ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the relation between disruptive behaviour in online environments and the design of multiplayer online games, focusing on huehueing, a widespread phenomenon of disruptive behaviour in online games linked to Brazil’s national identity. The discussion is based on a sociotechnical view that understands MOGs not as the combination of a technical artefact and a social construct that belong to different realms and mutually influence each other but as the two sides of a single coin in which huehueing is inscribed. This vision allows the identification of how and why the social dynamics of huehueing is capable of temporarily changing the mediating ground, and therefore the design features of the game.

Keywords: Game Design, Griefing, HUEHUEs, Multiplayer Online Games, Sociotechnical Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Home access to the internet in Brazil has increased rapidly during the last decade, but it is still restricted to less than half of the population. In comparison to other countries, the average Brazilian connection speed is low and prices are high (CETIC.BR, 2014). However, the country’s size and the patterns of internet usage have drawn attention to the presence of the Brazilians on the internet. For nearly a decade, Brazilians are known to have spent more time online than users of any other nationality (Ibope, 2006, 2013). Most of this time is spent on social interaction and entertainment, with 77% of the Brazilian internet population being active users of Social Network Sites (SNSs) and 43%, or nearly 37 million

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people, playing online games (CETIC. BR, 2014). This intensive use for fun and sociability is often associated with the friendly and warm nature of the Brazilian people (Silva, 2005; Ruvolo, 2014). However, other studies of the Brazilian presence on the internet point a different direction, to a history of aggressiveness and symbolic violence (Fragoso, 2006; Recuero & Soares, 2013).

Disruptive behaviour on the part of Brazilians in multiplayer online games has been reported since 2003. These gamers and their practices are associated with Brazil by the use of Brazilian Portuguese and national symbols, such as the national domain BR, and by certain memes such as “huehuehue”, that is supposed to represent laughter. In association with this, disruptive Brazilian gamers (occasionally, Brazilian gamers in general) are referred to as “HUEHUEs”. The HUEHUEs refer to their actions as “huezagem”, a neologism that will be translated in this paper as huehueing. This paper discusses the relation between huehueing and the sociotechnical characteristics of the preferred environment of the HUEHUEs, that is, MOGs. The theoretical framework assumes the inseparability of the social and technical aspects of sociotechnical artefacts, as well as of the online and offline realms. The methodological consequence is that the technical aspects of games and the online and offline aspects of playing cannot be discussed separately; they must be approached at once, in a single movement.

In order to prepare the ground for the proposed discussion, the next sections present the HUEHUEs and characterize huehueing in relation to other forms of disruptive behaviour, such as spamming, trolling and griefing. All examples of text about the HUEHUEs and their practices quoted in this article were publically available and have been transcribed verbatim. They are part of a database composed of more than 100 webpages, images and videos, obtained with cascading searches between January and March 2014, using the HUEHUEs best known memes as keywords. URLs were last checked 30 August, 2014.

THE HUEHUEs

The HUEHUEs are relatively easy to meet in MOGs and are mentioned in a variety of other types of online sources, such as game forums, blogs, SNSs and newspapers. They are said to have originated in Ragnarok Online in 2003, where Brazilians playing on servers located in the US searched for their co-nationals by repeating the question “BR? BR?” and talked in Portuguese in the open chat channel. Players from the US complained that English was the official language of those servers, but these complaints were ignored by the Brazilians, who laughed at them in the peculiar way that would come to be the meme “huehuehue”. “Brazilian” Ragnarok servers were created, but they were not as powerful or up-to-date as the servers located in the US and many Brazilian players did not migrate to them. The rules for fighting the communicational noise caused by spam and conversation in Portuguese on the US servers became increasingly
LBRW: A Learning based Random Walk for Recommender Systems
[www.igi-global.com/article/lbrw/128348?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/lbrw/128348?camid=4v1a)

How Do Adolescents Obtain Health Information: A Phenomenographic Study of Adolescent Health Literacy in Health Education
[www.igi-global.com/article/how-do-adolescents-obtain-health-information/236626?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/how-do-adolescents-obtain-health-information/236626?camid=4v1a)