"A Game is a Game is a Game…"

A Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research

Leipzig, 04.04.2019
Tracy Hoffmann
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research

Introduction

- A ludic, technological and cultural artefact
- History of video games deals with the evolution of this medium
Introduction

„If we consider ‘old’ games, the games that were once ‘coming soon’ and that had their moment at the cutting edge, taking centre stage at retail, being advertised on television, online and in print, but which are now outdated, superseded, and unsupported by their publishers and developers, we often find surprisingly little, and what we do find are sometimes only unreliable traces of existence.“

James Newman, Best Before (2012)
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research

Challenges

- Example question: "Where and when were video games released?"
  + "Who was involved in the production/distribution process?"
- No simple answer:
  - no comprehensive database
  - only a few authoritative institutions with databases
Challenges

- Example question: "Where and when were video games released?"
  + "Who was involved in the production/distribution process?"
- No simple answer:
  - no comprehensive database
  - only a few authoritative institutions with databases
- Goal:
  - Data integration and linking with RDF
- Challenges:
  - heterogeneous data models
  - no identifier
  - various titles, publisher practice of porting, converting, re-releasing a game, ...
  - localisation, censorship, downloadable content (DLC), ...
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research

Method

- bottom-up approach
- proxy vocabulary
  - terms identified by proxy URIs for each concept in the data source
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research

Method

- bottom-up approach
- proxy vocabulary
  - terms identified by proxy URIs for each concept in the data source
## Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Records</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Japanese Release Date(s)</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Companies</th>
<th>Alternative Titles</th>
<th>Links to Knowledge Base</th>
<th>Walkthroughs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Art DB</td>
<td>38.068</td>
<td>Jp</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobygames</td>
<td>81.609</td>
<td>En</td>
<td>Worldwide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GameFAQs</td>
<td>55.834</td>
<td>En</td>
<td>Worldwide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Wikipedia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research

Talking about different things
Talking about different things

- Game: **Dark Souls**
  PlayStation 3 (2011) and Xbox 360 (2011)

- Game: **Dark Souls: Remastered**

- Game: **Dark Souls (Limited Edition)**
  PlayStation 3 (2011) and Xbox 360 (2011)

- Game: **Dark Souls: Artorias of the Abyss**
  PlayStation 3 (2012) and Xbox 360 (2012)

- Game: **Dark Souls: Prepare to Die Edition**
  PlayStation 3 (2012), Windows (2012) and Xbox 360 (2012)

-> Only the DLC!
Talking about different things

-> Only the DLC!
Talking about different things

Mobygames

Dark Souls
PlayStation 3 (2011) and Xbox 360 (2011)

Dark Souls: Remastered

Dark Souls (Limited Edition)
PlayStation 3 (2011) and Xbox 360 (2011)

Dark Souls: Artorias of the Abyss
PlayStation 3 (2012) and Xbox 360 (2012)

Dark Souls: Prepare to Die Edition
PlayStation 3 (2012), Windows (2012) and Xbox 360 (2012)

GameFAQs

Dark Souls
PlayStation 3
Xbox 360

Dark Souls Remastered
PlayStation 4
Nintendo Switch
PC
Xbox One

Dark Souls Trilogy
PlayStation 4
Xbox One

Dark Souls Trilogy Box
PlayStation 4

Dark Souls: Prepare to Die Edition
PC

-> Only the DLC!

MediaArt DB

DARK SOULS

DARK SOULS with ARTORIAS OF THE ABYSS EDITION

CS プレイステーション3 ディスク 株式会社フロム・ソフトウェア 2011年9月26日

CS プレイステーション3 ディスク 株式会社フロム・ソフトウェア 2012年10月25日

Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig
Talking about different things

Database record ≠ Video Game

Mobygames  => New Edition = New Record
Media Art DB  => New Release = New Record
GameFAQs  => New Platform = New Record
Main Concepts

- **Game**
  - Abstract term
    - „we played the same game“ or
    - „X is a remake of this game“
- **Platform Realization**
  - Technical realization
- **Edition**
  - Distribution/retail packages
- **Local Release**
  - Retail package for a specific region
Alignment with upper-ontologies

- FRBR/LRM to static and book centric
- CIDOC CRM for published mass production products?
- Harmonization of FRBR and CIDO CRM -> FRBRoo
Alignment with upper-ontologies

- FRBR/LRM to static and book centric
- CIDOC CRM for published mass production products?
- Harmonization of FRBR and CIDO CRM -> FRBRoo
Example

Dark Souls

DataProvider: default
game genre: Hack and Slash, Metroidvania
releaseDate: 2011-09-11
variantTitle: Project Dark, ダークソウル
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research
Developing a Mediated Vocabulary for Video Game Research
Conclusion and future Work

- Further integration of proxy vocabulary
- Mapping to upper-ontology needs further work
- Open for extensions
- Collaboration
- Evaluation
Thanks!

Tracy Hoffmann
tracy.hoffmann@uni-leipzig.de

https://diggr.link/
https://github.com/diggr/diggr-video-game-vocabulary