



The Sims: a study of fandom and Machinima productions

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Abstract

This research focuses on fandom, more specifically on The Sims', focusing mainly on fan productions in Machinima. Therefore seeks to understand how the fan community of this franchise is characterized, focusing on a kind of machinima production ("Girls in the House") to analyze the production method and its repercussion in the community, based on the qualitative documentary methodology of social media (LANKSHEAR; LEANDER, 2005).

Key words:

Fandom, Machinima, The Sims.

Introduction

Digital information and communication technologies have developed and caused impacts on the users. This gave rise to a new ethos (Lankshear, Knobel, 2007) on the internet, which incorporates bigger freedom in the circulation, appropriation and manipulation of information. It gave space to the new literacies and multisemiotic objects produced through new practices on the Internet, since a new posture of the users of the technologies in the construction of texts is mobilized, demanding a more participative and collaborative work. Precisely because of this, this mentality is based on the Convergence Culture (Jenkins, 2009).

In this way, there is a great influence on the fans, because today it is possible to fit them as "producers" (Bruns, 2008) because they are not just receivers. They comment, redistribute and remix, expanding the types of productions.

From this, the general objective of this research is to study the fan community of The Sims around the production of Machinima, a 3D animation produced inside a game, expanding the academic studies for a greater analysis of the relationship between fandom, media and convergence, considering the practices of new literacies and possible relations with the school.

Results and Discussion

The first part was to understand how the fan community of this franchise is characterized and map it by analyzing which objects and products are most often produced.

For this, the methodology of Documentary Analysis in Social Media (Lankshear; Leander, 2005) was utilized, analyzing different productions published on YouTube. It was perceived that the Machinima is a initial genre that, after editing, becomes another genre, which is the published one. Thus, it was proposed a typology for the different types of genres produced from an initial Machinima, according to Bakhtin's theories of Discourse Genre (2003), focusing on the Architectonics and Compositional Form and style of each produced genre. Not only that, we analyzed Chronotope (Lemke, 2006), valuation appreciation and polyphony, listing the characteristics and differences of each genre produced. Thus, charts have been created that expose these characteristics and style of the following genres produced

through Machinima: gameplays, contests, series, novels, short films, feature films, video clips, skits and spoofs. We emphasized the first two, as they are the ones that most highlight the collaborative and interactive Web 2.0 and the ethos presented in the introduction. Mapping the main productions, we can see how the community relates and interacts, in addition to what is valued or not by it, such as lip sync, a feature very appreciated by fans of The Sims.

The second part involved the analysis of a specific production in machinima of The Sims: the viral brazilian web series Girls in the House. It was proposed, also based on Bakhtin, an axiological appreciation of an episode, focusing on the enunciative, architectural and compositional form of the production, allowing the perception and influence of the enunciation and authorship to the production. Not only that, it was perceived that the series was a great corpus for the analysis and of the cultural phenomena in which the fans are inserted, as Convergence of media, besides web series, it turned into a book, went to the television and in the future to the cinema.

Conclusions

The research proved to be relevant, since it extended the conceptual tools elaborated by the Bakhtinian Circle, providing a good methodological analysis of audiovisual editing, bringing important questions related to the "authorship" of the fans and their relationship with the *corpus*. Not only that, the genres' charts can be used for possible educational and pedagogical purposes, both of production and analysis of the genres made through Machinima.

In addition to expanding academic studies on fandom, media and convergence and their productions, it will also facilitate future studies regarding The Sims' fan community, as it has already been mapped on a specific production.

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