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Cultural Warrant and Hospitality in Animation Film Abstracting

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Cultural Warrant and Hospitality in Animation Film Abstracting

Cover Page Footnote

My sincere gratitude to Capes, my mentor João, and my family.

Introduction

In this paper, animation films are understood as audiovisual documents that hold information through moving images and sound. In libraries, archives, and museums (LAM), animation films require different techniques for content abstracting. Animation is the application of movement on different kinds of objects using multiple possible techniques, which are driven by the animator's skills and creativity. The focus of this research is based on the Brazilian context, where there is not a national standard or protocol for transposing audiovisual content into a written abstract, though several researchers address the issue and propose methods for indexing and abstracting video content based on different techniques and focusing on different attributes. Additionally, the literature critically considers video segmentation; the main argument is that segmentation does not consider the semantic aspect and disregards the cultural aspect.

This paper is part of a doctoral dissertation carried out in Brazil at São Paulo State University, which presents a theoretical study of cultural warrant and hospitality, and how these can be applied in animation abstracting (Sundström, 2021). This paper aims to discuss the theoretical and methodological parts of the study. Interviews and document analyses will be presented in a complementary paper.

Cultural Warrant and Hospitality

The concept of *literary warrant* was coined by E. Wyndham Hulme in 1911 in the paper "Principles of Book Classification." This paper opens with a reflection around classification systems. Literary warrant is demonstrated in the use and selection of the classification system for representing the document content. According to Beghtol (1986), literary warrant emerges within semantic decision making while applying a classification system to a document, and it involves considerations of limitations and possibilities of a classification system.

Additionally, Beghtol (1986) pointed out other types of semantic warrants, such as scientific and philosophical warrant, educational warrant, and cultural warrant. Recently, these semantic warrants have been studied in the field of knowledge organization, and Barité has published articles related to this topic. Barité et al. (2010) claimed that the rise in new models of warrant occurs as the literary warrant may have some gaps when it is applied in conceptual structures. Moreover, a knowledge organization system (KOS) has nuances beyond what could be addressed in literary warrants. The authors here have mapped some of those warrants focused on their aim, features and applicability. They have analyzed the concept of literary warrant, concluding that the main idea of literary warrant is that "the literature of one specific domain must be the source for the extraction and

validation of the terminology to be included in a classification system or other knowledge organization system” (Barité et al., 2010, translated from Portuguese). In 2018, Barité revisited the literary warrant concept, arguing that every warrant, including literary warrant and the semantic warrants, are directly or indirectly complementary. Further, Zamboni (2018) compiled a glossary of 35 different warrants, each with its set of functions and limitations.

A recent surge in the study of literary warrant is occurring in allied fields across library and information science. Hjørland (2008), Barité et al. (2010), Barité (2019), and Pinho (2006), for example, reflect on the role of the warrants to knowledge organizations systems and the field-specific applications that create a new type of exclusion within the KOS. To avoid exclusion within KOS, and from the perspective of the semantic warrants, Beghtol believes that a principle of *hospitality warrant* must be considered to complement the cultural warrant principle, since cultural warrant necessarily focuses on a specific group of information seekers within a specific cultural orientation.

Exposing the gap in the cultural warrant principle, Beghtol introduces the principle of *cultural hospitality*, asserting that cultural hospitality holds that “a knowledge representation and organization system can ideally accommodate the various warrants of different cultures and reflect appropriately the assumptions of any individual, group, or community” (Beghtol, 2005, p. 905). Cultural hospitality “complements and extends the idea of cultural warrant” (Beghtol, 2002, p. 47). Patrons must recognize their own experiences within a KOS, and for that reason, information providers should employ assorted practices in order to be hospitable to equitable information access. Cultural hospitality functions to reduce conflicting perspectives that may emerge during a patron’s interaction with information.

Cultural warrant identifies and integrates socially relevant cultural aspects of documents, while hospitality accommodates different cultures to negotiate possible conflicts within the KOS. Information providers play an important role in recognizing a community’s cultural diversity and in handling that diversity through active use of these principles. However, there are gaps around cultural warrant and hospitality, such as ensuring language and terminology used by a cultural group are those used by the information center (Beghtol, 2005). A lack of methodological clarity can lead to misinterpretations in the field: “Forms of cultural hospitality can be understood as the deliberate insertion of terms, facets or schemes complete with a certain cultural orientation, within pre-existing classification” (Barité, 2019, pp. 4–5).

And so, the following considerations were essential to this study. First, the individual’s culture will shape the way he or she relates to information. The author does not ignore the complexity of culture. Secondly, a system of access is a cultural artefact (Pinho & Milani, 2020), and the author considers the catalogue, terminological instrument, keywords, abstracts, and others tools of access as

cultural artefacts. These considerations help justify the methodological path taken in this research.

Survey of Methods

Beghtol (1995) approached cultural warrant as a principle pertinent to a classification system; however, she mentioned it can be open to interpretation in all KOS. Beghtol proposes the use of domain analysis in the study, which investigates literary warrant in her work around fiction. Based on this, our hypothesis is that it is possible to use domain analysis to identify the cultural elements that must be ensured in animation film abstracting.

Domain analysis originated in computer science and was adapted and expanded into information science by Hjørland and Albrechtsen (1995). Hjørland (2002) synthesizes eleven applications and possibilities for domain analysis. In this study, we focus on Hjørland's seventh suggestion, document and gender studies. The author explains that specific types of documents have distinct purposes; moreover he believes that the meaning of the document is a social construction. The author also indicates that such an approach can be taken in conjunction with three others: indexing studies, historical studies, and critical and epistemological studies. Mai (2005) shows us that *domain* is an ever evolving and malleable concept, which is useful in information science because there are vast differences among patrons and the experts.

Through domain analysis, it is possible to (1) map the structure of a document, (2) explore the function of this document within an information center, and (3) reflect on the users' needs and observe if the way the topic is being described corresponds to the needs of the discursive community, which represent our three methodological stages, outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Methodological stages

Stage 1	Domain	Animation	To bring the concept. Identify what might be relevant in this universe.
Stage 2	Document Dimension	Main features of animation. Eligible elements during the abstracting.	Review the methodologies of audiovisual abstracting used in Brazil.
Stage 3	Discursive Community	Animators, producers, animation collection managers and animation festival organizers.	What is relevant to the community? What does this community need?

Table reproduced from Sundström (2021)

In this paper, we present Stages (1) Animation as a Domain, and (2) Document Dimension. We first explore the characteristics of the animation and then review existing approaches to audiovisual abstracting in Brazil.¹

Animation

Animation is the application of movement on different kinds of objects using multiple possible techniques, which are driven by the animator's skills and creativity. The result of this process may be a piece of art or a commercial product: We can identify several types of products resulting from this creative process, such as games, cartoons, photorealistic movies, and many others, which include animated films, though the production process can interfere with the concept of animation.

In the etymological sense: “The word animate comes from the Latin verb *animare*, meaning ‘to make alive or to fill with breath’” (Wright, 2013, p. 1). Etymologically, animation consists in giving life to something unanimated. However, this perspective cannot be applied to other animation types such as the live-action movies since live-action can be understood as a capture of reality.

Hilty (2013) claims that animation has a complex relationship with reality, and this is inherent to animation since animation is inspired by—but is not—the real world. He recognizes the effect of animation becoming increasingly realistic as related to modern animation production, because the distance between those who produce and those who consume is decreasing.

On the other hand, some authors suggest that production does not interfere on the definition, such as Hayward (2000) who considers the hybrid issue and understands that animation can be present in live-action films as well, because animation is the creation of movement in inanimate elements, which, regardless of the technique used—photographs, stop-motion, hand-drawing, computerized and others—is understood as animation. In this way, animation is understood as a technical resource resulting from various types of production and modalities.

Denslow (1997), on the conceptual variety of animation, wrote: “Definitions of animation vary from each other for many reasons, including historical development, production and marketing requirements, and aesthetic preference” (Denslow, 1997, p. 01). When the concept is based on production that includes emerging technologies, this aspect can bring considerable diversity and

¹ The institutions characterizing the discursive community in this research are Lula Gonzaga Animation Film Museum (MUCA), Animation Museum of Belo Horizonte (MUABH), Producer Anaya, and Cinemateca Brasileira. The study included semi-structured interviews, a documental analysis of the Brazilian Filmography (FB), and analyses of the Cataloging Manual of Films (2002) and the Annual Activity Report (2017). The results of these analyses will be presented in subsequent publications.

instability. Indeed, conceptual diversity is relevant; however, it can create conceptual limitations as well, and within an academic context, it is important to have conceptual stability.

Wells and Moore (2016) have covered the animation issue, and it is essential to outline their point of view related to animation's features and definition. They consider animation to be an expression of creative people since everything imagined can become reality through animation. Furthermore, the techniques used are not the center of concern, and they can embrace several areas of expertise which characterizes animation as an interdisciplinary field. The authors also pointed out that some features must be taken into consideration when we characterize something as animation, what they call an *animation language*.

Wells and Moore (2016) discuss giving motion to animation, which consists of creating movement from the real world, and in this case the imagination is included as part of the real world. Besen (2008) also described animation as a set of principles: Analogy, Caricature, Movement, Fantasy, Reality, and Control.

Wright (2013) considers animation the pursuit for the construction of imagination. The animation universe has its own rules and respecting such rules makes this universe seem real to the viewer, even if the elements are the result of imagination. The author worked for many years producing animation, which shows that her concept also represents the perspectives of the producers. Animation is something visual in which the laws of physics do not apply; the jokes are quick, and the characters have great morphing power.

Bendazzi (2004) builds an analysis from an historical perspective stating: "Animation is everything that people have called animation in the different history periods" (Bendazzi, 2004, p. 1). The author reaches this conclusion after presenting the different techniques used over time and what people call animation. For him, different periods name different techniques as animation. He also presented two other essential points, the first was: "Furthermore, the word animation did not exist as a noun – it was only used as an adjective with the 'cartoon': animated cartoon (as used previously)" (Bendazzi, 2004, p. 2). The second point was: "The noun animation began to be used by French specialist in the 1950s, when an international cultural movement was consolidated between Paris and Cannes that attributed a specific meaning to this form of art" (Bendazzi, 2004, p. 3). Therefore, integral to understanding animation as concept is recognizing the perspectives of animation creators and consumers.

Recently, Husbands and Ruddell (2019) conducted a review of the concept, and they highlighted the complexity of mixed viewpoints. They reviewed this complexity from the production and academic perspective and categorized their analysis into two points: the illusion of life, and metamorphosis. These two concepts start from the illusion of life, that means, the way of making movement, they wrote: "animation is not the art of drawings that move, but the art of

movements that are drawn” (McLaren, as cited in Husbands & Ruddell, 2019, p. 5). However, this comprehension does not apply to all types of animation, and they claim that the illusion of life cannot be a guide when we are searching for a common and unified definition.

Metamorphosis is understood as a changing from one drawing to another, or the way some elements are developed on an animation such as the environment. Thus, both illusion of life and metamorphosis can be considered animation movement but applying these two elements in all kinds of animations can be problematic, especially during the search for a unique definition (Husbands & Ruddell, 2019). Therefore, the authors understand that the viewer’s opinion may be necessary to elucidate a working definition. “Indeed, examining animation in spectatorial terms opens up opportunities to explore not only what animation is but also what it can do – what it can show us and enable us to feel” (Husbands & Ruddell, 2019, p. 10). They highlight “When considering the diverse and distinctive experiences that animations offer us, it becomes quite clear that any on universalizing theory or description of animation spectatorship will not suffice” (Husbands & Ruddell, 2019, p. 10). They conclude that studies in animation must be ongoing to seek new ways to understand and define it.

The complexity of conceptualizing animation directly reflects the moment of retrieving and building the historical path of this material. While it is possible to find studies that indicate the image that simulates movement as the first animation record, such as the magic lantern, other studies point to cave paintings as the first indications, as they consider the lines between the drawings an intention of movement, thus confirming the origin of animation. In this study, we decided to understand the origin of animation in the magic lantern because they were understood as the first images that simulate reality in an animated way with the intention of creating movement. Animation is the representation of real or non-real elements created through different technological resources.

Audiovisual Abstracting in Brazil

In the Brazilian context, discussions around audiovisual documents are relevant, but are also fragmented. Part of that relevance is based on a shortage of resources for describing the content of this type of document, as in many cases this process is done manually, which requires specialized skills from information professionals. Another point that justifies the interest is due to the low investment for preservation in the public sphere. Recently, in July 2021, Glauber Rocha’s collection was destroyed by an accidental fire, and that was another institution affected by the lack of government investment. The fragmentation is due the different theoretical currents. Besides that, some studies consider singular context or institutional particularities in when proposing an abstracting method.

There are several publications proposing methods for audiovisual abstracting. Sundström, Moraes and Albuquerque (2019) conducted a bibliometric search on Brazilian databases² and argued that studies are based on different approaches for indexing and abstracting fiction movies. They also highlighted that there are different theoretical paths to propose abstracting, and they rarely consider each other's methods.

Cordeiro (2000) considers the structure of the film to identify the content. Through her methodology, the movie should be analyzed as an integral form, which she names *integrative analysis*, which consists of analyzing montage and narrative. However, she does not disregard the importance of reflecting on the documents produced for the film as a complementary source of consultation when dealing with this material, as with the script. She also claims that all information about the films is relevant when abstracting the theme. "The analysis of the film as an indexing object must be approached as a process of production of meaning (narrative and editing) and not from a single language (images-sound-words) or a single documentary support (script)" (Cordeiro, 2000, p. 184, translated from Portuguese). Therefore, the elements mentioned are relevant to the film and must be considered during the indexing and abstracting. Furthermore, Cordeiro (2000) emphasizes that, to understand the subject of the film as a whole, it is necessary to understand the narrative as well as the editing.

Integrative analysis provides a margin of safety for whoever is going to carry out the indexing because it embodies *all* the documents used to produce a film. Through this methodology, the author proposes the observation of four aspects: "a) information projected on the film, [what she names the *todo filmico* (whole film)]; b) the static images of part of the film; c) the movie sequences; d) the frozen movie sequences; e) the documents produced for the film" (Cordeiro, 2000, p. 196). Briefly, the author works with the idea of breaking down the film to get to the subject matter.

In the study by Cordeiro and Amancio (2005) it was possible to find a consideration in professional praxis, as the existing standards and the user's need to propose an approach were considered. Cordeiro and Amancio (2005) stated that information units can develop abstracting based on the user levels, and the first level is the public in general, the second public intermediate, and the third level is specialist in cinema (Cordeiro & Amancio, 2005). The methodology is based on the descriptions standards such as The International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), and others, proposing balance between exhaustiveness and specificity in the indexing and abstracting process. The abstract must have the following structure: "presentation and objective of the main character; conflict(s) described through narrative facts and characters; closure of the plot." Other elements can

² The results were published in Portuguese and informed the present research.

complement this abstract as well, for example: present time and space, avoid adjectives, mention the names of characters and actors that represent them in parentheses, and conclude by guiding the reader that this summary is about a production of the indexer's personal opinion (Cordeiro & Amancio, 2005, p. 93).

Smit (1993) reinforces the importance of addressing the problem of audiovisual indexing as an interface between the areas of archival science, librarianship, and museology. She makes four points. The first is that professionals in each area believe that they deal exclusively and coherently with the audiovisual. The second is that these three areas partially or totally ignore each other's literature, which makes possible advances in treatment restricted to each area. The third point is that, even belonging to different information centers, the methodology for treating this information is very similar. And in the fourth point, she states that the name of the information centers and the professionals involved in this process do not always reflect the logic of the unit's organization. Although Smit's study (1993) was published over 20 years ago, it still portrays a current problem of information science in Brazil.

Finally, there is a rule from ANCINE (Agência Nacional do Cinema) widely used among producers for abstracting films and documentaries. For films, the producer must focus the protagonist, the objective, and the conflict. For a documentary, the main objective and approach strategy must be presented. ANCINE does not present different methods for abstracting, therefore, the animations that are submitted to the project call at ANCINE follow that same structure.

Discussion

When analyzing the characteristics of abstracting, one notices that the dialogue with cultural warrant exists when it considers the external agents that influenced its production, the choices of its techniques, its post-production path (in this case the festivals) and its message through the synopsis; and the latter must be linked to the concepts understood in the field of producers and those who will seek the information. Thus, there can be hospitality within the knowledge organization system. An animation is a document in and of itself that bears meaning and reflects the animator's community.

A manual abstracting should consider the type of institution, the type of document, the purpose of the institution and the user profile. The particularities of that community directly influences the method to be selected for abstracting the content. It is precisely in this context that cultural warrant can be approached, as the concept recognizes the different needs within the same system.

The absence of specific regulations to identify eligible elements within an audiovisual document creates a gap in professional practice in the Brazil scenario;

this gap is filled by constantly new-proposed approaches, which sometimes do not consider the metadata standards, resulting in a lack of interoperability across systems.

Conclusion

This study found researchers presenting different methodologies in an attempt to fill the gap of abstracting audiovisual documents in the Brazilian literature. However, we still lack a consolidated methodology or a standard. The existing methodologies emphasize different tasks, which may, for example, prioritize the document attributes or the patrons' needs and expertise. For that reason, we believe that the cultural warrant and hospitality principle helps ensure the use of cultural attributes of the represented community and helps identify which methodology fits the institution's purposes.

Smit (1993) presents the possibility of using the same method for abstracting audiovisual within librarianship, archival science, and museology, but the literature has shown these professional fields developing in different ways, especially regarding patrons' specific information needs. There seems to be little crossover use of abstraction tools between fields, despite audiovisual subject analyses being common to all three, as Smit pointed out.

We noted that according to previous studies, there is a difference between film genres that becomes relevant when proposing to abstract documents. Animation has particularities that do not fit existing methodologies for other audiovisual media. Besides that, existing methodologies require more development, especially when considering metadata interoperability. Further, manually abstracting within cultural warrant necessitates methodology selection according to that which is culturally relevant to a community.

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