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BASIC APPROACHES TO THE DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF "VIDEOGAME" AS AN ELEMENT OF MODERN SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE

The article explores the concept of "videogame" as a narrative of modern social and philosophical thought, which considers a video game through the prism of the gaming of social and individual life of a person. It is emphasized that despite the active penetration of videogames into the life of a person, a general concept of a "videogame" has not yet been formed in scientific discourse that would comprehensively cover this phenomenon, reflect its specific features and determine the further directions of research. It is proposed to supplement the concept of "videogames" with the following characteristics: 1) Videogame becomes new cultural phenomenon, one of parts of the mass culture and art of the modern world; 2) Videogame forms not only a virtual world, virtual space. Nearby the virtual space of game forms special society, also in this space can be formed special culture, ethic and morality that modifies real standards; 3) Videogame may be merely game for fun; however, it also can bring some ideas: philosophical, political etc.; 4) Interactive in videogames depends on a genre or platform of the game. "Videogame" concept should include not only indication of interactive, but also capability of levels and variety of interaction between game and player; 5) "Videogame" concept should describe videogame as complex phenomenon that have positive and negative aspects. Emphasizing on one side may reduce concept. It is concluded that the video game will become a new cultural phenomenon, part of the mass and artistic culture of the twentieth century. The expansion of the currently available concept "videogame" can bring closer the formation of a stable scientific concept, which will become the foundation for the development of a scientific discourse on the study of gaming as a general theory of videogames.

Keywords: game; videogame; concept; discourse; "homo ludens"; gaming; gamology.

Statement of the problem. The modern world is characterized by the process of gamification - games influence on all areas of humans' life, beginning with professional area and ending with organization of educational process. The society made game more serious, meaningful for the social life, added games to all spheres of activity. Modern philosophers speaking about the possibility of gamification of science and art propose to use concept "homo ludens" nearby "homo faber". Johan Huizinga, author of the concept, insists on understanding games as key factor of anthropogenesis and appearance of modern human [*Хёйзинга, 1997*].

Today among the variety of gaming activity videogames acquire more extension and impact. They form special society and space, assist widening of languages with neologisms, which are used by gamers while speaking of videogames and in process of playing. Videogame becomes part of culture, has influence on socialization, worldview and values of a person. Videogames also are a special part of discourse that develops a problem of understanding and definition of ontological status of information [*Dodonov, 2014*]. Conceptualization of a new phenomenon of social reality or nature existence is a significant part of researching activity [*Horban, Martych, 2017*]. Because of all mentioned problem of concepts and methodological approaches of defining videogame as complicated social phenomenon, which is needed to be deeply researched, exists.

Analysis of researches dedicated to the problem. World science started deep researches of videogames around twenty years ago when they appeared and spread in mass culture. One of the first and most famous researchers become Gonzalo Frasca. Many researchers refer to his article "Ludology Meets Narratology: Similitude and differences between (video) games and narrative" because there was formed an idea of necessity of methods of researching videogame as game, not as narrative or simply story. Concept of "ludology" has determined following scientific discourse.

Despite active game penetration in humans' life, Ukrainian scientific discourse did not form general concept of videogame, which would comprehensively cover this phenomenon, would show its main specifics and determine further analysis and researches. However, without

general concept cannot be formed a term for a basis of researching gamology as a game theory.

The aim of our article is an analysis of world and domestic scientific discourse of forming general concept that would cover videogame phenomenon without reducing it to too bordered object.

"Videogame" concept in world scientific discourse

In world discourse, some established definitions of videogame have overall characteristics and enable the possibility to research this phenomenon. Despite some difference between terms "computer game" and "videogame" they are used as synonyms for denotation of one phenomenon.

Nicolas Esposito gives a simple definition of a videogame in his article: "A videogame is a game which we play thanks to an audiovisual apparatus and which can be based on a story" [*Esposito, 2005*]. In this definition, as author emphasizes, are given key aspects of videogame: 1) that it's a game, 2) playing needs some special apparatus and 3) videogame has a plot or some story in its base. This definition is really simplified because it does not count genre of videogames. As an example, genres as farm-simulators where player needs to save some resources demonstrate that some games can have no pre-defined plot. Players think that plot in such games is inappropriate.

Some researchers of videogames often emphasize that videogame demand interaction from player. Because of that one of the most determinative characteristics of videogame is they are interactive. Gameplay, a process of playing videogame, is depends on the impact of player. This impact is determined with genre and an audiovisual apparatus. In the same way videogames are defined in research "A Gameplay Definition through Videogame Classification", where videogame is given as "an interactive application, entering into interaction with a player" [*Djaouti, Alvarez, Jessel, 2008: 1*].

Researchers Salen and Zimmerman focus attention on a formal system of rules as on a parameter that determines a structure of a videogame and make possible its analysis. System as described also needs interaction because player must do some action according rules or against rules if it is counted by the game [*Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Smith, Tosca, 2008: 99*].

Miguel Sicart says when researching ethics and morality in videogames: "Computer games are complex cultural objects: they have rules guiding behavior, they create game worlds with values at play" [*Sicart, 2009: 4*]. In this definition, attention is also paid to the rules that regulate behavior of player; however, feature of virtual reality that game forms and that can be totally different from real world is added.

Parts of a concept of videogame are deeply researched in book "Understanding Video Games" [*Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Smith, Tosca, 2008*]. During analysis of different approaches to researching videogames authors of the book point out that videogame took many from the simple game, however there is some difference, for example rules of videogames are more inflexible and often cannot become a topic of discussion. A person can discuss about rules with other player, friend of teacher, but without special knowledge person cannot "discuss" with a computer.

In this book is also described a Jesper Juul's model that shows classical aspects of a game: negotiability of actions, fixed rules, different results and binding player to results, necessity of player's effort. However, there are also shown examples of videogame industry that confirm

possibility of inconsistency between videogame and one or more listed criteria [*Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Smith, Tosca, 2008*].

On the base of definitions listed above, we can determine that in world discourse main characteristics of "videogame" concept are:

1. Apparatus that coordinate game process, input and output;

2. Interaction with player - videogame must be interactive;

3. Some rules of interaction between player and world of the videogame.

Videogame is different from the other software. In contrast to the programs that are expected to make people's activity easier and improved videogame may be programmed to create difficulties and resist player in process of playing videogame. Some genres and game series with aim to hinder player and make him form special skills for overcoming barriers exist. As an example can be given "Souls-series" famous because of its complicated compared with other Action/RPG gameplay. Battle with enemies is given as some kind of competition; because of it, challenges - passing game with conditions that harden game process - have conducted.

"Videogame" concept in Ukrainian scientific discourse

There is no general definition of videogame in Ukrainian scientific discourse. Scientists who research this phenomenon often characterize videogame in side of their researches; however, phenomenon remains analyzed not enough for forming overall system and terms.

During the analysis of specific technical researches were found next characteristics of videogames/computer games:

1. computer game is computer program that serves for organization of process of playing, helps with a connection with partners or appears as a partner;

2. computer games are intended for personal computers;

3. "computer game" today have different interpretations and is used in wide and in narrow senses of a term. In wide sense, computer games are understood as a general term for all interactive entertaining programs for a computer. Narrow sense is linked with games for a personal computer and often it is not specified if these games are specials for PC [*Федоров, Шарко, 2011*].

One of proposed above definitions was formulated by A. Koblevsky and M. Khovrich [*2016*]. Their definition does not seize videogame in general and expose aspects of organization of game with the help of apparatus and possibility of replacement of real partner by machine intelligence. Given above formulation does not demonstrate differences between genres and does not give understanding of interaction between game and player, focusing on the computer as instrument of conducting the game.

In case of examining video/computer games as a media phenomenon, in spite of television they are based on giving user an active role in narration and expended also co-authorship of artist and player, what makes similar videogames and innovative theatrical productions that propose participation of spectators [*Алієва, Жукова, 2016*]. As in definitions examined above in this definition, attention is drawn to interactive in videogames; however compared with theatrical productions, in our opinion, is inappropriate: when spectator interferes in staging actors can consider proposed alternatives and modify the plot while acting. Hardware, software and mechanical intelligence of video-

game at present can count only preset changes; in situations that were not set previously, apparatus would not react or react with error.

K. Kislyuk denotes that because of special scientific researches in particular attested that computer game is a genre of art because it integrates modern artistic tendencies and reveal new forms of interaction between spectator and artist surrounding [*Кислюк, 2014*].

Among main characteristics that, as N. Stratonova notes, unite computer games, immersion, what is characterized by loosing of feeling of outside reality and dipping in a virtual space (so-called visionnaire), is marked out. Because of the immersion user interprets as "real". One more important characteristic of a computer game is save/load option [*Стратонова, 2014*].

In definition from the vocabulary "Culturology. XX century" attention is drawn to interaction: "Virtual reality is artificially made environment where person can penetrate, transforming it from inside and feeling real perceptions in connection with it. When person finds oneself in this new type of audiovisual reality not only real people are available for contact but artificial characters" [*Носов, 2000*]. As definition shows, videogame appears one of sources of forming virtual reality, which works in its own rules and concepts of existence. It is pointed out that virtual reality of a videogame gives an opportunity to feel oneself as winner, omnipotent ruler. "Videogame" genre is produced by "society of feelings", where impressions and effects in pure form become articles of merchandise in isolation from a material bearer [*Алієва, Жукова, 2016*].

It is hard to agree with mentioned idea because depending on a genre of videogame it proposes a role of creator, ruler or part of the story, inhabitant, average person who do some actions and is depended on system of game rules.

All named characteristics in definitions above are united with the fact they do not form representation of videogame as a complex phenomenon. While contemplating computer games as subject of ethics V. Stepanov emphasizes on the next: "Computer games are often reduced to the object that has next characteristics: 1) demanding time; 2) not having practical usefulness; 3) causing addiction. On the base of listed characteristics, computer games are often ranged as alcohol and drugs. Main problem connected with videogames is that people prefer computer games to other activities. There also is another way of reducing videogames to the object with fixed predefined characteristics. Videogames are reduced to the object that influences on a person in a way A, B, C. Where A, B, C are chosen depending on the research. For example, it can be excitability, aggression, changing of social purposes, social adaptation, intellectual abilities etc. In this case next algorithm works: if A, B, C influences are positive, computer games are good; if A, B,C are negative, computer games are bad" [*Степанов, 2013*].

Shown in the quotation approaches to "videogame" concept illustrate relevancy of our point of view. Attention of researchers is drawn on aspects of videogames that could verify some one-sided (often negative) influence on the society.

Videogames are also studied as a source of addiction. Addiction in modern scientific literature is determined as partiality for some substance or activity, which leads to the desire for taking this substance without control or practice this action for receiving desired psychical effect. Addiction is manifestation of a desire to change psychic state of oneself in a side of intensive positive emotions with the help of some substances (as drugs, tobacco, alcohol, medicine, psychoactive substances) or in way of doing specific activity; addiction is characterized with disturbance of control on motive, irresistibility of aspirations, insatiability and binding with performance (disturbance of eating, passion to gambling and computer games, to the internet etc.) [*Ільницька, 2011*].

Although videogames can become a source of addiction, researching merely this context results in reducing overall phenomenon to negatively characterized object. As one of forms of non-chemical activity near a computer addiction workaholics is designated [*Гупаловська, 2012: 8*], however, "work" phenomenon and its philosophical understanding are wider than analysis of single characteristic of work - escape from reality by fixation on work.

So, videogame as complex social phenomenon is one-sided (often with negative context) and scantily investigated in native scientific discourse.

Problem of existing "videogame" concepts

The widest concepts from listed in article reduce videogame phenomenon to general aspects and do not reflect difference between videogame and other software; from the other side, they generalize this phenomenon and lose difference between videogame genres and engines, what leads to complication of analysis of games in full.

Videogame depends on its genre and platform. Some elements can be implemented only with the help of specific engine and input/output facilities. As an example can be given an interactive film game "Until Dawn" released as an exclusive for PlayStation 4 console. Some game scenes in game need special activity from player as movement or immobility of a manipulator, special apparatus not working on personal computer yet.

Listed in article approaches of defining a concept do not count differences between games developed for different platforms. The same is true of genres - mentioned in article interactive film genre propose some number of available action; however main part of online games are based on different kinds of interaction between players.

Videogames are often made for fun, but surrounding of player can be friendly or hostile. Given above example of "Souls-series" can be supplemented with platformer game "Super Meat Boy" that also creates difficulties and does not contribute to solve in-game problems.

Despite active usage of videogames in studying and training skills, "videogame" concept is not often included with useful characteristics. On the contrary, especially in Ukrainian discourse, attention is paid on "escape from reality", excessive "immersion in virtual reality".

In definition used in discourse is not fully reflected an opportunity of influence of videogames on different sectors of society and areas of life, in spite of investigation of cultural, ethic, esthetic aspects of videogame. Also in the definitions is not explained the difference between videogames made for fun and that can be place among art. In detailed researches single sections are dedicated to the question of mass product and videogame as artwork [*Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Smith, Tosca, 2008; Sicart, 2009*]; in Ukrainian discourse opportunity to divide videogame as part of pop-culture and videogame as artwork is bordered with lack of terminological apparatus of videogames.

We also would like to draw attention to the next fact: modern videogames and players form not only the virtual space, but also special ethics of gaming process; rules and policy that can be bound with outside space, not only in-game space. However, this problem still is in the process of researching. Because of that, the idea of game

ethics can be found in insignificant part of researches; in Ukrainian scientific discourse, this idea is almost absent. Nevertheless, this absence does not minimize scientific potential of this idea. On the contrary, this situation means necessity of widening the object of "videogame" researches to the special state of social reality with all characteristics of social life.

Conclusion

In conclusion, "videogame" concept would be advisable to fulfil with next characteristics:

1. Videogame becomes new cultural phenomenon, one of parts of the mass culture and art of the modern world.

2. Videogame forms not only a virtual world, virtual space. Nearby the virtual space of game forms special society, also in this space can be formed special culture, ethic and morality that modifies real standards.

3. Videogame may be merely game for fun; however, it also can bring some ideas: philosophical, political etc.

4. Interactive in videogames depends on a genre or platform of the game. "Videogame" concept should include not only indication of interactive, but also capability of levels and variety of interaction between game and player.

5. "Videogame" concept should describe videogame as complex phenomenon that have positive and negative aspects. Emphasizing on one side may reduce concept.

Widening of "videogame" concept that exists now may approach forming of stated scientific term that would become a basis for elaboration native scientific gamology discourse as general videogame theory in details.

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ОСНОВНІ ПІДХОДИ ДО ВИЗНАЧЕННЯ КОНЦЕПТУ "ВІДЕОГРИ" ЯК ЕЛЕМЕНТУ СУЧАСНОГО НАУКОВОГО ДИСКУРСУ

Сучасний світ характеризує процес гейміфікації - поширення ігор у всі галузі життя людини, починаючи з різноманітної професійної діяльності і закінчуючи освітнім процесом. Суспільство зробило гру значущою для соціального життя людини та включило її у всі можливі сфери діяльності. Сучасні філософи, говорячи про можливості гейміфікації, зокрема науки та мистецтва, пропонують поруч з "homo faber" (людина, що працює) поставити "homo ludens", "людину, що грає", а сам автор даного концепту - Йоган Гейзинга - наполягає, що гра є вирішальним чинником антропогенезу, який сприяв появі сучасної людини.

У статті досліджується концепт "відеогра", як наратив сучасної соціально-філософської думки, яка розглядає відеогру через призму гейміфікації суспільного та індивідуального життя людини. Зроблено висновок, що відеогра постає новим культурним феноменом, частиною масової та художньої культури сучасності. Розширення наявного наразі концепту "відеогра" може наблизити формування усталеного наукового поняття, яке стане фундаментом для розробки наукового дискурсу щодо дослідження геймології як загальної теорії відеоігор.

Ключові слова: гра; відеогра; концепт; дискурс; "людина, що грає"; гейміфікація; геймологія.

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