Chapter 13
Cognitive Processes in the Reception of Interactive Short Film Script:
Mental Representations by Audiovisual Specialists

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ABSTRACT
This chapter aims to present mental representations by seven audiovisual specialists on Sirena, the antagonist of a noir fictional story in a multilinear interactive short film script. To this end, a reception study was created with in-depth interviews with specialists after reading the script to discuss its several aspects. This approach is of qualitative character. The study was conducted between June and October 2015 in São Paulo, Brazil. It is possible to perceive that participants have interpreted the character differently in spite of its consistent build. We could verify that the mental representation of the antagonist was aided by the world-view and experience of each interviewed specialist, which has led to unique readings of the character.

INTRODUCTION
Human knowledge constitutes facts and rules stored in memory, formed by patterns observed in behavior (Clancey, 1993). Knowledge is formed in specific actions in which the situation orders the space-time between objects and agents conditioned by their physical and characteristic environmental limitations (Rohlfing; Rehm; Goecke, 2010). In this sense, action is seen as something broader than simple behavior. On the other hand, the context in which the action occurs depends on several factors, being defined by

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the socio-cultural levels of the individuals and environments involved. Individual actions are limited by
the context, which in turn is determined by the situation. Thus, there may be a myriad of contexts for a
given situation, with possible overlaps. Vanzin (2005) sees the formation of knowledge occurring when
situated, due to a process of social-interactive participation by the agent in a community of practice
in which concepts and culture cannot be understood in isolation. In this sense, cognitive activities of
knowledge acquisition and relation can only be understood when in relation to their context.

When facing a given situation, individuals construct a general representation to elaborate their behav-
ioral plans. Therefore, cognitive phenomena occur through internal processing of information provided
by the transformations in representation. Clancey (1993) understands reasoning (understanding, making
meaning, speaking, conceiving, etc.) as the act of manipulating representations through stored models
and schemata, in which meanings are a way to map primary information, concepts, facts, and rules. In
this context, a mental representation is a way to understand situations (Vanzin, 2005). Representations
are transitory and limited to the set of elements in a given situation occurring in a specific context and
with specific aims. It is through mental representations, or mental imagery, that individuals form their
world-view. For Clancey (1993), the act of representing is interactive, involving motor and sensory
aspects - that is, it is necessary to take perception and movement into account in order to represent
something. The process of knowledge formation occurs in every act of seeing, speaking, hearing, feeling,
interacting, and so on. In this sense, people conceive an idea when interpreting something, not simply
by recovering and assembling meanings, but creating meaning - that is, information is not determined
by the informer, but constructed by the observer - because people as receivers conceive a unique form
of knowledge when understanding something.

From a narrative point of view, Jiménez (1996) sees that it is inseparable from its social and cultural
contexts, as discourse is constructed by the set of actions and propositions of a person. Relations between
narratives and meanings result in a complexity of other autonomous microtexts, in which history and the
way it is presented are an effect of the exchange between the narrator and the audience. The narrative
is different as it is the action of retelling a given story with real or imaginary events. This story is made
true by the receiver's mind, occurring in an environment of representation (Castro; Freitas, 2010). Nar-
rative is thus not a static phenomenon, but a phenomenon emerging from the interpretation of readers
and their interaction with a text (Tenenbaum; Tomizu, 2008). The act of narrating is the basic way to
make meaning of experience. In this sense, people narrate to negotiate their experiences in the meaning
systems that provide contexts.

With constant technological developments and the advent of new means of communication, storytelling
devices have been adapted. Among these, interactive environments (Steiner; Tomkins, 2001) can be
seen as the newest field of application to present narratives. This is possible because the narrative works
in a flexible model, which enables the interpretation of a range of phenomena through rules involving a
certain type of general knowledge. It thus constitutes a cultural pattern which allows for certain analo-
gies to seem plausible and intelligible (Brockmeier; Harré, 2003). In this context, iCinema (interactive
cinema) has been gaining strong interest of viewers as to their active participation in decision-making
processes as the narrative develops. Interactivity (Manovich, 2014) is the key factor in iCinema, allow-
ing for greater immersion and deeper experience of subjects in a story (Bieging; Aquino, 2014) and
enabling interferences with the narrative flow and plot, reformulating it according to viewer choices.
The multilinearity of structures collaborates with iCinema, inviting viewers to take important roles in
developing the narrative. This growth of film possibilities can be perceived today in the broadening of
film narratives, and in various moves in the medium, generating multiple sensations and intensifying