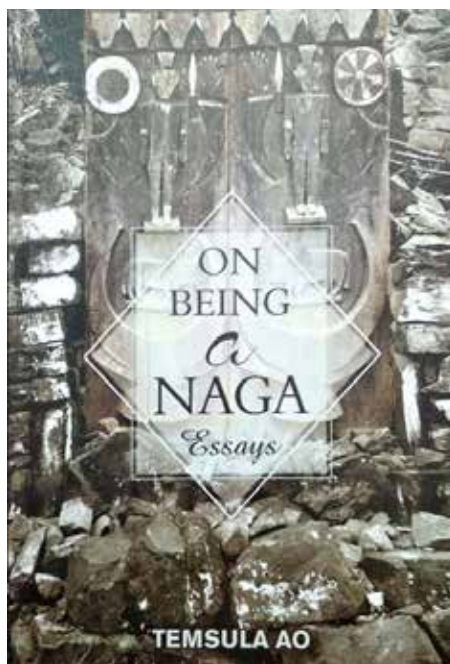
2.2.6 Sources for Narrative

- Museum artefacts
- The visit to the museum was an expedition into surveying the collections of artefacts, attires, memorabilia and dioramas depicting the tribal men and women going about their daily activities in the past which could be used in the narrative. Some examples of artefacts put on display that seemed to have an interesting backstory or cultural significance were as follows:
- Seemingly ordinary stones that were almost spherical in shape and obsidian black with a title card that read "Prosperity stones: The person who owned one was said to get rich without working much."
- An exhibit of indigenous community games that each tribe used to play.
- A whole gallery of photographs taken during the war times and the portraits of people during those days.

Books

In order to create a narrative based on factual or credible information, the project will refer to the following literature to gather content for the narrative along with consultation from corresponding elders and individuals from Nagaland.

1. "On being a Naga" by Temsula Ao
2. "A terrible matriarchy" by Easterine Kire
3. "Sumi Naga: The origin and migration of the Nagas" by Inavi Jimomi
4. "Studies on Naga Oral tradition" by Anungla Aier
5. "The Naga Saga" by Kaka D Iralu
6. "Taboos, Myths and Legends" by Visakhounu Hibo and R. Chumben Ngullie





2.3 Narrative Subject

There was a need to base the narratives on particular subjects which would best represent the Naga cultural identity from the plethora of information available at hand. There was an attempt to delve into investigating what naga cultural identity meant and if one could define it. However, as forewarned, it was too large of a topic to cover. Hence we decided to focus on specific areas, identified below, which the narratives could be based on. There were several such themes such as folklore, dance, music, history, origins etc. which came up. It was later realized that focusing on an area or aspect like 'tradition' for a single tribe wouldn't justify or encapsulate the essence of what needs to be understood about the Nagas. It was also not possible to create a single narrative that would justifiably be able to touch all the themes mentioned above. It was eventually decided that multiple narratives which would touch upon aforementioned areas will be used. This led us to further regroup the themes into broader categories which could act as pivots to traverse through a range of narratives. These broader categories are Tribe, Object and Time, the reasons for using these categories are mentioned below:

Tribe: the diversity of these 16 tribes together is representative of the Naga identity, this was very evident from the user studies as individuals identified very closely with their own tribes. Each tribe has their own stories which cover their dance, music, art etc. and this will help users discern the individual richness of each tribe.

Object: There was a strong relationship of objects to fantastical stories or anecdotes, that recur and play into several narratives.

Time: An important aspect of the Naga culture is the vast shift between the past and present Naga life. The aspect of time helps to compare the different timelines as it was and as it is and highlight the changes that have occurred



Fig: Interactive narrative "The boat"

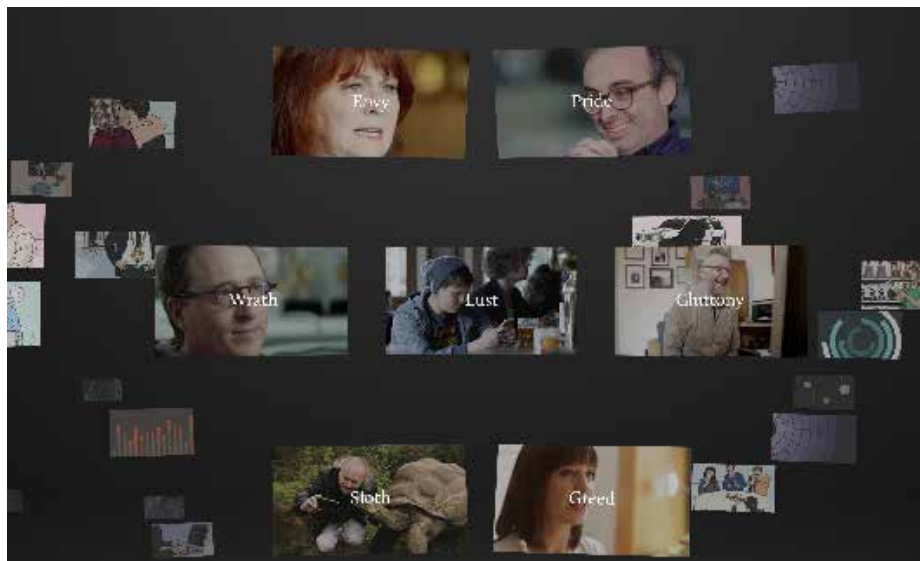


Fig: The seven deadly digital sins

2.3 Secondary Research on Interactive Narratives

2.3.1 Analysing existing Non-Fictional Interactive Narratives

In fictional narratives, there remains the possibility of increasing the extent of the player controls, allowing the user to author the narration by creating new possibilities with their decisions as long as the drama manager allows it. However, non-fictional narratives, such as journalistic documentaries or articles a pre-authored narrative structure and the information remains unalterable. It has a lot of factual information and non-fictional elements to it hence the narrative arcs and ending/endings are fixed and authored, allowing the user unravels and make sense of the information through exploring already defined options and tasks. So in non-fictional interactive narratives, the information may be more conveniently scattered or sequenced allowing the user to create their own narrative from the already existing events or follow along with a sequential narration by performing tasks. As the project also primarily deals with non-fictional content, we decided to analyze the same.

2.3.2 Methodology

Taking into consideration, fundamental dimensions of an interactive narrative, we take in an already established model for theoretical analysis of some popular nonfiction interactive narratives to get a better understanding of them. The model for analysis of interactive digital narrative by J.V Pavlik and J.O Pavlik [12] was used. This model relies on three main dimensions of journalistic storytelling; the foundation, the structure and the media which are outlined in table 1 below. The textual analysis of the narrative, the media and all aspects of the story were analysed for the narratives mentioned in table below.

Foundational	Structural	Feature of Digital Media environment
- Extent of evidence (Sources, credibility) - Message Substance (Novelty) - Quality of Writing Editing - Production Values (quality of audio, video)	- Use of non-linear narrative structure - Presence of dynamic driven content - Use of immersive (1st person vs 3rd person)	- Number of media modalities - Extent of interactive content elements - Incorporation of social media Interactivity - Extent of presence of contextualised content - Approach (Game, simulation, narrative exploration)

2.3.3 Choosing Narratives

The narratives chosen were based on the popularity of the narratives, variety, and accessibility on media platforms.

The balloons of Bhutan, Jonathan Harris 2007 A documentation of the lives of the Bhutanese people in the audio form taken over a two-week journey and assembled.
Seven digital deadly sins, NFB digital studio and The Guardian 2014 An interactive documentary giving insights to the evils, the current digital world enables and allows the user to condemn or absolve acts.
ReBuilding Haiti, J Abbiatici, F. Maurin, 2014 An interactive article about the plight of Haiti trying to recover after the hurricane and the problems they face. The game simulation format incorporated allows the user to make decisions for Haiti that could make or destroy Haiti.
After the storm, Andrew Beck Grace, 2015 An interactive documentary essay about the experience of living through a natural disaster.
Pirate fishing: An interactive investigation, Al Jazeera, 2014 An interactive investigative game on uncovering the illegal fishing off the coast of Sierra Leone.

2.4 Findings and Discussion

2.4.1 Foundational:

The quality of productions of each of the narratives was of considerably high quality, The ones which were purely journalistic in nature had decent sources. There was ascertained two kinds of sources: Harris's Balloons of Bhutan and Grace's After the storm was based on personal experience, the former being a collection of other people's stories collected through conversation and the later one an essay of a personal account. These two's claim of credibility is legitimised by the evidence of their own personal account.

2.4.2 Structural:

Structurally the narratives are divided between non-linear and linear narration. While Harris's do not follow any linear narration, the information is scattered finely allowing the user to make sense of the narration by themselves. The narration Harris provides do not have a fixed ending or conclusion, it remains

as a repository of stories where one can revisit over again to listen to the stories. The other three seems to have a clear directive objective, following a linear story with an end, in ReBuilding Haiti however the game element allows the user to experience different endings based on their choices throughout the narrative.

All the narratives are addressed in the first person view, where the user is directed by the narratives to be involved as an active participant or a listener. Role-playing is only used in the interactive investigation by Al Jazeera.

Feature of Digital Media environment

The gamification and the presence of dynamically driven content like data visualisations keep the user engaged. The immersion of the narrative is particularly high with added visual and audio effects in almost all the narratives. While Harris's narration is novel in its subjects telling their own stories, most of them try to incorporate some game or decision making to promote user engagement/involvement. The seven digital sin's use of polls enables collective involvement adding to the experience. After the storm, stands out as an immersive experience due to its production quality and the poignancy of the narrator. The unidirectional scrolling in ReBuilding Haiti and After the storm gains the least points for user interactivity, while Al Jazeera's game interface delivery and Harris's Balloon's of Bhutan provides interactive content elements.

Title	Extent of evidence	Novelty	Message Substance (Novelty)	Quality of Writing Editing	Production Values	Production Values
The balloons of Bhutan	high	5	The novelty of this project lies in the experiential aspect of the author's journey and the fact that the data collected was from the origin source itself.		High, The quality of audio and the presentation of the 117 stories along with a data visualisation of the statistics make it a high quality production	
ReBuilding Haiti	high	2	A game based approached that allows the user control and make descisions		High, the artwork, audio and the articles well were presented.	
After the Storm		5	A personalised journey or experience		High, very neatly presented with a cinematic feel	
The seven digital deadly sins		4	A collection of documentaries with polls and other activities		High, the audio, video and the websit itself reeks of high quality production	
Pirate Fishing An Interactive investigation		5	The project takes the user in as an active participant in the investigation.		5 High	

Title	Use of non-linear narrative structure	Presence of dynamic driven content	Use of immersive
The balloons of Bhutan	Non Linear	Data visualisations	1st person
ReBuilding Haiti	Linear	Fluidity	1st person
After the Storm	Linear	Fluidity	1st person
The seven digital deadly sins	Non linear		1st person
Pirate Fishing An Interactive investigation	Non linear	Gamefied	1st person

Title	Number of media modalities	Extent of interactive content elements	Incorporation of social media Interactivity	Extent of presence of contextualised content	Approach (Game, simulation narrative exploration)
The balloons of Bhutan	High	Clickable and explorable	Yes		Narrative exploration
ReBuilding Haiti	two	Clickable	no		Simulation Game
After the Storm	High	Clickcable	no		Narrative exploration
The seven digital deadly sins	High	Clickable and exploarable	Yes		Narrative exploration
Pirate Fishing An Interactive investigation	High	Game interface	no		Game

Fig: Analysis of the the narratives

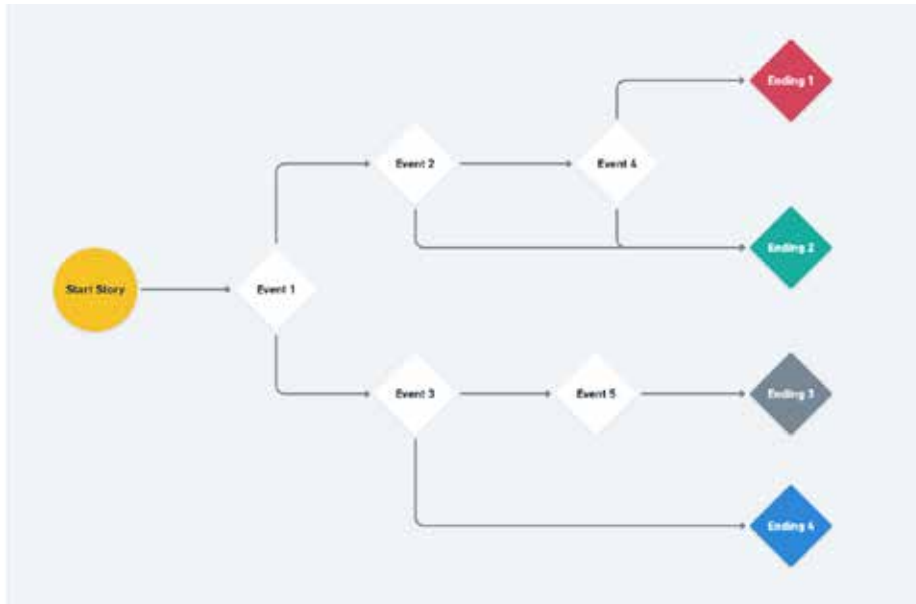


Fig: A linear narrative flow

2.5 Narrative Approach

There were two different potential directions the narration could have taken. There is a linear narrative approach wherein the events being driven by user actions to reach a definitive end. The other being non-linear, transcriptive in nature where the narration is loosely set and the user chooses which stories/ events to listen or engage in. The user is provided with multiple events, some connected and some independent, that the user can explore and access the narrations without expecting a definitive outcome

For this project, it was decided to go with non-linear narrative approach as the project would entail multiple narratives covering different themes. A non-linear approach can encompass different characters, contexts, and viewpoints which will be more suitable. A non-linear narrative approach also provides flexibility to the user and the opportunity to scale it further. [13]

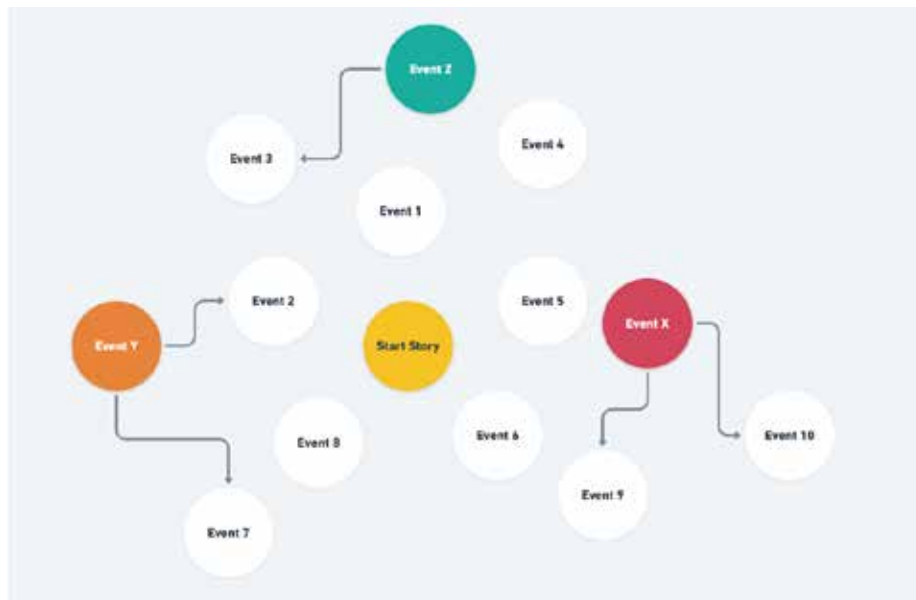


Fig: A non linear narrative

2.6 Medium

While interactive narratives exist in its simplest traditional choose your own adventure books, DnD and mobile games, the majority of the existing interactive narratives lie in websites and web applications, for instance, The boat and the land of the magic flute.

In the current digital age, the narratives can also be represented in virtual or augmented reality. [14] The digital narratives could also be accessed through different devices, and the level of interactivity could be direct, indirect or passive. Interactive narratives also allow a certain degree of contextualisation of the story through methods like locative narratives.

For this project a web based medium was chosen. This is because it would provide more accessibility compared to other existing mediums. Also creating a digital repository provides an added opportunity to scale or alter it's content.

3

Objectives and Goals

3.1 Objective

Based on the insights gathered from research, the objective of the project is to create a digital platform incorporating multiple interactive narratives that would help people better understand the Naga culture. (using a non-linear narrative approach)

3.2 Goals

The goals of the project are as follows:

- To create meaningful narratives incorporating folklores, and real life contemporary stories that would best represent the Naga culture | Incorporate research findings to create meaningful narratives that would best represent the Naga culture
- To create a platform where the users can experience these narratives in an engaging and immersive manner.
- Chalk out the system through which these narratives can be collected, curated, treated and then disseminated to users.



4

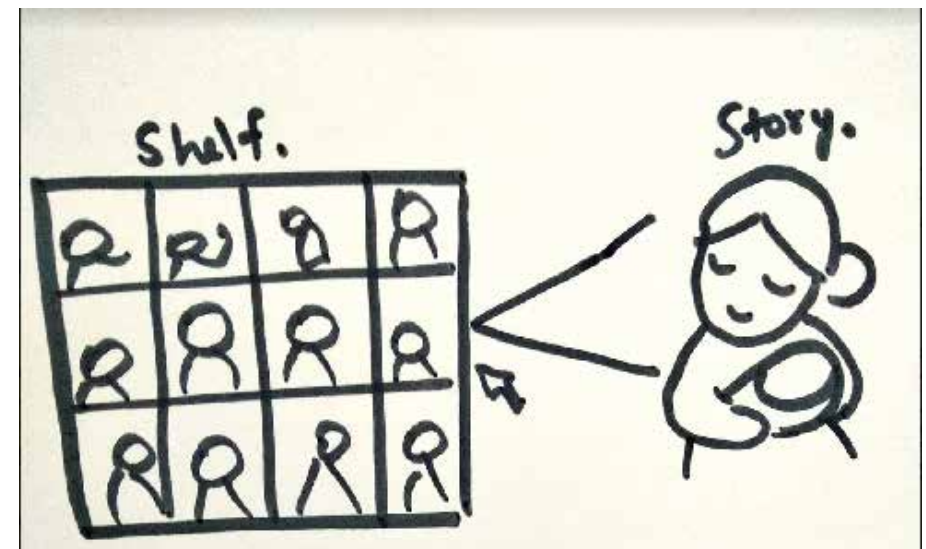
Brainstorming and Ideations

Based on the insights gathered from research, the decided narrative approach and the narrative subject, the following ideas were conceptualised.

4.1 Concept 1: The human library

This concept is to build an illustrated library of personas, each of whom will tell a story from folklores to customs, reasons and struggles. The listener is left to decide which story he would listen to and make sense of it.

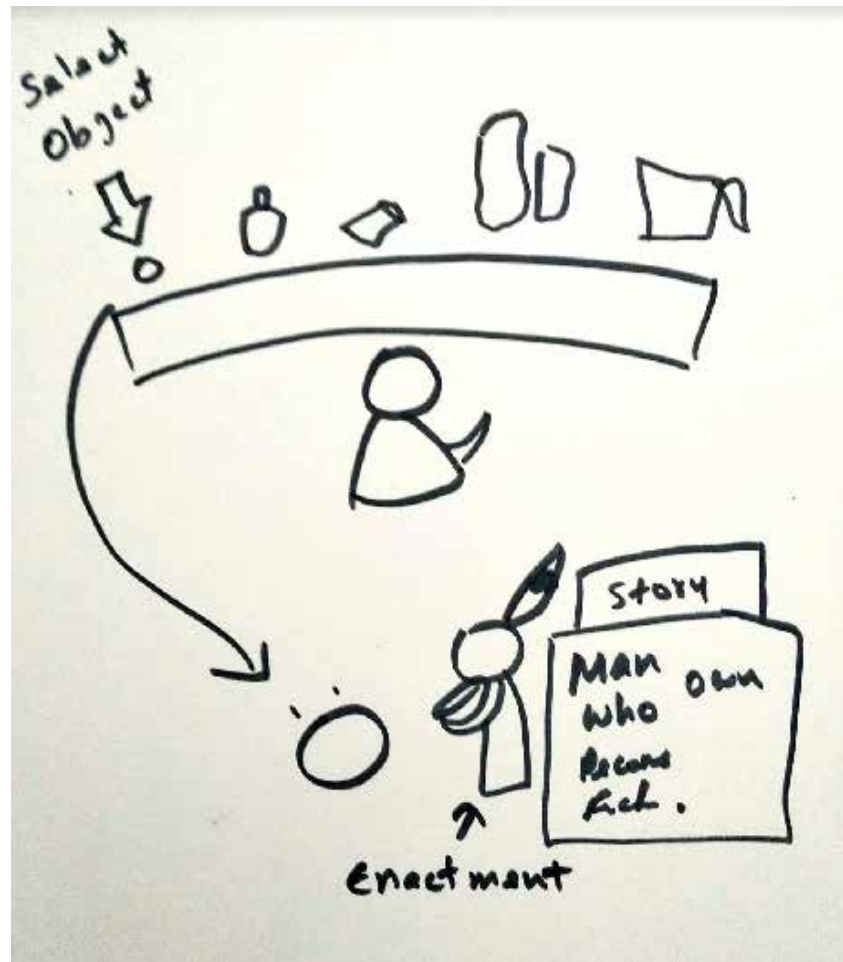
Conclusion: The oral tradition reflected; Nagas have a strong oral tradition where passing down the knowledge occurs verbally. This concept duplicates it in a digital form by having representation of Naga individuals telling their stories. The execution could require an archive of audio recordings of the personas sharing their stories.



4.2 Concept 2: The naga Artefacts

Keeping in mind the relation of mundane looking objects to fantastical folklore and myth, the artefact museum will include a collection of objects, representing the original objects in a tangible or intangible way. Interaction with each object will provide a narration of the myth or folklore behind the object.

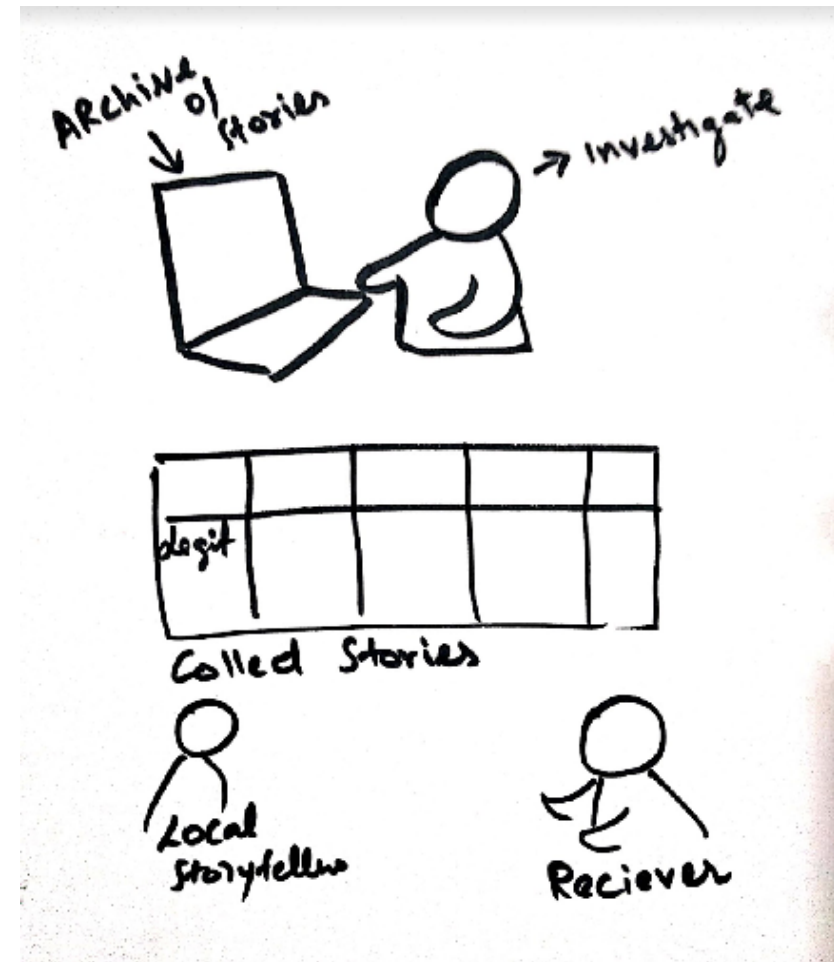
Conclusion: This requires a vast collection of objects and artefacts that would tell the stories. This also provides an opportunity to explore tactile interactions with tangible objects. The limitation being that the sources are obscure and recreating the objects pose a different challenge.



4.3 Concept 3: The Collaborative narrative

A digital platform where naga stories are collected and updated, people who know about the culture could add to the stories making it richer and listeners and readers could engage and interact with the story elements in the platform.

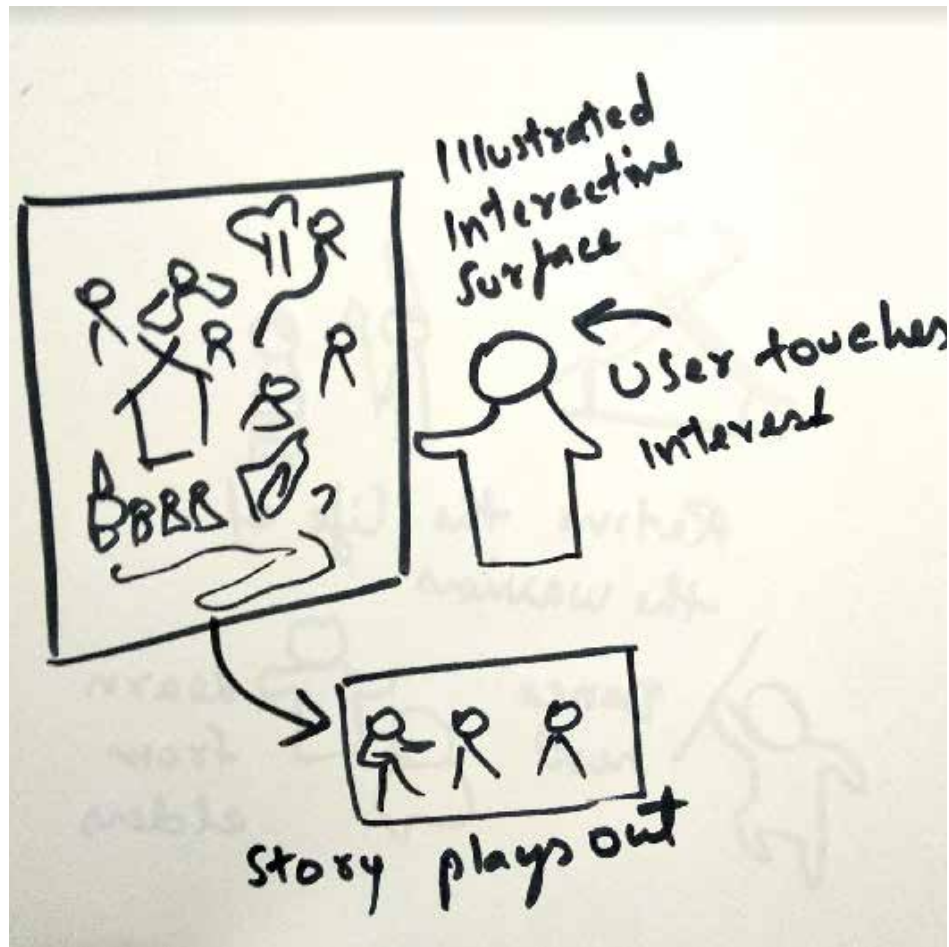
Conclusion: The challenge is fleshing out a platform with user generated content. Managing and moderating such a platform where authenticity is prioritized can be a challenge. Considering the many assumed users who will be at the platform to learn about the culture the contributors should have credibility.



4.4 Concept 4: An Interactive collage

A large collage of illustrated objects or a diorama in which each element upon interaction will relay a narration. The narration builds up with directed clues and actions performed by the user.

Conclusion: The object of this is to have an exploratory environment for the user to discover the naga culture through his own investigations.



4.5 Concept 5: A Contemporary Comparison

In this, the narrative will tell of the customs of the old and how it has changed over the years.

Conclusion: Not enough sources to create narratives around.



4.6 Concept 6: A Community life

This narration will follow an RPG based narrative where the user will take the place of a as a young lad/lass of the village. Nagas in the past used to have a tradition of young men and women being sent to live together in their own respective community houses where they are taught the way of life.

Conclusion: Leaning more towards a gamified documentary, this concept demands a fleshed out story world with a responsive or fixed narration. The scalability of this is an issue with the narrative bounds being limited to an arc at a certain time and place, nor giving enough opportunities to explore more themes that are crucial in understanding the Nagas as a whole.



4.7 Final concept

The final concept is a combination of multiple concepts listed above. The final idea is the creation of a tool wherein the user can choose from a range of narratives by selecting amongst tribes, objects and time. The user is then put through a journey where they investigate on their environments and proceed along the narrative.

This was chosen as it allows for flexibility of different individual narratives to form, as well as cover multiple topics. The advantage this platform gives is the possibility of creating a large repository through which anyone can access and experience the narratives.

5

Naga Stories

Is an interactive platform that allows users to experience narratives about the Naga culture by choosing through a combination of elements based on their interest. The platform acts as an access to a growing repository of narratives that is managed in the backend. The stories and narratives are varying in topic, themes and visual styles that capture and gives a glimpse of the culture through an insider's perspective. Each Narrative can be fictional or factual. The fictional narratives too are grounded and constructed from factual information supplied and verified by authentic sources.

5.1 The system

A detailed breakdown of how the stories will be collected, treated and disseminated through the system is described below:

5.1.1 Authentication and curation:

A set of credible sources for the platform is established which include books, dominant narrations, experts on the subject and real life stories. A set of moderators would collect stories from these sources, post which, the stories would be curated and prioritized to be included in the platform. This will be done on the basis of which stories provide variety and are culturally significant.

5.1.2 Treatment of the narratives:

The chosen content will then be transformed into narratives by subjecting it to textual and audio-visual treatments and adapting it in an appropriate flow for the users to experience. The treated narratives will then be validated by an expert to ensure that the essence of the story is intact and communicated well.

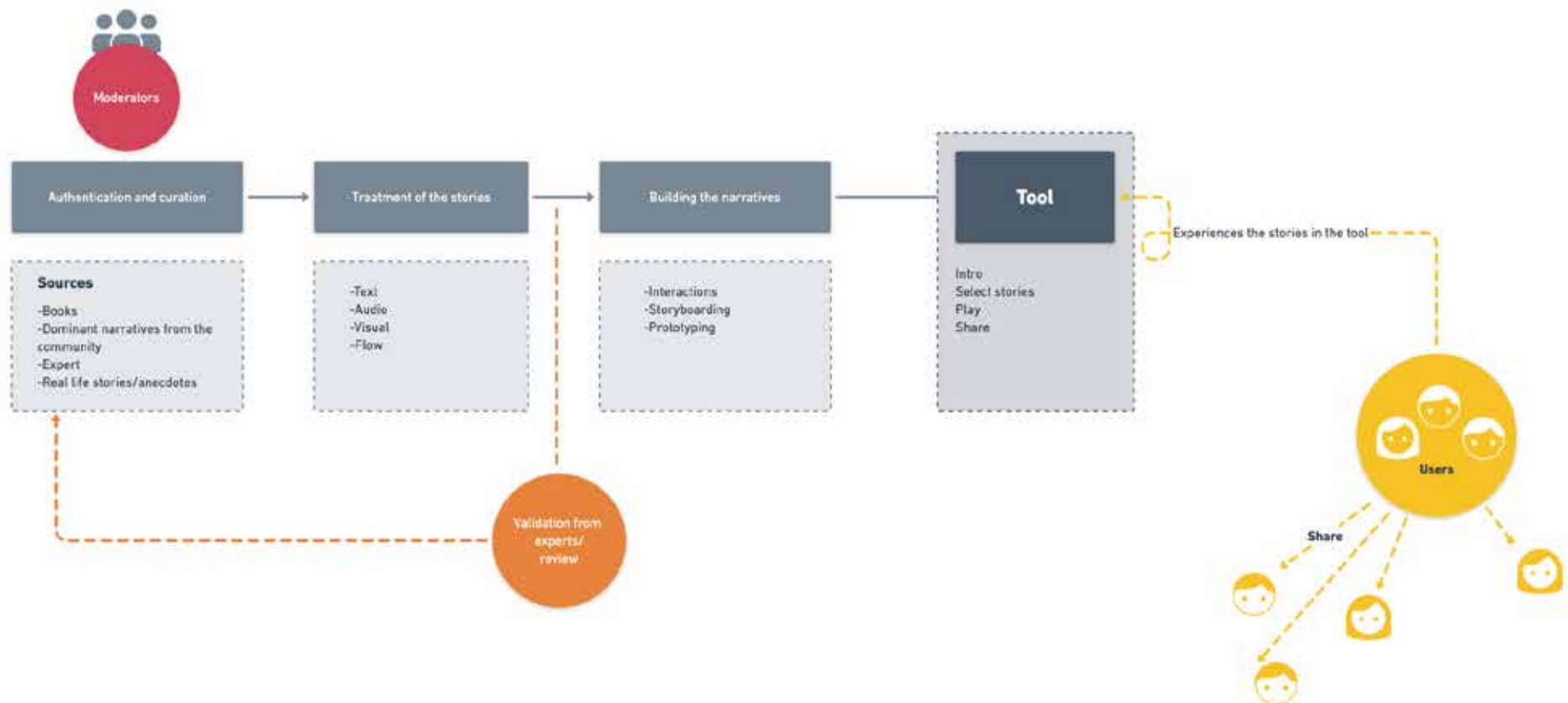
5.1.3 Building the narratives

The narratives will then be built for the tool.

This part includes building the narratives for the platform by storyboarding and prototyping. Here interactivity will be embedded to the narratives and be added to the pool of existing stories.

5.1.4 Using the tool

The tool is a collective repository of several Naga stories which users can experience in an engaging manner. The user is first given a brief introduction about the platform. After this the user moves to the story selection area, where they choose a story based on a combination of elements. The story then plays out for the user. After viewing the story, the user can share it amongst the family and friends and hence more individuals can encounter the tool.



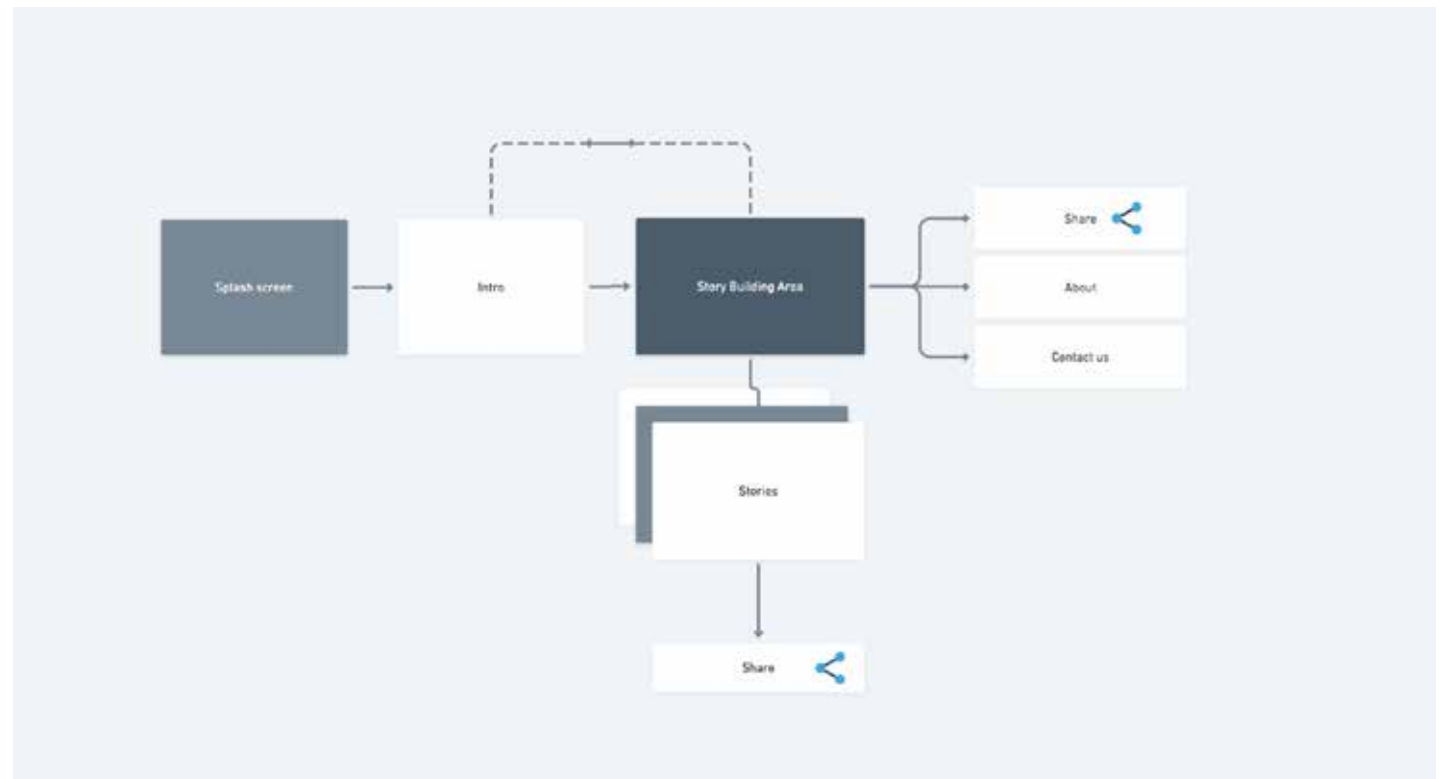
5.2 The Tool

The tool contains events and narratives that are accessible by a combination of elements. The narratives will be presented in the form of text, illustrations, video or audio. The narratives the user experiences has been curated and categorised, where each story represents a significant theme. Fig . represents the information architecture of the platform. The main areas within the tool are as follows:

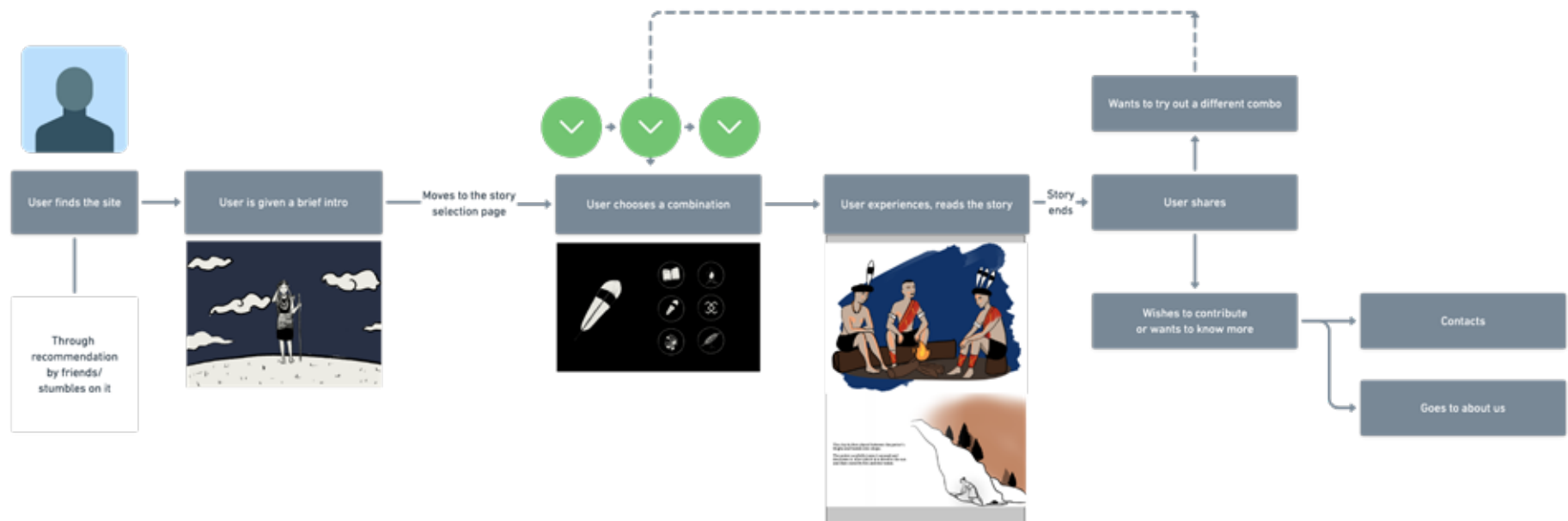
- Introduction
- Story Building Area
- View Stories
- Options to share

A detailed description of how the user uses the tool is described below.

Information architecture of the web platform



User journey using the tool



User journey using the tool

PRE

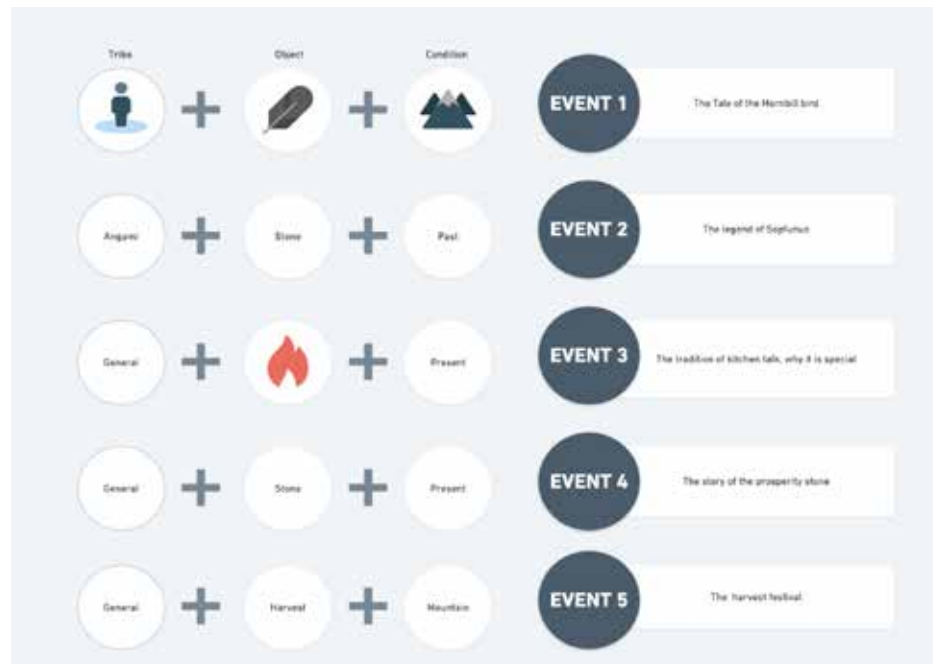
5.2.1 Introduction

When a user visits the platform, a short introduction briefly introducing the platform will be shown. This will help to set the tone of the narratives.

5.2.2 The story building area

In order to access these stories, the user has to select elements which include a tribe, object and time period based on their interest. These elements can be represented as icons or images that upon clicking would lead to the story. The user on creating the combination is sent further to experience the story or the narrative behind the representative elements.

It is important to note here that the selection will happen stepwise, i.e tribe, followed by object, followed by time. This is done so that the user only views those elements which have a story tied to them. The range of proceeding elements are shown based on the previous selection. This prevents cases where a combination may not yield any story.



DURING

5.2.3 The narration flow

The narration begins with initiating the user to the context and placing the user in the environment. The next step that follows is giving the user choices and freedom to explore the narratives through interaction with the elements presented. After selecting the desired element, an event follows that tells the user a story much in the fashion of how stories are passed down.

POST

5.2.4 Explore alternative options/share stories

After going through the narrative, the user has an option to go back and explore other alternative options or elements for that narrative. In cases where the stories are based on real incidents, people or objects, the users will be informed about it through real life images or references of the same. Given that the content could grow as the intent for the platform is to be a growing repository where more stories can be added, the users will also be prompted to play and explore the various options for experiencing other narratives.

5.2.5 Other parts of the platform:

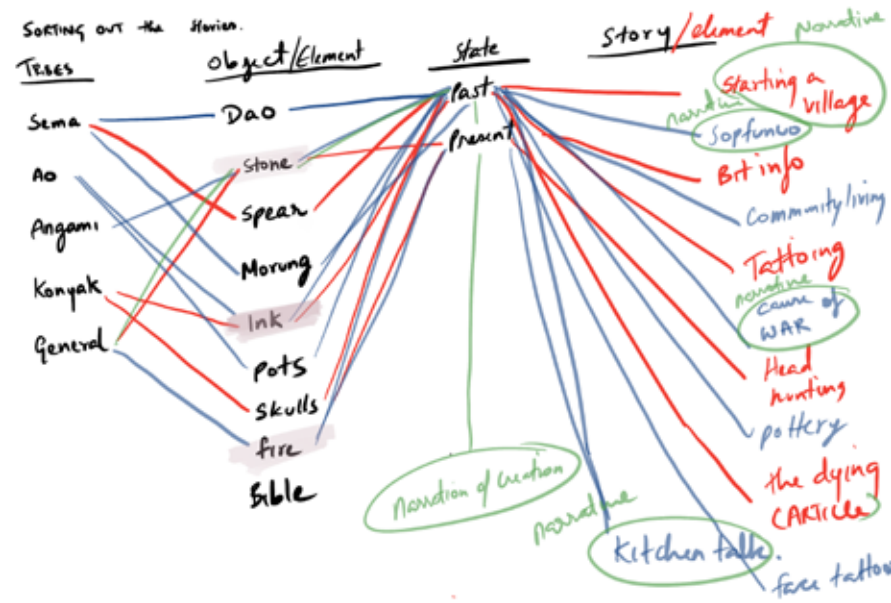
Apart from those mentioned previously, the platform will also have other sections wherein the user may know more about the platform, and be able to view the source of the narratives presented.

6

The Narratives

The stories are extracted from the source texts mentioned and through exchange of stories with credible Naga individuals. Each story was also tagged according to the theme, the characters, objects and the tribes that would further help in sorting them.

Title	Category	Keyword	Theme	Objects/places	Tribe	Description	Sources	Verified
Pottery	History, way of life	Labour	Womanhood	Pots, clay,	Ao	An ao woman's retelling of why they don't do pottery anymore.	Museum	Yes
Discovery of Chilli	Folklore	Cooking	Sisterhood	Chilli	Sumi	Two sister's come across a strange fruit	dominant narration	Yes
Lightening axes	Telltale	Explanation	Superstitions	Axe stones	General	Stones believed to be what lightening is made up of	dominant narration, museum, experience	Yes
Prosperity stones	Folklore		Superstitions	Prosperity stone	General	Owner of such stones are presumes to become rich without working	dominant narration, museum, experience	Yes
Community fishing	Way of life	Community	Customs	Fish,	General	The old way and the new community activity		
Origin of nagas (multi versions)	Folklore			Stones	Angami	Khezakheno		
					Zelaing	Pou's stick		
					Ao	The six explosion stones		
Lycantrophy	Old beliefs		Superstitions/beliefs	Wolves	Sumi	Grandmother's retelling of an odd visit	Dominant	Yes
						The man in the jungle		yes A naga Saga
						The snake and the tiger		
Inheritance	Customs		Customs	Land	Multiple tribes			
Creating a village	Way of life, customs		Customs	Spear, land	Sumi	the first sumi women's village		yes
					General			
	Humor				Sumi	The village in the moon		
Oral tradition	folklore	Explanation		Dog	General			Yes
Tattoos (male, female)	Significance, way of life	explanation		Tattoos	Konyak	Gaining tatoos through victory		
					Ao	A sign of strength and a sign of beauty		
Earning merits (Feasts, bull fighting)	Customs	Explanation		Structures		How the men of the old gain accolades and respect by fulfilling the many conditions.		
Christain missionaries	History		Modernity, change	Bible	General	each tribe's encounter with christianity		
Kohima battle	History	Event		Shell, tank, cemetery	General	The fiercest battle that was fought and the memorial left behind		Yes
Enlisting in the war	History, event			Medals	General	The quirky story of the Naga labour corps		Yes
Marriage dowry	Customs			Livestock	Sumi	The bride price, dowry and practices	dominant narration	Yes
Indegenueous games	Way of life			Cart, spears, rope	General	Each tribe's indigenuos game (Opportunity to compare with modernity)		Yes
Tales of weaving	Folklore, way of life			Cowry shells	Sumi	How some patterns and mekhela styles were created.		Yes
				Lilies	Sumi	How some patterns and mekhela styles were created.		
farming	Way of life			Terrace fields, jhum		The farming practices	practices	
The hornbill bird	Significance			Feathers		Te significance of the bird and why Nagas revere it		Yes
Dzukou valley	Landmark, folklore			Landscape	General	The tales of dzukou		
Shilloi Lake	Landmark, folklore			Landscape	General	The footprint shape and the speculation about it's formation		
Music/dance	Way of life, community				General	How the nagas learned to dance		
Morungs	Structure, way of life, community			Buildings	General	The dwelling and the purposes		
Festivals	Community			Landscape	All tribes	Compare with modernity		Yes



Creating combinations

6.1 Bite sized stories

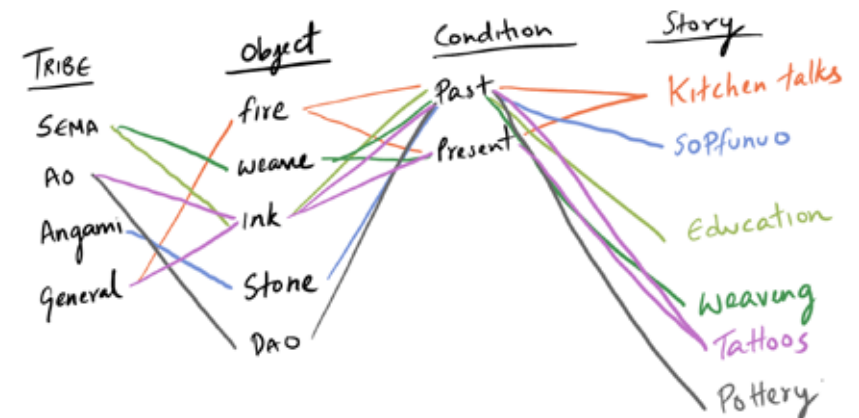
The stories used will be bite sized in nature. This is done so that the users can retain key information from the narratives. This will make it easier for the repository to accommodate, treat and disseminate the stories.

6.2 Curating the stories

One issue that arises with the combination solution is the fact that having three categories with three objects within it itself adds up to a total of 20 stories and more. Ultimately the objective is to allow maximum combinations to have their own stories but for the prototype this had to be reduced to an executable number.

The stories were then decided based on the factors of

- Variety
- Interest
- Exploration of different Themes and subjects.



These six stories are finalised for the project prototype.

6.3 Final Stories

These are the stories that were chosen to be included in the prototype.

Kitchen Talk

Key theme: Traditions

Selections: Tribe- Sumi, Object- Fire, Time-Past/Present .

Story: The narrative follows in the form of poetry/song.

It tells of how since olden times stories has been passed down from generations and will be passed down. This narrative lays down the foundation of the reverence the Nagas have for community and storytelling, wherein the family/ friends gather round the kitchen fire to pass down knowledge and continue their strong oral culture.

Source: Dominant narration, fiction, Studies on naga oral tradition.



Sophfunuo

Key theme: Beliefs and Myths

Selections: Tribe- Angami, Object- Stone, Time-Past.

Story: An Angami folklore. The story is about a woman who is turned into stone. The story of Sophfunuo highlights the magical and mythical belief in spirits that the Nagas had. The metamorphosis into a stone/object is also a common theme that is found in many folklores.

Source: Dominant narration, folklore.



The weaver's daughter

Key theme: Connecting to the past

Selections: Tribe- Sumi, Object- Loom, Time-Present.

Story: This fictional story follows a young modern Naga woman's recounting of her childhood and her mother's weaving. She recalls the stories that her mother used to tell her and the weaving patterns that was formulated from those very stories.

This story being interactive lets the user choose which of the three heroines stories he/she would like to listen and based on that, the young woman is wearing a makhala that is related to the story chosen.

"I should tell you my story of when I was younger. I lived in the village. My duty was to take care of my siblings and I did. I carried them on my back and sang songs to them. When I was younger my mother would tell me tales of these women, beautiful, strong and determined.

I would listen to them and I was enchanted. Of these stories were three stories that were my favourites."

Source: Dominant narration, folklore, correspondence with mother.



Asu's Story

Key theme: History/ embracing modernity

Selections: Tribe- Sumi, Object- Book, Time-Past.

Story: A semi-biographical take on a great grand-uncle's struggle as he started school in a new age when the Nagas were adopting new ideas of education and christianity. The story follows the young boy as he is sent to school and his graduation.

Source: Autobiography written by Asu Kelhoshe



Pottery

Key theme: An adapted story of women who once practiced a dying craft

Selections: Tribe- Ao, Object- Pots, Time-Past.

Story: The women of the Changki village of the Ao tribe used to practice pottery. This art has dwindled but with the story of a young girl who is learning the trade from her mother the art of pottery making is retold. This narrative deals with the theme of knowledge that is passed down from mother and practice of pottery that was once practiced in abundance, the decline of the practice is also addressed.

Source: Dominant Narrative, Tamsula Ao's These hills called home.
Correspondence from Individuals of the Ao tribe



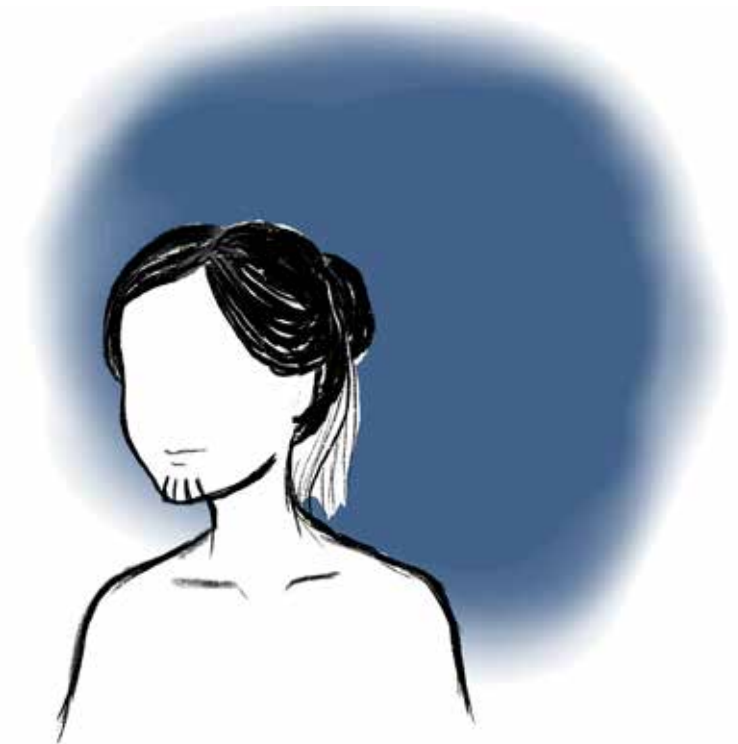
Tattoo

Key theme: A documentation through the eyes of a modern Ao woman

Selections: Tribe- Ao, Object- Tattoo, Time-Past.

Story: Tattooing was widely practiced among some of the tribes of Nagaland. It was a ritual, a symbol of status and beauty. The tattoos were earned or had certain meaning behind them. This narrative tells of the tattoos of the women of the Ao tribe. The dying art and the meaning behind these practices are also explored.

Source: Dominant Narrative, Tamsula Ao's These hills called home.
Correspondence from Individuals of the Ao tribe



7

Narrative Treatment

9.1 Textual treatment

The narratives are in the form of poetry, dialogues or first person narratives.

9.2 Audio-visual treatment

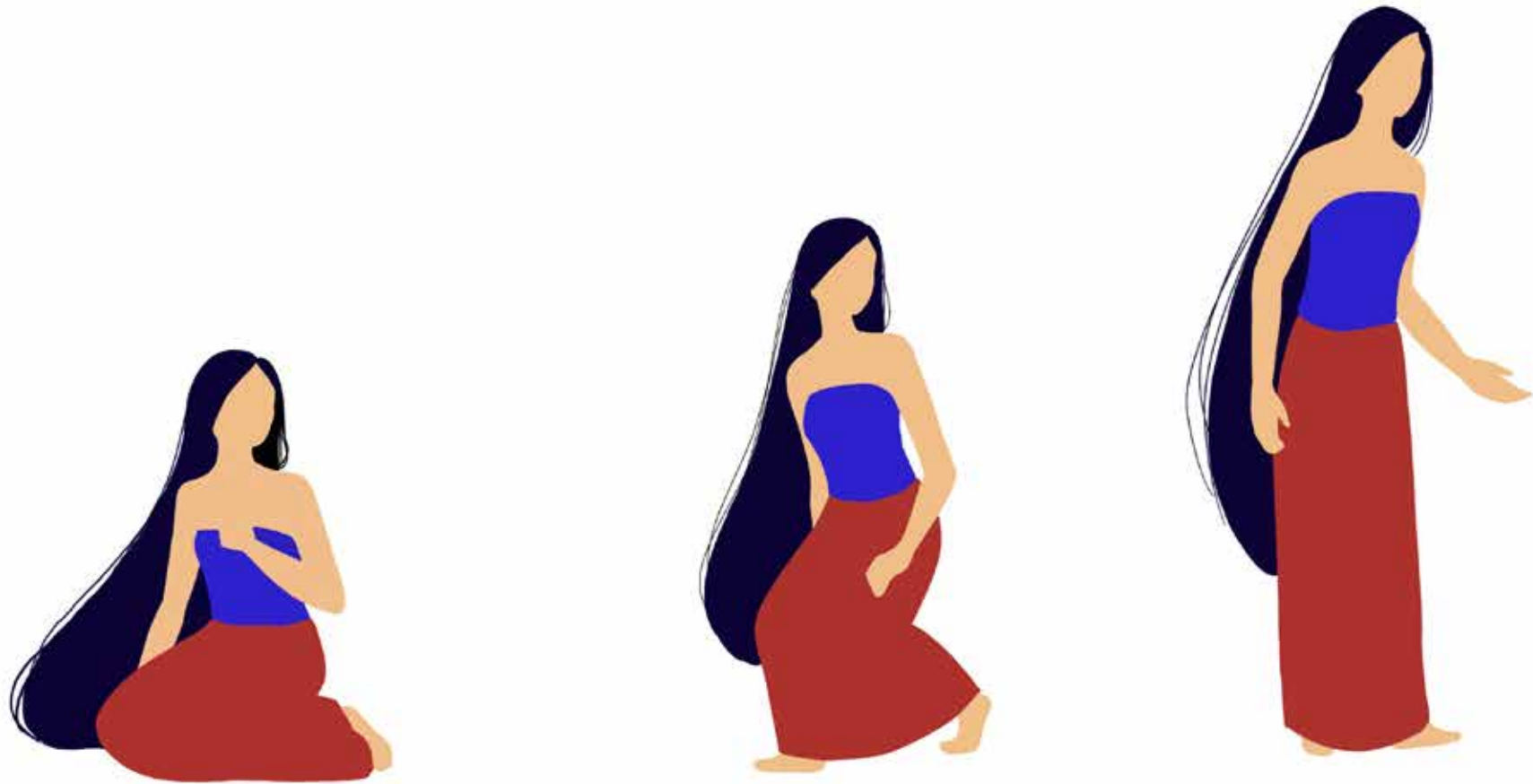
The narratives include a combination of text, still images, gifs, videos and audio. While the platform has a consistent style guide, the narratives encompass varying visual styles and interactions. Their descriptions and explorations are described below:

9.2.1 Visual style

Visuals of the narratives were experimented upon to deliver the content in an appropriate manner. Some narration will have narrated animations and some in moving images. Different visual styles such as chalk lines, block inking and line art were tried for the stories. Sketchy chalk line-art gave the stories a raw and tribal aesthetic which was found to be most in tune for the stories. Here are a few samples of the explorations



The different tribes, in minimalistic sillhouhettes adorned in colourful garb respective of their own tribes.



Vector drawing of an ao girl's narration.



Simple line art with minimal colours for highlight.



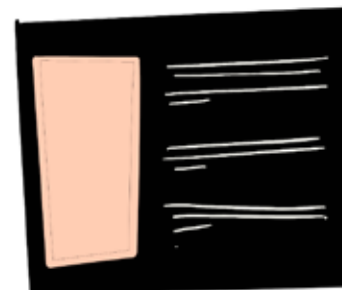
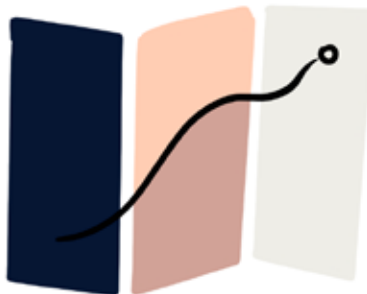
Coloured illustrations with washed background.



Rough dry ink outline with block colours.

9.2.2 Color Palette

Below is the color palette chosen for the platform. The colours were chosen as they bear a close association with the palette commonly found amidst the objects, clothes, etc. of the Naga people.



9.2.3 Audio

Audio will be incorporated in the narratives by two means; Lejoh-le, a traditional folk song, will be played as background music for certain narratives, the users will also be informed about them as they play. Other audio such as fire crackling and weaving sound effects will be added to enhance the overall experience create a more immersive environment.

9.3 User Interactions

Various options were explored to decide which user interactions can be used for the narratives. It was understood that there were two possible directions that could be taken; one was to have a fixed set of interactions that the user will be informed about which will be used in all the stories. Another approach was to have different interaction styles as per the stories which will be infused intuitively within them. The later was chosen for the platform as it complemented with having varying visual styles for the narratives. Intuitively infusing the interactions would also enrich the user's experience of traversing through the story.

The platform will hence contain two categories of interactions, one being navigational, other being investigative. The navigational interactions include those that user navigate in the stories such as using scroll or arrow keys. The investigative interactions will be used for the key events in the stories that will help the user to discover and explore.

Some instances of the interactions used are described below:

Story: Kitchen Talk

Event: Listening to the stories of the elders around a fire

Interaction: Scroll upwards along the fire crackling

Story: Sopfunno story

Event: Moving the stone the stone along with the villagers in the

Interaction: Dragging the stone

Story: Weaver's Story

Event: Handing loom to the mother

Interaction: Drag and drop the loom into weaving area

8

FINAL PROTOTYPE

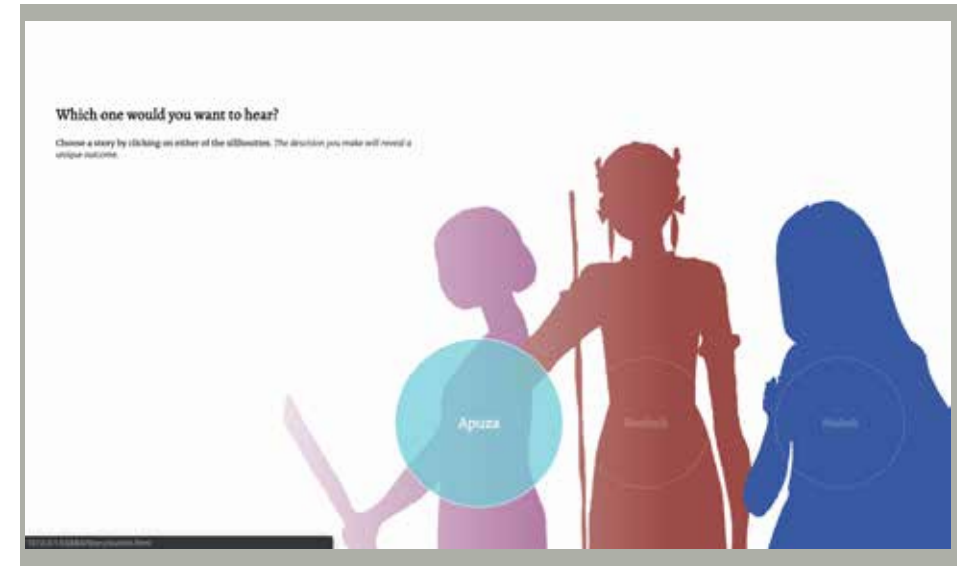
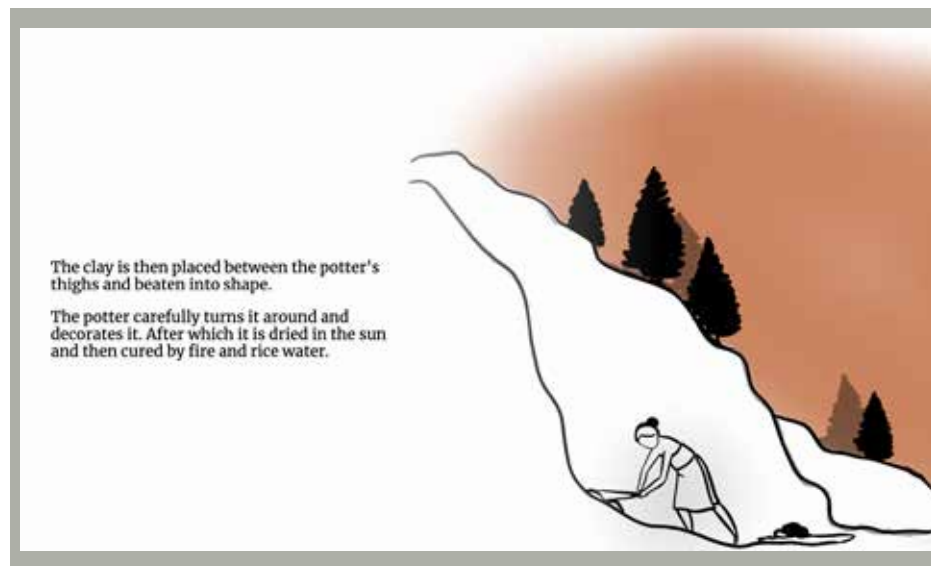
10.1 Proof of concept

A proof of concept for the tool was created using HTML and CSS to gauge feasibility. A basic version was the same was successfully created however the final prototype could not be developed using the same means as it includes more complex interactions which require knowledge of advanced web technologies.

Screenshots of the coded prototype



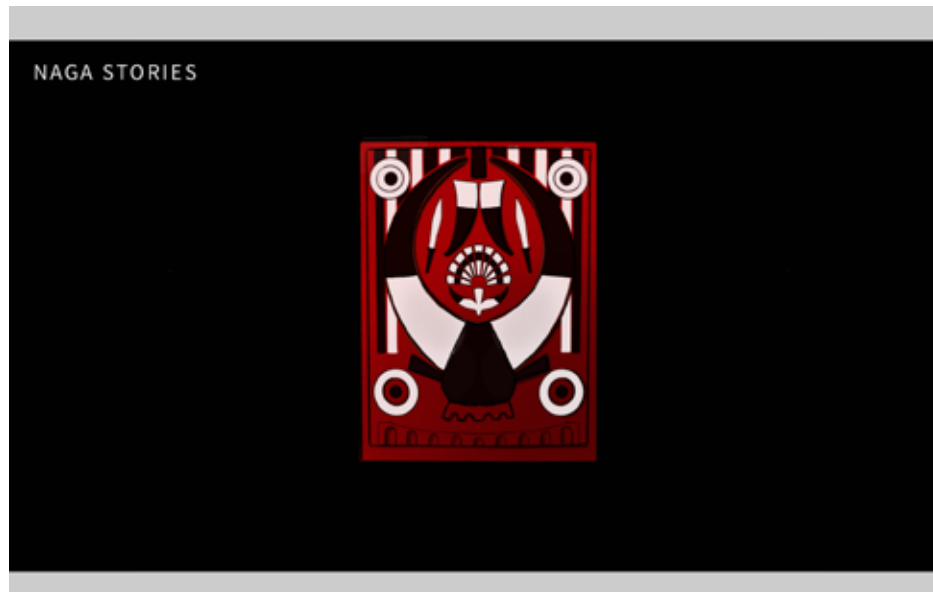
Screenshot of the story



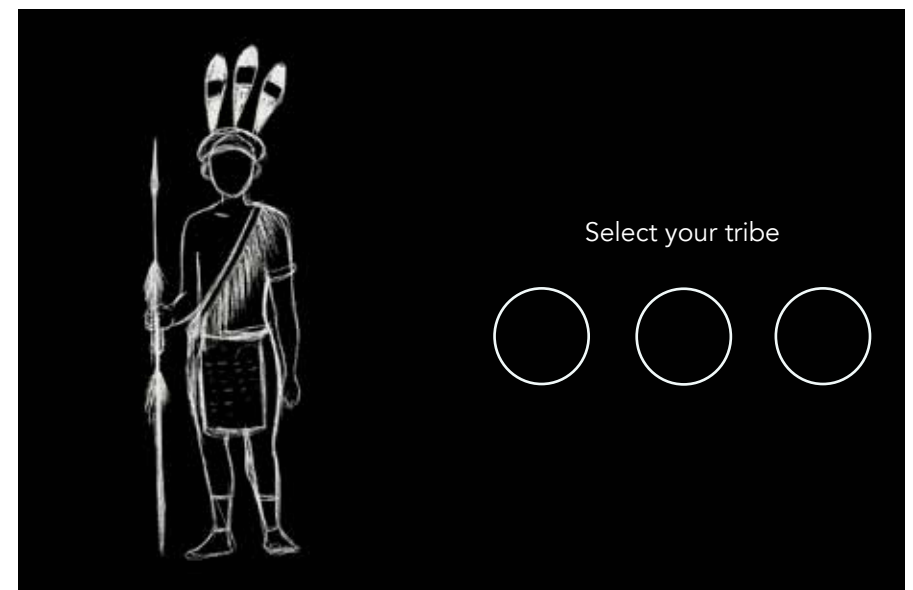
10.2 Final prototype

The prototype was then developed using prototyping tools such as Sketch, Adobe XD and Principle. Some screenshots of the final prototype are shown below.

The mock prototype in progress



Icons



9

Evaluation

Evaluation Plan

Users: The user evaluation will be conducted with both Nagas and non-Nagas. The evaluation with non-Nagas will attempt to gauge the general interest and awareness that the platform can provide. The evaluation with Nagas will attempt to get validation from the Naga users on whether it can represent aspects of the Naga culture.

What:

- Whether the platform is able to generate interest and engagement for the users
- Whether the users will gain new knowledge about Naga culture after going through the interactive story.
- Are they able to retain the information they have gained through the Naga story.
- Whether they effectively represent the Naga cultural identity
- Find usability issues

Method:

- The users will first be asked about their familiarity with Naga culture and what their general perception is.
- Then the platform will be presented to the users
- The users will be asked to navigate through the platform and view the stories
- The time the users spend on the platform and the stories they view will be noted down.
- Post this, questions will be asked to them which they will rate using a Likert scale along with some open ended questions.

Questionnaire:

Questions/criteria will be created by referencing The Empirical Assessment of the User Experience in Interactive Storytelling [15]

10

Conclusion

In this project we conducted an elaborate study to identify aspects and sources that can be used to communicate a better understanding of the Naga culture. Through these studies, a range of authentic sources and credibility criterion was established which helped us to create and curate the stories. Various ideations of these stories were created by subjecting them to different textual and audio-visual treatments. These stories were then prototyped using appropriate tools and suitable interactions were embedded into them. We also designed and created a tool using which the user can select through a range of stories using elements of that story. Further, a system was devised which details how stories can be collected, treated and disseminated. An evaluation plan has been proposed to validate the tool and its stories.

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Images taken from google

