

Immersive and Interactive Storytelling: Exploring Narratives and Online Multisensory Experience for Cultural Memory and Collective Awareness through Graphic Novel

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Abstract : The spread of the digital and we-based technologies has led to a transformation process, which has coincided with an increase in the number of cases who are beyond the mainstream storytelling and its codes on the interaction with the user. On the base of a previous research on i-docs and virtual museums, this study analyses interactive and immersive online Graphic Novel - one-page, animated, illustrated, and hybrid - to reflect on the transformational implications of this expressive form on the user perception, remembrance, and awareness. The way in which the user experiences a certain level of interaction with the story and immersion in the semantic and figurative universe would bring user's attention, activating introspection and self-reflection processes, perception, imagination, and creativity. This would have to do with the involvement of different senses - visual, proprioceptive, tactile, auditory, and vestibular - and the activation of a phenomenon of synaesthesia (involuntary cross-modal sensory association) - where, for example, the aural reconnect the user to another sense, providing a multisensory experience. The case studies show specific forms of interactive and immersive graphic novel and reflect on application that has sought to engage innovative ways to communicate different messages and stimulate cultural memory and collective awareness. The visual semiotic and narrative analysis of the distinctive traits of such a complex textuality, along with a study of the user's experience through observation in naturalistic settings and interviews, allows us to question the functioning of these configurations, with regard to the relationships between the figurative dimension, the perceptive activity, and their impact on the user's engagement.

Keywords : collective awareness, cultural memory, graphic novel, interactive and immersive storytelling

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