Second Writing Project

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Discourse community of web and mobile development

I was a game design major student and I love playing games and also interested in creating my own games. However, the status of Chinese game development industry is a mess, plagiarism has been an unspoken rule of the industry and that's made me made decision to choose a major which is related to game design and also provide high income for future independent game project. To have a better job expectation, I transferred from game design major to the web and mobile development major. And that also means I had transferred from game design academic discourse community to the web & mobile development one.

John Swales, who is the linguist of genre analysis has defined six characteristics of discourse community in his paper. (Swales) First, there should be a set of like-minded targets in the discourse community. Second, members of a discourse community have its own way to communicate. Third, members of a discourse community use its own method to exchange information. Fourth, a discourse community has some different genres to achieve the set of like-minded goal. Fifth, the discourse community acquire lexis for its different genres. And the last, there is a threshold in the discourse community that a part of members have appropriate level of relevant content and discourse expertise.

In Prof. Swales' paper, he claims that "a discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals." (Swales) My academic discourse community also has the similar broadly agreed set of goals. Because my academic discourse community of web and mobile computing is about computer science and software/web App development, our goals are writing good codes to solve problems in life. For example, to develop a map App for people to find the way to the strange place easily is a kind of use codes to solve problems in life. And to save the development costs, the better codes we write the less money we spend. In the interview of Mykhaylo Kachaluba of the discourse community, he said that" In the computer science field, maybe the problems in life which programming professionals want to solve are different like making good games or make life easier, but the methods to solve problems are same, is writing good codes." (Kachaluba) During my co-op experience, write good codes made program tiny and run fast, that's also means get off work earlier and higher salary. Almost not only the common goal of members of my academic discourse community but also all programmers.

In the web and mobile computing academic discourse community, I belong to, there are also some "mechanisms of intercommunication among its members." (Swales) During the learning experience, we are supposed to write programs in increasing difficulty. Sometimes we have to work together with classmates as groups by using the Git system. The Git system is a software which allows users to share their codes, work as groups and also control the version of codes. People who use Git could leave comments in the code which they want to share. Another example, the famous "Github" website provides free Git service for programmers to use, people who use Github could check and download other users unlocked projects. Classmate

Yongchun Cui said that “Programmer would rather show their code than quarrel, and then the Git is created.” (Cui). In this discourse community, the using of Git is a kind of “mechanisms of intercommunication among the member of this discourse community” (Swales). And the Q&A website is also a good way for members to exchange the information. Q&A website members ask and answer questions about solving programming problems to exchange the information like expertise. Mykhaylo Kachaluba said that most of his student use Q&A website like “stackoverflow” to solve the coding problems like the algorithm or environmental construction. (Kachaluba) During my programming course, my classmate also told me that “stackoverflow” is a good website to find answers of homework. It’s really an unspoken rule in the web and mobile computing academic discourse community.

Because these two ways are the main way which members of web and mobile computing academic discourse community get used to use, members are familiar with exchanging information between the members and also familiar with providing or get feedback by using Q&A websites and Git. According to the definition which states by Prof. Swales that a discourse community utilizes and “hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims” (Swales), here are two different types which we just mentioned—Git and Q&A websites. Most kind of Git websites such as Github provide the comment function, and programmers could share their ideas by using Git-like service. (Kachaluba) When we are doing our group project, we also use Git-like service to group work. And it’s also a common solution for the parallel work requirement project.

To better explain the differences between Git and Q&A websites, please allow me to introduce the lexis which belongs to this discourse community. The Git-like service is like the OOP(object-oriented programming) concept and the Q&A websites just like the POP(procedure-oriented-programming)concept. OOP is the abbreviation of object-oriented programming, which means to solve the programming problem by using an abstractive way. To be specific, programmers try to declare objects and values for practical meaning. And the POP is the abbreviation of procedure-oriented programming, which focuses on the procedure to solve the problem, step by step. Q&A websites provide some solutions for the current problem, with a focus on the procedure to solve the problem. However, the Git-like service provides a complete set of project management system in an abstractive way that allow programmers to solve programming problem by using OOP method. (Cui) And those two types of genres meet the definition which has been claimed by Prof. Swales—"a discourse community utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims." (Swales) When I just search for the coding/algorithm solution, I would use Q&A website. However, when I had a specified project to do, I prefer to use Git-liked system. Because the Git system would be better used in the entire project development.

Give another example of professional lexis, the "FPS" and the "Render" are also the professional lexis which comes from the game design—the academic discourse community which I had belonged to. FPS is the abbreviation of frames per second, the basic unit of measurement to determine the smoothness of the game screen. And the word "Render" means a software or hardware process the generations of visual image

from models, not give something out. (Read) There are always some words mean different meanings in the specific field which every discourse community has.

According to the explanation of the previous paragraph, we can conclude that professional lexes would not be explained very well without some required knowledge. To analyze one of this four words I just announced, people must have knowledge about object structure, basic programming experience (Cormen), game design project experience or gaming experience (Creighton). This is the threshold level which mentioned by Prof. Swales in his paper, the basic requirement for analyzing the lexis.

After I joined the web and mobile computing academic discourse community, I felt that the new concept was updated very quickly. During my co-op experience, I found that my colleague only knows how to write Java and jQuery code. When have to use the Python to write web server, he just got into troubles. That made me feel like he just falls behind the times. In other hand, the latest commonly used standard Html 5.0 was released in the 10/28/2014. (W3C) The latest generation JavaScript framework was released in February 2014. (Vue.js) That shows the updating speed of new framework/standard is very fast. With the updated framework and standard release, much more lexis and concept that we have to learn.

Citation

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