

Hypermedia paradigm and Museum's didactics: a challenge for the future. Studies on Palazzo Pianetti's Application

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The growing importance of hypermedia texts in Cultural Heritage Communication has led museum's collections to start a new process of self-definition, which began in the past century, and is now clear, involving visual and interactive fields (Pascucci, 2007). This "state of the art" means not only to discuss which kind of technology is used in modern Cultural Heritage Communication, but also to underline a change in knowledge process. The way to exchange information emphasizes new cultural models and values, firstly because hypermedia texts (including for instance web apps, totem whit touch display, augmented reality, and third generation audio-guides) enable people to "visit" collections virtually; secondly because the same collections are going to become virtual.

Therefore, the focus of modern Cultural Heritage Communication is now on the *subject* rather than on the collection itself: the *visitor* is no longer asked to observe the contents of exhibitions *in loco* as he/she can now *experience* the exhibition *even outside* of the museum. *Visitors* are also supposed to act, choose and react (Antinucci, 1999) according to the hypermedia content of the exhibition: they can decide how to watch collections, how to select information and, from a proxemic point of view, how to move themselves through collections with a device representing an extension of their capacities.

Different issues have been raised by the current way of developing and implementing digital interfaces in Heritage Communication: how to design the devices taking into consideration different kinds of users, such as elderly or persons with visual impairments; and also how to implement intuitive user graphic interfaces (GUIs) in digital tools which may enhance the contents of collections. Based on the previous questions, we want to add a reflection about what can happen when hypermedia texts for Cultural Heritage are designed for educational aims.

A case study will be illustrated as an attempt to investigate how hypermedia texts can improve not only user's experience in accessing museum's collection but also the learning experience. The analysis of Le Stanze di Enea's App, after a test phase (based on students and researchers data collection) shows the following results: a well structured application related to a Museum's didactic

tour increases the attention and the state of engagement during the students visit; it enhances students' autonomy in term of going in depth into some contents also after the didactic tour (for example spending time for visiting a room, analyzing specific topics, or visiting again the exhibition to gain further informations); last but not least, the use of this kind of hypermedia texts seems to encourage not only the interaction among peers but also between students and professors during the visit.