

Analysis of the organizational culture of the company Genesem Inc. from the perspective of visual anthropology

Análisis de la cultura organizacional de la compañía Genesem Inc. desde la perspectiva de la antropología visual

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ABSTRACT

Organizational culture in companies is of great importance, since it allows you to know how the company is inside, this organizational culture shows you how communication is managed, who manages it, how is the work climate and culture, as well as the use of technology by employees, especially when it is used as a communication tool. Within the organizational culture it is also possible to see how the relationship of employees is, both within the company, as well as their relationship with customers and suppliers.

Through this qualitative analysis from the perspective of visual anthropology, it is possible to have more detail on all these issues, especially through the analysis of video images where you can perceive the nonverbal communication and micro expressions of the people who participated in the data collection techniques.

Keywords: communication, organizational culture, work climate, work culture, multiculturalism.

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RESUMEN

La cultura organizacional en las empresas es de gran importancia ya que permite conocer cómo es la empresa por dentro, es decir, cómo se maneja la comunicación, quién la maneja, cómo es el clima y la cultura laboral, así como el uso de la tecnología por parte de los empleados, sobre todo cuando se utiliza como herramienta de comunicación. Dentro de la cultura organizacional también es posible ver cómo es la relación de los empleados, tanto dentro de la empresa como su relación con clientes y proveedores. A través de este análisis cualitativo desde la perspectiva de la antropología visual, es posible tener más detalles sobre todas estas cuestiones, especialmente a través del análisis de las imágenes de vídeo donde se puede percibir la comunicación no verbal y las micro expresiones de las personas que participaron en las técnicas de recolección de datos.

Palabras clave: comunicación, cultura organizacional, clima laboral, cultura laboral, multiculturalidad.

INTRODUCTION

Genesem Inc. is in Incheon, South Korea. The company has been operating in the country for more than 20 years; however, it has customers in various parts of the world, which is why it is important to collaborate and interact with them.

This is why it is important to know how information is handled within the company, what technological means are used to be in contact with each other as well as with their clients, and to know how the work climate and culture is lived within the organization, without leaving aside the multicultural relationships that exist in the company.

This study was carried out with a qualitative approach, which included different techniques for the collection of information, such as participant observation, non-participant observation, in-depth interview and focus group.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite being a company that has been operating for so long, the company does not have a communications department within the organization, so most of the communications are handled by the General Manager of the Foreign Sales Department.

One of the objectives of this research is to know how information is managed within the company.

METHODOLOGY

It consisted in four qualitative research techniques such as in-depth interview, focus group, participant observation and non-participant observation.

RESEARCH APPROACH

Being this research from the perspective of visual anthropology, it is important to highlight the ability to observe and analyze different situations, Visual anthropologists help “develop more reflective approaches in visual research”¹ (Ibanez 2006, p. 2), since at the time when the recording is being made, the researcher already knows what his objective is, so the observation becomes more profound and in turn, when performing the analysis, it becomes more detailed.

Having the possibility of seeing through the human gesture, what their body, their expressions and their hands are showing, what they are trying to transmit and even what they wish to hide, is the way in which the researcher can make anthropology his ally, so that through this analysis he can get to know certain situations in depth.

It should be noted that, observation is not always done in person or through a camera, but can be done through a screen, which can be considered according to the author as “a window open to a space in which one can be present at a distance”² (Chabert 2014, p. 43), that is, that through the screen in which two or more people can be communicating, one can be somehow in that same temporal space so to speak.

However, it is important that for this technique of observation through the screen to be effective, it must be considered the way in which methods of observation that are out of the ordinary are elaborated or put into practice, since in this way, it will allow the researcher to reach objectives or go beyond what he is interested in knowing in the objects of study.

When ethnographic research is carried out by having a direct approach with the people of the community or company being studied, very enriching information can be obtained, since this approach can be very effective. That is why, “Hypermedia ethnography is fast becoming an established form, of interest to anthropologists and sociologists, used in teaching and learning and in ethnographic representation” (Pink *et al.* 2004, p. 172), as it gains traction and is considered relevant during research it allows more researchers to make use of it, so research results will be more complete and provide more information.

¹ Développer des approches plus réflexives au sein de la recherche visuelle.

² Une fenêtre ouvrant sur un espace dans lequel on peut être présent à distance.

DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

An important part of the qualitative methodology is that it gives you the opportunity to experiment with techniques that allow you to go beyond, they are unique moments, both for the researcher and for the person or persons who are participating in the study.

For Pink:

Interviews should be understood as instances in which the interviewer and interviewee together create a common ground. Interviewer and interviewee communicate as embodied and emplaced persons, sometimes using media technologies in the process. Reframing the interview in this way opens up possibilities for understanding how and what we can learn about other people's worlds through the interview (2009, p. 82).

This point, even though the interviews were conducted in a language that did not correspond to the mother tongue of both the researcher and the interviewees, it was possible to achieve an atmosphere of trust in which they could express themselves in an honest and free manner.

During the focus group with the participation of 6 leaders of the company, it was possible to perceive that during the development of the focus group it was possible to create a space in which they felt comfortable and confident to talk about their experiences in the company, sometimes each one of them shared something about the same fact:

The interview creates a space to reflect, define and communicate experiences. It is in fact a creative place where representations and understandings of experience rather than objective truths about what has been experienced are intentionally produced (Pink 2009, p. 87).

As for the observation in two events, to carry out a non-participant observation, as well as a participant observation, including the recording of the events, in this sense, the participation is given with a specific purpose at the time of observing, recording and even having an interaction with the employees, it can be said that the purpose of this is to obtain particular information or in its case to have a closer observation and even an opinion about the person by having a direct deal with him, which allows the analysis to have complete knowledge of the context.

By being able to make recordings of these interviews and events we have the opportunity to permanently save these moments, "all forms of interaction are valid for studies and not only face to face"³ (Ibanez 2008, p. 138), this greatly facilitates various types of analysis, it is possible to make an analysis of actions, behaviors, interactions, as well as communication and emotional space of each one.

³ Toutes les formes d'interactions sont valables pour les études et pas seulement le face-à-face.

Similarly, the recordings allow through the video an analysis of the micro expressions of the person who is in the film, according to the author Ekman (2007), who conducted for several years, mainly between 1965-1967 studies on emotions and facial expressions of people, embodied in images of photographs, which presented them to people who had no contact with the outside and who were isolated, to know their reactions to these. This is how he identified that the emotions and expressions transmitted through these images are universal, and do not correspond to a characteristic of any particular culture, as other authors claimed.

Ekman (2007) began his work with these types of emotions: happiness, sadness, disgust, anger, fear and surprise, as the basis for the study, as he progressed, he included more categories; however, for this research only these six mentioned were used as the basis for the analysis of the micro expressions of some of the people interviewed, those that because of the video had a greater closeness and clarity of the face.

Study population




At Genesem Inc. in South Korea, interviews were conducted with two people, a manager and an employee, and the focus group was conducted with six leaders, while one of the events was a concert offered to employees and the other was a meeting between a group of employees of the company with two customers from a company in Malaysia.



It should be noted that the interviews, the focus group and the two events were filmed on video to later make a visual analysis of both the behavior and reactions of the people, with an emphasis on their micro expressions.

Analysis of visual methods of observation

As part of the visual methods through the perspective of visual anthropology, an analysis was made of the images obtained through the video recording of the two interviews conducted with a manager and an employee of the company, the focus group composed of 6 leaders of the company, as well as two events, the first of them the meeting of members of the company with customers, as well as the second event in which a concert of classical music was offered to employees. This can be seen in the Table1, and below is a detailed interpretation of it.

TABLE 1: ANALYSIS TABLE OF GENESEM COMPANY IN SOUTH KOREA

TOPICS	VISUAL DATA TRACE	SOCIOLOGICAL DATA	ENVIRONMENT	INTERPRETATION	TECHNICAL COMMENTS
Communication Culture Technology Multiculturalism Labor Relations	Fujifilm Digital Camera Gear 360 Camera	EP3S3 	A semi-private space, despite being a boardroom, it was enclosed only by glass and could be seen from outside and out. Relaxed, quiet.	Openness to talk about their feelings in the company. Effective communication with colleagues, team members and customers. Team culture and camaraderie. Constant use of technology. Positive emotion.	Regular quality of the video with the Fujifilm camera, regular quality of the audio with some noise from the camera itself. The 360° camera recorded very little and no audio due to technical problems.
Communication Culture Technology Multiculturalism Labor Relations	Fujifilm Digital Camera Gear 360 Camera	EPS4S4 	A semi-private space, despite being a boardroom, it was enclosed only by glass and could be seen from outside and out. Relaxed, quiet.	Effective and open communication with others. A very strong culture of partnership and teamwork. Use of technology, as well as various media that are related to it. Positive emotional space.	Regular quality of the video with the Fujifilm camera, regular quality of the audio with some noise from the camera itself. The 360° camera recorded very little and no audio due to technical problems.
Communication Culture Technology Labor Relations	Fujifilm Digital Camera Gear 360 Camera	FGCGL2 	A semi-private space, despite being a boardroom, being closed only by glass, you could see in and out. A little tense, in general due to the difference in language. Little physical space between them.	Strong culture of teamwork, being leaders. They work with people of other nationalities; they do not have problems. Effective communication with team members, especially when transmitting information. Constant use of technology.	Regular video quality with Fujifilm camera, regular audio quality as some noise from the camera itself is noticeable. Good audio and video quality with the 360° camera.

TOPICS	VISUAL DATA TRACE	SOCIOLOGICAL DATA	ENVIRONMENT	INTERPRETATION	TECHNICAL COMMENTS
Communication Culture Multiculturalism Labor Relations	Fujifilm Digital Camera Gear 360 Camera	Genesem Employees and customers 	A semi-private space, despite of being a boardroom, since it was closed only by glass, it was possible to see from outside and out. Serious, formal, pleasant atmosphere. Little physical space between Genesem members and little physical space between Unisem representatives	Strong sense and culture of partnership and teamwork. Effective communication. Positive emotional space. There was no emotional space between them even though there was physical space between the table.	Regular video quality with Fujifilm camera, regular audio quality as some noise from the camera itself is noticeable. Good audio and video quality with the 360° camera.
Communication Labor Relations	Fujifilm Digital Camera Gear 360 Camera	Genesem Employees and members of the orchestra 	Large luminous space, little physical space between the public.	Fellowship, experience of values, respect and teamwork. Positive emotional space among the audience (employees), as well as among the members of the orchestra.	Regular video quality with Fujifilm camera, regular audio quality as some noise from the camera itself is noticeable. Good audio and video quality with the 360° camera.

SOURCE: PREPARED BY AUTHORS.

EP₃S₃, after performing a visual analysis of his interview, it is possible to highlight through the images that he showed confidence, it was possible to perceive his joy, that he was happy to be responding. His posture was comfortable and calm. He constantly maintained movement with his hands, as well as eye contact during the development of the interview. In some moments he was thoughtful before answering some of the questions, and with some of the answers he smiled or even laughed.



EP₄S₄, after the visual analysis of the recording of her interview, it could be observed that she was in a relaxed, confident posture, during the interview she always had eye contact; however, the movement of her hands did not stand out so much, only on some occasions with some questions. It could also be observed that as the interview progressed and with some of the questions she smiled or used her hands to a greater extent.




After the visual analysis of FGCGL₂, the employees were relaxed, they were all on the same side of the table so that sometimes they communicated with each other, while some were answering others could be drinking coffee or water, the atmosphere was relaxed, sometimes they laughed, smiled a lot during the development of the questions. An important point is that one of the managers was in the room during the development of the focus group, at the beginning I considered that maybe because of his presence they could feel intimidated and not express themselves freely; however, he was encouraging them to answer the questions, to participate.

During the development of the first event (meeting between members of the company and its customers), a visual analysis of the recording shows that employees are close to each other, that they communicate, that they have eye contact with each other. It can also be observed, as it was a meeting with clients, that their behavior was one of respect and participation, of dialogue.

As for the second event, after the visual analysis, in Table 2, is possible to observed that the atmosphere was very relaxed, the postures were comfortable, you could see a lot of respect among them, as well as towards the members of the orchestra, you could also notice that they were attentive, and at certain times they even smiled. At the end of the event, one of the things that was noticeable was that they immediately organized themselves to pick up the chairs from the place, in their faces there was no evidence of any discomfort or dissatisfaction.

TABLE 2: VISUAL ANALYSIS TABLE FOR THE COMPANY GENESEM IN SOUTH KOREA

VIDEO	IMAGE	FRAGMENT OF TIME	PHYSICAL SPACE ANALYSIS	VISUAL ANALYSIS
CONCERT GENESEM ₃		0:10- 0:34	<p>The space is very large, with lots of natural light due to the windows behind the stage where the musicians were performing. Behind a table there were chairs for the employees to sit and enjoy the concert. On the right side of the chairs were the entrance doors of the company, on the left side the entrance and reception area for the entrance of employees and visitors. In the background was a wall, as well as the access doors to the production floor.</p>	<p>In this shot you can see three rows of people occupying the chairs, in the foreground you can see one of the employees touching his hair, in the second row you can see the people who were paying attention, while others were recording with their cell phones, the appearance of the attendees in general was serious, sometimes they were smiling and mostly they were paying attention.</p>
FOCUS GROUP ₁		2:25- 2:50	<p>The space of the meeting room is very large, in the center is a circular table, on one of the walls there are blackboards for both writing and projecting.</p>	<p>Here are 6 persons, one of them is the respondent, while another one is taking notes, two others are paying attention, another one is drinking coffee and a last one is touching his hair and neck, two of them are talking to each other. Some of them are looking straight ahead at the interviewer and the translator, while the others are staring blankly, showing little or no interest.</p>



VIDEO	IMAGE	FRAGMENT OF TIME	PHYSICAL SPACE ANALYSIS	VISUAL ANALYSIS
MEETING GENESEM 4		0:25- 1:10	The space of the meeting room is very large, in the center is a circular table, on one of the walls there are blackboards for both writing and projecting.	Three of them are seated, the one on the left edge is staring blankly with his right arm leaning on his face, the one in the middle with his arms stretched in the shape of an x on another chair, while the one on the right edge is with one arm resting on the table. Meanwhile, the manager, one of the employees and one of the customers are talking next to the blackboard, the employee is drawing and giving an explanation, those who are seated are only observing how this event happens.
DSCF2064		0:40- 1:25	The background wall is painted green, where the company logo (Genesem) stands out, on the left side you can see a little bit of the background of the wall and the door in gray and white. The interviewee is dressed in a white shirt with the company logo, in front of him is his gray computer.	He smiles as he answers, makes movements with his hands, looks directly at the interviewer, his posture is relaxed, his demeanor is calm, relaxed, you can tell he is comfortable. While answering, there are times when he remains thoughtful, perhaps remembering the moment he is referring to.
DSCF2063		1:00- 1:17	The background wall is painted green, with the company logo (Genesem), and on the left side there is a little of the background of the wall and the door in white and gray. The employee is dressed in a black jacket with the company logo, in front of him a blue notebook and a pen.	He smiles as he answers, makes movements with his hands, looks directly at the interviewer, his posture is relaxed, his demeanor is calm, relaxed, you can tell he is comfortable. While answering, there are times when he remains thoughtful, perhaps remembering the moment he is referring to.

SOURCE: PREPARED BY AUTHORS.

Analysis of micro expressions

As mentioned above, an analysis of the micro expressions of the faces of the subjects interviewed during the development of the qualitative methodological study is carried out, taking as a basis the emotions of: happiness, sadness, disgust, anger, fear and surprise. In Table 3, the images may not be clear, because they are taken as screen captures of the videos analyzed for this analysis; however, in the video their expressions can be clearly distinguished.

TABLE 3: MICRO EXPRESSION ANALYSIS TABLE FOR THE COMPANY GENESEM IN SOUTH KOREA

DATA	IMAGE	ANALYSIS
Subject : EPS4S4 Fragment of time : 00:35- 00:50		You can appreciate the emotion of happiness, he shows a smile of enjoyment, sincere, without being so effusive, he also shows a little surprise with a raise of eyebrows.
Subject : EPS4S4 Fragment of time : 2:30- 2:45		He shows an emotion of complete happiness, his smile is one of enjoyment, the movement in his cheeks is noticeable, showing his teeth, as well as the movement of his eyelids and eyes when he smiles.

SOURCE: PREPARED BY AUTHORS.

RESULTS

After carrying out the qualitative analysis, the following findings are represented as the most significant:

- Communication has an area of opportunity for better management of this, especially towards information management.
- Leadership is good, but it could be much better if there were closeness and trust with people, so here there is a direct relationship with emotional space.
- The culture is good, but it could be much stronger and more important for the members of the company.
- The multiculturalism that is experienced in the company is positive and healthy, there is openness towards other cultures and the relationship with them.

CONCLUSIONS

As part of the conclusions, we can find the relevance for an effective relationship between employees and their supervisors within the organizations that is considered as a fundamental part of effective leadership, which promotes constant communication and trust, which will allow the organizational culture to be stronger and therefore, the members of the organization are more motivated and committed to the company.

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